

OFF THE RACK REVIEWS

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June 2017

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and tiny campers

CAMPING WITH THE
HAPPY CAMPER



Life in the Outside Elements

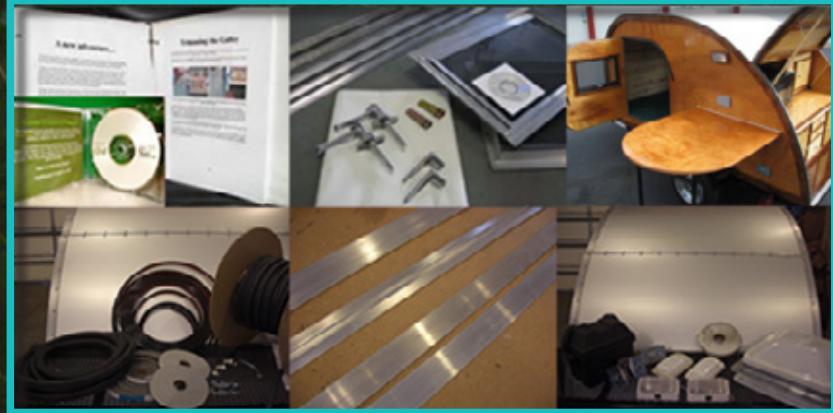
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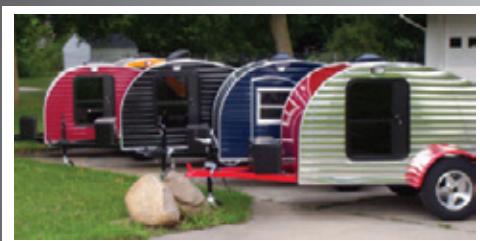
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Letter from the Editor:

Summer is in full swing

The past decade has brought a boom in the RV industry as a whole, as the younger generations are discovering the feasibility of travel via a light-weight camper. While we are certainly excited about all the new RVers joining our little niche of camping, it can at times make reservations more tricky.

How do you solve this issue? Several answers pop to mind:

1. Reserve EARLY! Some campgrounds allow reservations up to one year in advance. This is great if you are a planner and already know which camp-spot is your favorite. Particularly important if you are planning a trip during a popular camping time (ie: Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day) but this is also helpful if you seek a more stress-free camping experience. I have been finding that although I prefer to make reservations on-line, sometimes it's easier to simply pick up the cell phone and call the reservation line. Sometimes, the park attendant even has tips and ideas on the best spots in the campground.

2. BOON-DOCK! This is certainly not a new thing to tent campers and teardrop campers. I am preparing a special issue of Cool Tears just on this topic alone. What does it mean? What does it entail? How feasible is it all across the states? What's the longest amount of time people boon-dock? All these questions, I hope to answer. But I am learning so much about this, and love the idea of pulling the teardrop to some of the most remote and gorgeous locales and simply being able to enjoy nature.

BUT...I want to hear from you!
Send me your best boon-docking stories, photos and tips
and then watch for the special issue to see your story in print!

Until next time...enjoy every sunrise!

SARAH TUCKER

Editor
Cool Tears
and Tiny Campers Magazine™
sarah@cooltears.com



...life by the 'Drop



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OFF THE RACK

REVIEWS

{Book}

TRUDY THE TRAILER

>>**about**>> The new children's picture book, *Travels With Trudy*, follows the journey of Trudy (a cute teardrop camper) and Ollie as they travel the USA. My girls loved the book and I enjoyed the rhyming and cute illustrations. You can preview the book at TravelsWithTrudy.com.

>>**to buy**>> For \$15, you will receive a signed copy of the colorful, 24-page hardcover book AND the companion coloring book. Shipping is also included.



{Bags}

HANDMADE CAMP BAGS

>>**about**>> Sean has created some high quality, versatile bags for use camping or even just around town. The large shoulder strap bag has several pockets in addition to the large opening that would be perfect for bathhouse items. It comes with many hooks to attach additional items too. I really enjoyed the small clutch as well. It can be carried in several different ways and is large enough for a phone plus a few other items.

