



# Intro to RV Life

**Spend More Time on the Road and Less Time Parked  
in your Driveway!**



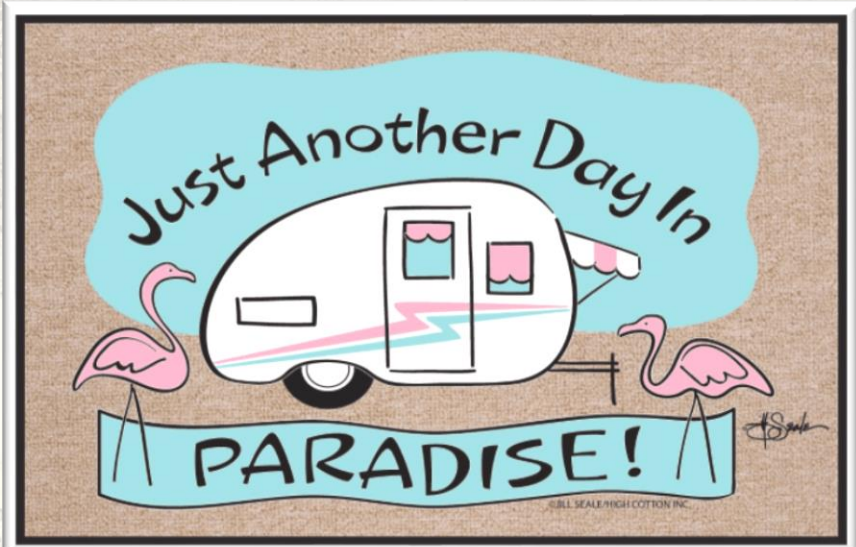
**-Ron Godbey  
-Anita DeAngelo**



# Intro to the RV Life

## Session 5

### RV Life on the Road



-OR-



# Session 4 Recap

## ➤ Maintenance Overview

- Caulking
- Water
- Septic
- Tires
- Engine
- Generator



- Gas
- Batteries
- Critters
- Winterization/De-winterization
- Off season storage

## ➤ Costs

- RV Specific items
- Generic items



# Travel Planning

## ➤ To Plan –or not to Plan –THAT is the question

- Do you like the idea of just hitting the road and seeing where it takes you?
- Do you like to know every step of the way where you are going, what you will be seeing, what you will be doing?



# Travel Planning

## ➤ Essentials for hitting the road

- Knowledge of

- RV Parks
- Parking sites
- Road restrictions for RVs
- Height/weight restrictions
- LP Gas
- Weather conditions

- Drive time

- How many hours per day will you drive?
- Speed x time = distance
- How often will you stop?



# Travel Planning

## ➤ Location

- Popular attractions often require advance planning
  - National parks may need up to a year of advance planning!
  - RV Parks may be booked far in advance
  - Cities have their own considerations
    - Traffic, parking, where to stay
  - Will you be
    - Driving to a new location frequently?
    - Staying at one location for an extended time?
  - Activities
  - Weather
    - Consider climate of destination locations
      - The Rockies may have blizzards in August!
      - Rain, hurricanes, floods –oh my!
      - Wild fires in California



# Travel Planning

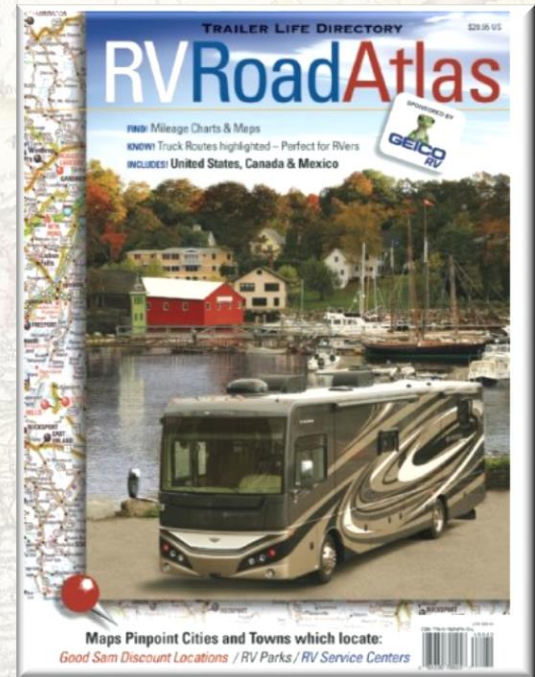
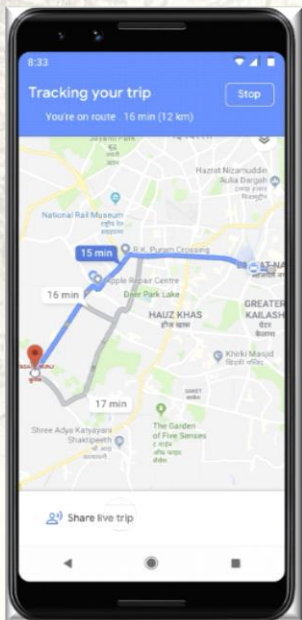
- Take the scenic route –or highway all the way?
  - Is it the destination –or the journey?



