



# Camping Women Trails

May 2010

## Shake out those Blankets...Polish that Rig...And Head for Invitational

By Kathy Arellano

Camping Women's 2010 Invitational and Get Away Days will be here before you know it. This year, the key word is FUN. Whether you want to lounge, hike, fish, visit, eat, play games, sleep, laugh, sing, practice camping skills, read, cook, learn something new or just hang out, you're going to have a great time at this year's Invitational.

**Climate.** As with the rest of the state, the Sequoia foothills area has experienced a wet winter. By Invitational time - June 13-20 - the terrain around Quail Valley Recreation Village (near California Hot Springs) should host a spectacular display of fir, maple, alder and California buckeye trees, native grasses and hundreds of beautiful, wild flowers and plants (for a complete list, visit [www.calflora.org](http://www.calflora.org)). Historically, daytime temperatures in the area range from the low 70s to the high 90s, dipping to the 40s and 50s at night. Given 2010's unseasonable winter/spring weather campers may be in for record-setting highs or lows. You may want to pack your allergy meds and an extra box of tissue as well as plenty of insect repellent and sunscreen!

**Equipment.** Speaking of packing, don't forget to gather up your Silent Auction items - anything new or gently used that you think a Camping Woman would like to purchase. If you're creative, consider donating your crafts or art for a very good cause. Also, consider donating services that you can provide on-site or at a time/date to be arranged with the buyer. All proceeds go into the Camping Women national treasury and are used, in part, to fund college scholarships.

**Workshops.** Several women have volunteered to lead workshops. If you have an interesting skill or talent to share that lends itself to an outdoor workshop setting, please contact Joey Johnson ([joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net)) or Kathy Arellano ([kathysewsfrit@yahoo.com](mailto:kathysewsfrit@yahoo.com)).

Visit [www.campingwomen.org](http://www.campingwomen.org) for complete Invitational information.

## **A Word (or two) from Our President**

By now, the chapters have planned out many activities for the coming season. I am happy to see so many great campout and day trips being scheduled. You can see all of the things each chapter is doing by visiting the Chapter section of the website. Remember that you don't have to be a member of that chapter to participate in their activities. Looking over all this neat stuff, I'd like to go on all of it.

Kudos to the new leaders in the Morongo Chapter. They now have a newsletter and a great schedule. People are excited again about being in Camping Women and having fun. They are talking about how to repair the Julie Miller Trail, which has suffered the effects of time and some vandalism. Everyone in Camping Women is encouraged to get on board with this and help out however they can. Details will be coming as the project gets planned out.

Also, props to the Invitational Committee. The LA/Beach Cities Chapter has really put time and effort into organizing this event. In the process, they have strengthened a core of their membership and turned much of their planning into fun campouts also. Invitational has

always been a special event for Camping Women and this year will be no exception. We will need volunteers to help out at the event and still need people to put on workshops. Don't miss out on being a part of this great activity.

The National Board held an "electronic" meeting in April. A summary of the meeting is in this newsletter. It had been decided to try holding the meeting via email to avoid travel costs and because scheduling one weekend when everyone could come together was proving to be a challenge. It was an interesting process. Business did get taken care of and things went pretty smoothly, but this will never replace the face-to-face, real time exchange of ideas. The next board meeting will be at Invitational.

Happy camping and see you at Invitational.

Joey Johnson

*Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves. ~John Muir*

## **Board Briefs**

**By Penny Smith, Recorder**

Well, Camping Women has moved officially into the 21<sup>st</sup> century technologically by having our first cyber board meeting by e-mail throughout the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>! Joey facilitated it and we actually got a lot

accomplished, without leaving the comforts of our homes! Here is a quick look at what happened.

Most of our members renewed by March which means everyone should be included in

the upcoming directory. We revised the membership form to be more user friendly to the system we use for keeping track of members.

Positions that we would like filled on the board include: Finance, Public Relations and National Camps Coordinator. Please contact Joey Johnson at [joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net) if you might be interested and she can give you more details on what each position entails.