>>**to buy**>> Send an email directly to SAIL72@PTD.NET for more info on purchasing.

{Cooking}

MUFFIN MAKER

>>**about**>> This tiny, lightweight yet durable muffin maker weighs only 3 ounces! It allows you to bake a variety of items over a campfire. You do have to use a camping stove or pot for the muffin maker to work. I am a lazy camper that does not cook much but this little tool is so fun to use that I know I'll put mine to lots of use on our next camping trip!

>>**to buy**>> Purchase your own Muffin Maker for only \$20 + \$5 shipping at www.backcountrybakery.com



This section is designed to preview new products on the ever-expanding camping market. To participate, contact sarah@cooltears.com with info on your product.

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/

MY DADDY'S PINTO BEANS

My Daddy loved pinto beans, Southern style with bacon. He always had a pot on the stove. On special social occasions we would go out with friends to a scenic place and cook the pintos in a Dutch oven over an open fire. Great memories were made over pinto beans.

Serves 10

4 cups dried pinto beans, picked over and rinsed
4 cups white or yellow onion chopped
1/4 pound bacon chopped
Salt to taste
Optional: 1/2 cup chili powder

Cooking Methods:

Slow cooker or crock pot
Large stockpot on the stovetop
Cowboy style in a cast iron Dutch oven



TEARDROP PORK CHOPS

This is a great entrée to make in camp! We often start this as we leave to sight see during the day and come back to wonderfully tender pork chops.

We freeze the pork chops.
2 boneless Pork chops (3/4" thick)
1 beef or chicken bouillon cube
1/4 cup hot water
2 tablespoon Dijon Mustard
2 small onions freshly ground pepper

Sear the frozen pork chops. Dissolve bouillon in the hot water, add mustard and stir. Cut off the ends, and peel the onions, then cut in half cross wise to make 4 thick "wheels". Place the onions on the bottom of the Crockpot in a single layer. Once chops are seared, place them atop the onions. Add salt and fresh ground pepper to taste, and slowly add the liquid over all. Cook for 4.5 hours

Serve with mashed potatoes or sautéed red cabbage with onion or kale.

Option: Top the pork chops with balsamic vinegar.

Soak the pinto beans over night and rinse.
Combine beans, water and in slow cooker or stockpot. Cover and cook on high for 1 hour.
In medium skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion, cook for five minutes until soft. Add onions, chopped bacon and salt to beans.

Turn slow cooker to low and cook about 8 to 10 hours.

For stockpot, turn to low and cook until the beans are tender.

For cast iron Dutch oven combine beans and onions with water. Cover with lid and cook over a low fire. Enjoy a leisurely conversation while tending the pot until the beans are tender.

If beans are too thick, add boiling water. Ladle into heated soup bowls. Top with chopped onion. Accompany with Tabasco or other hot sauce. Serve with cornbread.

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Camper Trailers for sale



by Ron Pro

The reason we created the site in 2012 is at the time, other than Craigslist & ebay.

There were not many sites if any at all that allowed you to post a classified ad to sell your used teardrop trailer. The URL www.UsedTeardrops.com was a perfect match for selling teardrop trailers that people needed to sell for one reason or the other.

The site is built on the Word Press platform. The ability to allow users to list a classified ad on the site is possible through a WP plug-in called: AWPCP

Perks of this site: All classified

ads are FREE! Also this site is dedicated to classified ads for used teardrop trailers and related items, there are no camping articles, no bells and whistles trying to get the user distracted and off to something they had not intended on. Very clean, cut and dry. "FREE classified ads for used teardrop campers only".

We have 5 very simple rules. All dealers must identify their ads as dealer ads. All ads run for 60 days, unless you delete it. You must provide a valid e-mail address. Please delete your ad when your teardrop sells. We reserve the right to not publish and/or delete any ads that are not in the best interest of this site.

Some of your best memories are made around the fire in a camping chair! Isn't it time to get a good one?