# Travel Planning

## ➤ Route tools

- Atlas –RV/Truck specific
  - Shows RV Parks, truck stops, etc.
- Apps such as Google & Waze
  - Turn-by-turn directions
  - NOT RV specific
- GPS –RV specific
  - Input RV specs
  - Guide around routes not RV friendly (height, weight, etc.)
- Tolls
  - Much higher for RVs
  - To avoid –or not?
    - Avoiding will add time and distance
    - Will add gas cost
    - Is it worth the savings?





# Travel Food

## ➤ Will you cook all your meals –or eat out?

- Will impact
  - Trip expenses
  - Packing & shopping
    - Food
    - Cooking supplies
    - Utensils/paper goods
  - Division of labor
    - RV kitchens are small
    - Option of using an outside grill



# Travel Food

## ➤ Preparing your own meals will

- Save \$\$
- Give more control over what you eat
- Make you more self sufficient
- More flexibility of when/where you stop



## ➤ Eating out will

- Allow opportunities to sample local cuisine
- Save time
- Save work in meal prep/clean up
- Save trips to grocery stores



# Travel Packing

## ➤ Clothing

- Weather conditions
- Casual/"formal"
- Activities

## ➤ Food

- Meals
- Snacks
- Perishables/non-perishables
- Refrigerator items
- Water
- Cooking gear



## ➤ Tools

- Maintenance
- Emergencies



## ➤ Entertainment

- Electronics
- Games
- Books



## ➤ Household

- Towels
- Bedding
- Toiletries
- Medications
- First Aid



# Travel Packing

## ➤ Be aware of weight

- Excess weight affects
  - Gas mileage
  - Towing capacity
  - Handling

## ➤ Weight distribution

- Distribute weight evenly as much as possible
- Uneven weight distribution will affect handling, tire wear

## ➤ Consider having your fully packed rig weighed

- Town land fill will charge \$10
- Will only give total weight –not distribution of each axle

MANUFACTURED BY WINNEBAGO IND. INC.		05/18	INCOMPLETE VEHICLE MANUFACTURED BY MERCEDES BENZ LLC		02/18		
GAWR:			GVWR	11,030 LB	5,003 KG		
FRT	4,410 LB	2,000 KG	SUITABLE TIRE AND RIM CHOICE		COLD INFLATION PRESSURE		
RR	7,720 LB	3,502 KG	TIRE	RIM	61 PSI 421 KPA SING		
			LT21585R16E	16.0X5.50	61 PSI 421 KPA DUAL		
			LT21585R16E	16.0X5.50			
THIS VEHICLE HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN ACCORDANCE WITH IVD, WHERE APPLICABLE. THIS VEHICLE CONFORMS TO ALL VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARDS IN EFFECT ON THE DATE OF			THE PRIOR MANUFACTURER'S APPLICABLE FEDERAL MOTOR MANUFACTURE SHOWN ABOVE.				
SERIAL NO.	10542Y156596	VIN	WDAPF4CC4J9753587	TYPE	MPV	COLOR	J31
F402C CHAS 3S	05/03/18	10Y-56596	2019 VIEW	WM524G		087237-02N	



# Travel Packing

## ➤ Weight Definitions:

- Towing Capacity: The total weight a vehicle can tow
- Curb Weight:

Curb Weight is the actual weight of a vehicle or trailer including all standard equipment, full fuel tanks, full fresh water tanks, full propane bottles, and all other equipment fluids, but before taking on any persons or personal cargo.

