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COOL Tears™ and tiny campers

Magazine

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Editor

Sarah Tucker

Contributing Authors

Marilyn McCray

Pat Marsh

Nicholas Tilleman

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Mailing Address:

Cool Tears Magazine

2600 NE Douglas St

Lee's Summit, MO 64064

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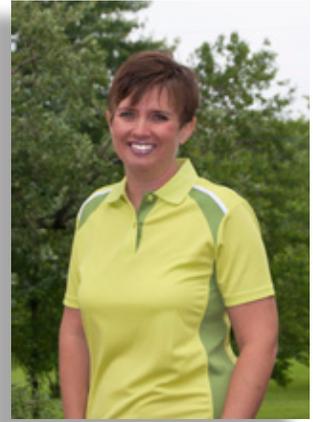
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Letter from the Editor:

Back 2 School Camping Therapy



Well it's that time of year! Back to School has come and gone with a lot of changes at our house. We have a 4th grader and a 6th grader now and it is true that each year is flying faster than the year before. More than that, I accepted a job in the behavior department of my daughters school. While the position is not stressful, it is intense and is not easy to simply walk away from it at the final bell. Enter camping! I've always enjoyed camping but now I realize it's greater power of relaxation and ability to connect with my family in a deeper way.

That is why the September issue of Cool Tears is coming to you one week early! Labor Day weekend will find our family back in the Missouri Ozarks (no, not the Netflix show) camping on Taneycomo Lake. I plan to sit back, relax, read a book, trout fish with my husband and shop with my daughters. It is my hope that you find the time next weekend to get out and enjoy our beautiful world whether with your friend and family or solo. It's worth the effort to get out and connect with nature.

This issue is packed full of great stories about traveling to find the perfect picture, rehabbing a large teardrop and a behind the scenes look at an up-and-coming big name in the custom built manufacturing world.

Do you have a great story you'd like to see featured in Cool Tears? We are constantly seeking great material so be sure to email sarah@cooltears.com with your story idea!

Until next time...enjoy every sunrise!

SARAH TUCKER

Editor

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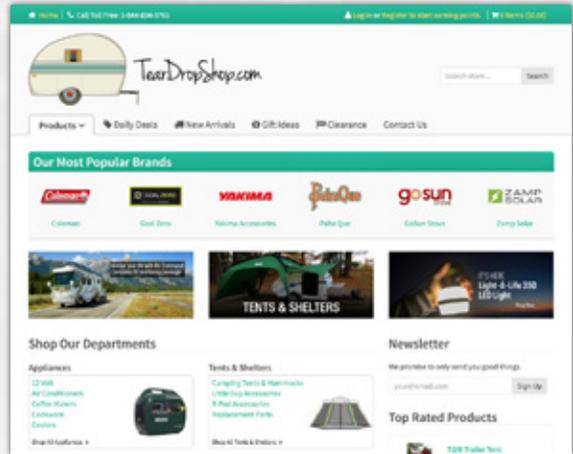
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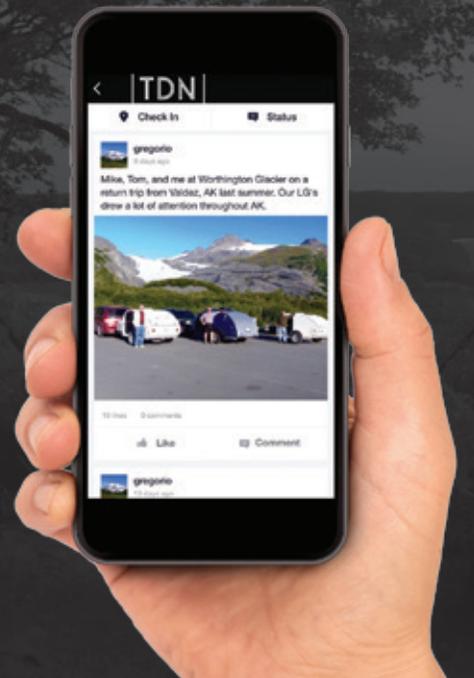
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ON THE TEARDROP TRAIL WITH MARILYN

Marilyn McCray is a published author of a cookbook titled *Canning, Pickling and Freezing with Irma Harding*, the International Harvester's fictional spokesperson. Marilyn and her partner, Jim Kerkhoff, travel in a beautiful teardrop to promote the book and she has graciously agreed to share some recipes with us in a regular column. Be sure to check out her book at teardroptrail.com/equipment-and-supplies/

TEARDROP CAMP POTATOES

Potatoes are a camping comfort food, hearty and delicious. They great with breakfast or as a side dish for another meal. Who doesn't love a serving of your favorite, yummy potatoes? This recipe can be made in a Dutch Oven, a medium or 12-inch cast iron skillet with lid, cooked either on a camp stove or over a camp fire.