Invitational registrations are coming in fast and furiously!!! We have 30 RV sites and 4 tent sites reserved with over 40 people coming. Each chapter is well represented. We have 13 RV sites (can also be used for tents) left so if you want to come, look at your yellow registration packet and follow the instructions or access the information at [www.campingwomen.org](http://www.campingwomen.org). If anyone

## **Treasurer's 2 cents worth**

By Cheryl Baker

This year's membership process went smoothly and I want to thank all of you for getting those checks cashed in a timely manner. I was able to get correct figures to the board in the first quarter with little or no problems.

I am also receiving many more insurance release forms than I have in the past, but I do know some chapters have had events and I still do not have their forms. Again I stress the importance of these forms and that they do affect the cost of our insurance as well as the filing of claims (if we should have any). So get those things

needs a packet mailed to her, send an e-mail to me [Penny.smith4@verizon.net](mailto:Penny.smith4@verizon.net) Sierra Foothills has created a "Basic Camping Skills" list (see pg 8). It would be great if each chapter could pick one of these categories and present a workshop on it at Invitational. Please contact Joey Johnson @ [joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net) if your chapter can do it!!! So far we have Nora Clark from Central San Joaquin Valley covering #5 - Trip Selection & Planning.

Many activities are coming up this spring and summer. Be sure to check our website for each chapter's schedule. It's fun to attend other chapters' campouts and see each other in between our annual weeklong Invitational.

Our next board meeting after Invitational will be a campout!! We will be meeting October 8-10 at Lake Millerton northeast of Fresno.

signed and sent please! You can mail them to me at:

**Camping Women, PO Box 1402, Twain Harte, CA 95383**

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at invitational and meeting our newer facilitators. Please do not hesitate to ask questions about any of the financial matters at the Chapter or National levels. I am here to serve the organization and do so with an open door.

Happy Camping!

# **To All Camping Women Members: We're Searching For A Few Good Women!**

It is Election Time again. That means we are looking for individuals interested in serving on the National Board of Camping Women.

Terms will start on January 1, 2011. Please fill in the following form.

I WISH TO SERVE ON THE CW NATIONAL BOARD AS:

VICE PRESIDENT:-----

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR: -----

TREASURER: -----

CWT EDITOR: -----

NATIONAL CAMPS: -----

**Tell a little about yourself** -----

You need to attend only four Board Meetings a year - usually in January or February then in April and October. The fourth Board Meeting is at Invitational (usually in June).

**You know how fast time flies? Take a few minutes now and  
Make a BIG decision ...**

**Return this form to Nora by October 8, 2010.**

**Thank you!!!**

**[lraep2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lraep2@sbcglobal.net)**

## CAMPING WOMAN OF THE YEAR 2010

Each year at Invitational we honor a member who has served Camping Women “above and beyond the call of duty” as the Camping Woman of the Year.

### CRITERIA:

**OUTSTANDING SERVICE AT CHAPTER LEVEL:** Nominee has been or is an active dues paying member for three out of the last four years; and described as a leader of chapter events and responsible for successful government of the chapter.

**OUTSTANDING SERVICE AT NATIONAL LEVEL:** Nominee has been or is an active dues paying member for three out of the last four years; and described as a leader of national events and responsible for successful government of the National Camping Women organization.

The Vice President via CAMPING WOMEN TRAILS and through communication with Chapter Facilitators will solicit NOMINATIONS each year two months prior to Invitational.

All nominations must be accompanied with a *biographical sketch* describing services at both the local and National levels.

The National Board at the annual business meeting at the National Invitational Campout will make final selection.

**The President at the National Membership Meeting will make PRESENTATION of the honor.**

-----Clip here-----

### CAMPING WOMAN OF THE YEAR 2010 NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPTER AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

NOMINATOR \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

If nominating more than one person use one form for each nominee.

Bring to Invitational or email to Nora at [lraep2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lraep2@sbcglobal.net).

