

# RVIA TODAY

RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Spring 2013

## RVIA Readies for Committee Week



RVIA members will gather in Washington, D.C. from June 2 - 6 for Committee Week 2013 to plan the association's agenda for the upcoming fiscal year. The association's standing committees, including the Market Information Committee shown above, will meet to develop program and strategy recommendations that will be reviewed by the RVIA Board of Directors. Complete information about Committee Week and a schedule of activities begins on page 4.

## RV Shipments Rise 11% Through First Quarter

America's wholesale recreation vehicle (RV) shipments shot up 11% in the first quarter of 2013, fueled by strong consumer response to the versatility, affordability and innovative designs of new models, according to market data collected by the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA).

Shipments for all of 2013 are projected to total 307,300, an increase of 7.5% from 2012. This growth projects to an 85% increase from the RV industry's recession low in 2009, and would mark the first time shipments surpassed 300,000 units since 2007. Shipments rose 13.3% in 2012.

"RVs offer an affordable, flexible and comfortable way for families to escape the pressures of every day life, and to share fun activities that create warm memories and strong family bonds," said RVIA President Richard Coon. "When the recession changed the way many Americans think about their family finances and how they would vacation, RV manufacturers responded to the new economic reality by designing and building products with the right mix of space, amenities and price points, further positioning RVs as the ideal way for families to travel. That's why demand for RV ownership is growing, and why dealers are getting ready to meet that demand."

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## Go RVing's "AWAY" Adds New Elements to Boost Consumer Awareness

With the RV industry surging to shipment totals not seen in the past five years, Go RVing's "AWAY" national advertising campaign is helping build awareness of RV travel and camping with consumers during the important spring and summer selling season.

Backed by a traditional media strategy leveraging strong partnerships in the television, print and digital space, Go RVing is also utilizing several new approaches to help stretch the budget to increase the reach of the campaign.

The centerpiece of this effort is Go RVing's first-ever RV product integration. Go RVing partnered with The Travel Channel to sponsor an episode of the popular program *Trip Flip* hosted

by Bert Kreischer. Filmed in the Scottsdale/Grand Canyon area in March, the episode features a family of four from Austin embarking on a vacation of their dreams, but the surprise is they are traveling by RV. It is slated to air for the first time on May 26 and run throughout the season. Navistar RV was selected in a member lottery to provide a Holiday Rambler Vacationer motorhome for the production.

Featuring RVs at consumer events is another new element for the Go RVing campaign. As part of the ad buy with *Garden & Gun* and *Country Living* magazines, Go RVing is displaying RVs at major events attended by consumers in the campaign's target demographic.

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# The RV Industry is Off and Running!

by Doug Gaeddert, RVIA Chairman of the Board

Wow! I can't believe that this is already the third time I've put some of my thoughts on paper for an issue of *RVIA Today*. Time flies when you're having fun! The last few months have seemingly been at warp speed for me and so has the pace of our industry.

With March's shipment numbers reflecting a year to date increase of 11.2% over the first quarter of 2012, it's a great start to what has the potential be an amazing year for everyone. To put things into perspective from a pace standpoint, this is an approximate 160% increase over the "very forgettable" first quarter of 2009. Total new RV shipments through the first three months of 2009 were approximately 30,500 units versus 79,422 for 2013. That rate of acceleration looks like Usain Bolt running the sprints at the London Olympics!

One of the results of the industry running at this speed isn't a "pulled" muscle, but one that is "strained." The RV transportation sector as many of you are aware, is struggling to keep up in delivering finished units from manufacturing plants to dealer lots. Although this is not a new phenomenon exclusive to this year, we are attempting a new and different approach at RVIA to see if we can't help smooth it out for the long haul. RVIA is exploring several possible strategies in hopes of being able to positively impact the RV transportation sector for both the United States and Canada.

No promises at this point, other than we are diligently working on it. That old definition of insanity – "doing things the same way every day and expecting different results at the end of the day" – is what we're attempting to break away from. Although if successful it will be too late to affect spring and summer of 2013, we hope to be able to impact the peak shipping periods of 2014. RVIA President Richard Coon and the association staff will keep you posted and may call on you or your company for help if needed.

