

www.cooltears.com

July/August 2021

COOL Tears™

and tiny campers
MAGAZINE

Tracy & I
Written by a UK reader



Who comes out on top: Brake Controller Review

PLUS: A new teardrop owner shares her first trip experience

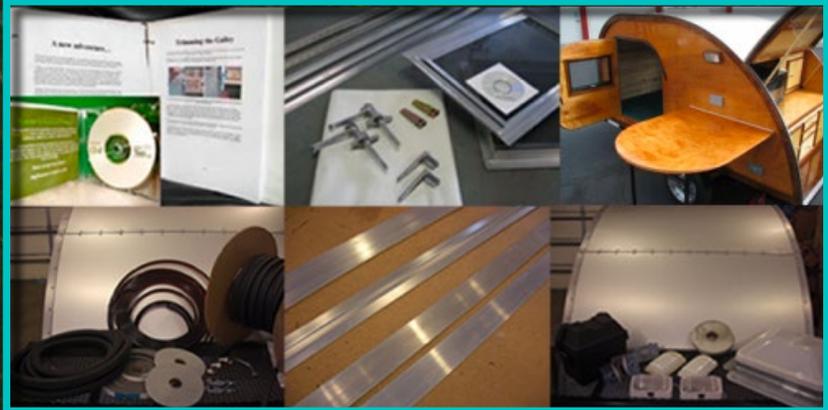
...And more

**BIG
WOODY**

**Serious about building
a teardrop camper?**

Big Woody Camper
ULTIMATE KIT
\$899⁰⁰ plus shipping

Teardrop Campers



Handcrafted Custom Campers.

Plans, kits, parts and accessories for the home builder!

BIG WOODY CAMPERS

715-271-0465 | www.bigwoodycampers.com



**DESIGNED
FOR THE UNPREDICTABLE
BUILT TO WEATHER IT**

Built in the USA



Covers, Shades and Tent Solutions for :

- Little Guy Trailers
- R-Pod Trailers
- T@B Trailers
- T@G Trailers
- A-Frame Trailers
- inTech Trailers
- Hiker Trailers
- and many more

BahaQue
www.pahaque.com

Poway, California
Call us toll-free at
888-700-TENT
(888-700-8368)

Also available at:  **TearDropShop.com**



HIT THE OPEN ROAD

*With Autowbrake on your trailer,
just plug and tow.*



The only electric brake control with nothing installed in the tow vehicle, 100% trailer contained. Period.



www.getautowbrake.com · getautowbrake.com

COOL Tears™ and tiny campers MAGAZINE

Vol. 9 No. 4 July/August 2021

16 COVER STORY

TRACY & I

Richard Chapman

5 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Lisa Adams

7 PRODUCT REVIEW: BRAKE CONTROLLERS

Lisa Adams

25 SECOND ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

Anne Cox

27 CROSSROADS OF AMERICA

Kurt Schlesselman

29 THE MAIDEN VOYAGE OF THE ZEN DEN

Jenifer Madson

34 PRESS RELEASES

Cool Tears Staff

39 THE TEXAS TINY TRAILER RALLY

Lindsay Buerger

42 REGIONAL CAMPING SPOTLIGHT

Cool Tears Staff



Editor
Lisa Adams

Contributing Authors
Lindsay Buerger
Richard Chapman
Anne Cox
Jenifer Madson
Kurt Schlesselman

© Copyright 2021 Cool Tears Magazine™ All Rights Reserved
Cool Tears Magazine™ is a trademark.
Written materials submitted to Cool Tears Magazine™ become the property of Cool Tears Magazine™ upon receipt and may not necessarily be returned. Cool Tears Magazine™ reserves the right to make any changes to materials submitted for publication that are deemed necessary for editorial purposes. The content of this publication may not be copied in any way, shape or form without the express permission of Cool Tears Magazine™. Views expressed in the articles and reviews printed within are not necessarily the views of the editor, publisher, or employees of Cool Tears Magazine™.

Mailing Address:
Cool Tears Magazine
51956 CR 215
Lawrence, MI 49064

Connect with us!



Letter from the Editor:



Tiny Camper Enthusiasts,

Summer is in full swing in the northern hemisphere and I hope that all of you have had great adventures with your tiny campers! I am thoroughly enjoying seeing all of the Instagram and Facebook posts of people taking trips and exploring the great outdoors.

I'm frequently perusing through the Teardrop Camper Adventures Facebook group managed by Mark Busha. If you haven't seen that Facebook group yet, please search for it and follow it. I follow several other teardrop or squaredrop related groups, including some builders, in the US, Canada, and Australia. I'm also a member of the Girl Camper Facebook group as well as a member of Sisters on the Fly. If you have a few favorites, please let me know so I don't miss any of your adventures.

On Instagram, I follow several different hashtags, including #teardropcamper #teardroptrailer #camping #campinglife #optoutside #squaredropcamper and several others. If you want me to see your posts, please include #cooltearsmagazine or #cooltearsmag

Why do I mention this? First, we want to make sure that we are staying relevant and offering content that is timely and interesting to you. But secondly, you ALL have a story to tell and we want to help spread your love of tiny campers or tiny camping!

I am proud that this issue of Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Magazine has three articles written by people discovered through Instagram and Facebook. I found Richard Chapman on Instagram and he is the first home built trailer article from the UK! Welcome to the tiny camper family Richard! Jenifer Madson is a new teardrop camper owner and shared a Facebook post about her first camping trip that caught my attention. We all remember that first trip and the trials that it brought. I'm proud that she has shared her adventure with us so that it may help other new campers learn what an accomplishment it is to get out there and do it - even if you are going by yourself that first time. Lastly, we have an article from Lindsay Buerger from Princess Craft RV in Texas that highlights their latest Texas Tiny Trailer Rally, which is held twice per year. If you're interested in joining their next rally, it is scheduled for October 7 - 10, 2021 and you can find more information about it in the article.

What do all of these people have in common? First, they're all going to get a 2021 Cool Tears Calendar for submitting an article that is being published in an issue. AND, they will receive a free 2022 when they are available. If you have an idea for an article or would like to submit one about either your build or a trip you've taken, send me an email! I'd love to hear from you. If you know of any people that haven't subscribed, tell them about the magazine and let's get them on the list so they won't miss any future issues.

As always, thank you to the new Top Fans of Cool Tears on Patreon or to those who have so generously donated to our magazine. Any funds received go directly to paying the bills of the magazine/website or purchasing products for reviews and giveaways! ■

Safe travels and stay safe

Live Tiny. Live Free.

Lisa Adams

Editor

Cool Tears Magazine™

Lisa@cooltears.com

Photo by Sandy Coen. Lunch stop at the Prince of Wales Lodge, Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta, Canada in 2018



Product

REVIEW

**NOT ALL BRAKE
CONTROLLERS ARE
CREATED EQUALLY**

**BELOW IS A COMPARISON OF THREE
POPULAR MODELS USED IN THE TINY
CAMPER INDUSTRY**

When we first started camping in our teardrop, we used a high mileage Subaru Outback as the tow vehicle. This was not a problem at first because the majority of our camping trips didn't have us stray too far from the western Great Lakes states. This part of the United States is not known to have mountains or even steep inclines. In fact, I only remember seeing a handful of the steep incline signs over the course of several years here. We always stayed well within the towing and payload capacity of the Subaru Outback and my green "Soob" performed well. In the fall of 2019, we took a trip over 2200 miles (3540 km) from Michigan to South Dakota and Nebraska before heading back home. The trusty Soob did well even though it already had over 150,000 miles (241,401km) on it. We had a great time exploring the Badlands, Custer State Park, and Mount Rushmore. If you've ever been to Mount Rushmore, then you know that the road from Keystone to Mount Rushmore is steep. While I was within the towing limit of my Subaru, going down that hill with a trailer was not something that I'd like to repeat because I was afraid of my brakes overheating. I could have avoided that feeling by having electric brakes on the teardrop.

If you have a smaller tow vehicle or larger tiny camper like a T@B or Bushwacker or you like to carry extra gear, then you should consider having electric brakes coupled with a brake controller to give you the greatest control over your vehicle. Electric brakes with a brake controller will save wear and tear on your tow vehicle brakes and when coming to a stop, it will feel like only your tow vehicle is stopping, you won't feel the added weight of the trailer.

The rest of this article will focus on the electric brake controller since there are several in the market. We'll focus on the Curt Echo®, Tekonsha RF and the Autowbrake.

[The Curt Echo® \(\\$244.95USD on Amazon\)](#)

This wireless, portable brake controller requires zero wiring as it simply plugs into the 7-way connector on your tow vehicle. This controller requires a 7-way connector to work, which may eliminate it for some of our readers automatically. The setup of this bluetooth brake controller is quick and requires no tools. First, download the Echo® Smart Control

App from either the Apple App Store or Google Play. Second, insert the Echo in the 7-way between your tow vehicle and the trailer and lastly, configure the settings.

