

Arizona Roundup's Buckskin Gathering

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February
2013

COOL TearsTM
and tiny campers

Rent a Teardrop



**The Trip of
a Lifetime
Teardroppin'
Military Style**



Tiny Trailer
**An Interview
with Owner
Jack Gerber**

COOL TearsTM

and tiny campers

Vol. 1 No. 1

M A G A Z I N E

16 COVER STORY

Don't have a teardrop yet
but want to try one out?

Rent a Teardrop



3 Editorial - Our Premiere Issue!
By Kevin Cross

4 Feature Story - The Trip of a Lifetime - Teardroppin'
Military Style
By Alan W. Johnson

9 Gatherings - Arizona Roundup's Buckskin
Gathering
By Grant Whipp

21 Manufacturer Feature - Tiny Trailer - An interview with
owner Jack Gerber
By Kevin Cross and Jack Gerber

25 Campfire Cookin' - An Introduction to Dutch Oven
Cooking
By Rhonda Gentry

28 Camping App Review - We Camp Here - The easy way to
find a great campground
By Kevin Cross

31 News - What's going on in the Teardrop and Tiny Camper World



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Our Premiere Issue!

Welcome to the premiere issue of Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Magazine! We are so excited about bringing you this magazine. The support shown by teardroppers has been overwhelming.

I have been working in the business world and the publishing market a long time and I know how competitive and ruthless some people can be. As a result I cringed a little as I started to talk with various people about the possibility of starting this publication. I feared that eventually I would cross paths with someone who would not take kindly to some new guy coming in and asking a lot of questions. I was a little nervous that I would be considered an outsider since I have not been around the teardropping as long as many others had been.

As it turned out nothing could have been farther from the truth! I have been camping for years and know that folks who camp tend to be friendly, easy going people. But after spending months talking to and working with teardroppers I am convinced that they are the friendliest people on the planet! Everyone in the forums and on facebook have not only welcomed me but provided help in any way they could. Everyone has been very enthusiastic about this magazine.

So, I want to thank all of you who have subscribed, who have like and participated in our facebook page, and sent messages of encouragement. You all have made this process a wonderful experience!

We already have a lot of great articles lined up for the next issue and beyond. So there is much more to come!

Thanks for all your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Cross'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large 'K' and a long, sweeping tail.

Kevin Cross
Editor
Cool Tears Magazine™

The Trip Of A Lifetime **TEARDROPPIN' MILITARY STYLE**

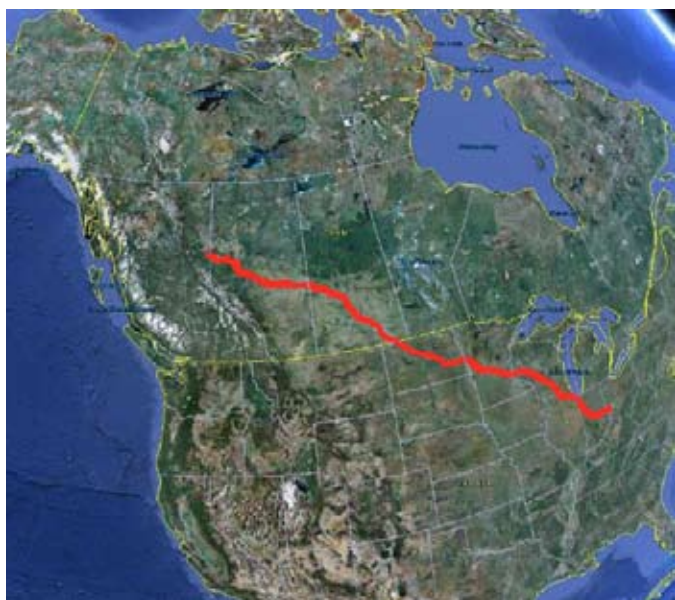


By Alan W. Johnson



I inherited a 1943 Willys US Army jeep from my father a while back and started tinkering with it. While looking for parts and advice, I learned about and joined the Military Vehicle Preservation Association (MVPA). The MVPA is a great group of folks who share a passion for restoring and driving vintage military vehicles. They also enjoy conducting “epic” convoys of these vehicles, such as a 2009 US transcontinental voyage to honor the Army’s 1919 horseless carriage expedition over the Lincoln Highway.

In 2010 I learned of another planned MVPA trip – this one being a 28 day, 4100-mile Alaska Highway expedition in the summer of 2012 to



commemorate the Army's highway construction during World War II. The organizers even included an excursion up the Dempster Highway to the Arctic Circle and established a web page at www.facebook.com/groups/AlaskaConvoy. I was hooked! As a kid, I loved reading Jack London stories of the Yukon gold rush and far northwest and this trip seemed like a "bucket list trifecta"! I could visit an area I really wanted to see and learn about its gold history, all while indulging my new passion for military jeeps. My wife cringed at the idea but agreed to support it and so I started planning.

Such a trip brings considerable logistics challenges – the primary one being that the convoy's start point in Dawson Creek, BC is about 2400 miles from my Ohio home. My jeep's cruise speed is only about 40 mph so I decided to transport it on a flatbed trailer. My other major challenge dealt with lodging along the way. The

MVPA trip organizers learned that the Alaska Highway hotel/motels would be expensive and scarce, and so many of us roughly 100 participants elected to sleep in tents or campers. I have a tent and some camping equipment but the idea of sleeping in that tent for the round trip's expected seven weeks just didn't appeal much to me. I knew to expect a fair amount of rain and maybe snow on the Alaska Highway and I didn't wish to become some bear's midnight snack!

