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April
2013

COOL Tears™

and tiny campers

ALASKA

A Three Month Teardrop Tour



Gorge-ous Teardrops
One-of-a-Kind
Creations



COOL Tears™ and tiny campers

Vol. 1 No. 2

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A Three Month Teardrop Tour

By Linda Hash



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Cool Tears Update

Well, things are going crazy here at Cool Tears Magazine. We continue to get lots of emails and see a lot facebook traffic. I hear from new people every week and constantly have new material coming in for future issues. We are growing too. This month we are welcoming a lot of new readers. In fact, we are within about twenty subscriptions of having twice the number of readers compared to the February issue! Wow! Thanks everybody!

As part of our growth we want to add a new section to the magazine. Beginning with the next issue (June) we will have a space dedicated to our readers' trailers. Whether you have a teardrop, canned ham, or other tiny camping trailer, we want to see it. Home built, restored, or customized, we want to show it off for you. We expect the response to this to be very good as we have already started to get submissions without asking. So don't feel bad if yours does not make it in the first issue or two. We will only be able to include a few each issue.

So send us a picture of your trailer along with the following information to submissions@cooltears.com

- Owners name(s):
- Trailer name: (if named)
- Home State:
- Builder: (Can be a manufacturers name)
- Trailer weight:
- Tow vehicle:
- Feature highlights: (what have you done to make it your own - custom graphics, tv, solar panels etc.)

Fill in as much of the information as you can and leave the rest blank or label it "unknown." If you want yours included in the magazine, don't post it on our facebook page. We want the featured readers to be a surprise. If it is on our facebook page you have already shown it off and we will include others in the magazine that have not been seen yet. Watch for other announcements on our facebook page between issues, www.facebook.com/cooltearsmagazine.

Thanks for all your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Cross".

Kevin Cross
Editor
Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Magazine™

ALASKA

A Three Month Teardrop Tour

By Linda Hash



When we decided to go to Alaska for our 45th anniversary, we began looking for a way to see as much of Alaska as possible. After researching canned tours and cruises, we decided that buying a “Lil Guy” teardrop trailer and camping was our best and most economical option. We had always been “tent campers” prior to purchasing our teardrop trailer at the RV show in March of 2012 from Missouri Teardrops. We chose to travel to Alaska on the Alaska Marine Ferry System, leaving from Fairhaven, WA on June 23rd 2012. It takes approximately five days to travel from Washington state to Whittier, AK. I had arranged to travel on the Alaska Marine Hwy by using the tour services offered by the Alaska ferry system. I worked with a great travel agent that arranged all of our tours and made great suggestions for activities at each of our stops.



The first week of our trip was spent on the Kenai Peninsula. In Seward, we set up our first camp at Stoney Creek RV park. I made all our camping reservations prior to leaving on our Alaskan adventure. While in Seward, we went to the Sealife Discovery Center and the next day we took a sight-seeing tour of the Kenai Fjords National Park. We also took tours on Prince William Sound out of Valdez and a tour on the Tracy Arm near Juneau, AK. We highly recommend taking at least one of these whale watching tours



if you are in Alaska. We saw Humpback, Gray, and Killer Whales, Stellar Sea Lions, Puffins, Sea Otters and Glaciers.

From Seward we drove to Homer. It was such a beautiful drive along the Cook Inlet, seeing sleeping volcanoes across the Inlet, amazing fields of purple lupines, and our first moose! We set our camp up at Driftwood Inn with a view of Kachemak Bay and Homer Spit. We

were both excited as we were taking a bear viewing flight to Katmai National Park from Homer. Katmai is the location of Brooks Falls, where we took photos of grizzlies standing on the falls catching salmon. Because Mike is an amateur photographer, he was able to get some good pictures of the bears that



were there that day. We had wondered about sleeping during the 18 to 19 hours of daylight. But our days were so full and our camper was so comfortable that we just pulled down the shades and had no trouble sleeping especially after a day with bears!



Next we drove into interior Alaska, camping and making stops at Wrangle-St Elias National Park Visitors Center near Glennallen and on to Anchorage for five days. We never had to worry about making friends with the other campers, wherever we went other campers and even natives were asking about our Teardrop and of course we were always happy to show them our great little trailer. While we were at Lake Louise near Glennallen, we set up our attachable 10 x 10 tent for the first time. I think the campers next to us were wishing for a movie camera so they could send it to YouTube! However, we got it taken down much quicker in the rain at 33 degrees the morning that we broke camp.