[The Curt Echo®](#) is small enough to fit in your glove compartment when not in use, so it takes up very little space and it is possible to use even if you're borrowing a trailer or renting a piece of heavy equipment that has trailer brakes. As someone who rents a Bobcat skid-



Photo by Anne Cox of the trusty Soob on The Wall near The Badlands National Park

steer loader occasionally, this is a nice perk. It is plug and play for any vehicle with a 7-way connector and a trailer with electric brakes.

What I don't like about this product are three major things. First, there is no way to secure this to your vehicle. So it is possible for



someone to simply walk up and steal the brake controller. I don't relish the idea of spending roughly \$250USD to have it walk off at either a campground or grocery store if I'm running in to resupply. The thought of unplugging it and securing it while I'm not near the trailer and then plugging back in when I'm ready to use, seems like wasted extra steps. The second aspect that I dislike about [the Curt Echo](#)® is that it requires me to use my phone while driving, which is illegal in most states. The Echo® works best with the app open and visible while you're driving so you can make quick adjustments to the braking if needed and it also allows you to see the trailer brake performance using a nice graphic. In theory, it's great and it definitely has my attention since I love techie things. However, if I'm heading out on a camping trip, I typically use my phone for navigation so the app screen won't be visible to me. By not having the app screen open, I lose the ability to press

the "button" to adjust the max braking output up or down depending on trailer or road conditions. To control the trailer brakes manually, you need to press the large orange button on your phone's screen. This must be held as long as you want to control the brakes manually. This leads me to the last dislike. Curt does offer a manual override button that you can install on your dashboard; however, the button is nearly \$80USD. Since driving hands free is required in so many states, I am surprised that Curt hasn't come up with a better solution for the people that won't use their app while driving to manually override their brakes.

As a safety feature, once this unit is configured, the unit will stay on the last setting even if your phone dies or you lose a Bluetooth connection, so your brakes will continue to function; however, the manual override function will not work.

If you have a 7-way connector on your vehicle, are not worried about theft, and you will keep the app open while driving, then this product may be a great fit for you since the setup is super simple.

[The Tekonsha Prodigy RF \(\\$399.54USD on Amazon\)](#)

This wireless trailer brake controller is a trailer mounted unit that is slightly smaller than a standard Kleenex box. It will function with a trailer that has up to 3 axles and it's ideal for the family that has multiple tow vehicles since the hand held control can be moved easily from vehicle to vehicle. The brake controller features proportional braking in forward and reverse, so the harder you hit the brakes, the



The Best Buying Experience and the Best Accessories for your Teardrop!

Plus new arrivals, daily deals and live chat with our accessory experts!



10x10 Cottonwood Shelter



10x10 Cottonwood XLT



All Weather Cover



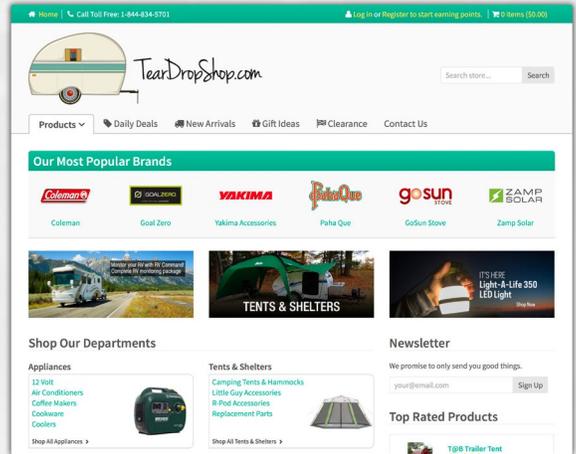
Side Mount Tent



Teardrop Lock



T@B Tent



Visit www.teardropshop.com or call Toll Free: 1-844-834-5701



THE APP FOR TEARDROPPERS!

Connect with the Teardrop Community!

- ✓ Status Updates
- ✓ Share Photos
- ✓ Likes & Comments
- ✓ Campsite Check-Ins
- ✓ Review Campgrounds
- ✓ Connect With Campers



Now available on iOS and Android!
<http://teardropnation.com>

more braking power is applied to the trailer. Like the Curt Echo ® , there is a manual override button which will apply the trailer brakes without applying your vehicle brakes, which will slow your trailer down in the case that you start to jackknife.

The Tekonsha Prodigy RF should be mounted as close to the cabin on the trailer as possible for best function. The installation process is relatively easy to manage as it only requires 4 self tapping screws (which are included) to mount the unit to the trailer. At this point, you may have some wiring to do, depending how long your 7-way wire is. Your trailer 7-way needs to plug into the back of the Prodigy RF, so it may not be long enough to reach. If this is the case, then you will need to rewire your 7-way from your electric junction box with the appropriate length wire. However, if your wire does reach, you have two options. 1. Just plug it in and secure the excess wire to the trailer frame with clamps or zip ties. 2. Cut off the slack and rewire from the junction box so you have just enough of the wire to safely plug into the 7-way connector. The second method is cleaner, but does require a bit more work.

As mentioned above, the Tekonsha Prodigy has a hand held control that must be plugged into a 12 volt outlet in the tow vehicle. For me, this is a plus and a minus. I like that this means that there is no battery to worry about replacing on the hand held unit, but it takes up a valuable 12 volt outlet in the vehicle which is usually reserved for phone mount chargers. Since I use my phone typically for GPS, that means that I would need to get an extra adapter with more 12 volt sockets, which just takes up more space near the driver.

If you have a 7-way connector on your vehicle and don't mind a larger, wired hand held unit

in your tow vehicle, then this product may be a great fit for you, especially if you tow your trailer with different tow vehicles from time to time.

[Autowbrake \(\\$342.99USD on website and Amazon\)](#)

This self contained, fully functional, electric brake control mounts on the trailer and also features proportional braking, meaning that it will adapt to every braking situation and will brake in the same manner that you apply the brakes in your tow vehicle. Unlike the other brake controllers mentioned above, once the Autowbrake is mounted on your trailer and connected to your vehicle, there is no initial sync up necessary to the key fob.

The key fob is not hard wired into anything and it's not essential for normal operation of the brake controller; however, it can be used to manually override the automatic braking



function to help stop trailer sway. I love the idea of only having a small key fob for a few reasons. First, I don't want to use my phone to manually override the system like the Curt

Echo ® . That's not ideal because it requires me to use my phone (Michigan is a hands free only state) and since the app needs to always be open, I also lose the ability to use my phone for navigation which I always do while traveling with my teardrop. Second, it does not require any extra power source like the Tekonsha Prodigy RF, power outlets are at a premium usually when we're traveling. The key fob is also multifunctional; it can be used to fine tune the level of braking necessary when you set up your vehicle. To engage the manual override, which is necessary to reduce trailer sway, you can depress any of the three buttons on the remote. In my many years of towing, I've never experienced sway. If I did start to experience trailer sway, I like the idea that I don't have to hit the "right" button to apply the trailer brakes without stepping on my vehicle brakes. The last thing I would want to do in that situation is to look at a fob and determine which of the three buttons is correct.

There is one downside to the key fob. You will need to replace the battery at some frequency. This is not a deal breaker, but if I'm leaving for a trip and I don't have a spare battery, then it may result in not leaving on time while we head to the store for a replacement. Another bonus of the Autowbrake is that you can use either a 7-way connector or a 4-way flat connector. If you plan to use a 4-way flat connector, I recommend that you send them an email or give them a call prior to placing your order to make sure it will work for your vehicle.

Autowbrake has been used for various tiny camper manufacturers in the past, so it's a testament to how well the product works. Scamps currently install this on their campers

and Taxa Outdoors (Mantis, Cricket, Tiger Moth campers) as well as nuCamp and Vistabule have used the Autowbrake on their tiny campers. Other manufacturers typically will install this brake controller at customer request.

Summary

All three products have pros and cons and it will come down to your personal preference on which brake controller is right for you and your towing/trailer situation. All three are relatively easy to install and they don't have the traditional "knee knocker" controller mounted under the dash of your tow vehicle like many others do. The controllers are relatively small, with the Tekonsha Prodigy RF handheld unit being the largest and the Autowbrake being the smallest, at just a fob. All three are versatile in that you can use different tow vehicles if the need arises. All three would also not void your vehicle's warranty if you are leasing since there is no extra equipment permanently mounted to the tow vehicle. The Autowbrake has the added advantage of being able to be used with either the 7-way connector or a 4-way flat, which the others do not, so that may be appealing for some. For me, Autowbrake has a major advantage because the fob is small and does not require a power source in the cab of my truck. We normally are charging phones, or iPads, or laptops, etc while we're driving, so there are no additional outlets left to charge something else in the truck.

Now that the product review is completed, I want to give some additional information about Autowbrake since they have been a long time advertiser in the magazine.



custom adventure trips & itineraries / outdoor events / content creation / adventure magazine



Autowbrake is a small company based in Iowa that has been in business for over 20 years. While the main office (of three employees) is in Iowa, the brake controller is manufactured in Wisconsin. I had the pleasure of talking with Carlton (one of the three) a few months ago and we talked like we've known each other for years. While it was an interview, I could sense his passion for their product and I was assured that anyone that has an install problem gets a personal phone call back from one of the three, Carlton, Chris, and Byron (left to right below). They will even call you back on nights, weekends, or holidays.