Serves 4 – 6

- 5 pounds potatoes – baby or small white or red-skinned potatoes (about 1 3/4-inch diameter), scrubbed, cut into quarters
- 1 onion – diced
- One clove of garlic, chopped
- ¼ c extra virgin oil
- Salt and ground pepper to taste

Variations:

- Butter
- One clove of garlic, chopped
- Bell Peppers, red or green
- Chopped jalapeños – add to the potato mixture before cooking
- Bacon bits – cook until crispy, break into bits and add to the potato mixture after cooking
- Chili powder or smoked paprika
- Grated cheese or Parmesan can be added to top after cooking

Coat the bottom of the Dutch Oven or skillet with olive oil. Add the onion and garlic, stir and cook for about 2 minutes. Add potatoes and peppers, or



jalapeños if included. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil and turn potatoes frequently with spatula to prevent burning, cooking 10 minutes until the potatoes start to brown. Times may vary depending upon the size of the potatoes. Add a few tablespoons of water, cover with lid or foil and steam for around 5 minutes. Add seasonings and continue to

turn with spatula until potatoes start to brown. Potatoes should be crispy, but soft in the middle.

Over the Campfire

Place the Dutch Oven or skillet on a grate or over the coals of the campfire, keep the heat low – adding coals or wood if needed. Follow instructions.

On the Camp Stove

Place the Dutch Oven or skillet on the stove, keep the burner low. Follow instructions. Serve with breakfast or as a side to lunch or dinner.





A
Picture
is worth a
Thousand
Words

**Getting the Perfect Shot While
Camping Along the Michigan Shoreline**

By Pat Marsh

We all have been there—poised with our camera, searching for that perfect shot. You know the one: the photo you show all your friends and family as you share the story of where and how you took it—what you had to go through to get the shot, and how they can find a similar image on their camera screen. You tell them about catching the light, creating the composition, and finding the subject matter, all positioned just perfectly, as if you created it, or at least planned it that way (and let’s hope you did), and all making your picture pop off the screen or paper. This is the story of how Tyler Paydon, a photographer from Oswego, Illinois, worked with this travel blogger for Gazettour.com and outdoor enthusiast to find that perfect shot in scenic Western Michigan.

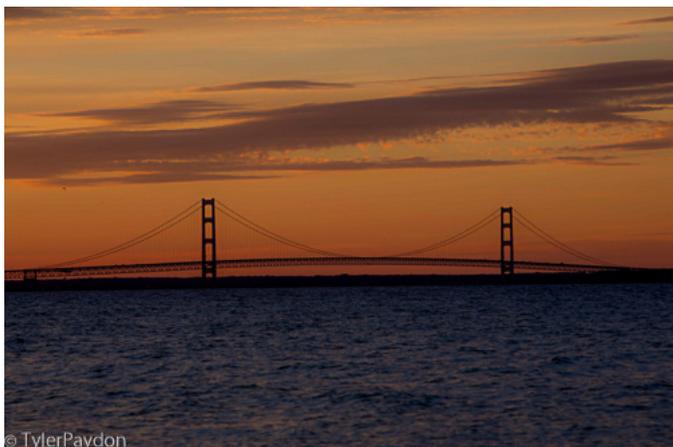


With my T@G trailer packed and ready, Tyler and I set out from our home in Northern Illinois to our neighboring state of Michigan. My T@G is a 2015 model with a twist: I converted it into a soft overland trailer within the first months I had it, to allow me more opportunity for exploration, and I have not yet found many obstacles that can stop me and my T@G from passing through. Tyler is a camper but was new to the week-long road trip that was in store for him. While my T@G provided my accommodations, Tyler would be doing the tent thing (and would soon be feeling jealous of my tiny trailer, I was sure!).

I designed a trip with short hops and single overnight stays. This would keep our travel times brief, providing us ample time for scouting for those perfect shots. The route I chose is known in the RV world as the Lake Michigan Circle Tour. It’s a well-marked route that mainly hugs the coasts of both Michigan and Wisconsin, winding its way around Lake Michigan. Our first stop after leaving the Chicago area was an event I was invited to along the shoreline in Holland, Michigan. (5)



Paragliding and Dive Bar Dining in Holland



© TylerPaydon

Scott Baxter and Steve Reed operate Illinois-based Midwest Parajet. They teach the growing sport of Powered Paragliding (PPG), in which you “run

into the sky,” holding the controls of your wing above you with the throttle of the power pack secured on your back. Just like the teardrop camper, these machines were created from a desire to find new, innovative and economical wayw to do something people love.



Scott and Steve invited me to attend the 2018 Holland Beach Run Fly-In, a parasports event held in Holland, where Tyler and I watched the PPGs fly. Set against the backdrop of Lake Michigan, these graceful machines gave us plenty of opportunities

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to fill our lens with the beauty of flight. Flight of the PPG is limited by the winds and is mostly done at sunrise and sunset, which, for someone wanting to photograph them, provides just about the best light a photographer can ask for. And as you can see, we were not disappointed.