Next stop Anchorage. We camped at Golden Nugget RV Park. It was a nice campground and we enjoyed the beauty of Anchorage with all the beautiful flowers in Delaney Park in the middle of downtown. While there, we visited the Anchorage Market & Festival, took a trolley tour of Anchorage and visited the Native Cultural Heritage Center. Then we are off to Denali National Park, Fairbanks, Chena Hot Springs, North Pole, and Tok. Remember our National Parks are some of the best places to camp and they offer senior discounts.

Our most interesting night camping was in Northway on our way into the Yukon Territory. Northway is a trading post run by Alaskan natives called "Naabia-Niign." We didn't know the meaning but are sure it means "place where huge mosquitoes carry off campers". We continued driving on the upper end of the Alcan Highway into Kluane National Park and camped at Kathleen Lake Lodge near Haines Junction. As with all the places we camped we met lots of interesting people. This included an interesting Frenchman who had hitchhiked

from Montreal to camp in the Kluane National Park and we weren't sure how much clothing he was going to take off and throw into the washing machine before heading to the shower. The lovely lady that worked in the laundromat helped us with our loonies and toonies for the washers and dryers.

We returned to the states at Haines, AK, where we took a fast ferry to Skagway and then took a train trip on the White & Yukon Route Railway. The trip started in Skagway, AK and ended in Carcross, YT. The rails loosely follow the Chilkoot gold trail into the Klondike. The trail was used by gold prospectors during the Alaska Gold Rush. It was a trail of unimaginable hardship with lots of great history and stories. Our trip ended with a scenic bus ride back to Skagway. We then returned to Haines, where we spent one afternoon watching an eagle's nest and taking some really great bald eagle pictures.



There were a few trips to the lake to see grizzly bears, too. Oceanview RV park was probably our favorite campground. It sits next to the boat harbor on the Lynn Canal. It isn't beautiful but the owners are really great folks and they want their campers to be happy and have a good time. Joyce and her camp hosts organize a crab dinner potluck for their campers on a weekly basis.

You get fresh caught Dungeness crab, a whole crab for \$6.00 and everyone brings a side dish. What a great way to meet other campers and locals and hear about their adventures in Alaska!



From Haines, we traveled by ferry to Juneau. In Juneau, we spent a day at Mendenhall Glacier and took a rainy trip to see the Sawyer Glaciers.



We left Juneau by ferry on the last leg of our Alaskan trip through the inside passage. We stopped in Sitka where we enjoyed a hike in the Tongass Rainforest, seeing the historic Russian Orthodox church and taking a tour of the Russian Bishop's House, where a guide explains a lot of the Alaska-Russian history. The last stop was in Ketichkan, where we spent time watching a black mother bear and her two cubs at Herring Bay, walking the famous Creek Street, and going to learn about Tlingit totem poles at Totem Bight Park. Our last ferry stop was in Prince Rupert, BC. There we left the Alaska



Marine Hwy and traveled through British Columbia into the "outside" the Alaskan term for the lower 48.

We always tried to get photos of other tear-drop trailers we saw in AK.



Rest stop in British Columbia

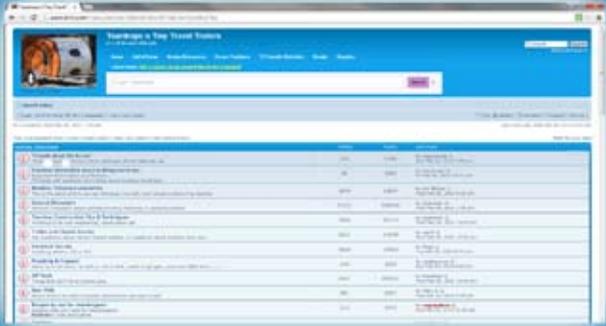


Homemade trailer from TX in Valdez, AK

Our entire trip took three months with approximately six to seven weeks spent in Alaska. We spent two nights in a hotel which was planned as part of their Skagway train trip. We really enjoyed camping in the “Lil Guy” teardrop. It was comfortable sleeping and traveling. The 10 x 10 attachable tent was a real plus because we could sit outside the trailer and do minimal cooking without mosquitoes and rain. We traveled over 11,000 miles towing the trailer with a Toyota Tundra which cost us very little extra expense for gasoline. We are looking forward to trips to Colorado and Raleigh, NC this year and are very satisfied with our decision to purchase a “Lil Guy” teardrop trailer! We hope to meet you when you are out camping!



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Lake Perris Teardrop Time Gathering

Photo courtesy of California State Parks (c) 2013.