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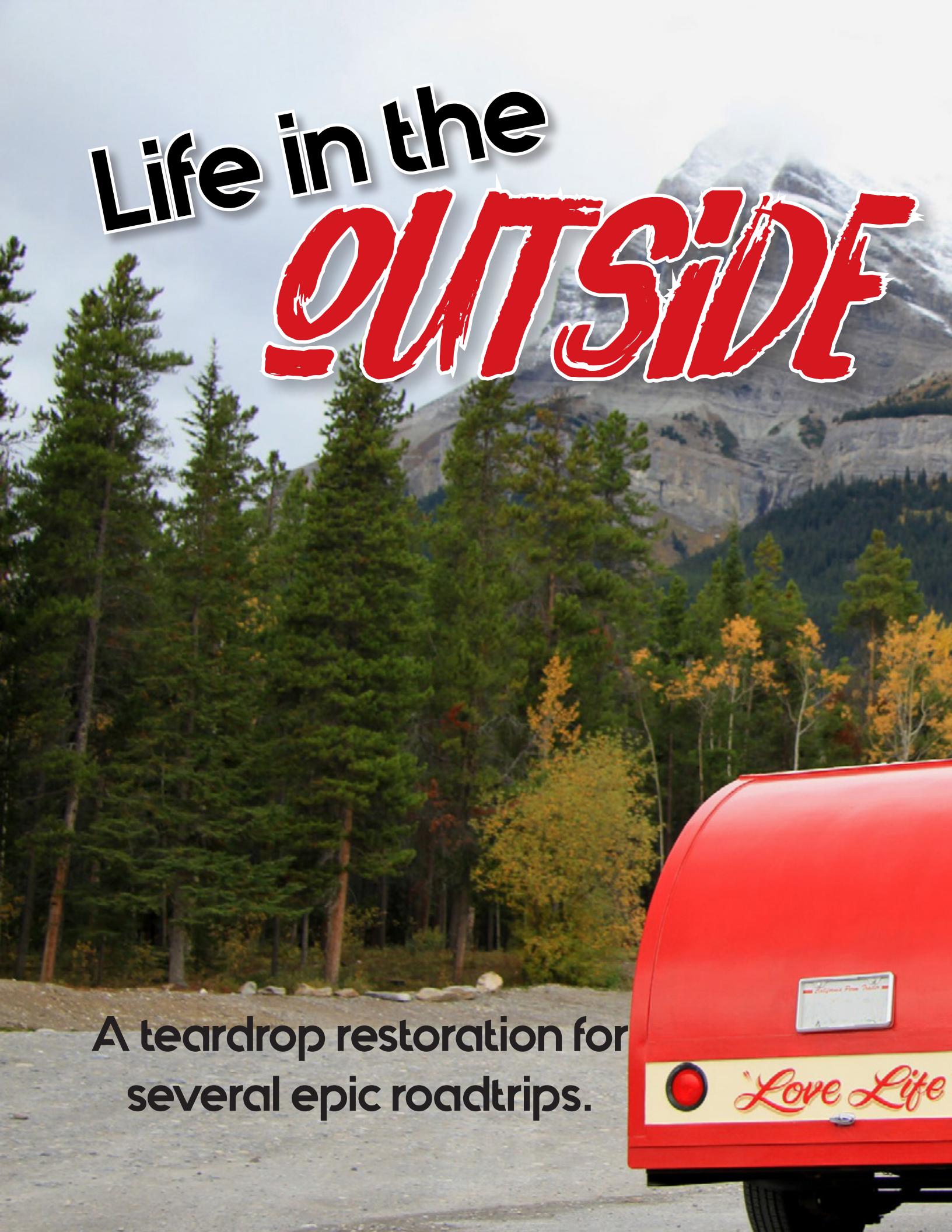

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Life in the *OUTSIDE*

A photograph of a red teardrop trailer parked on a gravel road. The trailer has a white license plate that reads "Tear Drop From Trail". Below the license plate, there is a white panel with the words "Love Life" written in red script. The trailer is positioned on the right side of the frame. In the background, there is a dense forest of green and yellow trees, and a large, rugged mountain range under a clear sky.

A teardrop restoration for
several epic roadtrips.