After watching the fly-in and shooting some fantastic pictures, we spent a relaxing night with friends, catching up over a delicious dinner and craft beer at the Itty Bitty Bar—a fitting end to a great day. This self-proclaimed “five star dive bar” lacks that fine dining curb appeal, but don’t let that fool you. It features a menu packed with items not typically found in a bar, and the proof of the fine dining taste lies on your plate at this place. It should definitely be on your “places to try” list if you are ever in the area, along with the



beautiful parks that are nestled right along the Lakeshore, which provide a wide variety of water sports to enjoy.

Exploring a Lakeside State Park and Historic Lighthouse



After some much-needed coffee, Tyler and I were off again the next morning. Our second day's destination was just 92 miles to our north: Ludington State Park. This park features lush sandy dunes, and for adventurous types who love scenic walks, a visit to Big Sable Point Lighthouse. Big Sable Point Lighthouse is situated just a four-mile roundtrip hike from the park’s main entrance, and is one of the tallest lighthouses

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in Michigan. Built in 1867, this 100-plus-foot towering beacon, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, still guides ships traveling along the Michigan coast today. The hike to Big Sable, along with a climb to the top of the lighthouse, will give you some spectacular

views. Do not rule out exploring the dunes along the way to the lighthouse; they will provide you with some excellent photo subject matter as well. With a good eye, reflective ponds, dead tree sculptures, and dune plant life can all add up to some really memorable photos.



The state park is popular and can get crowded, but we found it to be very clean and quiet, with up-to-date bathhouses, and level and scenic campsites. It is also not uncommon to see clean-up crews continually plucking up trash and keeping the grounds well-groomed. Still excited and full of energy from our trek to the lighthouse,

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we ventured out to the park’s beach, which, depending on where you are camping, you can either walk or drive to. Now, technically the beach is closed at night (when we decided to visit) and access is not encouraged during off-hours, but we weren’t asked to leave, even as we passed a park ranger on the way onto the beach. The view here is worth the risk, in my opinion; we took some perfect night sky photos that caught cargo ships off in the distance.



© TylerPaydon

Finding Spectacular Stones and Great Grub in Petoskey

Have you ever heard of a Petoskey Stone? Well, neither had I. But I was about to learn of them during our next stop of our Circle Tour! The Petoskey Stone is Michigan’s state stone, formed of coral that dates back 400 million years. They



© TylerPaydon

are hard to pick out from all the different stones found along the shore in this area, but not to the trained eye—and finding one is a treasured moment.

A stay at the Petoskey State Park, just 170 miles farther to the north, gives you an ample stretch of beach to comb, where you, too, can try your luck at finding this highly desired fossil. When dry, Petoskey Stones look just like smooth limestone rock; the magic happens when they get wet. That’s when the magnificent six-sided coral structures jump off the stone, and this ordinary rock turns into a work of nature’s art. Unfortunately, I did not find one myself on this trip, but a local gift shop provided one for my travel shelf at a reasonable price.

Petoskey State Park is also clean and can be crowded, but the good news is that the camping spots are separated nicely. Something to consider, when traveling here, is that sites can be quite unlevel, but with a quick jockey of position, my teardrop camper is positioned for a good night’s sleep. Our dining choice for the night was one and a half miles from the park entrance at the Petoskey Brewing Company. All I have to say about this spot is that I had one of the better burgers of the trip here. And the beer wasn’t bad either! Stop in and ask to see their Petoskey Stone—it is enormous, and the locals say it’s worth a fortune.



©Gazettour.com



Once on the island, you will find a lot to do and see, from historical tours, to horse-drawn carriage rides through time, to browsing the gift shops and indulging in homemade fudge. Horse-drawn carriages are one of the few ways to explore this island other than walking and bicycling. Cars and other motorized vehicles are not allowed, with airplanes—and during the winter, snowmobiles—being the only exceptions.(29)

One of my favorite things to do on a camping trip is to look up at the night sky while sitting next to the fire. I love to watch the firelight dancing off the trees and satellites appearing as if to try to sneak past me. This photo was taken on the night we stayed in Petoskey. I can almost smell that campfire again.

Touring Must-See Mackinac Island

The vacation mainstay for northern Michigan is Mackinac Island, and although it is a tourist destination, it's one worth visiting. The water ferry ride to the island from the Lower Peninsula in itself gives passengers some of the most spectacular views of the Mackinac Bridge (affectionately known as the Mighty Mac), the longest suspension bridge in the western hemisphere, which links the state's Upper and Lower Peninsulas. (28) You can also take a morning cruise, offered by some ferry companies, which explore the underside of the Mighty Mac before arriving at the island. Unfortunately, pictures cannot adequately capture this 26,300-foot-long structure's magnificent beauty.