A friend at work happened to be toying with the idea of building a teardrop camper trailer and he suggested I build one too. He showed me some of the commercial trailer websites on the internet and introduced me to the [Tear-drops N Tiny Travel Trailers \(tnttt\) forum](http://www.tnttt.com). Perfect! The tnttt forum is wonderful – great people, superb ideas, and some good humor to boot! I'm much more active on a vintage military jeeps forum though, so when I established my own teardrop build thread I put it at <http://www.g503.com/forums/viewtopic.php?f=141&t=201740>.

I began by thinking about what I wanted the teardrop to be and do. I did not want to modify the jeep to pull it. I wanted the teardrop to aesthetically match the jeep—i.e., to look like an actual vintage military item although to my knowledge the Army never used them. I wanted it to be functional: big enough to sleep comfortably in and contain adequate storage for food and clothing. I needed it to be small and light enough so it wouldn't overwhelm my 60-horsepower jeep and its marginal brakes. Finally, I wanted the wheels and suspension parts to be common with my jeep because

spare parts storage space would be minimal. A Korean War-vintage M-100 trailer addressed several of these design challenges – I borrowed



the axle, springs, fenders, and tongue assembly from one which solved the parts commonality problem, simplified the jeep/trailer interface, and helped preserve the retro look.



I had a friend weld a 3' x 7' frame from square tube steel. This 3' x 7' dimension would also become the teardrop's inside width and length. The narrow 3' width was dictated by the M-100

trailer axle I borrowed, which in-turn matches the jeep's track width. I picked the 7' length teardrop dimension because I wanted the teardrop to fit cross-wise on the flatbed trailer I would use to transport everything to the convoy start point. This size seemed much smaller than what I



was seeing on the tnttt forum so I built some cardboard prototypes to be sure I could actually fit!

The teardrop is pretty light – under 600 lbs empty I think, with about 75 lb of tongue weight. The floor and walls are built from $\frac{3}{4}$ " MDO ply-





wood. The top uses poplar spars, insulation, 0.04" aluminum sheet, and 5mm lauan on the inside. I bought most of the aluminum trim and stainless fasteners from local hardware stores and got great deals on the rear hatch hinge and

other specialty parts from Grant Whipp and his [Lil' Bear business](#). The only electric wiring (other than for tail/brake lights) is a ground fault-protected box for interior 110 volt power. There is no kitchen in the back – just a storage shelf. My actu-



al kitchen was a folding aluminum table, chair, and backpacker's white gas stove. I used an Army Mermite can for my refrigerator. The teardrop needed about 7 months of my evenings and weekends to build.

So how did it all work? The MVPA's Alaska Highway trip was wonderful! It was everything I hoped it would be. I drove about 9000 miles in the seven weeks and saw some incredibly beautiful country in the US and Canada along the way. I stepped across the Arctic Circle. I saw the Northern Lights and huge glaciers. I enjoyed warm summer days and endured cold, wet winter-like ones in my open jeep with no heat and hand-operated windshield wipers. I spent one night at a place called Mendeltna Creek in Alaska—the boyhood home of one of my new convoy friends. He and his dad built a cabin on the creek in 1943 and the cabin and general area were apparently little-changed from his childhood days there. I saw lots of animals, including my first caribou and a dead



The teardrop spurred questions almost everywhere I stopped: “How can you sleep in something that small?” “Is that where your dog sleeps?” “Will it fit in your pocket?” “Do you get claustrophobia in that thing?”

And the one I liked the best: “How many of those did the Army buy?”



moose along the highway that appeared larger than my jeep! I got to meet a bunch of interesting people from all over the world and become friends with them. The teardrop worked out very well. I rigged it to sleep in even when

transporting it on the flatbed trailer, which helped keep trip costs down. In testament to the great tech advice I learned from the tnttt



forum, the teardrop easily survived the trip -- including 1100 miles of rough gravel roads -- while keeping the dust and wet out and letting me sleep comfortably every night. While mornings saw my tent-based colleagues scrambling for 30 minutes or so to fold and stow wet gear, I could sleep a little longer and then just dress and go. Overall I think I gained an hour of useful time each day by avoiding the tent setup/teardown chore. I never felt compelled to rent a hotel room in my seven weeks on the road.

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ARIZONA ROUNDUP'S BUCKSKIN GATHERING

By Grant Whipp

The campgrounds and RV park for Buckskin State Park nestles on the inside of a broad horse-shoe curve in the Colorado River just a ways downstream from Lake Havasu and only a bit upstream from Parker, AZ. This was the site for the Arizona Round-Up group's 5th Buckskin Gathering for Teardrop and Vintage Travel Trailer enthusiasts last November 29 through December 2, 2012. The weather was warm and sunny (a very pleasant respite from the cold & dreary late Fall temperatures we get here at home!), and owners & residents of 51 assorted trailers basked in the sunshine and enjoyed the green & well-kept grounds and the friendly staff! The campers came from all over the southwest (SoCal, So-Nevada, Arizona, Utah, & New Mexico) as well as one couple from Colorado, and we traveled down from FarNorthern California. The AZ Round-Up folks could not have been friendlier hosts, and everyone enjoyed a fabulous & relaxing weekend!