- GVW: Gross Vehicle Weight

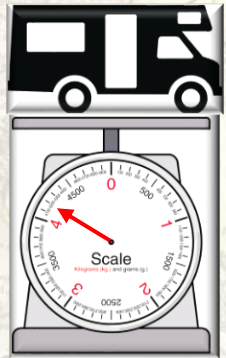
Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) is the actual weight of the fully loaded vehicle or trailer, including all cargo, fluids, passengers, and optional equipment, as measured by a scale.  $GVW = \text{Curb Weight} + \text{Cargo Weight} + \text{Person Weight}$

- GVWR: Gross Vehicle Weight Rating

Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) is the maximum weight that should never be exceeded. GVWR is applied to trailers as well as vehicles, but you may see this rating referred to as the Maximum Loaded Trailer Weight.

- Resource: Understanding RV Weights

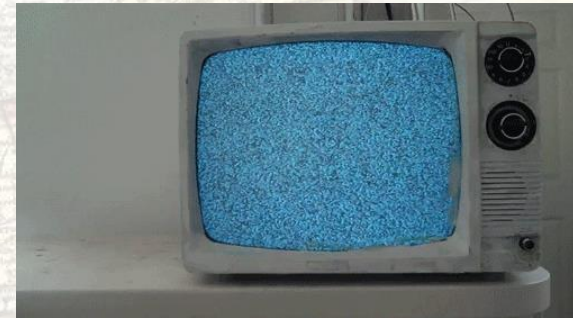
[http://changingers.com/rv-sec-tow-vehicles-understand.shtml#\\_curb](http://changingers.com/rv-sec-tow-vehicles-understand.shtml#_curb)



# Travel Packing

## ➤ Balance between packing too much and not enough

- Packing too much will take up valuable space and add weight
  - Considerations
    - Duration of trip
    - Weather conditions of your destination(s)
    - Recreational activities
    - Emergencies
- Cooking gear
  - Coffee maker, grill, utensils, dishes
- Laundry
- Tools & equipment you will need
  - But don't pack for the apocalypse!
- Entertainment items for the road
  - And for when no TV, Internet or cell service is available