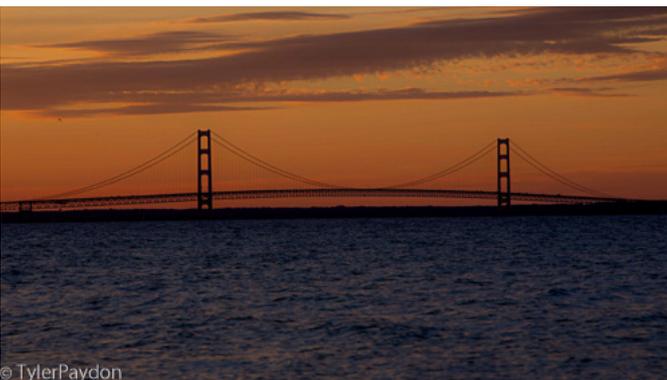


You can rent a bike, or bring your own along with you, and venture out and cycle the whole island, including all 8.3 miles of Highway M-185, the only non-motorized highway in the nation, which circles the entire island, passing natural wonders like Arch Rock. As you can see, our walking tour of the island did provide us some fantastic shots.

The bottom line is that even though it is a tourist destination, Mackinac Island just can't be passed up. You can also trade a night's stay in a campground for a stay in one of the posh hotels or resorts on the island.



Now let's talk about the Mackinac Bridge: It is gorgeous by itself, but we found a spot to capture both it and nature together. Located on the Lower Peninsula, our vantage point proved to be a helpful location in getting a wall hanger. The rush of waves slowed by the cameras almost gives a ghostly look to this Great Lake as the sun sets, ending the day perfectly—well, not entirely.



As you might see by now, there was also a culinary theme to this trip, and Bière de Mac Brew kept this spirited idea going with burgers and beer: yes, my happy place. A newcomer to the area, Bière de Mac Brew offers a variety of excellent beers, served by one of the coolest beer tappers I have ever seen. The Ranville family and classically trained chef Edgar Jacobs offer diners here an experience that is not to be missed.

We spent the night in Wilderness State Park, a lovely campground. And like the state parks we visited previously, this one was clean and spacious. With the shore just steps away, it was easy to grab our chairs and relax as the gentle waves calmed our minds. This became our home during our time in the area.

Boating and Hiking along Lake Superior

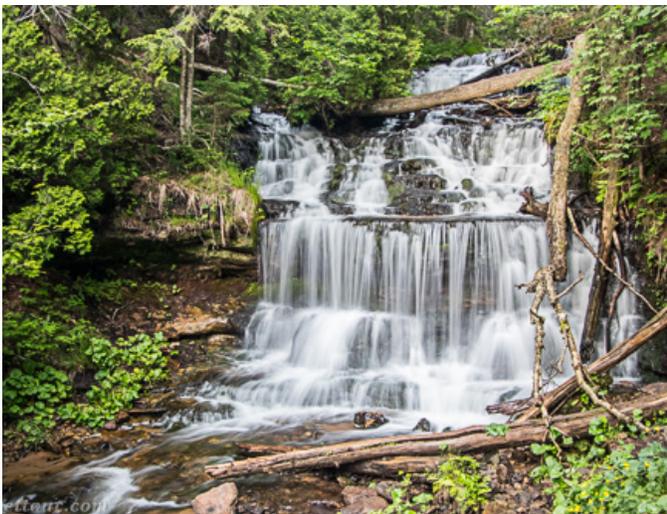
Lake Superior, one of my favorite destinations, was next on our itinerary. Its purity and its history of dangerous passage make it uniquely beautiful. The largest of the Great Lakes, Lake Superior ranks as the third largest freshwater lake in the world—all good reasons for my affection. We visited Munising, Michigan, nestled on Superior's shore, and the jumping-off point for Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. (43-45)

Pictured Rocks are sand and rock formations that stretch for 30 miles. Although you can reach portions of the park by walking, these beautiful formations are best seen by boat. There are several options to view these towering structures of nature: Of course, taking your own kayak is an easy way to get out on the water, but if you do not own one, there are many places to rent kayaks in the area. You can also take a tour on a larger cruise ship that takes you out to the cliffs, and then provides a kayak for you to paddle along the colorful stretches. Tyler and I opted for a two-hour boat tour that covered the whole 30-mile stretch



without the use of a kayak. As an added bonus, on this tour, we were able to take some fantastic shots of the Grand Island East Channel Lighthouse. This 45-foot tall structure guided ships from 1868 to 1908, and it offers great opportunities for photos to show your friends.

Not having too many campgrounds to choose from in the Munising area, I settled on the Tourist Park Campground, a privately owned 127-site property situated on the shore of Lake Superior. The campground was centrally located, giving us access to town and one of the best waterfalls in Michigan. Wagner Falls, which stands at only 20 feet tall, is very picturesque and easily reachable by a short hike—and it's worth the trip.



Rodeo-ing in Wisconsin

The last stop on our tour took us to Wisconsin, to an event that has been in existence for nearly 60 years: Manawa, Wisconsin, host to the Mid-Western Rodeo. The rodeo was, to my surprise, such an exciting event. Top pro rodeo performers from all over the United States attend this rodeo, providing great entertainment for the whole family. With this being my first rodeo, all I have to say is, Wow! It was hours of non-stop action, ending with the ever-exciting bull riding competition. If you have never been to a contest such as this, I suggest that you attend one.