Looking upstream from just above the Park Entrance.



Looking upstream from the CA side of the Colorado River.

The AZ Round-Up is a group of like-minded teardrop & vintage trailer enthusiasts from Arizona who formed in 2002 to host & promote Gatherings year 'round throughout their home state, and advance the awareness of their favorite means of camping. You can find out more about them and their schedule of events on their website, www.azroundup.net.

About five years ago, the head Ranger for Buckskin State Park approached the group to see if they could round up 25 or so trailers to help them celebrate the 50th anniversary of their State Park's system. The Park was so nice, and the staff so friendly, that AZ Round-Up decided to make the event an annual affair, and it's become a highly anticipated campout in their annual schedule.



Ray Parmenter's Custom Rayme Teardrop behind his 1952 Ford F-1 pickup ... one of the AZ Roundup Hosts



Jack & Karren Keldenich's fresh-but-unfinished Homebuilt on its maiden voyage behind their 1937 Ford Tudor



Roger & Jill Henry's 2005 Camp-Inn 550 Ultra enjoying another fabulous weekend camping! Purchased Last Memorial Day, they've been out in it at least once a month, and they are both grateful for the freedom this trailer affords them to camping again. Roger is in a wheelchair, and the wide doors and low threshold of the Camp-Inn makes entry into the trailer and exit an easy transfer.



Roly Nelson and his 1/4 Nelson Stacker- It's built on a Harbor Freight 40" x 48" folding utility trailer. The cabin is 6' long and just a tad over 40" wide. The body is all wood, and the whole thing weighs less than 300lbs. Roly is a master woodcrafter and did all the work himself in a tiny shop next to his house near Lake Elsinor, CA. Because of the small size of his shop and garage, he designed the trailer so that it could stand on its end in a more-or-less out-of-the-way corner, hence the name "Stacker". Since his first teardrop was called the 1/2 Nelson, it only follows that this one would be the "1/4 Nelson".



Eddie Miller's unique, one-of-a-kind tandem-axle rear-entry 1945 Covered Wagon. Eddie has been working on this for several years, taking it to gatherings all the while, and he says it's "almost done" (but, are they ever?!). One of the additional features of this trailer is the dropped floor at the rear entry that allows standing headroom in the back of the trailer.



How many of us remember playing with Lincoln Logs as kids? That was the idea behind this particular teardrop that draws massive amounts of attention where ever its owner, Mike Gillio, takes it, and this gathering was no exception ... it was very difficult to get any pictures of it without a crowd all around it! I was never able to meet up with Mike, so I can't tell you any more about the trailer or how it was built or how he achieved the log-cabin look on the outside. I can tell you that the workmanship is first-rate and well deserving of all the attention it garners!

Buckskin isn't just about teardrops & vintage trailers ... it is just as much (if not more so) about the people who own them and the camaraderie they share and the willingness they have to openly show anyone who is interested their treasured campers! The fabulous Saturday night potluck more than satiated the appetites of all the attendees, which included desert in the form of not one, not two, but THREE surprise birthday cakes! As is the case with most get-togethers of this nature, if you leave the dinner area hungry, it's your own fault.



Mary VanDuzen is a famous ceramic artist from Scottsdale, AZ, and happens to own a Little Guy Silver Shadow teardrop. Along with immersing herself in the fellowship of Teardropping, she also brings her stunning pottery to the gatherings she attends, nearly all of which have specific lettering carved into the clay, and all with spectacular multi-hued glazing. Don't miss your chance to pick some up when ever you get a chance!



Bridget & Hillary are fast becoming well-known for their hand-crafted and custom-made teardrop and vintage trailer potholders. They have "stock" patterns you can choose from, or they will make one for your specific trailer, color scheme and all. Hillary was there (in her "in-progress" 1958 Caveman Camper) with a great selection and is taking orders.



In addition, the area has some exciting and unique attractions to go and visit, from a variety of “floating bars” up and down the river to the infamous Desert Bar several miles out into the desert, from the many sites in & around Lake Havasu (London Bridge, etc.) to the annual flea markets in downtown Parker ... there are the nearby casinos, desert jeep excursions, various watercraft rentals to explore the Colorado River, hiking & mountain biking, and the world-famous Quartzite, AZ, is an easy drive (though this time of year is a little early for the renowned Snowbird migration & associated festivities). We were there for four days and only saw a handful of sites and barely met half the people at the gathering, let alone all of the trailers!



for yourselves what makes this a “must do” Gathering for December in the Southwest (and then get ready to book your own site for the 2014 event)! More info about Buckskin State Park can be found at www.azstateparks.com



The iconic faux steeple outside the Desert Bar, just one of many sites & features both outside and inside this famous establishment ... a definite must-see when you visit the area, drinker or not!

Next year's Buckskin Gathering is scheduled for December 5-8, 2013, and while the Park is already completely reserved for the event, you can always stop by for a visit and see

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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.