By Carrousel Corliss

The second annual Lake Perris Teardrop Time Gathering occurred on March 21-24, 2013 at Lake Perris State Recreational Park in Lake Perris, CA. Thanks to all the rain Southern California received during the winter because the campground was full of beautiful wild flowers and the grass was very green. The gathering began on Thursday and the teardrop trailers trickled in all day long through Friday and Saturday and before we knew it there were a total of 113 teardrop trailers camping during this gathering which is a gain of 5 trailers over last year.

The campground loop we reserve has space for 160 teardrop trailers so there is plenty of room for growth and hopefully we can keep the tradition growing and have even more teardrop trailers next year. The campground commented many times on how our group is the best group all year every year and they never have much to do after we leave. Thank you to all who help keep

our stellar reputation with the campgrounds.

We were very lucky this year because the weather was perfect; it was a gathering of familiar friends and new friends and it was amazing, and of course the potluck food was wonderful. The truth is we have wonderful weather every year but let's not jinx us for next year.

We had a movie trilogy featuring Lucille Ball, Thursday night was Forever Darling, Friday night was I Love Lucy TV series, and Saturday night was The Long, Long Trailer with fresh hot air popcorn and hot chocolate being served



each night. You can never go wrong with Lucille Ball. Last year's theme was the great outdoors. What will next year's theme be?

The Dutch Oven-a-thon was a success on Friday night with hostess Marianne with over 25 different recipes from both the experts and the novice chef. You can never go wrong with some Dutch oven cooking while camping. Thank you Marianne for coordinating!

On Friday night we had a teardrop couple hosting a game night and a teardrop couple hosting a happy hour night. Happy Hour, Dutch oven food, and games: what a combination! On Saturday night was the big potluck with everyone. We had 40 tables set up for all the good food and people to sit and enjoy dinner. There were plenty of "to do" options to choose from while camping. Thank you to everyone who had some

activity planned, it is quite helpful to have others hosting an activity at the gathering.

We had a teardropper come as far as northern California and they loved our campground. We also had a teardropper as close as Lake Perris.

There were homebuilt teardrop trailers and manufactured teardrop trailers owned by seasoned campers and first timers. They were the same but all different. There were so many unique and cool ideas for their teardrop.

The children played together and the families and friends came together for a great kick off to the teardrop season. It was just a peaceful, easy, and fun weekend camping.

Thank you to the article in the local newspaper because the "lookie loos" came out all day long in wonderment of the teardrop trailer and the answer is yes, we do sleep inside.

Everyone pre-registered received a grab bag which had a tea towel with a teardrop trailer





printed on it. They were a big hit with the teardroppers. The gathering has only one giveaway which is a chance to have your teardrop trailer featured on next year's event t-shirt. This year's event t-shirt featured Gilbert's teardrop trailer and next year's t-shirt will feature Leon's teardrop trailer. The t-shirts always go fast so it is definitely best to pre-order them. The deadline for next year is March 6, 2014.



The park has always been very kind and generous to us, but unfortunately due to the economy; the park has raised their rates for next year. The fee will be \$23 a night for pre-registration but still a great price for camping with electric, water, picnic table, and fire ring for each site with clean bathrooms and showers. The park has already approved next year's dates which is a week later in the month, March 27-30, 2014. The website has been updated with the new dates including the registration form. We already have our first registration for next year!



It is hard to believe we are already making arrangements for the third annual gathering at Lake Perris. Check out our website: teardrop-time.weebly.com.

Also note we put together two other gatherings during the year. Those other two gatherings are for teardrop trailers and vintage trailers. June 6-9, 2013 is at Woods Valley Campground in Valley Center, CA and Hurkey Creek is August 14-18, 2013 by Idyllwild, CA. Woods Valley has limited sites reserved, currently there are 26 sites left. Hurkey Creek is dry camping and has no electric for the trailers, only water. The