To get a glimpse of Autowbrake, I recommend watching this short video.

<https://getautowbrake.com/pages/our-story>

Their brake controller was patented over

20 years ago, but it seemed pretty futuristic for the time. Other brake controllers back then required an internal unit to be mounted underneath your dashboard and it also had to be hard-wired in. While the Autowbrake has changed slightly over the years (becoming smaller, updating electronics) the core functionality has remained the same. They wanted the brake controller on the trailer and they didn't want to plug in anything in their vehicle so the dashboard would continue to look seamless. I love that they continue to listen to the consumers to get ideas on redesigning their product. For example, the unit that attaches to the trailer has become smaller over the years as the electronics have improved and the fob that goes inside the tow vehicle has migrated from something that was as large as big mobile phone or walkie talkie down to something that is similar in size to a key fob to unlock your vehicle doors.

Here are some additional highlights of the



product. The Autowbrake also comes with a free 3 year warranty on the brake controller and 1 year on the fob. Replacement fobs

are available, if needed. They are also currently offering free shipping on every order placed in the United States. Autowbrake has several videos on their YouTube channel to help guide you through the installation and calibration process. Again, don't hesitate to call or email them if you have any questions. They are happy to help and will respond quickly - this is visible by the testimonials that are shown right on their website.

To learn more about autowbrake, [click here](#). ■



Photo by Bill and Adrienne at Moose Lake, near Mount Robson in the Canadian Rockies.



By **Richard Chapman**

I think we can all agree the last 18 months have been very different, turbulent, and full of change. For me, during this time I split with my wife of 6 years and suddenly found myself with much more free time. I found myself thinking about the future more, watching videos on YouTube of a guy who moved to a wood in Wales, built his own house, and built an off grid power system. That seemed a little extreme and too cliché; I needed a sense of adventure, closer to home, more affordable, something I could involve my two young children in. The retro VW camper was out of my price range and too big. Completely by accident, I saw a feature on television about creating small campers and it got me thinking.



As an Engineer and a keen DIY'er it was never a question of whether to buy a teardrop or build one. For me, I love the challenge of finding solutions to problems, designing elegant solutions, whilst learning new skills along the way. Over the next few nights, using my work CAD laptop, I started designing a small teardrop camper that could sleep myself and my two children. Instagram had always been a great source of inspiration and not wanting to bore all (50 or so!) of my current followers with very niche pictures of plywood being cut, I created a new Instagram profile to document the build. Tracy was born!

I shortly after moved back in with my parents, whilst this was a major change, it also gave me the space and additional resources to work on Tracy. They say the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, my Dad and I are very similar, both engineers, enjoying working to create something. My Dad being a hoarder also means there is access to a multitude of materials and items, including a trailer frame he had been given and happened to have still "lying around" and lots of useful bits of wood, such as planks of oak from reclaimed flooring which would form the worktop in the kitchen and a stainless salad bowl that was just the right size and shape to form the sink.

The build plan was started like I start most of my projects, design for manufacture. Choose the most readily available materials and design the assembly so it requires minimal resources

to complete. Although I had access to lots of power tools and had the space to be processing materials, I didn't want to get bogged down in cutting lots of wood to size. Whilst carpentry doesn't require high precision, the Engineer in me wants everything to be perfect and I can easily get caught up in cutting everything perfect. It's easier to get the supplier to cut it for you and get them to worry about cutting it accurately. I based Tracy around the classic 1220 x 2440mm (8x4') Plywood sheet using a slightly chunky 38x63mm softwood as the carcass/frame. 38x63 is a common size used in stud walls here in the UK, so readily available and cheap.

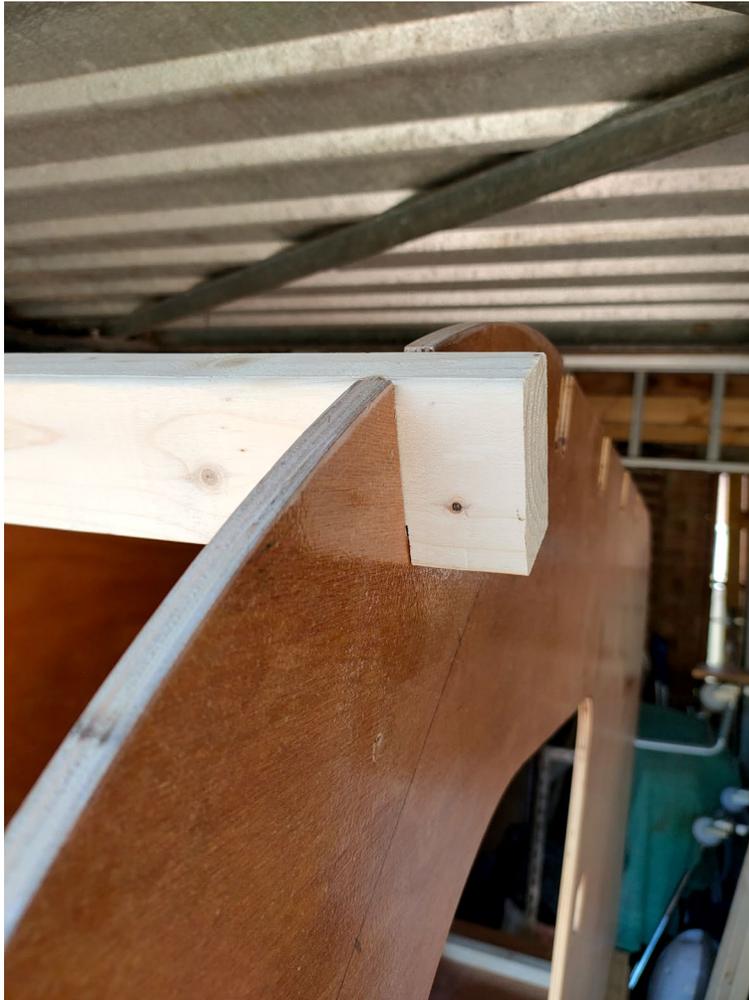
I must admit, I didn't do lots of research before starting the build, I bought a very popular book from Amazon, which documented a teardrop build. Whilst it was useful, it didn't go into the detail I wanted. It was more of an overview of how to construct a teardrop, general carpentry and electrics, most of which I was already familiar with. I wanted to know how the hinges were sealed, what vents were suggested, how the door was sealed, weather proofing etc. I believe the author of the book was from California, so he probably wasn't as bothered as me as trying to ensure the wet English summer didn't spread it's way into my Teardrop! Sometimes I feel in this age, where there is so much information available, you can almost over research. You can get caught up in forum posts, agonising over the best paint, construction method insulation etc. For me it is not always about the destination, the journey of learning along the way, through the ups and downs, provides much of

the enjoyment.

The initial build started very quickly, I'd spent lots of time mulling over designs in CAD and needed to just start it. My design was simple, 8 sheets of ply, with foam insulation in between each pair of sheets. Idea was to create a strong insulated panel to create the base, sides and roof. 12mm (1/2") marine ply all around, except for thinner 3mm (1/8") ply on the inside. As a first timer I was excited to do the more exciting and interesting bits and probably overlooked some of the more difficult or pressing items. Having the luxury of having a laser cutter at work, I used this to make plastic templates for routing out the side panels, curved door and even things like holes for the electrical sockets. This was a big time saver. Once one of the curved outer panels was routed, I used this as a template for the other 3. All the templates were put to one side, with dreams of creating a second teardrop one day for a family member or friend, or even using them to design a "kit" for others.

Getting the sides on the trailer was a big





milestone and was exciting to see the curved

Solar.
Waterproof.
Lightweight.
Luci.



MPOWERD

form take shape. I had originally planned to join the two sides by screwing through into the 63x38mm coss members. This would require all manner of clamps. marking out and screwing into the end grain is never great, even if the outer shell/roof would tie it all together. Instead I decided to notch out the edge of the internal plywood walls and rebate the cross members so they interlocked with glue. Placing the two plywood walls on top of each other to cut the notches, meant that both sides were identical. This worked really well and allowed me to locate all the cross members in place and get all the parts lined up, no clamps, no wobbly side panels as I tried to screw everything together. This resulted in a very strong and solid carcass. It was at this point I should have started work on the hatch, figuring out how

much support was required, what hinge, how to seal. But instead, wanted to get the roof on, see Tracy's curves take shape. Lining the outer went with very few hiccups, the marine ply was more compliant than I had expected, the large cross members providing a big area to secure the outer shell to. One mistake I made here was not thinking about the joint. The outer shell is longer than the 2440mm of the standard ply sheet, so a joint is required. I didn't plan this and the joint happened to be right at the front of the trailer, just after a curve, so it is difficult to get to sit flat and needs lots of filling. In hindsight a joint on the nice flat top of the Teardrop would have been

much better and only visible to the birds.