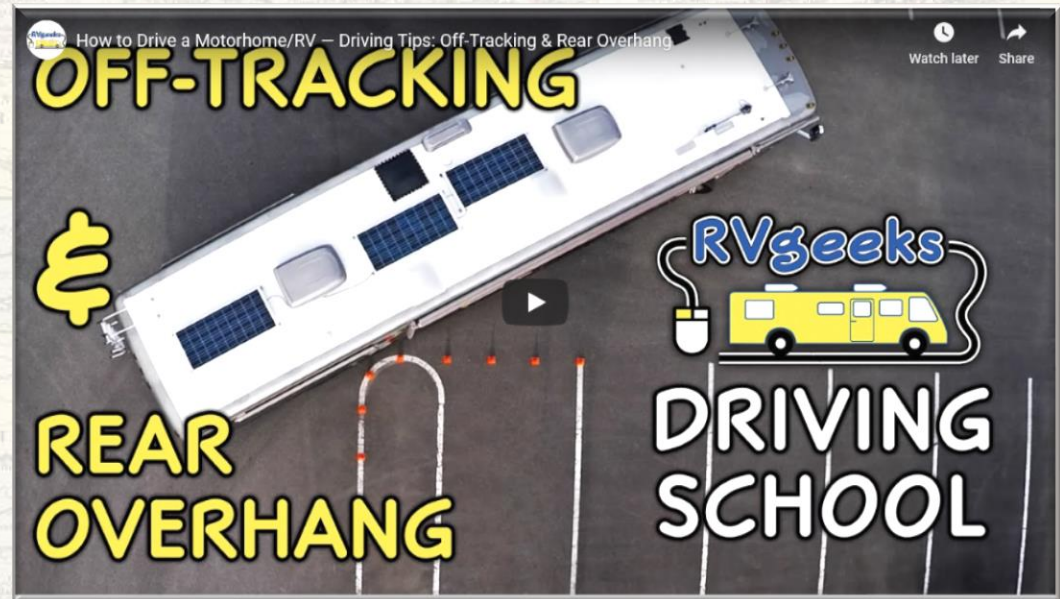
# Travel Driving

## ➤ Driving an RV is different!

- Length
- Height
- Width
- Visibility
- Turning radius
- Backing up

## ➤ Learn how to drive

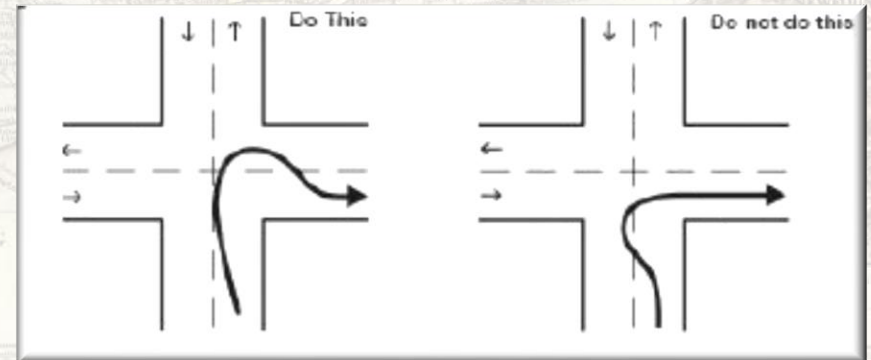
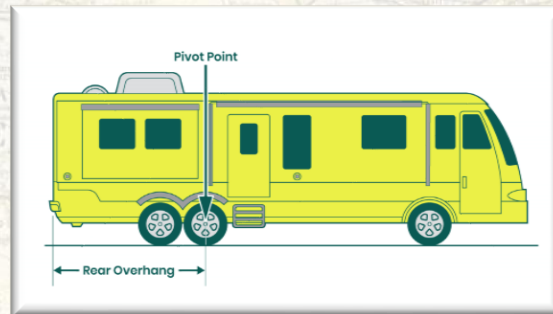
- Practice
- Resource: <https://www.thervgeeks.com/driving-school/>



# Travel Driving

- Buy some soccer cones
- Find a large empty parking lot
- Practice

- Turning
- Parking
- Backing up
- Be aware of rear wheel overhang and pivot point!





# Travel Driving

## ➤ Visibility

- Eliminate blind spots with mirrors
  - More difficult than with a car and needs more fine tuning
  - Use the convex mirrors!
  - Practice
  - Practice
  - Practice
- Rearview Camera



# Travel Driving

## ➤ Share the driving –or not

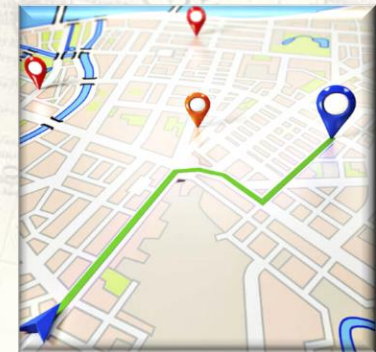
- If you share driving
  - Need to adjust mirrors every time you switch off
  - Both drivers need to learn and practice driving skills
  - Both drivers need to learn how to be a “good passenger”
  - Both drivers need to become good copilots
- If you don't share the driving
  - Driver fatigue
  - Copilot burn out



# Travel Driving

## ➤ The copilot

- Practically a full time job!
  - Navigator
  - Researcher
    - Next rest stop
    - Gas
    - Overnight stopping places
    - Upcoming points of interest
    - Nearby place to eat (that will also accommodate your land yacht)
  - Snack distributor
  - Overseer for kids & pets needs



# Travel Driving

## ➤ Flexibility

- Once you reach your destination, are you trapped there?
  - Running out for a gallon of milk
  - Sight seeing
  - Going out for a night on the town
- Options
  - TOAD/Dinghy
  - Uber/Taxi
  - Car Rental



# Travel Towing

## ➤ Things to consider

- Towing means another vehicle to worry about
  - Road hazards, maintenance wear & tear on both
- Means much less maneuverability
  - Extends total length for lane changes, parking etc.
  - Can NOT back up!
    - Always need a pull through parking space
      - Restaurants, stores
      - Gas stations
      - RV Parks, rest stops
  - Added time to attach/detatch car
  - Periodic checks on towed vehicle