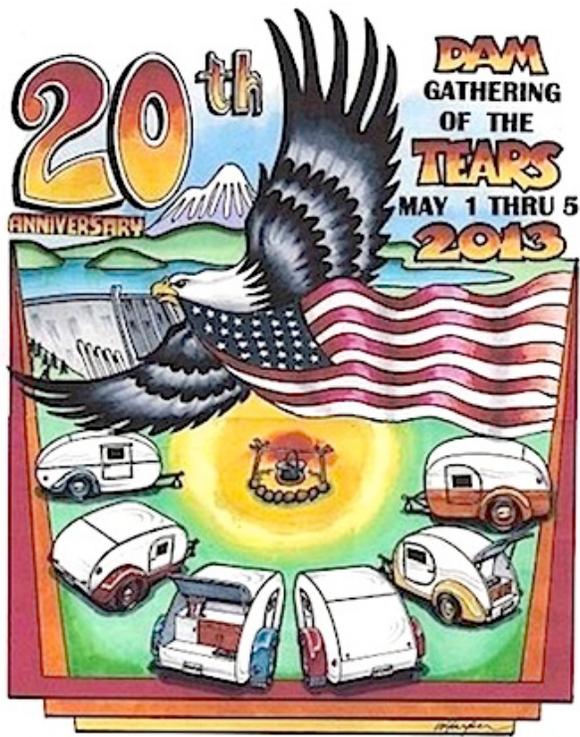




website does have the registration form for both of these gatherings with campground information too.

Lake Perris is the only gathering we host that is teardrop trailers only. Safe travels and happy camping to all and let the camping season begin!





The Granddaddy of All Teardrop Gatherings Turns 20!

Come help us Celebrate two decades of Dam Good Times with Dam Good People and Dam Fine Teardrops!

By Grant Whipp

First started in 1994 in a campground near the base of Shasta Dam in far-northern California (hence the name), the Dam Gathering is the world's oldest and longest running Teardrop Campout & Social Get-together. After outgrowing the original site in 1996, the event has since been held at Antlers RV Park & Campgrounds in Lakehead, a rustic & wooded facility with lots of room, right on the banks of Lake Shasta, just 25 miles north of Redding, CA, and 35 miles south of Mt. Shasta, just off of Interstate 5.

Typically a 4-day campout, attendance is usually in the 80-100 trailer range, and popular activities have included the Friday Night Dutch Oven Sampler and Next Cast Iron Chef competition along with the evening Lantern Light-Up, then Saturday's World-famous Chili Feed & Potluck, Awards, and Dutch Raffle.

This year we are expecting over 150 trailers from all over the country and have added an extra day! Special activities for this celebration include the Thursday Night Wine & Cheese Social, Pinewood Gravity Races, Live Music on Friday night, Hay Rides through the campground on Friday & Saturday, Kids activities

throughout the weekend, and the Five Wide Club will be building a Teardrop from start-to-finish in 4 days right in their campsite! There's even going to be a wedding on Saturday afternoon!

There is always lots to see & do in the area, as well ... including the fabulous Lake Shasta Caverns, Shasta Dam itself, the old Railroad town of Dunsmuir, Mt Shasta, and the annual Shasta Damboree Celebration in the town of Shasta Lake City. Great fishing can be found on the lake and in the Sacramento River and various feeding streams, so if you are an angler, bring your equipment or rent it from the neighboring marina.

We welcome ALL Teardrop enthusiasts. If you do not have a Teardrop, by all means come anyway and camp in a tent or whatever you have... we'll have a space for you. If you're new to Teardropping or intend to build one of your own, bring a camera or video cam and feast on all the ideas and innovations. Other tiny travel/camping trailers are always welcome as well, and we will have sites designated just for them.

Full details, including agenda and fees, can be found on the official websites - <http://www.teardrops.net/damgathering.html> and <http://damgatheringofthetears.weebly.com/index.html> - or by e-mailing info@teardrops.net or calling 530-242-6452 You are not going to want to miss this once-in-a-lifetime Celebration!

So, come on out & join us! We're looking forward to sharing this very special Dam good time with all our old, new, and yet-to-be-made friends!



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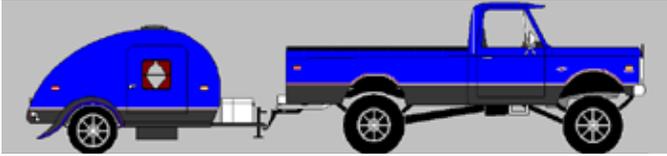
Gorge-ous Teardrops



By Jim and Joyce Bailey

I first saw a early model Kit sitting in some guy's yard about 14 years ago when I was living in Hood River, OR. I approached the owner about buying it but he said it was his cousins and didn't want to sell it, but it was to late. I was hooked on them. So I went to a couple of gatherings to look at the different models and makes. It just intensified my interest in one day having one for myself. I had just gone through a divorce and was pretty much broke. But I started buying materials a little at a time.

I have a photo of my truck and teardrop I used my AutoCad to draw. The truck was completed 14 years before, but I wanted the trailer to match it. So I drew it out and just dreamed of someday



having it. I matched the cushions to the interior of my truck, matched the wheels and even used Chevy running lights on the side.