Tracy looked great at this point, was really taking shape. It then dawned on me, with the outer shell on, I wouldn't be able to get the large sheets of ply inside the teardrop to line the inside and the enormity of planning and securing the rear kitchen hatch was starting to sink in. Like everything, I tried to keep the carcass for the hatch as simple as possible, ribs of ply, with broomsticks running across was my idea to make a simple and strong construction, which I could fit to the back of the Teardrop and form the rear hatch panel over, so using the already existing side panels as a guide. Unfortunately this failed miserably. I cut the holes in the ribs too small and then tried to bodge it by turning the holes into U slots, this caused the ribs to lose strength and when I tried to form the hatch, it just lost its shape, the ply returning to its straight form!

This was quite a low point of the build, but with the help of my Dad, we hatched a plan to build back better and stronger, using thicker ribs and studding (threaded bar) and blocks, instead of wobbly uneven broomsticks, to tie it all together. This resulted in a much stronger structure that could be temporarily screwed in place in the closed position, the rear hatch panel then being formed around it, once I had sorted out the hinge! Confidence in the build was restored.

Teardrops only seem to just be taking off in the UK, meaning that parts don't seem as abundant. All the sealed PVC 'Living' type hinges, or metal 'Hurricane' hinges seem to be in the US. I struggled to find something suitable, but found a PVC hinge from a UK

supplier that fitted, with some modification to the back of the Teardrop. This further reminded me that I should have prioritised the rear hatch design, over some of the earlier parts of the build, but all good learning!

The final big job was lining the inside of Tracy, after the success of the external lining, thought this would be easy, wrong again.



The insulation foam went in easily, it required a tight fit to stop it falling out, another reminder that I should have done the inside first! The big problem was that I had to cut the inner lining ply into smaller parts to get in through the Teardrop door. Once inside, I found the 3mm ply wanted to snap rather than bend, I mistakenly assumed thinner was more bendy, but thinner also means less layers of laminate and more snappy! What I probably needed was more marine ply, in 4mm or 6mm, but after already having several

plywood deliveries, didn't want to order anymore. Searching through offcuts I found some 6mm ply, which looked great, seemed to bend better, wrong again it just wanted to snap. Another low point in mine and Tracy's relationship. After drinking many cups of tea (thanks mum for providing the regular cups) and chats with Dad, wetting the 6mm ply seemed to do the trick and managed to line the inside of Tracy, strip by strip. There were some gaps in the lining and some warping of the fibres, but at this point I didn't care, just needed closure, nothing, some filler and a sander won't sort.

So I'll ramble no more, this brings you up to date with the current progress on Tracy, with the next big job painting which will be rolled on inside and sprayed outside. I've



<p>WE GO TO THE EXTREMES..</p> <p><i>Camp-Inn Travel Trailers</i></p> <p><i>Extreme Luxury Teardropping</i></p> <p><i>Over 30 Options Over 100 Features</i></p> <p><i>Highest Quality Materials & Finishes</i></p> <p><i>Building Luxury Teardrops for 20 Years</i></p>  <p> www.TinyCamper.com</p>	<p>..SO YOU CAN TOO!</p> <p>Road Toad Campers</p> <p>Extreme Light Weight</p> <p>Under \$6,000 - FREE SHIPPING</p> <p>All Composite Construction</p> <p>Pull with almost Any Vehicle</p> <p>600 lbs Cargo Capacity</p> <p>400 lbs Dry Weight</p> <p>Extremely New - 2019</p>   <p>www.RoadToadCampers.com</p>
<p>Camp-Inn Travel Trailers and Road Toad Campers are built by Petenwell Ind. LLC</p>	



decided to try and use old OS maps on the inside side walls as wallpaper, decoupled with varnish, to give it a different look and also cut down on painting. In the US there seems to be a trend to add aluminium to the outside, but I've decided to spray the outer, with the help of a neighbour. Although to be honest, my children enjoy playing in it as it is, a partially finished shell, if we ever get out camping, that would be a massive bonus! Thanks for reading! ■

You can follow Richard on Instagram at [teardroptarcy](#)



V-Neck Unisex Tee

\$24.99



Photo by Colin Hughes in Algonquin Provincial Park



OKLAHOMA'S BEST CUSTOM BUILT TEARDROP TRAILERS



918.629.8311

**VETERAN
OWNED**

QUALITY CONSTRUCTION

— FROM THE FRAME UP —



FULL KITCHEN



THREE MODELS

Square Back, Wood Panel
or Aluminum Panel

OK SCHOONERS TEARDROP TRAILERS ARE INDIVIDUALLY HAND-CRAFTED, QUALITY CAMPERS. EACH IS BUILT WITH YOUR SPECIFIC OPTIONS IN AVAILABLE COLORS AND ACCESSORIES AT OUR SHOP LOCATED IN BROKEN ARROW, OK. WE DO NOT MASS PRODUCE OR USE ASSEMBLY LINES. OUR GOAL IS TO PROVIDE OUR CUSTOMERS WITH A QUALITY CUSTOM-BUILT TEARDROP AT A REASONABLE PRICE. COMPARE US TO THE COMPETITORS AND YOU WILL FIND THAT OUR VALUE, QUALITY, AND WORKMANSHIP ARE FAR SUPERIOR.

COLOR OPTIONS



Okschooners.com



2nd Annual Calendar Photo Contest

You helped to make our first annual calendar contest a success! Let's keep that rolling this year. Help us fill a Cool Tears and Tiny Campers 2022 calendar with amazing outdoor shots of YOUR campers, whether it's a teardrop, squaredrop, or other tiny camper.

We are looking for creative photos that celebrate tiny campers in beautiful locations around the world. The best 13 photos will be selected to be in the Cool Tears and Tiny Campers 2022 calendar. The top three winners will receive a free calendar and some Cool Tears swag. The ten other winning entries will receive a free calendar. Your photo entry may also appear in the Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Magazine or across the Cool Tears social media channels.

Please note that the dates are earlier than last year. While we were quick in shipping out the calendars once we received them, we didn't anticipate some of the issues that cropped up. We definitely didn't expect the issues with getting the correct envelopes from the USPS or the delays in shipping times. We've learned from our mistakes and will do better this year.

The Rules:

- Photos must be taken in an outdoor setting
- Photos must be high-resolution digital images
- The preference is at least a 1MB picture, higher is fine. Most mobile phones meet this criteria
- Touching up or adding filters to photos prior to submitting is allowed
- No negatives, printed photos or links to web libraries.
- Photos must be horizontal orientation - if you're taking a picture with a phone, turn it sideways
- Entries must include the following information: Name of photographer, location, indicate if the camper is home built or manufactured, and title of photo (if you have one)
- Images become the property of Cool Tears and Tiny Campers. No images will be returned. You will be given credit for the photo, if used
- Parties submitting photos certify that they have permission of all individuals shown in each photo and all individuals owning property shown in each photo.
- We will blur out any visible license plate
- Submit your entries to: Anne@cooltears.com

Timeline:

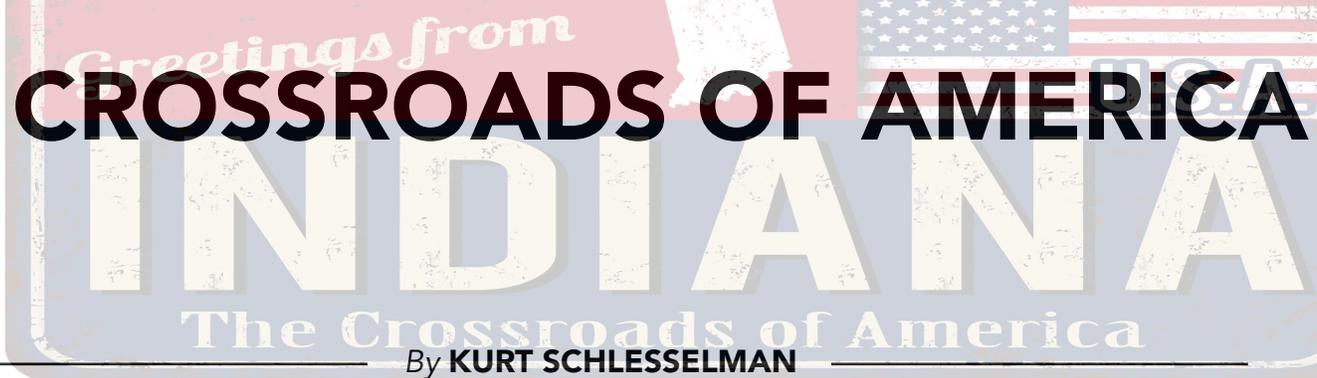
The deadline to submit photos to the 2022 Cool Tears and Tiny Campers calendar is September 19, 2021.

Winners will be contacted by October 3, 2021.