I'm sure this will be a topic of discussion at RVIA's Committee Week, which is just around the corner. The event kicks off on June 2 with the first committee meeting and ends on June 6 with the RVIA Board Meeting. In between, a lot transpires over a few fast paced days. This is the week in which the association's Strategic Plan and the individual committee's prioritized goals are approved and blended into a "roughed out" overall operational plan. The plan is then subjected to the budget process which culminates in an August budget meeting for the final financial "tweaks" and is then submitted to the Board for review and approval at fiscal year 2013's year ending meeting in September.

Committee Week is a huge effort involving RVIA's talented staff and many hard working industry members who make up the committees. These generous volunteer leaders are basically donating their time and expertise for the betterment of the overall industry. RVIA's annual Capitol Advocacy Day also takes place during Committee week. This again is a volunteer effort to visit those folks in both Houses of Congress that represent us with the goals of strengthening the relationships and keying in on industry specific objectives and challenges.



If you've never participated in Advocacy Day or on an association committee, I strongly encourage you to do so. If you want to become involved in either or both of these efforts, or want to give your input, just contact any one of RVIA's staff members or someone on the Board of Directors. Remember—this is YOUR association!

In closing, I believe that our industry is better coordinated than it has ever been. The combination of consolidation and improved communication between associations, manufacturers, dealers, suppliers, campgrounds, distributors, transporters, and finance companies will hopefully make us all the "Usain Bolt" of the travel and leisure industry! Happy selling and don't pull a muscle!

## RVIA TODAY

RECREATION VEHICLE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

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## RVIA Names New Executive Committee, Board Members

The RVIA Board of Directors elected two new members to the Executive Committee and three new members to the Board during their meeting held earlier this year in Orlando, FL in conjunction with the association's Annual Meeting.

Garry Enyart of Cummins Power Generation and Matt Miller of Newmar Corp. were elected to the Executive Committee as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. The two join Chairman Doug Gaeddert of Forest River, Inc.; First Vice Chairman Derald Bontrager of Jayco, Inc.; Second Vice Chairman Bob Parish of GE

Capital; Chairman Ex Officio Gregg Fore of Dicor Corp.; and RVIA President Richard Coon. They replace Bob Olson of Winnebago Industries and John Regan of Fabric Services who both resigned from the RVIA Board and Executive Committee.

The new Board members are Chad Reece of Winnebago Industries (assuming the Manufacturer seat vacated by Bob Olson); Tim Stephens of Atwood Mobile Products (appointed to the Supplier seat vacated by John Regan); and, Dave Schutz of Dometic Corp. (assuming the Supplier seat vacated by Doug Whyte).



*RVIA's Executive Committee for 2013 includes (front row from l to r) RVIA President Richard Coon, Chairman of the Board Doug Gaeddert, First Vice Chairman Derald Bontrager, Past Chairman Gregg Fore, (second row l to r) Treasurer Garry Enyart, Secretary Matt Miller, and Second Vice Chairman Bob Parish.*



*RVIA members named to the Board of Directors included (from l to r) Tim Stephens, Atwood Mobile Products; Chad Reece, Winnebago Industries; and Dave Schutz, Dometic Corp.*

## RVIA Partners with U.S. Foreign Commercial Service to Offer Export Assistance

Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) has partnered with the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration in a program to allow RVIA members enhanced access to international trade resources offered by the federal government.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the two organizations, RVIA and the U.S. Commercial Service's network of worldwide offices will work together on marketing, education programs and events leveraging both entities' expertise to help make businesses—and particularly small and medium-sized firms—more export savvy. Joint activities may include building awareness through outreach at trade shows and online registration for resource support.

As a strategic partner with the U.S. Commercial Service's New Market Exporter Initiative, RVIA member companies will receive:

- Expert advice on new export markets
- Access to free on-line market research reports
- Opportunities for export training
- Access to trade counseling through Commercial Service's worldwide network by registering at [www.export.gov/rvia](http://www.export.gov/rvia)
- Assistance in complying with regulatory and documentation requirements

- Expert advice, local contacts and market intelligence from specialists located in targeted markets
- Services to connect to local distributors and representatives

"We're pleased to welcome RVIA as a partner in our efforts to strengthen the U.S. economy and support local jobs through expanding U.S. exports," said Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Francisco Sánchez. "With more than 95% of potential customers living outside U.S. borders, it's imperative that American companies of all sizes consider the benefits of selling their products abroad."