Hope to see you there,
CRA 2013 Organizers

<http://cra2013.weebly.com/index.html>

A photograph of a teardrop camper parked in a wooded area during sunset. The sun is low on the left, casting a warm glow through the trees. The camper is dark-colored with a rounded front and a single visible wheel with a red rim. The ground is covered with fallen leaves.

Don't Have a Teardrop Camper Yet But Want to T

Rent a Teardrop

By Kevin Cross

As some of you may know by now, although I have been camping for many years I am new to the teardrop world. I had seen them now and then on the road but never knew much about them. As my kids get older they are spending more time doing things with friends and less time with us. On top of that my daughter is working on her college plans. Yikes! With all of that comes the realization that we are approaching the empty nest period of our lives. Enter the Teardrop Trailer.

ry One Out?



Realizing that the two of us will still want to do some camping, we decided that those cool teardrops were now a more practical option than ever. After some research online I decided to see if I could find a dealer within a reasonable distance where I could go and actually see various models firsthand. A quick Google search brought up a place called [Missouri Teardrop Trailers](#). Not only was there a dealer in the area, but it was only about three miles from my house! It is apparently one of very few places in the central U.S. to find a teardrop.

We stopped by the dealership and spoke with Dana the owner. He was very helpful and gave us the grand tour. He also introduced us to a few other very light-



weight trailers that we were not aware existed. They were not teardrops but all them can be towed behind fairly lightweight vehicles. We found out that Missouri Teardrop also rents teardrops as well as the other ultra-lightweight campers. A few weeks later we made arrangements to take out one of the rentals. Missouri Teardrop Trailers carries Little Guy and Silver Shadow Teardrops, as well as CAMPLITE trailers and truck campers. The one we took out was a 5' x 10' Silver shadow teardrop.

We were excited to try out a teardrop so we decided we could not wait until spring. The only weekend we could work out was Thanksgiving weekend and it had just turned cold. Really cold! The first night turned out to be about 22° F. We were a little concerned, but we were determined. The other hurdle was that we are both a little claustrophobic. My guess is that there may be others considering a teardrop that may have

the same two basic concerns. Can you stay warm in one and is it a little too small of a space? We were about to answer those questions for ourselves.

Because it was going to be so cold and we weren't sure if we could stay in such a small space for that long we decided to camp the first night at home. Once inside I felt like it was plenty of space. In fact I felt like it looked bigger on the inside than it did on the outside. My wife... not so much. We sat up



in it for a while and then eventually climbed under the covers to sleep. I fell asleep but it was not very long until my wife had enough. She headed in the house. As far as the temperature we thought it was warm enough even with the windows opened a little and the roof vent slightly opened. We did run a small ceramic heater but it was on low and had not been running long at all.

Fortunately, the story did not end there. My wife agreed to give it another try the next night so we headed off to a campground about 30 minutes from our house. We even brought our kids and they slept in the back of our SUV. We found our spot and set up camp, which went very quickly. We left it hooked to the vehicle because it was just going to be one night and we were not planning to go anywhere. We also did not have to put the stabilizers down although that would only have taken a few more minutes. We have

set up tents, pop-up campers, and even a 28ft travel trailer before. This was by far the easiest set up we have ever done. We kept feeling like we were forgetting something. But nope! Just back in, stabilize and plug in. That's it! Wow! We almost didn't know what to do with the extra time. By the way, I really liked the electrical connection on this trailer. In the past we have always had the cord that pulls out of the side of the trailer. The problem is that sometimes it's a little tricky trying to get it back in. On the Silver Shadow you just plug the provided cable into the side and tighten the ring that secures it. Maybe it's just me but it seemed much easier.



Having set up so quickly, we went ahead and built a fire for dinner, cooked our meal, and enjoyed some s'mores. We had a really great time. It was still pretty cold that night but gathered around the fire it was nice and toasty. Everything seems to be better around the camp fire.

We all decided we would head in and check out the camper. Yes, all of us. All four of us climbed into the camper and watched a movie on our portable DVD player. Then it was bed time, the moment of truth. Could my wife handle sleeping in a teardrop? Good news! She got settled in, opened the window a bit and did just fine. By morning she said she felt like she would have no problem sleeping in one again. It was just a matter of getting used to it.

The trailer was very nice. The craftsmanship seemed to be very good and it towed nicely. We pulled it with our SUV because we don't have a hitch on our smaller car yet. Although there are lighter trailers it was obvious that the Silver Shadow could easily be

pulled by a much smaller vehicle.

As I mentioned before, the shore power connection was easy and the trailer had both 110v AC and 12v DC outlets. There was plenty of lighting on the inside, outside and over the galley. My wife loved the "kitchen." There was room for a cooler, and cabinets



with doors and drawers. I was pleasantly surprised that the drawers had full extension glides. I know from my cabinet shop days that those are not cheap but they are a very nice feature.



The model we rented had a few extra options as well. It had a good size tongue storage box, air conditioning, and the star gazer window. My wife commented that the additional window helped prevent the claustrophobia feeling. The interior was very nice with lots

of storage and excellent craftsmanship. I got the impression that quality and attention to detail were a priority of the factory.

Overall it was every bit as fun and convenient as I thought it would be and more. We haven't quite decided yet what direction we are going to go but I would definitely consider a Silver Shadow if I bought a commercially built Teardrop.