ELEMENTS



by Gary Neel

I was a design engineer for Newell Coach Corp. & Foretravel Motorhomes for years. I have been in the recreational vehicle business for over 30 years. I had a friend of mine call and asked if I wouldn't mind taking a look at a little trailer she was looking at buying for \$750. I said sure, so I went down and took a look. It was a homemade Benroy teardrop. I fell in love with the little teardrop and told her that if she didn't buy it, I wanted it! She called me about three days later and said she just could not come up with the money and if I wanted it to let her know. I was on her door step within the hour with the \$750. I took a real passion to this little teardrop and my wife and I both love it.





1st paint design: "Sierra Nevada Brewery" My wife Teresa and I both kayak and so we wanted the exterior paint scheme to match our mango colored kayaks. We also have three dogs, black lab and two border collies so we added a paw print on both sides of the teardrop to symbolize our love for our dogs. I might add, We don't go anywhere without our dogs. Sierra Nevada Brewery colors (Orange Peel) seemed to work for our theme for restoration of my newly purchased teardrop. My wife and I live in the Sierra Nevada Foothills Northeast of Chico California and Sierra Nevada Brewery is one of our favorite stops for a great meal and a nice cold beer. It was a fun theme.

2nd paint design: "Ruby Red", had to repaint the teardrop so it would match my wife's new Ford Edge "Ruby", car for our 5 week trip to Canada. Couldn't make this journey without some color coordination.

Most of my challenges were pretty simple because it was simply replacing or adding existing parts. Front Compartment: There are two AGM Batteries in parallel with a 12v Battery Maintainer-Desulfator on board when plugged into shore power. 750 Watt Inverter Converter and a switch from 12v to 110v. 110v is for slide-out tray inside the cabin for a laptop computer; In the kitchen area we have 110v outlet and overhead lighting. Also, 12v lighting in the kitchen and inside the cabin. Outside of the teardrop there is a shore power hookup with a 12v disconnect switch to throw power to all 12v lighting.

We dry camp a lot so I did add a GoalZero Boulder 15 portable solar panel and GoalZero Battery Controller for charging our house batteries. A portable GoalZero Fold Out Panel to charge our cell phones and a GoalZero Sherpa50 Rechargeable Power Pack w/100W AC Inverter also for Cell



Phone/Lap Top use. Great products by GoalZero available at GOALZERO

There really wasn't much rebuilding as much as there was redesigning the exterior themes. Lots of time sanding, caulking and preparing the exterior. Replaced some of the trailers exterior lights and adding some small hardware. Most were found at the local auto parts stores.

I did most of my research on the internet for different sources and found most everything I needed quite easily through all the different teardrop sites. Such as Door Handles, Trim, Rubber Seals, etc.. GoalZero is a great company based out of Utah that provides all sorts of Solar Panels and gear.

One of the very first trips was taking our kayaks over to Moss Landing at the local KOA campground and kayaking Moss Landing Harbor and the Elk Horn Slough. We highly recommend kayaking the Elk Horn Slough. Also a trip down Hwy 1 from Mendocino to Monterey.

Our major trip was a five week trip to Canada and back. We started out in Chico, California in September and made our way to Crater Lake in Oregon, Glacier National Park in Montana, Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta Canada and then right up through the Kananaskis (the cowboy trail) all the way to Banff, Moraine Lake, Lake Louise, Icefields Parkway, to Jasper Alberta Canada. Following the Canadian Rockies was the most beautiful and inspiring trip we have ever been on.

From Jasper, Alberta Canada, we ventured west to Kelowna British Columbia, a beautiful and romantic city in the Okanagan Valley, BC. Then headed to Vancouver British



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British Columbia where we took the ferry from Horseshoe Bay across the Salish Sea over to Nanaimo British Columbia. We ended our Canadian portion of the trip in Victoria British Columbia. We spent a week at the Inn at Laurel Point (dog friendly) downtown Victoria British Columbia. They accommodated our three dogs with no problem and we took a small break from the teardrop lifestyle.