# **First Time at Invitational!!**

## **Rachel Harp's Maintenance Workshop**

We are excited to have Rachael Harp of Harp's RV in Penryn, CA (near Sacramento) with us this year at Invitational to present a Maintenance Workshop. This will be in two parts- 2 hours on Thursday morning followed by a "walk-around" and 2 hours on Friday morning followed by a "walk-around." Her husband Joel Harp will be available on Thursday, Friday and Saturday to work on RVs on-site. They will also have a small inventory of RV products for sale at site #84. An article by Rachel appeared in the FEB 2010 issue of CWT.

Rachel will be going over the basics of maintaining your RV to increase your awareness of what needs to be done to protect your investment, as well as to give you peace of mind when using your RV. *No prior experience is needed to attend.* You don't have to be a mechanic.....but when a mechanic talks to you about your RV, you will have a better understanding of what he/she is talking about. A \$10 materials fee covers both sessions.

- Thursday morning topics: Electrical, Water, Sewer, Battery, Tires
- Friday morning topics: Solar, Generators, Awnings, Slide Outs, Hydraulic Jacks

A "walk-around" to several RVs at the end of both sessions gives everyone an opportunity to "look at" some of the topics she covers. This workshop is casual, fun and packed full of information. She encourages participation so come with your comments and questions!

### **Penny Smith's Comments**

I attended Rachel's workshop at a recent campout of another camping group and had my rig worked on by Joel. I learned a lot and was appreciative of having work done for an "honest" charge. Rachel came to my rig during the first walk-around, and with her guidance, I flushed and drained my hot water heater and changed the anode rod (I didn't know what it was before the workshop, but I do now!) I can't tell you how empowering it was to do a small maintenance job "all by myself." My manicurist didn't much like it but it was worth it!

### **Make a reservation if you want work done on your RV**

If you would like some work done, e-mail Joel and schedule some time, give him a rough idea of what you want done and what day and time best suits you. He will be available Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. If you give him a heads up, he will be sure to bring what he needs to fix your problem. They can be reached at [rachelharp@hotmail.com](mailto:rachelharp@hotmail.com) or (916) 759-7921.

# Camping Boot Camp

Whether you travel in a luxury motor home, a no-nonsense 5<sup>th</sup>-wheel or a well-designed tent, every outdoorswoman needs skills to help her feel confident and well-prepared for nearly any eventuality. When a camper enjoys many successful outings with a minimum of problems, she is rewarded with wisdom earned because of her good planning. But where does one learn these important skills?

The Sierra Foothills Chapter of Camping Women has proposed a method by which every woman who wants to can learn the wealth of skill sets incorporated in nearly every camping trip. The suggestion is that each chapter chooses one or two skill categories at which their members are adept and then teach workshops to Invitational-goers. Here's the preliminary outline:

## 1. Knots and Hitches

Basic knots best used for camping are demonstrated and practiced. Discuss how and when to use each knot. Materials needed by instructor: 20 pieces of rope, handouts on how to tie each knot, sticks or broom handles to tie knots to.

- A. Overhand
- B. Half Hitch
- C. Square Knot
- D. Clove Hitch
- E. Bowline
- F. Taut Line Hitch

## 2. Fire Craft

Fire building skills demonstrated and discussed

- A. Fuel Selection
- B. Fire Starters
- C. Safety and containment
- D. Extinguishing properly

## 3. First Aid

Basic First Aid and prevention. Wound management

- A. Sprains and Strains
- B. Blisters
- C. Bites and Stings
- D. Weather Emergencies
- E. Illness

## 4. Gear Selection

Discussion and demonstration of gear needed for specific activities.

- A. Shelter
- B. Specific gear and clothing for a specific activity
- C. Cooking
- D. Sleeping

- E. Personal hygiene
- F. Camp site cleanliness
- G. Camp Waste

## **5. Trip Selection and Planning**

Discussion on planning trips, near and far.

- A. Hiring a guide or joining a commercial group
- B. Planning on your own
- C. Travel tips
- D. Time management
- E. Resources

## **6. Maps**

Discussion on care and reading of maps

- A. Maps for planning
- B. Maps from street to water charts and types to use
- C. Map symbols & games

## **7. Compass**

Discussion on compass selection and use

- A. Types of compasses and their purpose
- B. Parts of a compass
- C. Shooting and following a bearing
- D. Using a compass with a map
- E. Triangulating a position
- F. Compass Games

## **8. Travel on the Trail**

Discussion of traveling lightly and safely on the trails.