One of the things I read a lot in the forums is that teardrops draw attention and that very evident even on this short trip. We had a lot of lookers and smiles as well as a comment or two from folks at the various places we stopped along the way.

If you are interested in teardrop and light-weight trailer sales and rentals, give Dana a call. He is a great guy who obviously cares about helping people make the right decision on a purchase or enjoying their time in a rental. He has taken the time to personally visit the manufacturing facilities to make sure that the trailers he sells are built with high standards in mind. So if you are anywhere near Missouri be sure to stop buy [Missouri Teardrop Trailers](http://MissouriTeardropTrailers.com).



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Tiny Trailer - An interview with owner Jack Gerber

As we started to put together the Cool Tears web sight we went in search for a great photo of a teardrop trailer to include in the header. We wanted something that had somewhat of a vintage style but with a modern touch. We found two images that we thought would be perfect and contacted the manufactures by email. One of them, Tiny Trailer, got back to us almost immediately and was very gracious to let us use their image and provide us with whatever we needed. Since then we have had the opportunity to communicate quite a bit with Tiny Trailer and have learned a lot about their company and their product. They have a great product and a great success story. We recently interviewed Jack, the owner of Tiny Trailer, and thought you might enjoy learning more about him, his wife Annie, and their tiny trailers.

When did you first become aware of teardrop trailers?

In the early 1990's Annie saw a teardrop trailer on display at the Seattle REI. She really liked the concept and thought it would be a good fit for us. We started camping with a van and tent for the kids, moved up to the truck and camper and then the motorhome. It seemed we were always getting bigger, better, and more costly in time, expense and upkeep.

Annie was ready to get back to basics and the teardrop trailer she saw was small, lightweight and could be towed behind a fuel-efficient car. It had a cozy cabin for two with hard sides that would shelter us from storms and allow us to sleep comfortably in bear country. The teardrop trailer even had a small camp kitchen to cook and prepare meals under the lift up rear hatch.

What did you do before you started manufacturing teardrops?

I owned and operated my own custom cabinet business for 27 years. I specialized in the design and manufacture of custom cabinets for banks, dental clinics and high-end homes. I then pursued a lifelong dream of teaching high school woodshop and construction trades, sharing my passion, knowledge, and skills with students.

How did you get started building Teardrops?

It all started with Annie seeing a teardrop trailer on display at REI. When we got our first Subaru Outback in 2003, I researched, designed and built the ideal teardrop trailer for us to tow behind it.

How long have you been building Teardrops?

I have been building teardrop trailers for nine

years. Since building the first Tiny Trailer in 2004, I have discovered a passion for designing and building Retro Style Teardrop Camping Trailers that I am proud of and have loads of fun using.

Was there a particular inspiration for the style of your teardrops?

Our trailer had to be true to its teardrop trailer heritage in design and features. The Tiny Trailer is built with retro 50's styling and modern materials. I wanted to keep it small on a 4'x8' platform so it would be lightweight and easy to tow behind our Subaru Outback. It needed to have a comfortable bed that was 6'-3" long with full-length storage underneath for fly rods and camping gear.

We both wanted an efficient kitchen with a pull out camp stove at a com-



fortable working height. In addition we wanted to be able to stand up under the rear hatch and be sheltered from the sun and rain while preparing meals.

What do you feel sets your teardrops apart from others?

Most trailers made today fit the McDonalds mold of being supersized. They are at least 5' wide and 9' or 10' long. It was my goal when designing the Tiny Trailer to keep it lean at 4' x 8' with a bed that was 6'-3" long and to have an efficient kitchen with a pullout camp stove.

As a designer of kitchens and professional workspaces I created the Tiny Trailer's compact



galley kitchen to be fun, efficient and easy to use. I placed the Coleman steel belted ice chest on the front of the

trailer for easy access. When you want a pop or a snack, just pull over and you can easily get what you want out of it. When you're ready to fix a hot meal or you just want to make coffee and cook oatmeal while waiting in line for a

San Juan Island ferry, it's as easy as opening the rear hatch, sliding out the pullout camp stove and reaching the food and utensils from the full extension drawers at hand.

How many do you build per year?

Working by myself I am able to build 8 – 10 trailers a year.



After putting all the work into building them, do you have a hard time letting them go?

Not at all, I love to see the smiles on my customer's faces and their pride of ownership when they take delivery of their Tiny Trailer.



Are there any options or accessories available?

I build one model of the Tiny Trailer and it comes fully equipped for your camping adventures as specified on our website, www.tinytrailer.com. It comes with two cabin doors, an insulated ceiling, Fantastic roof vent, 12 volt power ports, overhead lighting, 46-1/2"x75" bunk with Sunbrella marine fabric, full length under-bunk storage and two aft cabin shelves. Anodized aluminum exterior, teardrop shaped running lights, Airstream's original rear license plate light, and HDO plywood bottom. Powder coated 2" tube steel frame chassis, 2000lb torsion suspension with EZ lube hubs, powder coated fenders with gray hammered

finish, 2" ball hitch, front jack with caster, two rear stabilizing jacks, 15" tires, chrome wheels with moons and under mount



spare tire, rear galley with cherry cabinets, Italian laminate counter top, Coleman propane camp stove, stainless steel belted ice chest, overhead lighting and 12volt power ports. We even include a set of enamelware dishes.

What is the longest distance anyone has traveled to purchase a tiny trailer?