"The RV industry is growing and thriving in established and new markets in countries across the globe," said RVIA President Richard Coon. "The services and expertise offered through the New Market Exporter Initiative will be very useful to our members who are looking to explore opportunities in global markets. We are very proud to partner with the U.S. Commercial Service, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, in this initiative and urge our members to take full advantage of the tools and resources available through the effort."

For more information about the New Market Exporter Initiative and to begin using the program's services, go to [www.export.gov/rvia](http://www.export.gov/rvia). For additional information, contact Craig Kirby, RVIA vice president of international business and general counsel, at [ckirby@rvia.org](mailto:ckirby@rvia.org).

# RVIA Members Gather in Washington for Committee Week 2013

RVIA's Committee Week 2013 will take place from June 2 – 6 at the Mayflower Renaissance Washington in Washington, D.C.

Over the course of the five-day event, standing committees, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors will meet to set the association's plans for the upcoming fiscal year. The Go RVing Coalition will also meet on Monday, June 3. The event concludes with the Board of Directors meeting on June 6 where committee recommendations are reviewed.

"Committee Week is really at the heart of RVIA's effort to represent the RV industry," said RVIA President Richard Coon. "The planning that is done there sets the course for the association for the next year and beyond, tying our overall strategic plan to specific programs and initiatives to help advance the RV market."

In addition to the full-slate of committee meetings, other key events on the schedule include:

- **2014 RV Market Outlook** – Dr. Richard Curtin, director of consumer research at the University of Michigan, will provide the first forecast for the RV market in 2014 and examine the current economic climate at the Joint Committee Luncheon on Monday, June 3.
- **RVIA's Capitol Hill Advocacy Day** – RVIA members will visit Capitol Hill on Wednesday, June 5, to meet with legislators and their staff to discuss key issues critical to the RV industry (see page 5 for more information).
- **Networking Events** – Several joint-committee luncheons and receptions, including the opening reception the evening of Monday, June 3, at the National Museum of Crime and Punishment, will give Committee Week participants the opportunity to establish, renew and build upon the relationships critical to business success.



*Committee Week provides industry colleagues many opportunities to network and build relationships. In the photo, RVIA President Richard Coon (standing) chats with KZRV's Andy Bear (left) and Roadtrek Motorhomes' Jeff Hanemaayer during a meeting break.*

The Mayflower Renaissance Washington is a luxury hotel and historic landmark. Proclaimed by President Truman to be Washington, DC's "Second Best Address" after the White House, the hotel is on the National Registry of Historic Places and a Historic Hotel of America. Located just blocks from the White House, metro stops and dining and cultural hot spots, the 4-diamond property offers a splendid center for exploring the city.

For more information about Committee Week, contact Doreen Cashion in the Meetings and Shows Department at (703) 620-6003 (ext. 324) or dcashion@rvia.org.

## Committee Week 2013 Schedule

### Sunday, June 2

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Canadian Coalition Committee

### Monday, June 3

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. **Registration**

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Seasonal Camping Committee

8:00 a.m. – 12 noon Market Information Committee

8:00 a.m. – 12 noon RVST Council/Industry Education Committee

10:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Recreation Park Trailer Committee

12 noon – 1:30 p.m. **Joint Committee Luncheon**  
*Featured Speaker: Dr. Richard Curtin, University of Michigan*

1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Annual Meeting Committee

1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Go RVing Coalition

1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Industry Education Committee

1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Lawyers' Committee

5:30 p.m. **Reception at the National Museum of Crime and Punishment**

### Tuesday, June 4

7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. **Registration**

9:00 a.m. – 12 noon Public Relations Committee

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. National Show Committee

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Public & Leg. Affairs Committee

9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Standards Steering Committee

12 noon – 1:30 p.m. **Joint Committee Luncheon**

1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Supplier Committee

2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Financial Services Committee

### Wednesday, June 5

7:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. Pre-Advocacy Day Briefing

9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Capitol Hill Advocacy Day

7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Long-Range Planning/Executive Committee

6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Board of Directors & Advocacy Day Reception

### Thursday, June 6

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Board of Directors

## RVIA's Capitol Hill Advocacy Day Set for June 5

RVIA members will visit members of Congress and their key legislative staff during the association's Capitol Hill Advocacy Day, scheduled for Wednesday, June 5, during Committee Week.