As for the skin, I knew I was going to paint it to match my truck, so I used primed sheet metal for the skin. No use in paying for the higher priced aluminum when you're going to paint it.

Then I wanted a higher quality galley so I had the stainless lid installed and at the same time



had the running boards built. The steel fenders are from an original 30's teardrop. I have a photo of it on Grant Whipp's website under mysterious trailers. I bought it from a lady that lived back up in the hills. I have yet to find out what they came off of. They had the teardrop taillights on them with an emblem saying Oldsmobile. But I don't know if that was added or not.

I had plenty of time to think about what all I

wanted in the trailer. I had picked up different ideas from the different gatherings I attended just to see what I could implement into mine when I started building it. I saw a teardrop that had a foot well in it. I figured that when I was out camping, if it was cooler in the evenings I could sit inside and watch a movie or play games/cards or whatever.

In the end, after 6 years, I finally had mine completed. Or so I thought. I have since remodeled the interior cabinets, taking out the little DVD TV and putting in a 19" flat screen. Last year I purchased an 80 watt solar panel that powers it, everything from our TV to computers. No noisy generator for me. Next is the galley. I will be tearing out part of the cabinets and installing a Camp Chef stove/oven for the wife.

I ended up taking the trailer to several gather-



ings and shows. We go each year to the LeMays gathering in Spanaway, Washington. LeMays is the largest private car collection in the world. Harold LaMay owns over 3,000 cars. Our affili-



ation has been invited to show our trailers there for the past 16 yrs. My blue trailer was selected to be on the Dash plaque last year. From all this I had people sometimes three deep trying to get a look at it.

Due to the response of all this. I decided to start building trailers. The Kampmaster was one I saw on teardrop sites. I have around 25 pictures of the one owned by Mike Smith from I believe Sparks, NV. I didn't have anything else to go off of, so I built it using the photos of his. I would like to have had more photos from different an-



gles, but I think it turned out good the way it is.

I chose the Kampmaster because I liked the oddity of it. Kind of like a teardrop on steroids. It gave people the teardrop features but allowed them to get out of the elements in rain or windy weather. You can always unsnap one side or the other if you wanted an open feeling yet needed a wind break. Mainly it was just another challenge.

The Kampmaster came out in 49-50. It is also known as the Wild Goose because of how it looks with the back door open. I wanted something different on mine, so I put a dark cherry wood grained Formica on the outside. I installed the sink with electric pump and I am adding a built in two burner cook top stove rather than just the Coleman camp stove. Little bit of old and a little bit of new.



I was in construction for over 30 years and built everything from multimillion dollar homes to commercial/industrial buildings. My last position before I retired was construction manager for Providence Health Systems. In simple terms. I built hospitals. But my true love was working with wood and creating things of beauty.

Giving people what they want in their trailer is their special piece of identity. Sure they don't build it. But it's their ideas. But it also backfires on you sometimes. Most people have never had a teardrop or even slept in



one. It takes using one a few times to see what you need and what you don't. Kind of like when building a home. People are getting what they want. But after living in it for a few years, they see a change here and a change there. Just the way I see my blue teardrop. I changed out the inside and now I am going to change out the galley. To something that fits us more. But for now.

I am satisfied with building people their dream trailer. I have several customers who have wanted a trailer but didn't like the stipulations put on them. It was like, "This is our trailer. Take it or leave it." I wouldn't buy a car like that and I don't expect to buy a trailer like that either. So we off to build them one with their options. Our trailers start out at \$6250.00 for a 4x8 and go up from there.

We are working on our webpage at this time and hope to have it up and running in the next month or two.

We picked the name of Gorge-ous Teardrops because we are right in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge in Carson, WA. When I say the heart, I mean we are literally in the middle of tourism from the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic area. We are right along the Columbia River where the heart of windsurfing and kite-surfing is. There are mountains full of bike trails and year round skiing. From Mt. Saint Helens to Mt. Hood, its a scenic wonder land.



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“dedicated to the ease of camping”

By Kevin Cross

In early December of last year we had just opened up our Facebook page and website with basic information as to what we were planning to begin offering. During that time Todd Mowrer with TCTeardrops contacted us to make us aware of their teardrop trailer line. The first thing I noticed was the unique styling of their trailers. They were obviously built with a specific purpose in mind. A visit to the TCTeardrops website made that purpose clear. They were built to make camping in a teardrop as easy as possible, especially for the serious sports enthusiasts who like to bring all their gear with them. TCTeardrop trailers say “Bring it on!” There is no doubt in my mind that there are plenty of people out there looking for exactly what they are offering. As a result I decided to interview Todd and find out more.