Tyler and I saw a lot of great sights—and great photo ops—on our week on the road. Traveling from one destination to the next at what I thought was a brisk, but manageable, speed. At the end of



the trip, I asked Tyler, who had really never been on this type of road trip before, what he thought of the pace I kept, and he said he cannot wait to go on another one. Granted, this may not be everybody's idea of a good vacation, but having a tiny trailer makes it so much easier. Set up and take down is a breeze. And having everything you need in one convenient—and very mobile—location keeps your travel efficient and your time on the road affordable. I love the trips I've taken in my teardrop, and I look forward to my next adventure in it.

Finally, I want to say thank you to Tyler. During our week together, he taught me so much about his craft of photography. At age 25, this young man's passion and love for what he sees through the camera lens is contagious. I hope I also taught him something about experiencing the world through travel, and I hope to travel with him again, perhaps as part of the Gazettour team. And if you'd like any additional details or the exact locations of these pictures, feel free to contact us at gazettour@gmail.



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by Nicholas Tilleman

Nicholas and Liz Tillemans have always enjoyed traveling and camping, so several years ago they bought a 5 X 8 teardrop trailer. It served them well until their son, Graham, now 7, outgrew it. After making several modifications to their first teardrop, Nick decided he wanted to design and build his own camper. When he put pencil to paper on an original design and started a mock-up, he knew he was in for a daunting task. It took a lot of planning and many man-hours, but they're proud of the finished product and love camping with it.

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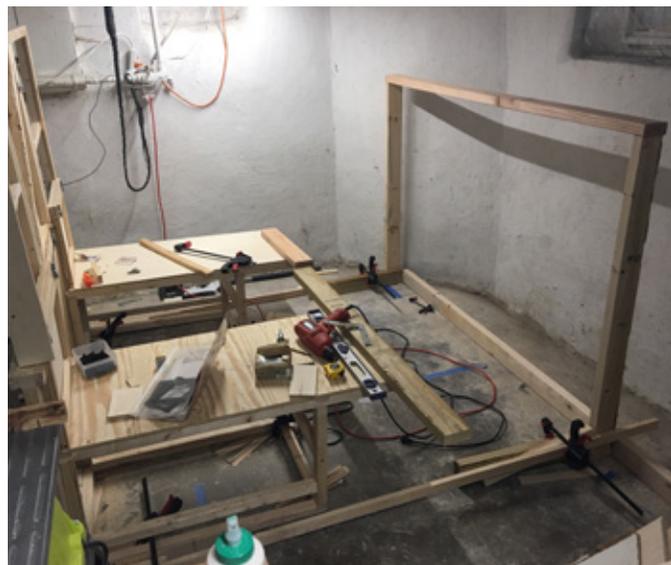
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Q: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BUILD A TEARDROP (OR TINY CAMPER)?

A: We purchased a 5x8 teardrop trailer a few years ago from a couple who had just started building campers. We loved it and used it a lot. It had a bunk for my son and we squeezed in a queen-sized mattress. It was very comfortable and practical. It was nice to have a real bed off the ground and a place to keep all our camping stuff in the back galley. It made getting away for the weekend much easier. I added solar power, remounted the tire and put a tongue box on the front. As much as we enjoyed it, I knew that we would outgrow it. The bunk was getting too small for my son, so I built a fold-out box. I wasn't entirely happy with that



solution or the aesthetic of it. While building the fold-out box, I tapped online resources such as TnTTT.com and saw all sorts of unique, cool builds. In my research, I realized that I could build a trailer that would custom fit our needs and incorporate unique features. I liked the Wild Goose designs and stumbled across the Alto trailer, which is something between the Wild Goose Design and the T@B, but basically a hard-sided pop-up in concept. I started working out a design on graph paper last fall.

Q: HOW DID YOU SETTLE ON YOUR DESIGN?

A: My original design draft was 5 1/2 feet tall with a hatch that would be about 8 feet in length and give us over 6 feet of headroom with the hatch raised. I wanted to have doors on either side and knew I

would need a substantial frame to anchor an 8-foot hatch, and that would interfere with the doors. Knowing that rainwater from the roof would drain right over the side doors, I shifted to a shorter hatch. Also, I considered the available materials; 4 x 8 plywood sheets are standard, so the non-deployed height shrank to 4 feet and the hatch length shrank to 6 feet. I think the original height would have been too tall for our garage anyway.