We will open the website for orders on October 1, 2021 and the calendars will be ready to start shipping in early November. ■

Harvest Hosts is a membership program that provides access to a network of wineries, farms, breweries, museums and other unique attractions that invite self-contained RVers to visit and stay overnight. If you have a self contained teardrop or tiny camper (indoor cooking and toilet required), then consider a membership to Harvest Hosts. Click the logo below to get 15% off the regular yearly price.





CROSSROADS OF AMERICA

The Crossroads of America

By KURT SCHLESSELMAN

"Crossroads of America" is a name associated with many places in the middle of the country but to "us" [the Hoosier Chapter of Tearjerkers] it has a special meaning.

This event is sponsored by the "Camping and RV community" as well as the help from other Tearjerkers Chapters such as Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Southern Appalachian and Illinois. Also keeping the event manageable are dedicated helpers from other chapters, all in an effort to make the gathering a fun and memorable event.

In 2011 the inaugural event of the "Crossroads of America Gathering" [CRA] event took place at McCormick's Creek State Park in Spencer, Indiana.

A great turnout of campers began signing up for one of the biggest Teardrop trailer gathering in the nation. The excitement was amazing and the 146 registrations added to the fun with 26 states and 2 countries represented.

So far we have had 5 very successful biennial events which means, of course that CRA2021 will be our sixth gathering.

This year we have decided to move the gathering to a new venue and a new date. We are hoping to fight back against the mid-summer heat that has plagued us in past events. Only time will tell if our decision was a good thing.

Instead of McCormick's Creek SP, the venue for CRA2021 will be at:

Whitewater State Park in Liberty, IN.

September 9-12, 2021

We are attracting Sponsors to help us successfully fund the event and will be offering Registration forms [on our web site] for the attendees. Details can be found at: CRA2021.com

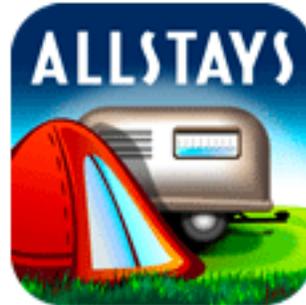
Special thanks to "Cool Tears" magazine for publishing this notice and helping us spread the word.

CRA2021 committee
CRA2021.weebly.com

NOTE: One of the great things about having a digital magazine is the ability to link you directly to the products or services that you want to hear more about. Some of the links on our website or in the magazine are affiliate links where we earn a small commission on goods that you purchase, this does NOT raise the price of what you're purchasing in any way. These commissions help us to continue to defray the costs of publishing this magazine. You may notice as you read through the magazine that if you put your mouse over any ad, the screen may flash briefly. You can click on that picture of our advertisers and it will take you directly to their website.

Cool Tears also participates in the Amazon Services LLC Associates Program, an affiliate program designed to help small businesses like this to earn a small fee by linking products to Amazon that you may be interested in. Again, this does NOT raise the price of what you're purchasing in any way.

We appreciate your support. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact either of us at Lisa@cooltears.com or Anne@cooltears.com



ENJOY THE JOURNEY

**CAMPGROUNDS
FREE PARKING
TRUCK STOPS
REST AREAS
PROPANE
SERVICES
RV DUMPS
WASHES
ROAD HAZARDS**



Maiden Voyage of the Zen Den

By JENIFER MADSON



In one 24 stretch, I did ALL the things with my new camper!

Hitched it on, towed it out, went over the Skyway Bridge, took it through town, made it to the KOA campground, and backed it in to the site with the help of the campground escort. (A man who was a bit barky in his instructions, but who thankfully guided me right into my spot).

I kept my pup Jojo in the car while I set up the awning in the blazing sun, leaving me to wonder what the hell I'd gotten myself into as the stakes kept popping up and the awning repeatedly fell from one side to the other, me pouring sweat and obscenities while I tried to get the damn thing situated.

Fortunately, help was nearby in the form of Stacey, a cheerful campground employee who helped me guy rope that bad boy into submission, and finally, we had shade.



Unfortunately, for a while, the A/C inside the Zen Den wasn't pushing cold air at all, so I set up my hammock chair under my newfound shade, and Jojo and I hung out and searched online hacks to get it working again, enjoying a somewhat cool breeze off the water in the meantime that started to cool my nerves at the same time.

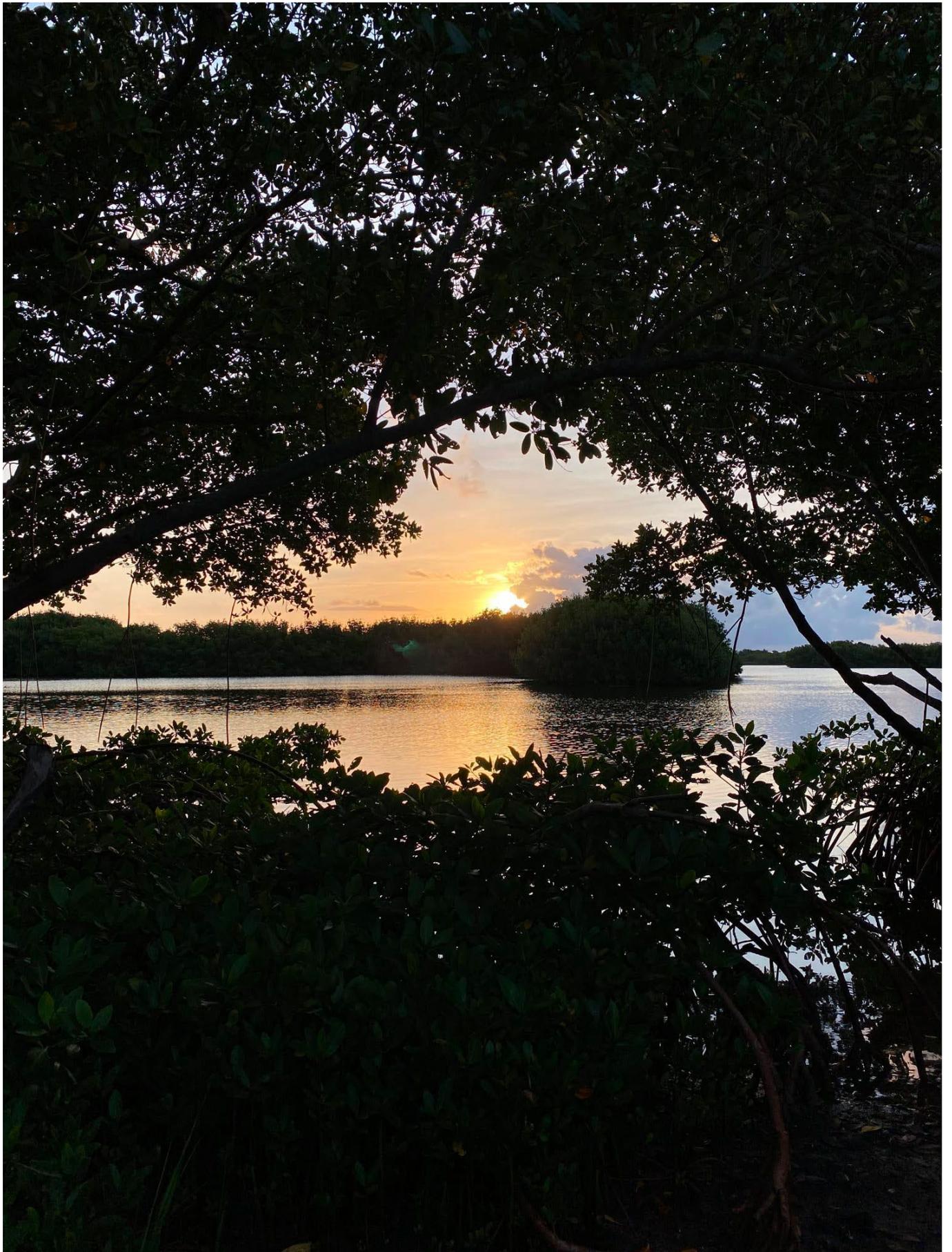
Within an hour and a half, I had everything I needed set up for this 24-hour jaunt, forgoing the rug and the fairy lights and the Tibetan prayer flags this go-round, because I was just too hot and the lights were a tangled mess, and all that mattered at that point was a cold shower and a nap.



In the evening, my darling friend Andrew came for dinner (the campground being a mere 10 minutes from his condo), and we ate and chatted by the water, and enjoyed the visiting heron and jumping fish and more of that delightful breeze.

After Andrew left, I got back to the business of fixing the A/C, and then Jojo and I took a nice stroll around the campground

before jumping in to the now cool camper to watch a bit of Peaky Blinders on the iPad and call it a night.



This morning I made delicious French press coffee, and again sat by the water, caught the sunrise, read the NY Times on my iPad, and after an hour or so, packed up, hitched up, made it back to my house, and parked my lovely little Zen Den in my driveway, where she's locked, covered, and ready for another adventure.

I know I'm not the first person—female or male—to do a solo camping trip in a camper of any size, and that it was just a KOA across town—still, it means a lot to me that I'm able to do these things by myself, with full enjoyment, f-bombs in the blazing sun notwithstanding.