We are located in Entiat, WA and Pete came all the way from Albuquerque, New Mexico to pick up his Tiny Trailer that we had on display at Cascade Subaru in Wenatchee, WA. Pete found our website and asked if we had a trailer on hand and what options were available. I let him know that we had a completed trailer and that the Tiny Trailer came fully equipped as specified on our website. The next day he emailed back SOLD and plans were made for him to drive up and get his new trailer. Pete had never seen one of our trailers in person but he liked what he saw on the website. He wired the payment to us in full and then was here by weeks end to pick up his trailer. Pete was extremely pleased. The Tiny Trailer was even better than he expected. Like my dad used to say, "If you can't do it right why bother doing it at all?"

Do you get to go camping very often?

Annie and I love to go camping and our Tiny Trailer makes it so easy to do. We keep it packed and ready to go on a moments notice. When

we get home it takes less than an hour to wash it off, store our gear in the trailer and put it away, ready for our next adventure.

Last year we started camping the first week of April and went almost every weekend through October. Were so blessed in the northwest to have so many wonderful places to explore.

How can our readers find out more information or contact you to purchase a unit?

We have a great website, www.tinytrailer.com and [Facebook](#) with information on our Tiny Trailers and how to contact us.



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An Introduction to Dutch Oven Cooking

By Rhonda Gentry

Nothing beats the flavor and aroma of breakfast cooked over the open fire. In fact, most campers have perfected breakfast. All too often, though, lunch and dinner consist of sandwiches or something dumped out of a can and heated on a camp stove. If you're ready for healthier and tastier meals, it's time to try Dutch oven cooking. Dutch ovens are pots with legs and flat, lipped lids. These features allow you to bake, using hot coals. Coals are placed under and on top of the pot, allowing heat to surround the food. Imagine slicing into freshly baked bread, hot from the fire!

Selecting a Dutch Oven

Your first decision will be to decide between aluminum and cast iron. Old-time campers may insist on cast iron, but many people find aluminum to be more suitable to their needs. Cast iron ovens are extremely heavy, slow to heat up, and must be seasoned. On the plus side, they heat evenly and will not melt over a very hot fire. Aluminum weighs 1/3 as much as cast iron, heats up quickly and can be cleaned using soap and water. Due to its lightness, it may have hot spots, and could, potentially, melt over a very hot fire.

When selecting your first Dutch oven, look for a solidly made pot. Make sure the legs are long enough that coals can be moved around underneath and the wire handle is thick enough to lift the pot filled with food. You may suffer some sticker shock, but good quality Dutch ovens are worth the cost. Cared for properly, they will last a lifetime. Lodge and MACA ovens are high quality and very readily available. Griswold ovens have not been manufactured for several years, but have a very dedicated following. Griswold owners even have their own online community. If you want to be part of this community and discover a Griswold Dutch oven at a garage sale or flea market, snatch it up!

Your final decision will be size. Most people find that 10"-12" diameter pots meet most of their needs. If you want to create multi-course meals, choose a couple of different sizes. You can even stack them during cooking to take advantage of all of that heat rising from the coals. As long as you are shopping,

buy a sturdy hook or long-handled tongs for lifting the lid while hot and a small shovel for moving coals.

Caring for Your Dutch Oven

Cast iron Dutch ovens must be seasoned before they can be used. Aluminum doesn't have to be, but cleanup and flavor are improved with seasoning. To season your Dutch oven for the first time, wash it thoroughly to remove the factory coating. Dry it thoroughly then rub it down with vegetable shortening or oil. Heat your home oven or barbecue grill to a medium temperature and place your Dutch oven inside for at least 30-45 minutes. If you turn the pot upside down, the oil will coat the sides more evenly, just remember to place a pan underneath to catch the drips. If you season your Dutch oven inside the house, make sure you can open your windows, as there will be some smoke. Repeat this process at least one more time until you have a nice, even coating. Wipe out excess oil with a paper towel before storing. If you find your cast iron has rusted, just scour it thoroughly and reseason.



To clean your Dutch oven, pour a few inches of water into the pot, then place back on the fire until the water boils. Let it cool enough to handle, then scrape out any food residue. Soap is not recommended as it will eventually remove the seasoning and leave a bad taste in the pan. If you must use soap, use very little and rinse thoroughly. It wouldn't hurt to rub a little oil on the inside and put back on the fire for a few minutes to keep the seasoning in good shape.

Always make sure your cast iron cookware is completely dry before storing. Humidity can be murder on cast iron, so you may want to consider aluminum if you live in a very humid area.



Cooking with Your Dutch Oven

Pick your favorite recipe – it can almost certainly be made in a Dutch oven.

Be sure to start the fire or charcoal early enough for the fire to burn down until you have hot coals. To estimate the tempera-



The apple crisp in the picture is just an ordinary apple crisp. The only difference is that you put it on (and under) coals instead of in an oven. I usually check it after about 40 minutes by poking a couple of apples with a fork. If they're tender, it's done.

ture of the coals, hold your hand about 6 inches above the coals, removing it when it becomes uncomfortable. One second is a hot fire, two seconds is a medium, and three seconds is low. If you are still in doubt, start with about 4-6 coals underneath and about 8-10 on top. Of course, the Dutch oven can always be used as any other pot, with heat from the bottom only. It takes some experimentation, but in no time at all, you'll be a Dutch oven chef.