We then crossed the Strait of Juan de Fuca on a ferry to Port Angeles Washington and from there went south crossing the Columbia River to Astoria



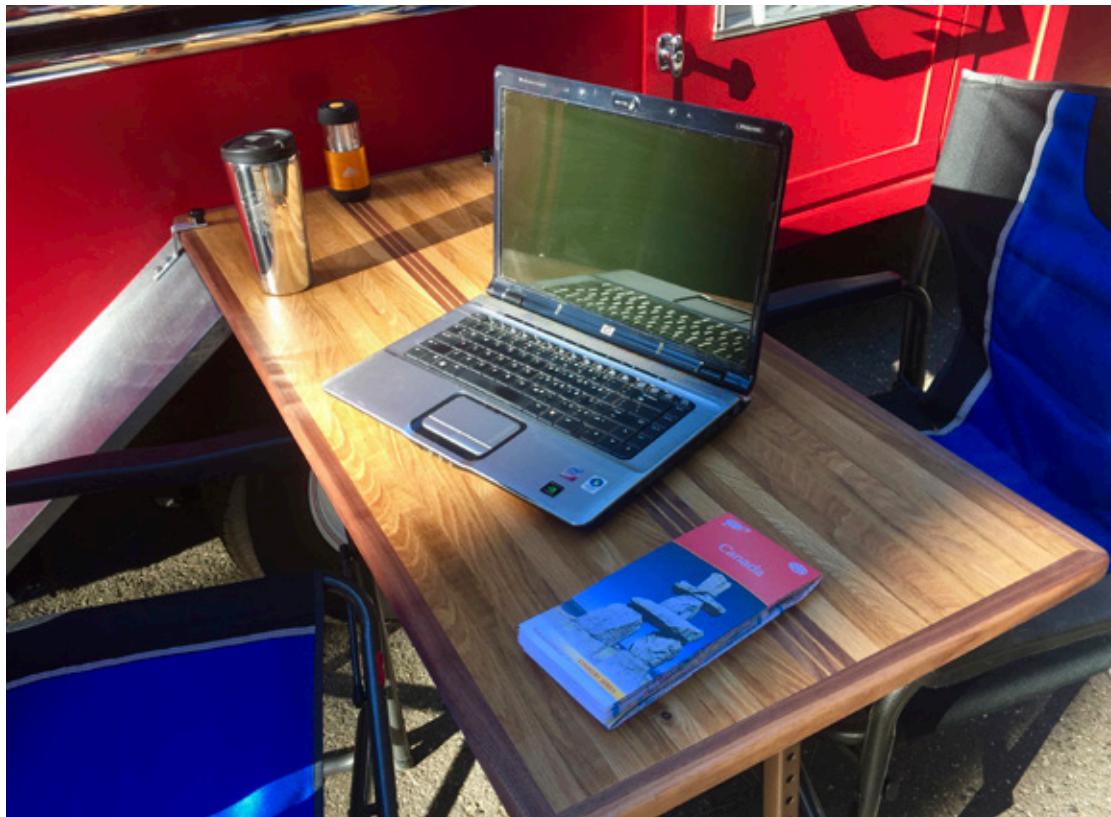
Oregon and then made our way back home.

We used a pop up changing tent along our trip equipped with a porta-potty every night. We used the battery operated candles in the dressing room which seemed to be the proper amount of light needed at night. We managed just fine this way. We always tried to stay at campgrounds where there were good shower and laundry facilities when needed.

We loved this trip in our teardrop and would make this adventure again in a heart beat.

This was the most amazing trip we have been on and remember, we took our three dogs. The dogs owned the back of the SUV, that was their camper.

The teardrop life style forces you to live in the outside elements. This is what we love about it.