I'd definitely rather have someone special to share all of this with, but I just can't wait for that someone to come along before I live my life and have my adventures!!

I so appreciate the encouragement from the camping community, live and online—it made EVERY difference to my confidence! Here's to the next stop!! ■





uCamp21 Teardrop Rally

Sugarcreek, Ohio. June 22, 2021 – More than 200 teardrop trailers gathered in Sugarcreek last week as part of the fifth annual uCamp Teardrop Rally. nuCamp, a major manufacturer of campers and teardrop trailers based in Sugarcreek, Ohio, hosts the event each year. The company was thrilled to bring the event back after a hiatus during COVID when the event was held virtually.

uCamp21 was held at Winklepleck Grove Campground in Sugarcreek, less than a mile from the nuCamp manufacturing facility. The event featured a full entertainment schedule, group meals, and opportunities to socialize with other nuCamp and teardrop enthusiasts.

Bob Bundy, who traveled from Independence, Virginia, has attended three rallies — as well as the virtual rally in 2020. He and his wife owned a TAG before upgrading to a larger unit, the TAB 320. “We love the product, but we especially love everybody getting together,” he said. “It’s exciting just to meet people from all over. It’s a great opportunity and a lot of fun.”

Some highlights from the event included Q&A sessions with nuCamp techs, camper-led sessions, plant tours, a swap meet, movie night, daily breakfasts and two nuCamp-sponsored dinners. Independent activities were also available, and there were several camper-planned activities including a gathering at the world's largest cuckoo clock in the heart of the village and exploring the Sugarcreek area.

Kathleen Nadolski, a TAB 320 owner, traveled from Port Washington, Wisconsin to attend the rally. “What I love most about the TABs is the quality,” Kathleen said. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen another trailer maker that puts the same kind of love and care into the trailers that they make.” She went on to talk about her positive experience at uCamp throughout the week. “The people from nuCamp are wonderful,” Kathleen said. “It’s the care they show. The organization of this is amazing. But the best thing is the other nuCamp owners that I’ve been able to meet. They’re wonderful people. It’s like being a member of a special fellowship.”

Scott Hubble nuCamp CEO stated, “It’s been two years since we last gathered and as the

tagline for this year's event states, we are indeed, 'better together.' It's a tremendous feeling seeing over 400 members of our nuCamp family come together to experience a week full of fun, friends and fellowship. One of the main reasons we are on this earth is to help improve the lives of those around us. Making high quality products provides us the platform to do that, but it's the human connections that are truly impactful."

We are already looking forward to uCamp22 with the announcement of the event date of June 13-17, 2022.



About nuCamp

nuCamp manufactures the highest quality teardrop trailers, teardrop campers and truck campers

available on the American market. Our recreational vehicle and trailer products are the result of extensive research and development, customer feedback, and the fusion of technology and old-world craftsmanship. The dedicated craftsmen and women who work at the nuCamp facility in Sugarcreek, Ohio, are committed to the principles of simplistic design, high-quality fabrication, and fanatical customer support. nuCamp is the world's largest manufacturer of teardrop trailers.

Escapod launches new TOPO2 Trailer

How the TOPO2 is Different from other Fiberglass Trailers

Let's address the obvious: this isn't the first fiberglass off-road teardrop trailer on the market. So how is it different?

Fiberglass trailers have been built before, but not like this. Most others are using the composite as an outer layer or shell surrounding an internal skeleton made of wood, aluminum, or other composite materials. That internal skeleton is what provides other teardrops with their strength, but doesn't help to reduce weight. We've changed the game with our unique PET core.

Made from recycled milk cartons, this rigid core is built directly into the composite exterior walls. It provides so much strength to our trailers that we were able to reduce the weight of our chassis by 300 lbs. And, since we no longer needed an internal support structure, we saved even more weight throughout the body. The TOPO2 is an incredibly capable off-road trailer weighing in under 1500 lbs.

But the innovation in the TOPO2 doesn't stop there.

We brought the design & creation of key elements in-house to solve industry-plaguing issues around water management: a single-piece shell, newly designed doors, ventable stargazer window, molded rain gutters, proprietary hinges, and continuous curves that direct water off the trailer & into our gutter system.

As for off-road capability, our Freeride Suspension System was designed to tackle any terrain. This fully independent suspension design yields 5" of travel on each wheel. With 16" Vision 355 Manx satin gray wheels, 265-75R16 General Tire Grabber ATX all-terrain tires, a 35-degree departure angle and 23" of ground clearance, this thing is designed for the wild.

The TOPO2 is ready to take on the most rugged terrain, but that doesn't mean that we compromised interior functionality. Ever tried taking your shoes off in a teardrop trailer? It's not fun. The TOPO2 introduces a heated mudroom at each entry-door. A strategically designed 4" utility space gives you a perch for your feet as you pull off dirty shoes. There's also an enclosed storage nook so you don't have to worry about dirt making its way between the sheets. We've even included two coat hooks at each entry, so you're not wasting precious cabinet space with a wet rain jacket or bulky puffy coat.

Inside the cabin you'll find a true queen-sized 6" memory foam mattress. Lay back and stare at the night sky through our 2.5' x 5' stargazer window. With nearly 8 cubic feet of cabinet space

and 5 cubic feet of space behind the headboard, you'll have plenty of space for your clothes, bedding, and additional gear. We carried over the beautiful baltic birch cabinet faces from our original TOPO Series to provide a rich & relaxing interior finish.

Then there's the power system. A 100 amp hour VPR 4EVER lithium battery powers the 12V system throughout the trailer. Strategically placed LED lighting in the cabin & galley, ground lights beneath each entry door, and reading lights above each nightstand (yes, there's a nightstand) will keep your nights illuminated. Access to USB ports in both the galley & the cabin will keep your devices charged.

You'll also find a Truma Combi nested inside the trailer providing forced air throughout the cabin. Air flow is directed strategically across the stargazer window & side doors which creates a warm air-pocket further insulating the cabin & reducing condensation on the double-pane windows. The Truma Combi not only heats the cabin air, but also provides instant hot-water to our stunning fully-integrated Ruvati sink measuring 22" W x 16" L x 8" D. Unlike other sinks, this one is actually large enough to do dishes in & easily fill a pot for cooking.

Speaking of cooking... The galley of the TOPO2 will make your kitchen jealous. A stunning Ruvati sink (22" W, 8" D, 16" L), ENO 2-burner stove (8000 BTUs), space for the standard YETI 75 (or an upgrade to an ARB 63), 7.5 cubic feet of cabinet space, a hidden knife storage cabinet, spice drawer, and modular shelving that allows you to customize your space to suit your needs.

The water tank gives you a usable capacity of 21-gallons of water. It's nested inside the insulated trailer reducing concerns over freezing temps. Combined with a unique water cut-off, the water system can be used year-round. We also made it easier to refill your tank when you're out in the wild using a water fill port on the side of the trailer that doesn't require pressurized water.