*We Camp Here*TM Campground Search



The easy way to find a great campground

One of the most frustrating things for me to do is try to find a new campground. Whether looking for a nice place close to home to get away for the weekend or trying to find a great place to camp while vacationing there seems to be no easy one stop solution – until now. Yep.... There's an app for that!

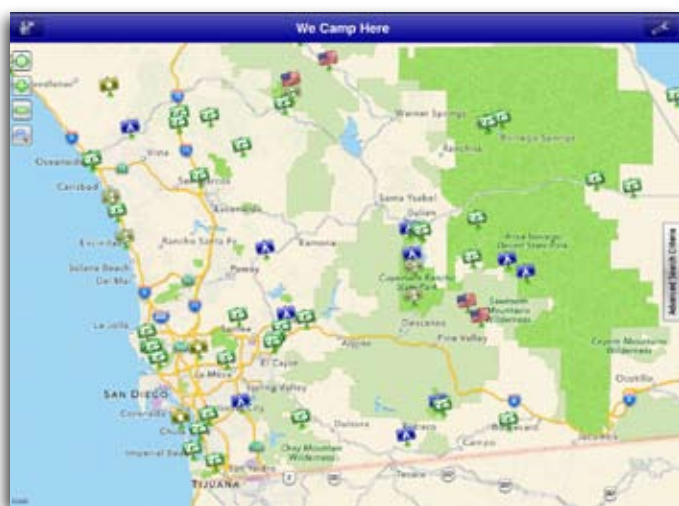
The answer is [We Camp Here](http://www.wecamphere.com). I don't know why I have not found this app until now but it is great. It is so much better than the old way of finding and choosing a campground. At least the way I did it. I would go to my favorite web search site and type in something like "Missouri campgrounds." Of course I would get all the listings that took me to

links that lead to links. Some sites had listings but most had limited information with too much digging and too many steps to find the information I was looking for.

With We Camp Here those days are gone. I can't imagine an easier way to discover campgrounds and to find if they offer the

amenities you want or need. The app is very user friendly. It is one of the easiest to use apps, of any kind, I have ever used.

The app opens to a map and basically all you have to do is point. There are pins with various icons that represent what type of camp-

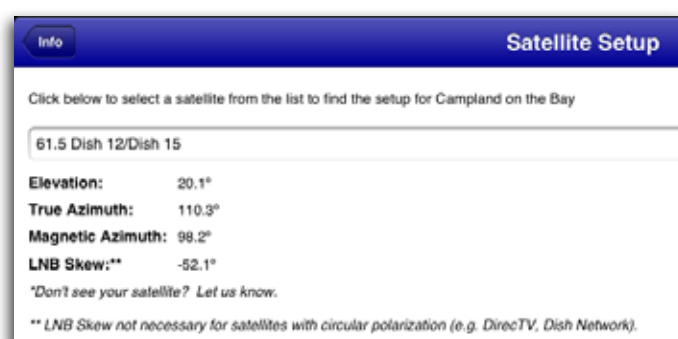


ground is located there. Privately owned, National, County, City, Corps of Engineers, Military, and BLM parks are all identified.

Just touch the one you are interested in and you are given the park name and selections



to retrieve general information including site types, utilities offered, amenities and recreation options. Do you want to know if electric or water hookups are available? Does the park offer wi-fi, or cable tv? What about a swimming pool or fishing? All of that information and more is literally at your fingertips. The app even provides all the information to set up your satellite access if your camping is that high tech.

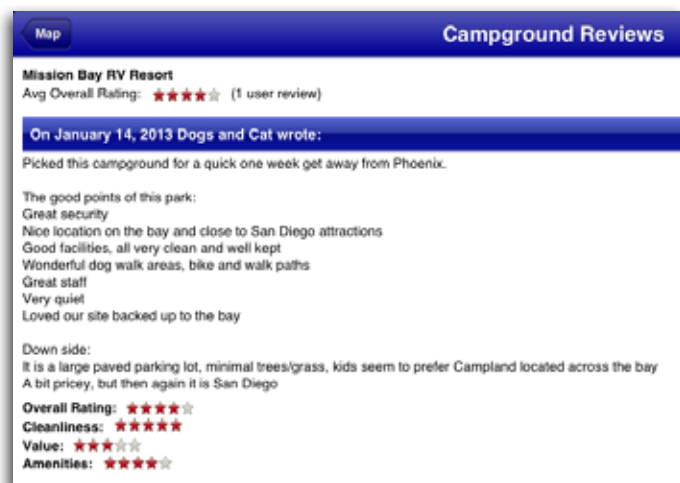


There are also buttons that offer options like reading reviews, calling to speak with someone at the facility office, a direct link to the campground web site and of course providing driving directions. The app makes use of your locations services if that feature is enabled on your device.



The app is somewhat self moderated in that you are given the opportunity to verify or offer corrections to the information provided. You are also given the option to write your own reviews about your experience at the campgrounds you have stayed at.

One of the best features of the app was the enthusiasm and response of the We Camp Here staff. I used the help link in the app to ask some questions and they responded very quickly. They obviously care about their product and their users.