# Travel Towing

## ➤ Tow Options

- Towing a Vehicle
  - Make sure the intended vehicle can be towed!
    - Resource: Towing Guides <https://www.motorhome.com/download-dinghy-guides/>
- Flat tow –or Tow Dolly?
  - Flat tow
    - Requires specialized connections to RV as well as TOAD
    - Separate electrical, braking, car attachment plate
    - Limited types of cars can be flat towed
  - Tow dolly
    - Less expensive
    - More makes/models of cars can be towed
    - Takes practice to get car on dolly and secured
    - Need to check tie down straps at every stop



# Travel Traveling

## ➤ Where will you stop each night?

- Boondocking (non campground)
  - Some states allow overnight parking at rest stops
  - Select retail stores
    - Many Retail stores allow overnight parking
      - Super Walmart
      - Costco
      - Cracker Barrel
      - Cabela's
- Call ahead and ask permission
- Observe retail Boondocking etiquette
- Resource: Boondockers Welcome

<https://www.boondockerswelcome.com/>



### ESCAPEES CODE OF PARKING ETIQUETTE

1. Obtain permission from a qualified individual.
2. Park out of the way.
3. No awnings, chairs, or barbecue grill.
4. Avoid using slide-outs if at all possible.
5. Do not use your leveling jacks on asphalt.
6. Limit your stay - one night maximum!
7. Purchase gas, food, or supplies as a form of thank -you when feasible.
8. Always leave an area cleaner than you found it.
9. Practice safety precautions.



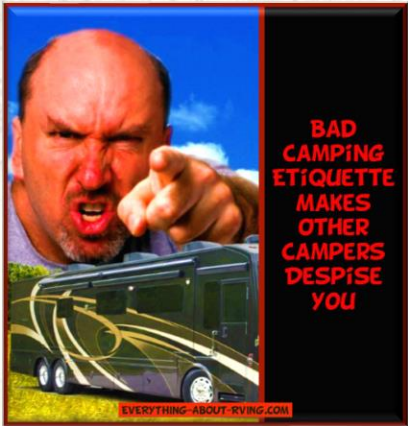
If you have an Escapees decal on your RV, you represent our organization. We know you will want to set a good example for all RVers.

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# Travel Traveling

## ➤ Where will you stop each night?

- RV Park
  - Will need to call ahead
  - Costs vary
    - Basic hook-ups
    - “RV Resorts”
- RV Park Etiquette
  - Follow RV Park rules
    - Vary from park to park
  - Observe “quiet hours”
  - Realize your RV neighbors are usually just 10 feet away





# Travel Traveling


## ➤ RV Park Discount Memberships

- Discounts usually offered only during weekdays
- Good Sam's
  - Largest most popular plan
  - 10% discount on some RV Parks
  - Offers Travel Road Assistance for newer RV (less than 10 years old)
- FMCA (Family Motor Coach Assoc)
  - Next largest most popular plan
  - 50% discount on some RV Parks
  - Offers Travel Road assistance for all RVs
  - Monthly print RV magazine covering many RV topics
  - Many social opportunities
- Great RV Escapes



# Travel Traveling

## ➤ Use a Checklist for site set up & breakdown

- Just like airplane pilots
  - Makes sure you won't forget to do anything
  - Makes a consistent routine
  - Resource:
    - Our Checklist: 
  - Start with a template and make it your own

### RV Check List

#### Departure: Inside

1. Secure kitchen area:
  - Paper towels flat, candle, condiments in sink
  - Kitchen blind up, window shut
  - microwave and coffee pot secured, unplugged
  - All drawers secure, frig & freezer closed, shut off
2. Secure living area
  - Remote and DVD player in TV cabinet, TV cabinet locked
  - Storage area above cab secure
  - Ceiling vent closed
  - TV trays, step stool stored
  - Secure Dog dishes, leash, dog!
  - Windows shut
  - Overhead lights off
3. Secure Bathroom



# Travel Connectivity

## ➤ Connectivity Needs Assessment

- Consider all travelers
- Do they want the “unplugged” life on the road?
- Is connectivity a Must Have?
  - Connectivity for work
  - TV
  - Online access
    - Trip planning and navigation
    - Email, texting, social media
    - Gaming
    - Keeping kids (and ourselves) sane



# Travel Connectivity

## ➤ Many RV Parks offer free Wi-Fi

- Usually it stinks!
  - Slow
  - Poor signal quality
  - May be sufficient for checking your email
  - Usually poor for streaming video or gaming
- Signal boosters
  - Wi-Fi
  - Cell
  - TV antenna
  - Combination Boosters
  - Will boost a signal, but will not improve speed
  - Will give you 1-2 additional bars
    - Will not boost 0 bars!