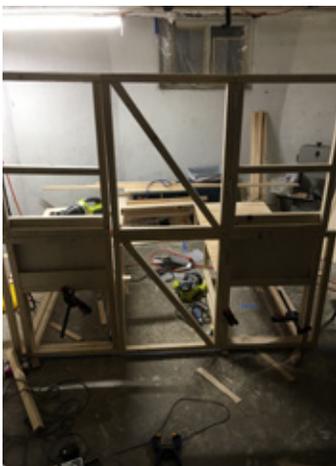
In many respects, I allowed function to drive form. The dual-angled profile of the hatch allows more headroom over the banquet area at the back and it looks better. Inside, many functional elements drove the design. We needed a bunk for my son, seating for three or four and a queen-sized mattress. We needed some sort of galley at the back for our chuckbox/galley items and a full door. An important concern was making the camper usable without the need to raise the hatch. We sleep comfortably with the hatch up or down.

There were many ideas in play. I had to squeeze everything in and yet give the camper a feeling of comfort, openness and connection with the outdoors. My son's bunk ended up in the front, the queen bed in the middle and the benches at the back with storage underneath. The benches are also accessible from the outside rear of the trailer. It all fit together that way. I actually settled on that configuration very early in the design phase.

Other design decisions were driven more by caprice. A chief consideration was



incorporating large side windows to bring the outside light in. The side windows were always an aesthetic priority. Making the side windows watertight and functional was an ongoing concern throughout the build. The front profile could have looked any number of ways. It could have been curved like a traditional teardrop or angled at any number of points at any number of different angles; but the final profile was the clear winner. As it turns out the aerodynamic look is truly aerodynamic. I suppose there were many ways this could have gone.





I worked out everything I could in advance on graph paper before making any cuts. I even used SketchUp to do some 3D modeling. Some decisions waited until we were well into the build; and those decisions were easier to make when we could see it all in real life. Sometimes we ran out of runway and were left with fewer options, which made some choices easier.

Q: WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS?

A: We have a small garage where we kept our first smaller teardrop. We weren't ready to sell our smaller trailer until we had a functional replacement, so we had to find a place to store it before we could purchase a trailer to build on. For me, that meant that I needed to prove the concept of the new trailer before purchasing.

At first, the whole project seemed almost a bit crazy and overwhelming. I've built furniture and



a small play shed for my son, but this was more daunting. And I wasn't exactly sure how I would make the back end work. So, I mocked up the back end in our basement. I didn't even know what trailer I would build it on. I cleared out a corner of our basement and spent the winter building the components for the back end. The space was tight, but I got a lot built down there ... so much that some people wondered whether I would be able to get it out of the basement.

At some point, it became clear that the new camper build was feasible and had the potential to be really cool. In the process of mocking up the back end in the basement, my wife was able to picture it and became sold on it. Once she was

fully on board and she gave me the all clear, I spent a lot of time looking for a trailer we could build on.

I didn't know whether I would be building on a smaller trailer with an overhang or a trailer that would entirely support the camper. We found an open 6 x 10 trailer manufactured by the same company that built the trailer of our first 5x8 teardrop. I needed it to be a half foot longer to make everything fit. I discussed my options with one of the trailer builders, who came up with the answer. They built out 6 inches over the tongue to give us the space. Somehow, I underestimated the overall width of the trailer; and for a moment, when I got the trailer home, I was afraid that I would not be able to fit the trailer through our garage door. Thankfully, I was just able to squeeze it in.

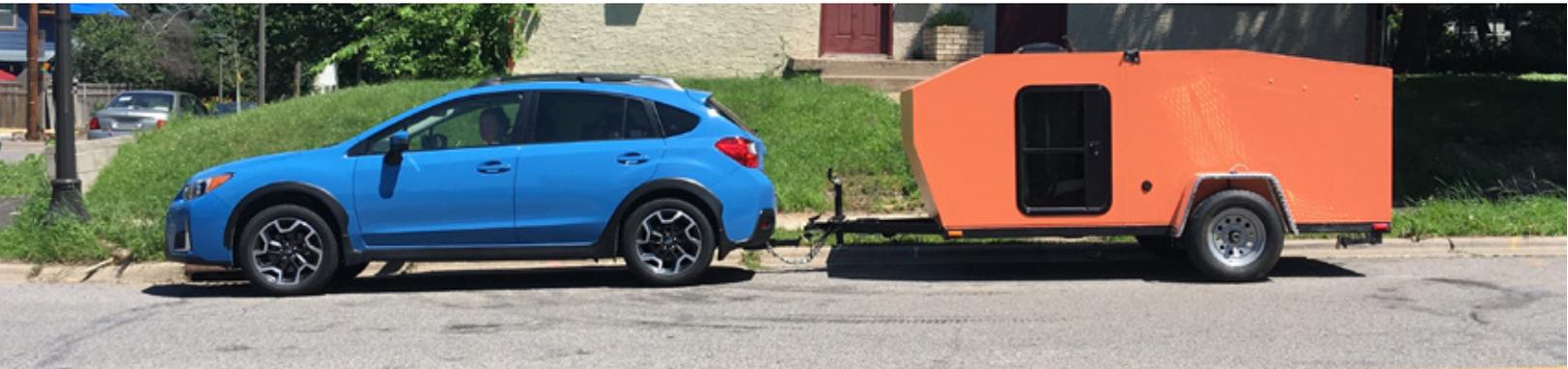
Once we had the camper built we were barely able to squeeze it out of the garage. A body-builder boyfriend of one of our neighbors happened upon us when we were pulling out the trailer and helped us muscle it out. It was almost like birthing a child to get it out of the garage. We will eventually need to widen our garage door.