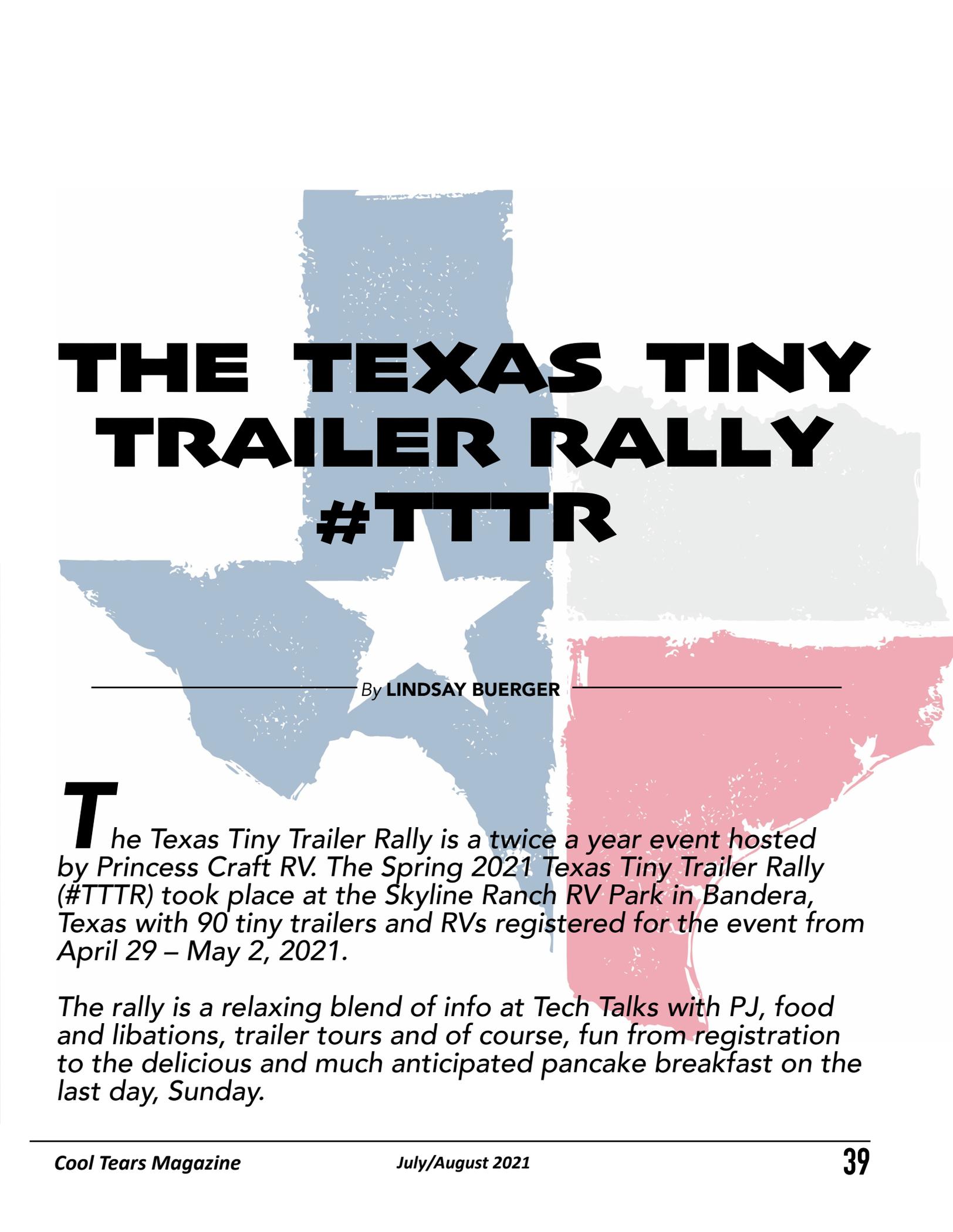
What about leaks, you ask? We've got you covered. The TOPO2 introduces a water management system like you've never seen before. Our single-piece composite shell is entirely water-tight and since there's no structural wood, concerns over mildew, mold, or rot are eliminated. We designed molded rain gutters around the hatch & door edges, so the elements will be directed away from your trailer at all times. Dynamic proprietary hinges move the hatch above the gutter system when it's open, which catches all run-off.

The TOPO2 is the most intelligently designed 4-season camper on the market. Every trailer will include a system monitor by Simarine so you can get an easy read on your battery consumption, external air temperature, internal cabin temperature, and water levels.

We are thrilled to share this latest innovation with you!

Hitting trails in 2022. 5-year manufacturer's warranty. \$39,500.





THE TEXAS TINY TRAILER RALLY #TTTR

By LINDSAY BUERGER

The Texas Tiny Trailer Rally is a twice a year event hosted by Princess Craft RV. The Spring 2021 Texas Tiny Trailer Rally (#TTTR) took place at the Skyline Ranch RV Park in Bandera, Texas with 90 tiny trailers and RVs registered for the event from April 29 – May 2, 2021.

The rally is a relaxing blend of info at Tech Talks with PJ, food and libations, trailer tours and of course, fun from registration to the delicious and much anticipated pancake breakfast on the last day, Sunday.



Beginning with registration in the rally hall, non-stop fun and adventure is the intent of rally staff for attendees of the rally at every opportunity. Introductions of new campers to all the seasoned rally veterans, as everyone gets unpacked, situated and campsites are set up, along with ideas for local adventures.

Excitement grows for all attendees as darkness befalls the campsite and volunteer campfire hosts ignite the night life welcoming anyone interested in hanging around the fire and hearing the amazing adventures of rally attendees.

The first full day brought fog through the rolling hills, as herds of deer graze silently with long gazes at campers trekking to the bathroom for morning relief, while

coffee brews and the delightful aroma arises towards the sleep-stricken eyes of those seeking caffeine revival.

Tech Talks with PJ from Princess Craft get the day's activities rolling with helpful information on subjects ranging from batteries to towing capabilities, with all questions welcome from the attendees. An attendee favorite is the Trailer Tours which gives everyone a chance to meet new friends and check out other attendees' tiny trailers, upgrades, and décor.

The first full day of the rally typically brings a potluck dinner, instead of sharing your dish with the group, we slightly altered to a BYOE(verything), but we'll be bringing back the potluck dinner for the fall rally!

Contests and prizes from the tours were awarded for the Master of Mods, Greatest Glamper, and Outstanding Outdoor Space. Additional giveaways for the attendees



including fire pits, gift cards and lots of branded merchandise from our incredible sponsors.

If you are interested in attending the next Texas Tiny Trailer Rally, the event will be returning to the Skyline Ranch RV Park in Bandera Texas. For more information and to register, please use the following link: <http://www.texastinytrailerrally.com/>

For sponsorship and vendor opportunities, please contact Lindsay at lindsay@princesscraft.com.

*** LINKS ***

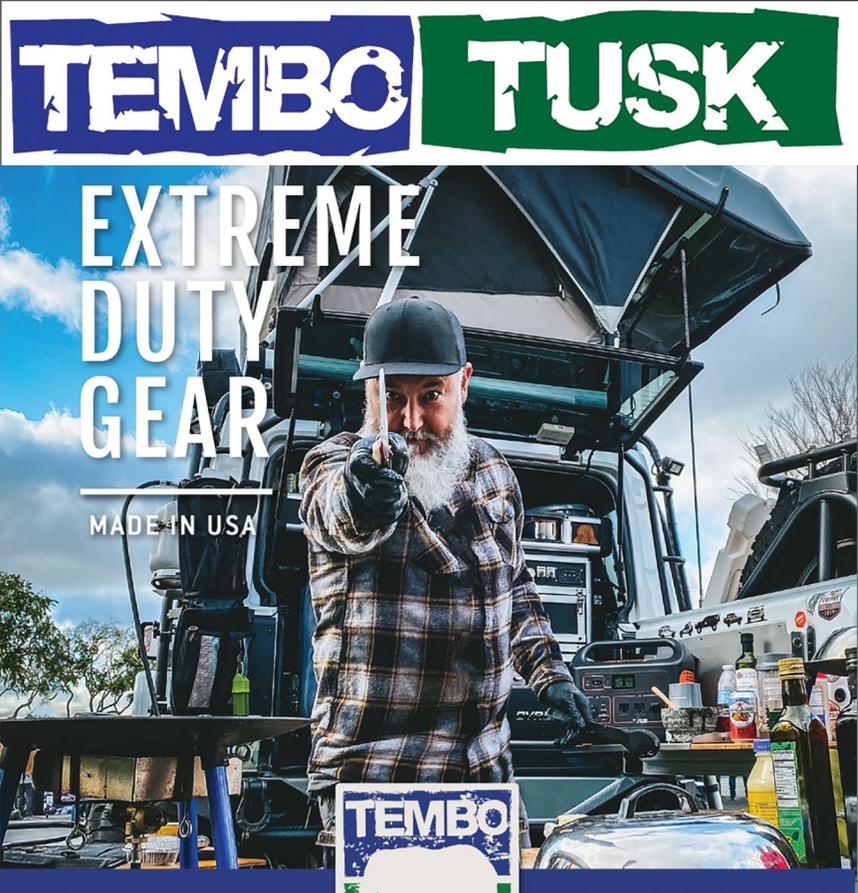
Texas Tiny Trailer Rally

Website - <http://www.texastinytrailerrally.com/>

Facebook - [https://www.facebook.com/texastinytrailerrally/Princess Craft](https://www.facebook.com/texastinytrailerrally/PrincessCraft)

Website - <https://www.princesscraft.com/>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/princesscraft/>