"Advocacy Day is one of the highlights of Committee Week for attendees and a vitally important element in RVIA's efforts to increase awareness of the industry and our issues at the federal level," said Jay Landers, RVIA's senior director of government affairs. "These visits and meetings help strengthen relationships between RVIA members and the members of Congress who represent their states and districts."

RVIA Government Affairs staff schedule appointments with elected officials, provide briefing materials and accompany members on visits. The program also gives participants the opportunity to have photos taken with Congressmen and Senators.

Advocacy Day begins with a morning meeting during which RVIA members are briefed on the issues they will be discussing with Congressional members and their staff. Topics are still being finalized, but two issues that will be discussed are the second home mortgage interest deduction and the renewal of the generalized system of preferences (GSP). The briefing includes rehearsal exercises that help RVIA members practice discussing key issues before they set out to meet elected officials.

For more information on RVIA's Capitol Hill Advocacy Day contact RVIA's Monika Geraci at [mgeraci@rvia.org](mailto:mgeraci@rvia.org) or (703) 620-6003 (ext. 318).



(From l to r) Monaco RV's Jim Ham and Bill Osborne meet with Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL) at last year's Advocacy Day.



Advocacy Day participants walk across the U.S. Capitol grounds at the 2012 event.

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# "AWAY" Adds Elements to Boost Awareness

*continued from page 1*

More than 2,000 people toured the Go RVing exhibit featuring a Winnebago Aspect type C motorhome and a Forest River V-Cross Vibe travel trailer at the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition (SEWE) event in Charleston, SC in early February.

Go RVing will have an on-site RV exhibit and host RVing seminars at three *Country Living* Fairs being held this summer and early fall. Total attendance at the events is expected to exceed 63,000.

"Partnerships that go beyond the traditional ad placement are valuable ways for our message to reach new audiences in a memorable way, especially with on-site displays at events where they can tour an actual RV," said RVIA Vice President of Advertising and Public Relations James Ashurst. "We're excited about this new way of reaching consumers who share characteristics with RV owners and allowing them to see first-hand that it is a fun, flexible and affordable way for families to spend quality time in the outdoors."

Go RVing's consumer outreach was also bolstered by the April "Spring Fever" sweepstakes with the Outdoor Channel which featured a Forest River Flagstaff Classic folding camping trailer as the grand prize. The month-long sweepstakes drew over 162,000 entries and generated 2,331 consumer leads.

Throughout May, Outdoor Channel and Go RVing are sponsoring "AWAY Fridays," where a lucky viewer will win entry to a National Park and cash for trip expenses.

## 2013 Media Schedule

Meanwhile the heart of Go RVing's "AWAY" campaign is the \$11.3 million media schedule for 2013 that features a comprehensive mix of television, print and digital outlets.

This includes a \$3.4 million national television media budget that features a new partnership with Destination America,

Discovery Network's newest cable network. During the year, Go RVing spots and custom-produced programming will also be seen on Great American Country, MLB Network, National Geographic, National Geographic Wild, the Outdoor Channel, and the SPEED Channel.

The broadcast plan also includes direct response advertising on many other popular networks through September. All of these outlets, which include Animal Planet, TBS, TLC, USA, HGTV and ABC Family Channel, have a good record of running Go RVing spots at optimum times of day and delivering strong lead response.

The \$1.6 million print buy for 2013 includes magazines that offer a strong demographic for the ads and a good editorial environment. Issues featuring Go RVing ads began to appear in February and will continue through September.