- A. Proper footwear
- B. Necessary gear and equipment
- C. Leave no trace Ethics
- D. Essential gear
- E. Environmental hazards
- F. Proper hydration

## **9. Cooking in the Out of Doors**

Discussion of all facets of outdoor cooking.

- A. Preparation
- B. Storage
- C. Menu planning
- D. Gear ideas
- E. Methods of cooking

## **10. Compact Cooking and Menu Planning**

Discussion of eating and cooking on the trail

- A. Back Packing
- B. Bicycle camping
- C. Horse camping
- D. Canoe/kayak camping

- E. Caloric needs
- F. Bulk
- G. Packaging/waste
- H. Weight
- I. Protecting food from animals
- J.

For more information or to volunteer to lead a workshop, contact Cheryl Baker or Joey Johnson.

## Invitational Workshops

Yes, it is that time again, where Joey begs and pleads for people to volunteer to put on workshops during Invitational. A few people have already committed to doing some really cool things. Nora is going to teach us to crochet bookmarks, Rachel Harp of Harp's RV is doing a seminar on maintenance, Elsie from Morongo will cover fire craft and Kathleen and Constance will do their Tie Dye T-shirt "happening" again. I will probably do something around outdoor photography if I can come up with something new (input on what you might like to talk about would be helpful). If you have told me about a workshop that I did not list here, please remind me. The mind is a terrible thing to lose, but alas, much of mine is gone.

So, there is a lot of time for many more learning experiences. There is always an interest in camping skills and the Board Briefs in this newsletter has a list of potential topics.

And, as I always say, if you are interested in something, others are also and would love to learn from your passion.

Don't be shy. You will never have a more kind and receptive audience than Camping Women. Here is the info I need from presenters:

- Name of workshop
- Amount of time needed
- Cost (if any)
- What people might need to bring with them
- Brief description

You can send this info to Joey at [joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joeyj2550@sbcglobal.net).

Thanks for being a part of a great Invitational.

## Notes from Fund Development

### By Karen McVey

To raise money for National, two events have traditionally been held at Invitational: a raffle and a silent auction.

For the raffle, each chapter donates a basket of goodies. Tickets are sold and

each attendee puts a ticket or tickets in the cup in front of the basket she hopes to win. After much disappointment last year, the National Board decided that nobody may win more than one basket even if her name is drawn twice or three

times. Instead another name will be drawn. Start working on your chapter's basket for Invitational. For example, last year LA/Beach cities tricked out a cooler with beach goodies, i.e., beach towels, sunglasses, sandals, a game, etc. For the silent auction please bring any item that you no longer have a use for: old camping stuff, dishes, books, cameras,

plants, bedding, games, etc. On Saturday, a committee sorts the goods and arranges them on tables. Each item has a bid sheet on which people the amount of money they're willing to pay. The highest bid wins. There usually is a mad scramble for the popular items at the end of the bidding time. It's a lot of fun.

## **Camping Women Badges**

There are new Camping Women name badges available! The LA/Beach Cities Chapter was camping with some members from RVing Women and saw these cool badges that they had. They brought the idea to the Board in January. We followed up on this and worked with

Badges R Us ([www.badges-r-us.com](http://www.badges-r-us.com)), a women owned business, to make these badges available for purchase by Camping Women. A copy of the order form is in this edition of CWT, or can be downloaded from the Camping Women website, [www.campingwomen.org](http://www.campingwomen.org)

# Camping Women Name Tag Order Form

Please clearly print the words as they are to appear on the badge.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Chapter name \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_ Badges with pin @ \$7.25 each: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Badges with Magnet Backing \$10.25 each: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Hang bar(s): \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$4.00 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping @ \$1.00 per badge (\$5.00 maximum): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment by Check, Money Order, or Credit Card. NO CASH please**

**Please make checks payable to: Badges "R" Us**

SHIP TO:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Badges R Us

411 N 6<sup>th</sup> St #2444

Emery, SD 57332

Questions: Call (760) 212-0682 or email [susan@badgesrus.net](mailto:susan@badgesrus.net)

# Chapter Doings and Goings On

## San Joaquin Valley

April 9. Mennonite's Quilt Auction and Craft Show at Fresno Pacific College

May 3-5. May Madness Mystery Campout -Met at Nora's house at 4 pm for your first clue --Each clue will lead you to another clue, etc.,etc. until you arrive at our destination!!!