# Travel Connectivity

## ➤ Alternatives

- Cell Phone Hot Spot

- Some cell plans do not allow
- Beware of your carrier's limitations!
  - Know maximum data use before extra charges
    - Overages can be VERY expensive!
  - Data caps
  - Speed throttling
  - Carrier may change rules without notice!

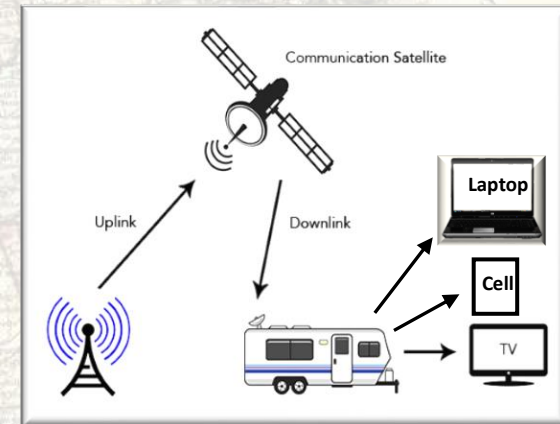
- Satellite

- Very expensive
  - Roof mount receiver
  - Monthly subscription

- Resource: Mobile Internet Resource Center

<https://www.rvmobileinternet.com/>

<https://www.technomadia.com/>



# Travel Cozy Quarters

## ➤ Togetherness has it's challenges

- Division of labor
  - Cooking
  - Cleaning
  - Shopping for supplies
  - Set up/teardown
- Personal space
- Idiosyncrasies
- Individual tastes
  - Food
  - Clothing
  - Activities
  - Entertainment
  - Hobbies
  - Alone time



# Travel Cozy Quarters

## ➤ Traveling in an RV is like any other vacation, except:

- Living in a tiny house
- Using a bathroom the size of a phone booth
- Limited resources: Water, power, food, connectivity
- Sleeping in beds/bunks with little or no privacy
- Driving a house down the highway during an earth quake in gale force winds
- Make sure you know where the next gas station and rest stop is at all times



# Travel Cozy Quarters

## Suggestions:

### ➤ Ensure you have outside space

- Working awning
- Picnic table/chairs
- Grill or camp stove
- Activities

### ➤ Consider every one's interests

- Plan for locations/attractions for each traveler
- "Tomorrow we're going to the zoo for Sally; the next day we're going to the water park for Johnny. The day after that we're hanging out at the RV park to give Dad a rest; and then were going to the art museum for Mom."

### ➤ Consider responsibilities for each traveler

- Clean up after yourself
- Set up & breakdown
- Take out the trash
- Take care of the pet

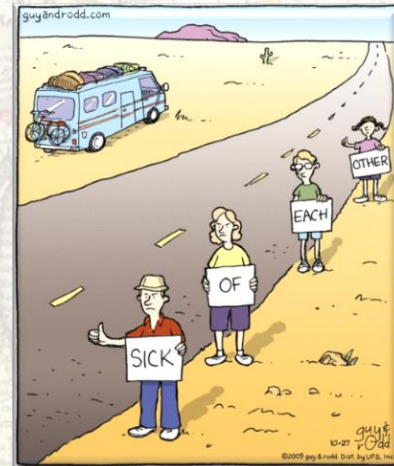




# Life on the Road is what you make it!



-OR-



## ➤ Adventure can be yours!

- All you need to avoid close quarters fever is:
  - A little planning
  - A little spontaneity
  - A little flexibility
  - A little sense of humor
- Approach every challenge as an adventure
- Learn from your fellow travelers
- Share your successes and failures



# Session 5 Recap

- RV Ownership
- Planning
- Food
- Packing
- Driving



- Towing
- Traveling
- Discount Programs
- Connectivity
- Cozy Quarters

Life on the Road is what you make it!



# Next Week

## ➤ RV Research and Resources