Digital media advertising remains a centerpiece of Go RVing's effort. Banner ads are appearing on top websites and search engines through the \$2.3 million internet buy. Consumers are able to link directly to GoRVing.com through ads that are running on lead-generating sites such as Google, Bing, Yahoo, and Facebook.

The "AWAY" campaign drives consumers to GoRVing.com, where prospects are provided comprehensive information to help guide them through the purchase process and RV travel experience.

New to the site this year is the "Find My RV" interactive tool to help consumers explore and identify what RV type best suits their needs. This section has quickly become the second most visited page on the website after the home page.

GoRVing.com also offers other tools that allow visitors to compare typical family vacation costs, watch videos featuring real RVers, and sign up for more information from participating Go RVing dealers, manufacturers, show promoters and campgrounds.

## Go RVing Launches First-Ever Hispanic-Targeted Initiative

As part of its overall 2013 media campaign, Go RVing has launched a targeted advertising push to reach the growing Hispanic market through a comprehensive media approach utilizing television and radio commercials along with interactive digital and traditional print ads.

The "AWAY" campaign message was tweaked slightly to resonate more fully with this market and features a multi-platform, national media buy targeting English-speaking Hispanics with a household income of \$75,000+ with television commercials on top-ranked Hispanic television networks that appeal to English-dominant viewers, interactive digital ads, and print ads in popular magazines. Additionally, there will be some DJ-endorsed radio ads in several markets that have a high saturation of affluent, English-speaking Hispanics.

The move to promote RVing to this consumer group is rooted in recent research showing the growing Hispanic market to be good candidates for RV ownership. The U.S. Census shows His-

panics accounted for 56% of the nation's growth between 2000-2010 with experts predicting they'll continue to account for more than half of the growth in the next five years.

Go RVing's 2012 Advertising Effectiveness Survey found that Hispanics are most likely to consider buying an RV vs. all other ethnic groups.

As an American demographic, the English-dominant Hispanic population spends more on domestic travel than any other ethnicity, and those with a household income of \$75,000+ are the most likely to have more discretionary income for travel and leisure.

Family visits are a major reason for travel among the Hispanic population, particularly among English-dominant Hispanics who are more likely to have family in the U.S. This affluent segment is engaged in traveling and in considering an RV. They are family-centric and looking for travel deals, but they spend when it's worth splurging.

# Airstream's Bob Wheeler Named Go RVing Co-Chair

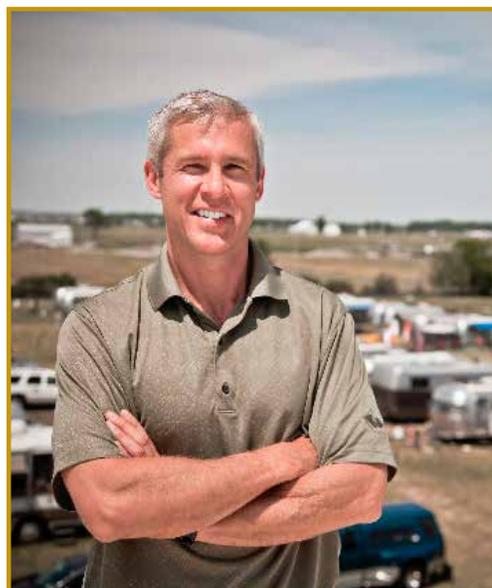
Go RVing has selected Bob Wheeler, president and CEO, Airstream, Inc., to serve as co-chairman of the Go RVing Coalition, the RV industry's national advertising and market expansion initiative. Wheeler joins RV dealer Tom Stinnett of Tom Stinnett Derby City RV (Louisville, KY-area) as co-chair of the industry-wide coalition, replacing Bob Olson, who retired from Winnebago Industries in 2012.

The officers of Go RVing, Inc. — RVIA President Richard Coon and RVDA President Phil Ingrassia — praised Wheeler as an excellent choice to serve as co-chairman:

"Bob is a proven industry leader who understands the importance of branding and strategic promotion. He brings valuable experience, insight, and influence to the Go RVing Coalition, and partnered with Tom, they will make a strong team to help guide Go RVing forward as we seek to build on the growth of the past few years."