[We Camp Here](#) is available for iPad, iPhone, and Android devices. It is also available on the web if you want do your browsing on your notebook or the home computer. So however you choose to access it, give it a try and I think you will be glad you did!



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New camping trailer, VISTABULE, rethinks beloved Airstream with practical, eye-catching teardrop

Streamlined VISTABULE brings versatility and panoramic vistas to active travelers looking for simple escape, small car towing.

Minneapolis, MN. — Minnesota Teardrop Trailers, LLC today announced the launch of its VISTABULE (www.VISTABULE.com) model specifically designed for small car towing. Now available for order, the VISTABULE Teardrop Trailer provides an enhanced camping experience by eliminating the inconvenience of tenting while offering the stylish practicality of a radically redesigned camping trailer. Streamlined and weighing just 1220 pounds, VISTABULE can be towed behind nearly any small car—making it an efficient and appealing travel option with rising gasoline, hotel and restaurant prices. “Everyone loves the classic Airstream style,” said Bert Taylor, Minnesota Teardrop Trailer founder and VISTABULE design engineer. “But I, like many, kept searching for a more practical, affordable and towable camping trailer to fit my lifestyle. VISTABULE is designed for those of us in mind.” It is VISTABULE’s signature oversized windows and “cab-forward design” that set it apart by offering panoramic views that no other teardrop trailer offers. The queen sized bed converts in seconds into a delightful sitting space with a fold up table and the smartly fitted kitchen allows you to prepare meals while protected from rain and sun. In addition, the trailer makes dispersed, non-campground

sites more accessible with its self-contained electrical power, water tanks and propane tank. A variety of add-on features are available. Prior to launch, VISTABULE has been well-received by active outdoor enthusiasts of all ages who want to be close to the action at trailheads, rivers and climbing routes. This fall, the company sponsored several U.S. trail running races and fielded the VISTABULE Racing Team—with team members placing among the top finishers at each competition. About VISTABULE:

Based in Minneapolis, VISTABULE is the newest camping trailer from Minnesota Teardrop Trailers, LLC founder by Bert Taylor. More information at www.VISTABULE.com and www.facebook.com/VISTABULE

Teardrops n Tiny Travel Trailers



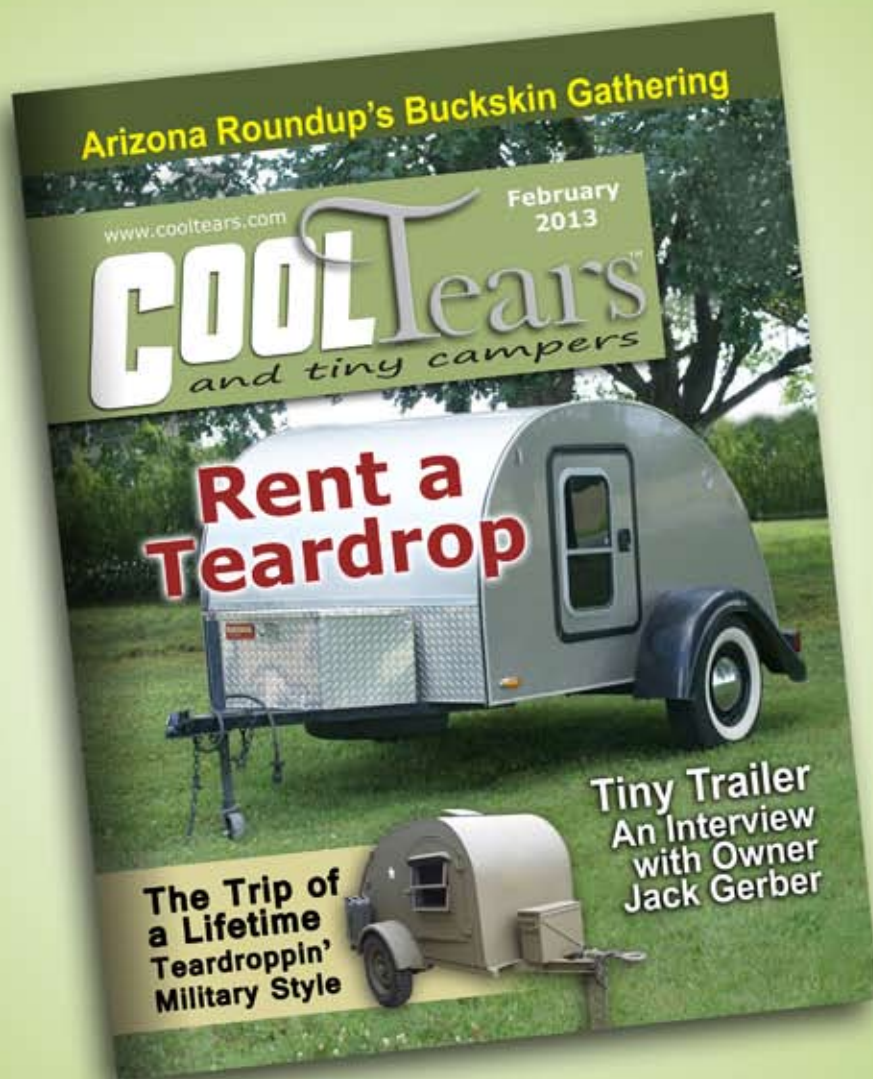
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