How did you get started building teardrops?

First and foremost, we love to camp - which for us means bikes, kayaks and all of the gear that goes with. We had a pop-up trailer for a few years, and we tent camped on occasion. We noticed that many trips seemed to be more work than play, so we started looking for a better way to camp. After one particularly rainy, cold weekend, we came home, opened everything back up and dried everything out, sat down exhausted and turned on the TV. We just happened to catch an episode of "RV Crazy" featuring Teardrop campers. Todd had always wanted to build one, so we decided to sell the pop-up and buy the materials to build a Teardrop. The pop-up sold the next day, and we built our very first teardrop - which we dedicated "to the ease of camping" (that became our slogan). The Teardrop life-style is just so simple; we can take off on a moment's notice without so much as a reservation and actually ENJOY our time outdoors, rain or shine!

How long have you been building trailers?

That first Teardrop was built almost 6 years ago. It took 6 months of nights and weekends to research, design and build. When we started camping in it people would always stop and say "can you sleep in that thing?", then they would realize that not only could we sleep in there (and Todd is 6'2" tall), we also had a kitchen/galley and a rack system. Then they would ask us where we got it from because they wanted one, too! So a year later we built another trailer and sold it on EBay. We lost \$5.00...but we gained momentum and got some orders! Todd and Carol's "TCTeardrops LLC" was born!

I noticed your website lists a "try it before you buy it" offer. Can you tell us more about that?

We had a really nice couple come to see us last fall; they were looking for a Teardrop to take on their vacation to the east coast. They own Indian Trails Campground in southwest Wisconsin and were planning a trip once the campground closed for the season. Since we mostly do custom builds we didn't have anything "in stock" at the time, so they offered to purchase our personal Teardrop to take on their trip, PLUS they ordered what became our first "Extreme Off Road" Teardrop - so they actually own 2



TCTeardrops now. The first one they use as a rental at their campground, the second one is their personal teardrop. You can rent a TCTeardrop from them and either camp at Indian Trails Campground to "try it", or take it on vacation wherever you want to go. Anyone can contact them to reserve the rental. We hope they expand their fleet!

What do you feel sets your teardrops apart from other manufacturer's trailers?

A few things. We primarily do custom builds, which means that we are able to work closely with each customer to make their Teardrop what THEY want it to be, the way they plan



to use it. All of our Teardrops feature 2 doors and 2 windows as standard equipment, and all of the doors and windows have screens so you can open them up for a nice cross-breeze. Our Teardrops are designed so you can sit up inside comfortably - you're not stuck lying down if you want to sit and read a book on a rainy day. TCTeardrops have the shear strength to handle a rack system on top to carry boats, bikes, etc... You can also open the back galley lid to make your lunch even if you have 17-foot sea kayaks on the rack, like we do. You can quickly open up the Fox Wing awning, which mounts to the rack if it's raining or just for shade, and still have your galley open AND your kayaks on top! Not too many teardrops can do all of that, all at once, in a matter of minutes. Not to mention that we offer 200 different colors, personalized graphics, teardrop wraps, custom canopies and add-on rooms, and lots of other accessories to choose from. We try to use the best quality parts and buy local as much as possible, while keeping our teardrops simple to use and affordable to purchase.

I understand that every one of your units come with a personal guarantee. How does that work?

When a customer orders a TCTeardrop, they put a deposit down on their purchase. We guarantee that, if they decide they do not want their teardrop upon completion, we will refund their deposit within 10 business days. We also do our best to keep in touch with our customers after the sale, many of whom become our friends, and we ask that if they ever have a problem to let us know so that we can help them with it.

You offer a variety of trailer sizes as well as a number of options for your teardrops. What are some of the most popular selections?

Our sizes are 4'x8', 5'x8', 5'x9' and 5'x10'. All TCTeardrops also have an additional 2' front storage rack as a standard feature. Our biggest seller is our 5'x9' teardrop - it seems to offer a large enough galley for most customers as well as ample sleeping room in the cabin, but is still small enough to be pulled by almost any vehicle. The 4'x8' is popular with people that want to tow with a small car, since the 4'x8' only weighs 750 lbs. All of our units are light enough to tow behind most vehicles. Even the 5'x10' is only 1100 lbs. Lots of options for customers to make their teardrop unique - no two TCTeardrops are exactly alike! We are also a dealer



for Oz Tents, and the Fox Wing awning has become a very popular accessory, as well as our custom-built changing rooms made by Duane's Cover It All. Duane makes our custom storage covers, cabinet doors, canopies, zippered screen doors - you name it, he can probably cover it!