Wheeler, 46, began his professional career as a manufacturing engineer at General Motors. He became President and CEO of Airstream in 2005 after serving in several other positions with Thor Industries, which is Airstream's parent company.

"The Go RVing program plays a vital role in our industry's effort to raise consumer awareness about the benefits of RVing and the RV lifestyle," said Wheeler. "I'm honored to work with the talented members of the Go RVing Coalition, who have for years helped position RVs as a fun and affordable way to build lasting memories. As we look to furthering industry growth and expansion, I'm excited to be part of the team's move towards more creative, impactful and innovative campaign executions."



Tom Stinnett, who has been involved in Go RVing since it began in 1994 and has served as a co-chair since 2004, will continue to play a leadership role as a key consensus-builder among dealers and manufacturers. "With his experience with Thor and Airstream, and his passion for the RV lifestyle, Bob Wheeler will be a great addition as Go RVing co-chair," Stinnett said. "I look forward to working with him as the 2013 ad campaign gets underway."

Wheeler is a resident of Sidney, Ohio, where he lives with his wife, Kelly, and their three boys — Grant, Harvey and Finn.

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## RVs Attract Media Attention Through Early 2013

RVIA's public relations team has been working throughout the spring to promote the RV industry and lifestyle in the media nationwide. This effort has resulted in a multitude of positive RV stories highlighting the industry's growth in shipments, as well as key messages about the affordability, fun and flexibility of RV travel.

Stories have appeared in national and local media outlets. Here are a few highlights from the national media:

- The May issue of *Sunset* magazine included a feature on the best places to camp in the West.
- The May/June issue of *Midwest Living* contained a piece about the 24 best campgrounds in the Midwest. RVIA worked with Winnebago to provide motorhomes for the editorial team to use as they visited and photographed several of the sites for the publication.
- On March 1, *USA Today* reported that motorhome shipments rose 13.6% in 2012 and were expected to rise approximately the same amount in 2013. The story cited RVIA statistics, included quotes from industry executives, and discussed the falling unemployment rate in Elkhart County.



## Herzogs to Promote RV Lifestyle on Media Tour

RVIA spokespersons Brad and Amy Herzog will hit the road to put a friendly face on the RV lifestyle in local media markets for a 14th straight year. This year's two-month media tour has the Herzogs traveling to cities in the Midwest and Southeast this summer.



The RV industry's "Explore America Family" will be traveling in a motorhome provided by Winnebago, which features the type of amenities that appeal to consumers and are fueling the growth in motorhome sales.

The Herzogs provide an accessible example of an RVing family. At each stop, they deliver messages of family togetherness, health and wellness benefits of RV travel, and the freedom, fun and flexibility offered by RV travel. They emphasize that RVing is a convenient way to travel, and that it's a great option for young families with children.

The 60-day tour launches June 19 in Terre Haute, IN. The tour includes stops in Nashville, TN; Jacksonville, FL; Savannah, GA; Charleston, SC; Charlotte, NC; Norfolk, VA; Richmond, VA; Washington, DC; Louisville, KY; Indianapolis, IN; and Milwaukee, WI.

## RVIA Inspectors, Standard Staff Meet for Bi-Annual Meeting

RVIA's team of inspectors met with the Standards and Education staff from May 7-9 at RVIA's offices in Reston, VA. The meetings are held regularly to help maintain and improve the consistency in the standards inspection process.

Those meeting at RVIA were (*l to r in photo*) John Proteau, standards administrator/chief inspector; Kent Perkins, senior director of RV standards; Gatie Gore, standards administrative assistant; Curt Richardson, senior inspector; Mick Sass, inspector/media coordinator; Nancy Jo Bell-London, inspection services coordinator; Greg Wischmeyer, inspector/certified technician; Bruce Hopkins, vice president, standards and education; and Sharonne Lee, director, technical information.

The primary focus at this session was to review the enforcement positions recently published in the RV Handbook (March 2103) and to continue the effort to become better educated on all the ANSI A119.5 Recreational Park Trailer Standard (2009 edition) requirements. The inspectors also submitted technical issues discovered during their inspections which resulted in the drafting of several Handbook updates and code change proposals for RVIA Technical Subcommittee review this October.