TEMBO TUSK

EXTREME DUTY GEAR

MADE IN USA

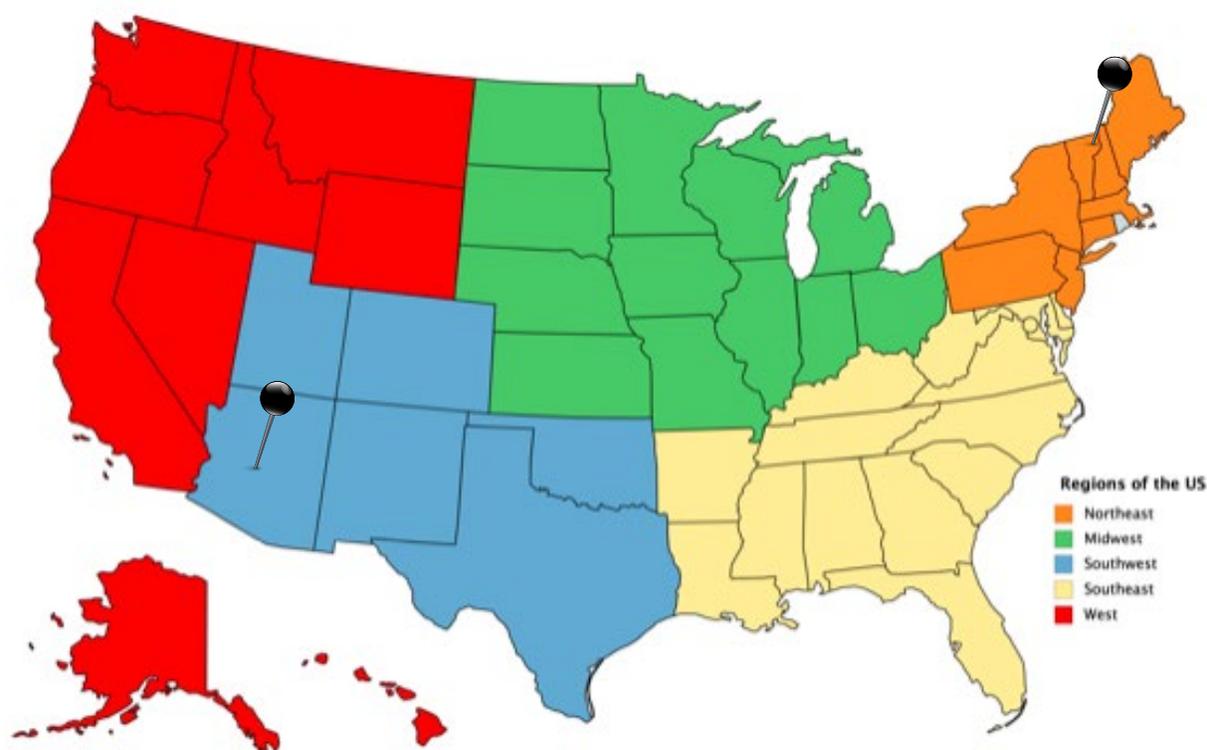
Skettle Grills
Camp Tables
Fridge Slides

TemboTusk.com
Info@TemboTusk.com

Made in America
Use Coupon Code: **CoolTears**

www.TemboTusk.com

REGIONAL CAMPING SPOTLIGHT



Created with mapchart.net ©

"To me, it doesn't matter whether it's raining or the sun is shining or whatever: as long as I'm riding a bike I know I'm the luckiest guy in the world.." ~ Mark Cavendish

Since the Tour de France is going on, I thought it was appropriate to have a quote from one of the riding legends who is back to the tour after crashing out of the 2018 race and after struggling with Epstein Barr virus. This year, he has won 4 Stages so far and is tied with Eddy Merckx on the number of Stage wins with 34.

These two camping locations are literally near the opposite ends of the United States; one in the lush, green mountains of Vermont and the other in the desert area of Arizona. Brighton State Park is known for its remoteness while Dead Horse Ranch State Park is within an easy drive of three large cities: Phoenix, Flagstaff, and Prescott.

While the locations seem to be completely different, they do have an extensive non motorized trail system nearby which can be explored on foot, by bike, and in some cases, on horseback. These state

parcs and their access to these trail systems allow for greater exploration of the surrounding area to areas not visible by your tow vehicle. In Arizona, the trail system is more than 20 miles (32 km) of non motorized travel while the Vermont trail system, known as the Kingdom Trail, has over 100 miles (161 km) available for exploration!

It doesn't matter if you are a hard core mountain biker shredding down the singletracks or someone that enjoys a wider trail with zero obstacles to climb or jump over, these trail systems have something to offer.

So load up those bikes and explore the surrounding area a bit more than you can do on foot, you will love both areas! ■

Location: Dead Horse Ranch State Park
675 Dead Horse Ranch Road
Cottonwood, AZ 86326

Getting There:

GPS Info (Latitude, Longitude):

34.752095, -112.0195519

34°45'15.999"N, 112°0'50.701"W

Dead Horse Ranch State Park is located on the Verde River in central Arizona. This state park is centrally located near these major Arizona cities: Flagstaff, Phoenix, and Prescott. The park comprises 423 acres (171 ha) and sits at an elevation of 3300 feet (1000m).

Dead Horse Ranch State Park has an elaborate trail system that weaves in and out of the state park as well as Coconino National Forest. There are more than 20 miles (32 km) of non motorized trails that vary in length from .25 miles to nearly 15 miles (0.4 to 24 km). Many of these trails are shared use, so expect to see hikers, bikers, and equestrians using the same trail.

The Lime Kiln Trail is a moderate trail that is nearly 15 miles (24 km) one way. Unless you stage a vehicle at the opposite end of the trail, it is not recommended to attempt the nearly 30 mile (48 km) round trip unless you are a seasoned mountain biker. This scenic trail connects Dead Horse Ranch State Park to Red Rock State Park in Sedona. You will ride through some of the most picturesque red rock landscapes as you move from the low to high desert, gradually riding into more red rocks as you near Sedona. This trail follows a portion of the Lime Kiln Wagon road which was used to provide access to a lime producing kiln in the late 1800s. The trail is well defined and easy to follow. If traveling from Dead Horse to Red Rocks State Park, you will ride through the lush riparian areas of the park before heading into the desert country and the red rocks of Sedona.

Other Nearby Attractions

Dead Horse State Park is a great location to use as a basecamp to explore other nearby parks in Sedona, Jerome, and Camp Verde. Other National Forests and National Monuments are within a short drive of Dead Horse State Park.

This park is open year round and the visitor center/park store is open every day except Christmas.

Note that this park is in an area that often sees forest fires. As of the writing of this article, there are no wood or charcoal fires allowed and you can only smoke in an enclosed vehicle. Trails outside of the park boundaries are closed due to current fire activity.

Number of Sites: 123 (3 loops that allow RVs and one loop is tent only)

Pets: yes

Water: yes

Electric: yes

Price per night: \$\$\$ (\$30-\$35)

Fire Rings: yes

Picnic Tables: yes

Restrooms/showers: yes

Campground is ADA accessible.

Primary activities within the park:

Hiking, biking, fishing (in the lagoons or in the Verde River), swimming, wildlife viewing, bird watching

Pro Tip: This park is a bird watchers paradise and the Verde River Greenway trail has some of the best nesting habitat in the area. The park boasts nearly 200 different species of birds and each April they host the Verde Valley Birding and Nature Festival which was started in 2001.

Pro Tip II: While in the river area, see if you can spot the river otters that the state has been working to reintroduce to the area since the 1980s.

Opposite top: Lagoon at the base of a cliff at Dead Horse Ranch State Park

Opposite bottom: Historic Lime Kiln in Dead Horse Ranch State Park



Location: Brighton State Park
102 State Park Road
Island Pond, VT 05846

Getting There:

GPS Info (Latitude, Longitude):

44.79677 -71.85525

44°47'48.393"N, 71°51'18.918"W

Brighton State Park is located in Island Pond, Vermont in an area commonly known as the Northeast Kingdom, or NEK. In 2006, the National Geographic Society named the NEK as the most desirable place to visit in the country and the ninth most place to visit in the world. Brighton State Park sits on undeveloped Spectacle Pond where it is common to hear loons at night.

This state park is known for its remoteness and it's nestled in tree covered mountains, clear lakes, and streams. The town of Island Pond was in its prime from the late 1800s until the Depression. The town had the first international railroad junction in the United States and at one time had 13 rail tracks that passed through town.

Other Nearby Attractions

The state park and surrounding area offers so many areas to explore. Similar to Dead Horse Ranch State Park in Arizona, the NEK region of Vermont has over 100 miles of non motorized recreational trails to further explore. What makes the [Kingdom Trails](#) so unique is that the trails are on private land. If mountain biking is your thing, then you may have heard of the Kingdom Trails as it's known around the world. There are trails for all skill levels from technical single tracks to mellow double track and everything in between. They take Kingdom Trails so seriously that they employ eleven full time trail crew members to build and maintain the trail network through the summer. All trails are well signed for easy access and navigation. [Here is a link to some suggested routes based on experience and length.](#)

Number of Sites: 54 tent/trailer sites

Pets: yes, but not allowed on the beaches

Water: yes

Electric: no

Price per night: \$\$ (\$19 per night)

Fire Rings: yes

Picnic Tables: yes

Restrooms/Showers: yes (coin operated showers)

Campground is ADA accessible.

Primary activities within the park: Hiking, biking, fishing, swimming, and paddling. Kayaks, row boats, pedal boats, and stand up paddle boards are available for rent



Northeast Kingdom, Vermont mountains

Uncompromising quality.



CLASSIC TEARDROP STYLE, MODERN AMENITIES

QUALITY DESIGN & CRAFTSMANSHIP
KESTREL STARTS AT \$7,800

PIKA STARTS AT \$13,200

CLASSIC STARTS AT \$21,500



www.timberleaftrailers.com



Cool Tears
wants to hear
from YOU!

Shoot an email with
your story idea and if
we use your idea we
will send a FREE GIFT
your way!



Anne@cooltears.com

#cooltearsmag



<https://www.facebook.com/CoolTearsMagazine/>



@cooltearsmag

Tag your 'grams with #cooltearsmag for a chance to be featured on our Instagram feed and in the magazine.



Time for a new adventure. Videos of our adventures, reader builds, tips and tricks. Live tiny - Live free.