Making the side windows work was also a challenge. And the solution came almost by accident. When I ran out of clamps while mocking up everything in the basement, I used carriage bolts to clamp on the side windows. My wife and I discussed options. She asked some insightful questions; and I had been kicking around a lot of ideas. Ultimately, I realized that sliding the windows in and out on those carriage bolts would be instrumental to their functionality. We ended up using the carriage bolts to slide the windows in and out of position. Originally, I was going to try to create a seal between two pieces of angle when the hatch lifted into position; but I was afraid my degree of precision would not be adequate.

I also was concerned about water getting into the roof seams. I didn't want to use trim. I felt trim might cause water to pool on the roof. Instead of using trim, we sealed all the seams with Poor Man's Fiberglass (strips of fabric and waterproof glue.) We were not able to cut the strips or to apply them perfectly straight. I was afraid that my OCD would come out. But those strips give the trailer a cool vintage vibe that I like. And they give me a lot of reassurance when the rain comes.





The hatch is quite heavy and it takes two people to deploy the back end. I lift the hatch while my wife folds up the rear wall and slides the side windows into position. It goes quick. We're a well-oiled machine. It would nice to have actuators or gas struts to assist with the lift, but I'm not sure where we would tie them in. For now, our challenge is to stay fit. Eventually, we may find a way to tie in some gas struts.

Q: TELL US ABOUT THE BUILDING PROCESS.

A: For a month or two, we spent every weekend working on it and also three or more hours after work every night. It became somewhat grueling and took a lot of man-hours. It was helpful to be part of online communities. We belong to several Facebook communities, DIY Teardrop Campers Community and Squaredrop Camper group, where we found good advice.

I was hoping to get a lot of work done in April when we purchased the trailer. I had a week off from work, but the weather did not cooperate. We had a major snow storm. I felt overwhelmed. I felt as if the whole Universe was against us. However, we made steady progress when the weather

warmed up. And my confidence improved.

I found that 4 x 8 sheets of 3/4 inch plywood were too unwieldy for me to handle alone, so my wife was a big help. I don't know how I would have moved everything around without her help. My son also helped with screwing together his bunk and handing me screws when I needed them throughout the build. Once we got the major build underway, my wife was there to help every step of the way.

I found it was a challenge to get everything square in three-dimensional space. Levels are only so accurate, and it was hard to find register points that we knew were truly square and where they should be. Wood is not always precise and often slightly twisted. But it is also forgiving in many respects and can be twisted and pushed into position. I tried hard to keep everything within an eighth of an inch from square. At just a few points I know we were off as much as half an inch or more. And it was unavoidable. But those imperfections worked themselves out over spans of 6 feet or more. We had to make lemonade out of lemons on some things, but it all came out just fine.

My wife made all the curtains, cushions and pillows. She also knitted an octopus mascot for our trailer.

Q: SHARE SOME OF YOUR SOURCES FOR BOTH IDEAS AND PARTS.

A: We purchased windows and doors from Vintage Technologies. The exterior plywood all came from a local lumber yard. Almost everything else came from Menards, Home Depot and Ace Hardware. Fabrics came from JoAnn Fabrics; paint from Hirschfield's. And we found inspiration and wisdom from TnTTT.com and the Facebook Communities we belong to.

Q: SHARE SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR FIRST CAMPING TRIP IN YOUR NEW TRAILER.

A: We literally pulled the camper out of the garage and attached the fenders the day we were heading out for a week-long summer vacation to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The camper towed straight and we got 24 mpg, which meant it towed like a dream. We didn't see it fully deployed outside of the garage until we were at our first campsite on the shores of Lake Superior. We didn't even know if it was watertight until our first thunderstorm at a campsite on the Keweenaw Peninsula. We realized how functional the galley was when we made our first stop for sandwiches in a roadside park. We had a lot of interest in our build from fellow campers, which was fun. We also got a lot of much needed sleep. It is very comfortable.



(The Tillemans live in St. Paul, Minnesota, where Nick works for the local phone company and Liz is a buyer for an adult gift store. Nick has written and self-published several books and they enjoy brewing their own beer. Both are BJCP Certified craft beer judges.)

b u i l t f o r
Adventure



by Sarah Tucker

Timberleaf Trailers has come a long way since it's founder, Kevin Molick, built the very first teardrop over three years ago. His background in construction formed a strong foundation as he began building quality campers meant to be taken anywhere one could imagine. What began as a side business in the Denver, Co area has boomed into a high-demand manufacturing plant now located on the western slope of the Rockies in Grand Junction, CO. Molick moved his company over the mountains in an attempt to change his environment and was drawn to the outdoor lifestyle that the city of Grand Junction embraces.