During the meeting, the group also reviewed upcoming 2014 NFPA 1192, ANSI 12V and NEC code changes that will start being enforced September 1, 2014.

# RV Shipments Rise 11% Through the First Quarter

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While the industry has seen strong growth in both towable and motorized categories, motorhome shipments are up 23.7% in the first quarter. The travel trailer category, comprising nearly 90% of all RV shipments in recent years, is up 9.8%.

Many of the new products offered by RV manufacturers include units that are smaller, lighter, and more aerodynamic and fuel efficient. These lighter models help reduce fuel consumption, and lighter weight travel trailers can be towed by smaller passenger vehicles. Many RV manufacturers are building trailers designed to be towed by popular family minivans or crossover SUVs.

Today's RVs are full of functionality and technology. Many offer gourmet and outdoor kitchens, well-appointed bathrooms, expandable floor plans and layouts that allow for multi-function uses, and state-of-the-art electronics.

"More than 20 million Americans go RVing every year because of the unmatched freedom and flexibility RVs provide when traveling," said Coon. "There's no better way to save money, see more of the country and spend more time with family."

Nearly 50% of RVs worldwide are made in America with the industry employing more than 250,000 Americans.

## Park Model Shipment Reports Show Strength

Year-end 2012 and early 2013 shipment reports released by RVIA show that after a steady 2012, park model shipments were up sharply to start 2013. This follows a trend seen across the entire RV industry. RVIA is reporting that 2,770 units were shipped in 2012, a small improvement over the 2,761 units that the Recreational Park Trailer Industry Association (RPTIA) reported were shipped by manufacturers in 2011.

According to RVIA Executive Director of Recreational Park Trailers Matt Wald, "Park trailer shipments began surging in October of 2012 and that has continued into 2013. In fact, shipments in January of 2013 were an incredible 138% higher than shipments reported in January 2012. Through February 2013, park model shipments are about 75% higher compared to the first two months of 2012."

"The bottom line is that the park model industry has been red hot for the past 5 months," he added.

Wald points to a number of factors for the surge in shipments, including growing interest in seasonal camping as baby boomers continue to retire in droves as well as a push by many campgrounds to reap the benefits of making deluxe camping accommodation rentals available to their customers.



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# RVIA Working to Renew GSP Trade Program

RVIA has made the renewal of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program a key legislative priority for summer.

The trade agreement program was renewed in October 2011, but is set to expire on July 31, 2013. For more than three decades, the GSP program has extended duty-free treatment to several thousand products imported into the United States from more than two-thirds of the world's countries. Large and small businesses, including companies in the RV industry, import certain products duty-free under GSP.

The possible expiration of GSP could result in serious financial burdens for the thousands of American businesses including RV manufacturers that rely on GSP savings to remain competitive. In particular, wholesale prices for imported wood, including luan, used by RV manufacturers and suppliers could be impacted. Luan, available only from Southeast Asia, has historically been eligible for the GSP treatment.

Congress will be considering legislation later this summer to renew the GSP program with the Trade Subcommittee under the

House Ways and Means Committee House and the Senate Finance Committee taking the lead on any legislation.

RVIA is participating with the Coalition for GSP, a Washington, DC-based group of U.S. businesses, trade associations, and consumer organizations that is urging the renewal of the GSP program by Congress before its expiration. "The Coalition is in preliminary discussions with members and key staffers on the lead committees, but it is difficult to generate any focus on trade issues right now given the current dysfunction of the Congress and the preoccupation with budgetary issues such as sequestration, the debt ceiling and possible tax reform," said Dianne Farrell, RVIA vice president of government affairs. "Until this issue is resolved, the RV industry, along with many other industries, faces the possibility of paying higher prices for imported products later this summer."

As a component of the renewal strategy, support for GSP program will be a primary focus of RVIA's upcoming Capitol Hill Advocacy Day on June 5, 2013.

## U.S., Canadian RV Standards Harmonization Progresses

Steady progress continues on the effort to harmonize U.S. and Canadian RV Standards with the CSA Z240 Technical Committee holding what is hoped to be the last in series of meetings dating back to March 2012 to update and synchronize CSA Z240 with NFPA 1192.