I recently read that TCTeardrops is hosting their own gathering. Tell us more about that.

We will be celebrating our 5th year in business this fall with our first annual TCTeardrops Camp outing, October 4-6, 2013 at Indian Trails Campground in Pardeeville, WI. You can call 608-429-3244 for a reservation. You don't have to be a TCTeardrop customer, anyone is welcome. We just want to promote camping and getting outdoors while celebrating our 5th year with friends.

Can you give us a rough idea of the price range of your teardrops?

Our 4'x8' model starts at \$3,800 and our 5'x10' Teardrop starts at \$5,800. The nice thing about our teardrops is that you can always add on accessories as you go. We include enough standard features with every teardrop that all you really need to start is your sleeping bag and food, and you are ready to camp.

How can our readers find out more about TCTeardrops trailers?

You can visit our website www.tcteardrops.com to view all of our models, features and accessories, as well as lots of pictures and our pricing. You can also call our office 715-573-7247 or send an email to info@tcteardrops.com - or like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/TCTeardropsLLC

We look forward to hearing from you!



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Hot and Simple Desserts

By Rhonda Gentry

The fire may be dying down, but you can still produce something warm, luscious and easy to make to end the day. Each of these desserts can be made with three or fewer ingredients, with several variations, depending on what you brought along on your trip.



Hot Caramel Apples

Ingredients:

- One tablespoon butter (optional, but it sure helps with cleanup)
- One can sweetened condensed milk
- Three large or four medium apples, thickly sliced

Directions:

- Melt the butter in a heavy pan, tilting to coat the bottom of the pan.
- Add the milk and cook on a grate over warm coals stirring frequently, until the milk begins to thicken and turn caramel-colored. (You can cook directly on the coals, but you'll need to stir constantly to keep it from scorching.) This should take about 15 minutes.
- Add the apples and stir. Cook just until the apples are warm - they should remain firm.

Tip - If you like your apples cooked down, the sauce with taste just as yummy, but may curdle from the reaction with the apple juice.

Variations:

- Add a little molasses or dark brown sugar to increase the caramel flavor.
- Add a teaspoon of cinnamon to make it spicier.
- Add some chopped nuts to make it crunchier.
- Add a handful of chocolate chips, because everything is better with chocolate!



Sugar Cone S'mores

A Google search shows that a whole lot of people have discovered this wonderful treat!

Ingredients for traditional flavors:

- Sugar cones
- Miniature marshmallows
- Milk chocolate chips

Directions:

- Partially wrap the sugar cones with foil, leaving enough to completely cover the top of the cone. Wrapping it before filling helps prevent spills.
- Fill the cones with the marshmallows and chocolate chips, in whatever proportions that you want.
- Seal the top closed, then heat according to your available heat source.

Tip - An empty egg carton makes a great rack for holding the cones while you fill them.



Tossed in the coals of your fire, they should take about 3-4 minutes. Heated on the grill, they will take 4-6 minutes. If you miss the joys of roasting the marshmallows over the open fire, just make a little hook with the aluminum foil and dangle the whole thing from your roasting stick. Whatever heating method you use, when you open up the foil, you will be greeted with sticky, chocolaty goodness.

Variations:

- Waffle cones – they'll need more filling and a little longer to heat
- Semi-sweet, dark chocolate, butterscotch or peanut butter chips
- Caramels, Toffee pieces, Nuts, Coconut
- Actually, if it fits in an ice cream cone, it's a possibility!



Dutch Oven Dump Cake

Grandma's favorite go-to dessert makes any easy leap to Dutch ovens and campfire cooking. This makes a crumb-top fruity dessert.

Ingredients for grandma's traditional flavor:

- One package yellow cake mix
- One can cherry pie filling

- One can crushed pineapple
- Two tablespoons butter

Directions:

- Dump the cans of fruit in a Dutch oven.
- Dump the cake mix on top.
- Dot with pieces of butter.
- Place on top of 10-12 coals.
- Cover with the lid and top with a layer of coals and bake for about 40 minutes, checking after 30 minutes.

Tip - For even baking, turn the pot one-quarter turn one direction and the lid one-quarter turn in the opposite direction every ten minutes.

Variations:

- For a cake-like topping, pour one can of Sprite on top of the cake mix before baking.
- For peach cobbler, use two cans of peaches instead of the cherries and pineapple.
- For a Black Forest version, use two cans of cherries and a chocolate cake mix.
- For a tropical delight, use lemon cake mix and top with coconut.
- Use two 12-oz bags of frozen berries instead of canned fruit. You'll want to add the can of Sprite to this one.