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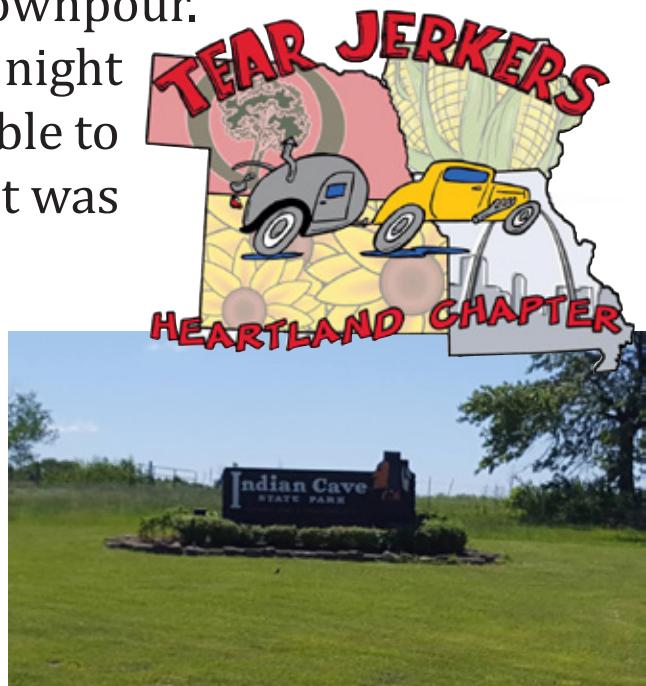
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CAMPING WITH THE **HAPPY CAMPER**



by Sarah Tucker

It was a late May weekend in the Midwest, and I had the honor of joining the Heartland Tearjerkers for their first gathering of the season. It was freezing. But that folks, is not going to dissuade hard-core tear-droppers! Friday evening the campground was in the direct path of a formable thunderstorm. It ripped through the area with 60+ mph winds, thunder and lightening and a torrential downpour. The group that made it up that night survived and but the time I was able to roll in Saturday early afternoon, it was chilly but not raining.



CAMPING WITH THE HAPPY CAMPER



We had a great time at the trailer tour where each teardrop was explained and questions asked/answered. A few homebuilts, a few Camp Inn's and a handful of other manufactures were represented and each unique and wonderful in their own way. I had the privilege of taking a Little Guy Limited Edition Silver Shadow from Dana Parson's of Missouri Teardrop Trailers. If

you live this the Midwest and are on the search for a teardrop, Dana's is a must-stop dealer. Saturday evening was spent playing a few games and enjoying the most wonderful potluck dinner together.

That evening, we headed back to our own campsite which as it might happen was right next



to one of the most interesting home built teardrops I have ever seen. John Crosthwait has been a Cool Tears supporters for years and it has been a joy to see his build posts on several Facebook pages. In fact, his build is so unique that when we pulled into the campground, I knew his teardrop immediately.

John graciously opened his teardrop to myself and the others in the group to investigate and patiently answered all the questions I could think up. He told me a bit of his story throughout the weekend as well. For years he admired larger campers but did not fancy the idea of people staying inside their



campers all weekend as he says, "That's not camping, you might as well stay home."

While watching a RV show on television, he spotted teardrops and thought they were pretty cool. It was then he began to collect a few items that could be used in a teardrop of his own. He knew a kitchen was a must-have so his first purchase was a two-burner cooktop stove. The complete kitchen now includes that cooktop, a sink, a microwave and a dorm-sized refrigerator. The fridge has become essential as it's great to not have to always be on the look out for ice to fill a cooler.



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CAMPING WITH THE HAPPY CAMPER



Besides the kitchen, the camper has not one but TWO televisions (1 inside and 1 out.) It is also outfitted with two stereos and nine speakers.

He built the frame in his garage and the plan was to build the wood structure in his basement over the winter. Before that could happen, he discovered that he was lacking the right tools and the space was too cramped. A local friend owns a cabinetry shop and offered up his garage space. The build started in February of 2015 and was completed by July of that year.

It was a trial and error process as many

understand. To work on the shape, he laid masonite on the ground and drew out the shape freehand. He didn't like the first shape so he drew it again. From that point on the rest fell into place.

John says he has reworked several parts over the last few years as he learned more about what he liked and needed camping. He added a quick LP hookup for the grill because he was tired of carrying the small 1 pound tanks.