This meeting resulted in a unanimous vote to approve all proposed changes agreed upon during all previous meetings. CSA will now format the draft 2014 edition of CSA Z240 and then issue a 60-day public review period. There may be a need to hold one last meeting, tentatively scheduled for early September/October, to process any submitted public comments.

The plan agreed to by an ad hoc group composed of members from the CSA Z240 Technical Committee and the NFPA Technical Committee on RVs is to "synchronize" as much as possible within the two standards for the respective 2014 editions. The current CSA Z240 code cycle schedule targets early 2014 for publication and the NFPA 1192 code cycle has the 2014 edition ready for publication in late 2013.

The approach also includes identifying those requirements that cannot be synchronized and then conducting the necessary research and lobbying in order to secure desired changes for 2017.

The final goal is to "harmonize" the two documents for the 2017 editions. The vision is to have the two documents published under a single cover that will have both the CSA Z240 and the NFPA 1192 identifications.

## Park Model Technical Subcommittee Meets

RVIA held its first standards technical subcommittee meeting on the ANSI A119.5 Standard and handbook on April 16 in South Bend, IN.



The subcommittee, chaired by John Walters of Cavco/Fleetwood, is made up of technical and engineering experts who reviewed and made recommendations regarding over 100 proposed changes to park model standards, including ANSI A119.5, NEC Article 552 as well as the A119.5 Handbook.

In addition to Chairman Walters, the Committee includes Gary Duncan, Forest River; Jerry Glenn, Kropf Manufacturing; Jerry Miller, Woodland Park; Bob Phillips, Dutchman Manufacturing; Jimmy Sellers, Chariot Eagle; and John Soard, Fairmont Homes.

"RVIA is a well-oiled machine when it comes to standards," said Matt Wald, RVIA Executive Director of Recreational Park Trailers. "Getting the park model technical experts working with our standards department on these code change proposals is a critical first step in bringing the park model standards and handbook up to date. It was an excellent and productive meeting."

The 2014 revision cycle of ANSI A119.5 is well under way, with the target date of publication set for October 15, 2014.

If anyone is interested in being considered for appointment on to this technical subcommittee please contact Kent Perkins, Senior Director – Standards at 1-800-336-1054, ext. 336 or by email: kperkins@rvia.org.

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## RV Usage Expected to Rise this Spring and Summer

RV owners will be on the road in a big way this spring and summer to enjoy time outdoors with family and friends, according to a new survey.

The latest Campfire Canvass survey of RV owners, conducted by RVIA, reveals that 71% of RV owners intend to use their RVs more this spring/summer than they did last year, and 21% say they'll use theirs the same amount. Just 5% said they'll use their RV less.

The survey of 378 RV owners was conducted by RVIA and Cvent from March 29 through April 22 and has a margin of error of 4.7%.

The top reasons for using their RVs more include enjoying outdoor activities (78%), taking more mini-vacations (72%), spending quality time with family (62%), and escaping the stress and pressure of daily life (51%).

In a significant change from last year's survey, just 34% (down from 58%) said fuel prices will affect their RV travel plans. Those who say their plans will be affected still plan to travel in their RVs, but will adjust their plans by traveling to destinations closer to home (80%), driving fewer miles in their RV (63%) and staying longer at one location (59%).

According to the survey, 73% think now is a good time to buy an RV because RVing is the best way to travel comfortably and conve-

niently (64%), and great deals now available (58%). Top benefits of RV travel include spending more time enjoying outdoor activities (80%), flexibility (76%), seeing natural sites and attractions (75%), the ability to bring pets (60%), and being on the open road (56%).

The research found that traveling with pets remains popular with RV owners. Sixty-four percent of survey respondents said they travel with pets. Of those, 94% bring a dog and 10% bring a cat.

## RVIA CALENDAR

### 2013

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| June 2 – 6   | RVIA Committee Week – Washington, DC         |
| Oct. 11 – 20 | 61st California RV Show – Pomona, CA         |
| Dec. 3 – 5   | 51st National RV Trade Show – Louisville, KY |