With just a few easy-to-pack ingredients and your imagination, your camping trip can be wonderfully sweet!





Crossroads of America 2013 July 25-28, 2013 Tearjerkers Gathering

Our gathering in the hills of southern Indiana was started in 2011 with the help of six of the “Tearjerkers” chapters that made up the organizing committee.

Although there have been several “major” gatherings over the years, there are few in the center of the USA. Our multi-chapter group decided that Indiana (commonly known as “the Crossroads of America”) might be a good place to have a big gathering. We also decided that the name, “Crossroads of America”, would be the obvious choice.

As we began to form the committee and start the process we found that there was a lot of interest from across the states and into Canada as well. Our planning and promotion was the heart of the gathering and soon we were taking registrations from campers throughout the 48 states.

We had a terrific first season at McCormick’s Creek State Park in Spencer, Indiana and chose that site for our second gathering as well. This year we have campers coming in from as far away as northern California to New York City to Louisiana and Wisconsin.

We would like to extend our invitation to any campers from small “Teardrops” to larger travel trailers.

Our event is scheduled for **July 25-28, 2013** and camping reservations can be made at [our reservations link](#).

[Our main web site](#) will describe the gathering and give you updates on activities as the gathering draws near.

Please come and join us by making your camping reservations as soon as possible. The State Park will fill up fast so those who wait will be looking in from outside the park in a few weeks.

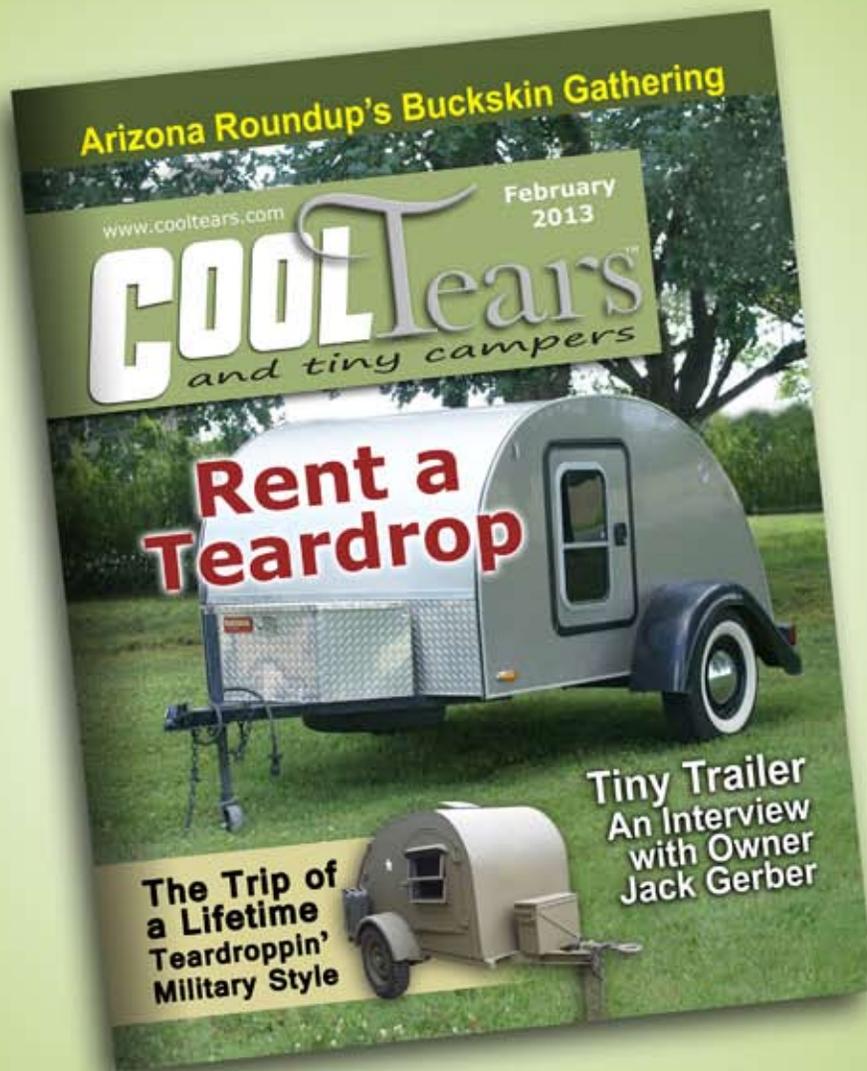
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