Their very first trip was across the river to a North Sioux City KOA. While watching a movie on the outside TV, they realized all

of the kids in the park had joined to watch at the drive-in! Since that first 7 mile trip they have put about 10,000 miles on the teardrop. Venturing to the Black Hills in South Dakota , Pipestone MN, Pardeville, WI and even New Orleans, LA. One of their favorite things they like is that they can use the camper as a hotel room. It has given their limited travel budget a boost. Camp sites are cheaper and because the camper is light, pulling it doesn't affect gas mileage much. It's perfect for an outdoor weekend or being near a city.

It was a true honor to spend time with John and learn so much about his teardrop. If you are on the highways and byways in the Midwest and spot the blue Happy Camper be sure to give John a wave!





Utilizing high quality, high strength materials to achieve the lightest camping trailer design possible.



by Kendall Duncan

I do a lot of motorcycle tent camping and I wanted a lightweight camp to set up. This is where I took the idea of the teardrop camping trailer and made it lightweight so that it was towable by motorcycle. After building mine, people approached me asking if I could build larger models to sleep two adults. So, I took this idea and after building a few I decided to debut my business in September of 2016.

Star City Teardrops is derived from the

fact that I live near Roanoke, Virginia, which is known for the Roanoke Star. The Roanoke Star represents Virginia's Blue Ridge and it sits atop Mill Mountain overlooking the Roanoke Valley and Blue Ridge Mountains.



The Adventure 60 is our most popular model and air conditioning has been the most popular option. Another, popular option/accessory, which I am currently working on is the addition of a galley. My goal is to add the galley while maintaining our light weight status.

We craft our own lightweight custom aluminum frames on smaller high speed wheels that are tucked underneath the trailer. This makes for a compact fit at the campground and when being stored. Overall, we make the lightest teardrop camper on the market making them virtually towable by any vehicle, plus it's affordable.

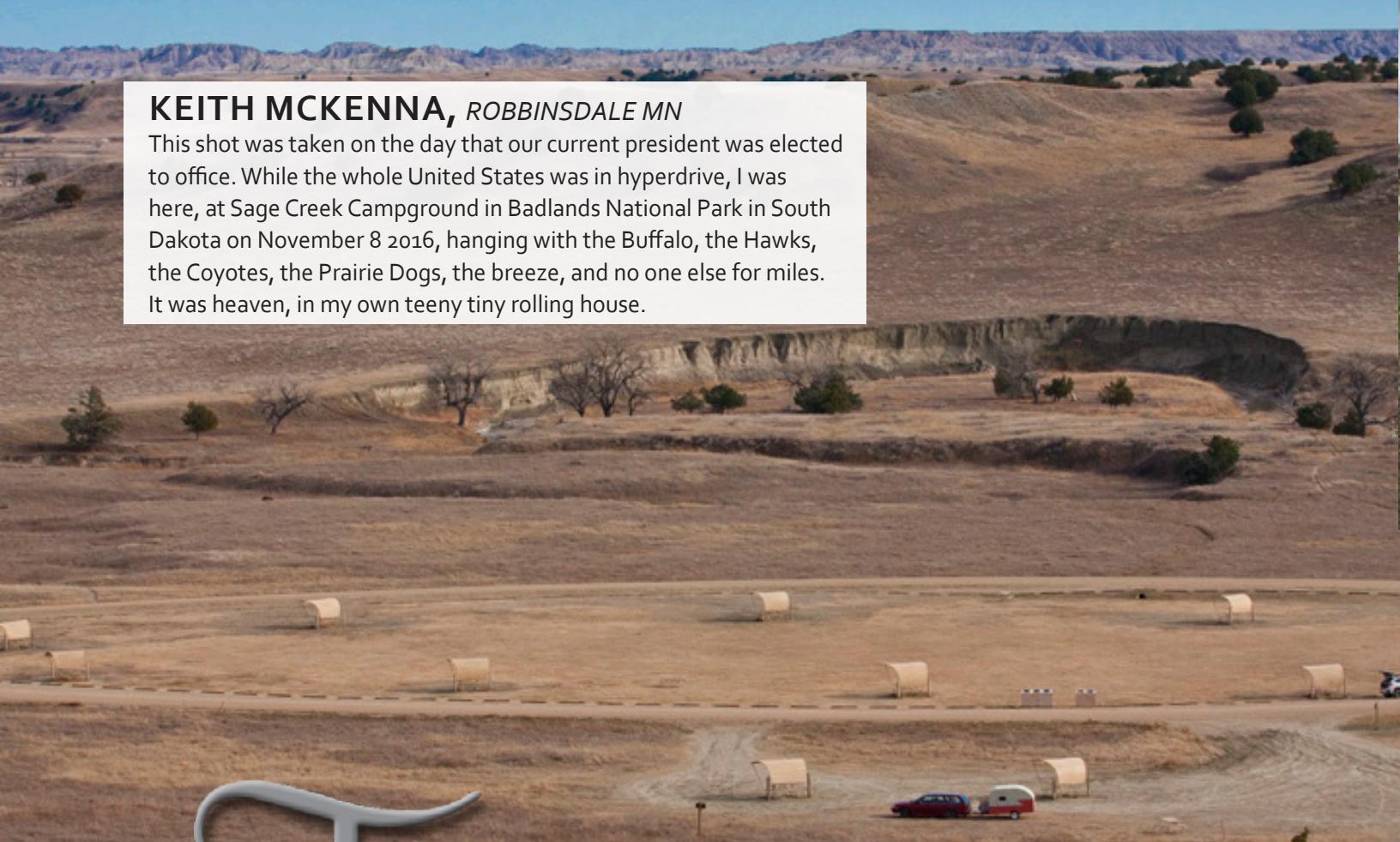
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The Roanoke Star was constructed in 1949 and was meant to serve as a seasonal Christmas decoration for the holiday shopping season. The star sits perched atop Mill Mountain and overlooks the surrounding valley and Blue Ridge Mountains, serving as a beacon and welcoming sign to visitors. As the largest, free-standing, man-made, illuminated star in the world, the Roanoke Star is one of the most photographed attractions in the area and the scenic overlook at the base of the structure is a popular stop for an incredible view of the region. The structure is actually three stars that are formed by 2,000 feet of neon tubing.