Timberleaf teardrops are perfect for any outdoor enthusiasts that are searching for a way to have 'just enough.' Their trailers have all that you need without sacrificing any comforts. The hand-built trailers have uncompromising detail and craftsmanship.

The " Classic " model weighs in about 1500 lbs and the brand new PIKA model weighs in at 950 lbs. After months of planning Timberleaf created a smaller, lighter and less expensive model called the PIKA. It is named after the small rabbit like creature known to live in the Colorado high country. The PIKA is 54" x 96" and has a full size mattress, a smaller galley and no

sink or stove option. Without side insulation, it doesn't keep the cabin as warm but also helps keep the weight down. It comes in all three suspension levels like the Classic - Street version, All-Road and Off-Road.

The Classic features a fully insulated cabin to keep the wind, heat, and cold at bay. They're all built with steadfast aluminum siding and a clear anodized top and sides are available in a variety of colors to ensure that each trailer will be unique. Weighing 1400 pounds dry, with 140 pound tongue weight, this aerodynamic teardrop can be towed by the smallest of cars. This featherweight trailer tows like a dream.





No one ever said that off-grid had to mean freeze dried meals, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and uninteresting meals. Leave the uninteresting and bland camp meals at home, and cook to your hearts desire in a spacious galley, equipped with a sink, faucet, LED lighting, and with optional stove and custom-made cooler; you'll be a backcountry chef in no time. Details like more than fifty stunning retro-inspired durable laminate counter top options, classic aluminum edging, and sliding bypass doors, mean that everything is



in reach, and easy to clean. In order to achieve the counter height and depth they hand-make custom coolers for every teardrop galley. The birch coolers have the same ice-retention as the leading cooler brands, but are made with custom dimensions to match the 100% baltic birch drawers. Each cooler features details rarely seen, such as genuine leather handles, beautifully finished birch, and dovetail joinery. This cooler is built to last and to impress all who encounter it.





Outfitted with one of the largest skylights in any teardrop, the cabins feel spacious and open. They build customized storage cubbies behind the headboard and an additional shelf for storage above. The gorgeous natural wood folding shelves on either side of the cabin are there when you want them, and stashed away when you don't. In addition to all of this, they've created an array of cabinets above the footwell—so, you'll have plenty of space to store all of your essentials.



Uncompromising quality.



CLASSIC TEARDROP STYLE

MODERN AMENITIES

QUALITY DESIGN & CRAFTSMANSHIP

STARTING AT \$19,750



www.timberleaftrailers.com

The fully insulated cabin has one-inch thick foam between two layers of birch plywood to keep the cold winter air at bay so you will be warm and cozy inside the spacious cabin. Finally, you'll be more at home in your trailer than in your own bed with a custom-made Colorado Queen mattress. It's the same length as a standard queen mattress, but made 3" narrower to fit perfectly into the teardrop cabin. It comes standard with a four-inch-thick dual-density foam mattress, but it's available to upgrade to a six-inch-thick custom mattress.

Kevin says, "We build these because we believe that the road is rewarding—that adventure does not stay in only one location. We make these teardrops to open up new horizons, to allow you to bring comfort with you, and to help you make lifelong memories."



TEARDROP TIPS



Never let your gas tank get below 1/4 tank unless you are on a route you are familiar with. That dot on the map that looks like a town may only have a church, a bar, and six houses. If in doubt, go back to the last gas you saw and fill up.'

When planning a trip use 50 mph as an average travel speed. (2 hours per 100 miles) This allows time for rest stops, curvy roads, going up and down hills, and just taking your time. Why feel rushed when you are trying to relax. If you get there early...that is OK too.

Parking with trucks at rest stops. Align the rear of your camper with the rear of their trailers. This prevents your spot from looking empty.

Bring quarters when you go to shower. Some campgrounds charge for showers and it will save you a hike back to the camper. You can get small clear plastic tubes that fit a stack of quarters. The tube keeps the quarters neat and it is easy to tell when you are getting low.

Check with the Chamber of Commerce in towns that you visit. They may have maps or know of points of interest that aren't well publicized. If you have a unique hobby or interest they may be able to put you in touch with a local club or

individual who can give you the inside scoop for the area.

Don't open your trailer to show it off to someone at a gas station or scenic overlook, unless you are willing to show it to several other people. As you are showing it, more people will drive up and if they see you are giving tours, they will join in. About the time you are done, more people may drive up.

Don't over book your activities. Leave time to relax or do something spontaneous.

If weather is forecasting hail – try going to a car wash – they are usually empty during bad weather.

If you like quirky roadside attractions and tacky tourist stops, check out the roadsideamerica.com web site. You can plan your trip around Paul Bunyan statues or the largest ball of twine or find where to visit the National Mustard Museum or the International Vinegar Museum.

A special thank you to Craig Edevold with Camp Inn Trailers for these tips.

Watch monthly for more great camping helps!

www.tinycamper.com

DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE



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