KEITH MCKENNA, ROBBINSDALE MN

This shot was taken on the day that our current president was elected to office. While the whole United States was in hyperdrive, I was here, at Sage Creek Campground in Badlands National Park in South Dakota on November 8 2016, hanging with the Buffalo, the Hawks, the Coyotes, the Prairie Dogs, the breeze, and no one else for miles. It was heaven, in my own teeny tiny rolling house.



Tears in the wild



JEFF FITCH, SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

Since this camper is set up for off the grid type camping being solar powered and is equipped with a 75qt Grizzly Cooler, it's a "bug out" rig. The camper has 20" of ground clearance and 31" tires with a 3500 pound axle with brakes. The Jeep Rubicon has a 6 1/2" lift up on 35" tires and a very flexible long arm suspension. The Foxwing awning and tag a long tent is all OzTent products from Australia. They can be installed on most anything with a round bar Yakima roof rack. The basket is also the Mega Warrior from Yakima with the extension. We have a 12 volt tv and ceiling fan inside and a Climate Right HVAC unit that operates off of 120v that sets outside of the camper on a table if needed.



ANDREW RAMALEY, MIDWEST

It took us about 10 months to build our teardrop. I learned a ton doing it from some great people. It was an adventure for sure and the skills I learned have been great for home remodeling, repair, etc. What I most learned is that there are always talented educated people that will gladly teach you if you just ask. I'm hoping to take what I learned and build a much lighter version but still with the artistic touches and warm woods.

Take your teardrop to the wild and send us a photo of your adventure!
Email your best shot to us, along with a brief description of your adventure, and
we will publish the most inspiring collections.
Put TEARS IN THE WILD in the subject line and send to sarah@cooltears.com today!

EDGAR MORGENSTERN, CALIFORNIA

This is our Teardrop in the wild at the Shasta Lake Gathering last month. I built this Teardrop last year for a round trip from California to Wisconsin last October. We spent twenty two nights in it and traveled 6400 miles on the trip.





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