June 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Matinee Play in Fresno

June 13-20. National Invitational - Quail Valley RV Resort -see mailing to all

July 12-16. Dinkey Creek - (four nights - come home Friday) Price \$23.00 per site - half price for seniors.

August 8. Golden Chain Theatre presents "Because Their Hearts Were Pure" - Sunday Matinee at 2:00 p.m. (two miles North of Oakhurst) - A Boo-Hiss Melodrama!!! Tickets can be reserved! -General Admission -- \$12.00, Senior -55 & over-- \$10.00

August 22-25. Sunset Campground - Sequoia National Park - (SJV annual event at Sunset Campground)

September 22-25. Yosemite Campout in the Valley (starts on Wednesday and come home on Saturday)

October 15-16-17 Springville Apple Festival. Come for one day - Saturday for the Festival - or Campout at Costa Twin Lakes from Friday until Sunday

October National Board Meeting - Millerton Lake

November 3-6. Monterey Veterans Memorial Park Campout - Coordinator Nora (more later)

## Sierra Foothills

Spring is in the air and Camping Women in Tuolumne County are on it! We have already had our first Campout at Woodward Reservoir and though the weather was a little dicey, we had a great time. We were able to kayak and canoe and share the water with many of our northern neighbors, the Canada Geese. Boy are they noisy, I don't think they ever quiet down those honkers. There are many bike trails and hiking trails including one that takes you almost completely around the lake. We had a great deal of moisture the first night and the last night, but in between we were dry and having a great time. Below is a picture of us trying to stay warm.



Our next campout was in March and we headed to Eastman Lake group campsite out of Chowchilla. This event is to see all the wild flowers and if we are lucky some bald eagles. This is one of their nesting areas and we are hoping to be fortunate enough to meet a few. Again hiking and biking trails abound here and we hope to visit them all. Kayaking and canoeing on the lake is also a fun activity in this park.

We have been to Badger Pass and Calaveras Big trees to snowshoe and cross country ski, and a small group headed back to Badger Pass to snow camp. We have also continued our weekly game nights and potlucks with much exuberance since the weather has tried to keep us in this season.

A week long desert trip was planned and happened so we could catch all the wild fauna in the California desert before it gets too hot there. The group went to Death Valley and Joshua Tree. This is a yearly trip for some of our members and each year they have more varieties and beauty to share with us. In fact, they came back with over 300 photos.

In April a group of us volunteered for Sierra Hope, a local organization helping in three counties to care for HIV, AIDS and hepatitis C patients. They also offer education in prevention of all 3 diseases. They host the beer garden at "Reggae on the Mountain" yearly and this year we poured the beer. In 4 hours we poured enough beer to raise \$3147. We ran out of beer even, but the weather was great, the music was great and we all had a good time.

We are also headed to the Pinnacles in May and plan to camp, hike and do a little cave exploration. The weather should be perfect this time of year.

Throughout the spring we will be doing our weekly walks, camping and having our game events. We are looking forward to seeing many of you at Invitational and don't forget to get your T-shirt orders in to us.

Enjoy Spring!

## **Sacramento**

Chapter membership: 34 as of Apr. 12, 2010. Planning meeting held Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>. Activities past: Art Walk in Downtown Sacramento; day trip to Daffodil Hill; creek cleanup April 17; Scottish Games Apr. 25.

## **Morongo Basin**

Our chapter is doing well with members excited and participating in various events. We have been distributing our brochure at different functions to boost membership. We will be receiving free advertising on Lspotpalmsprings, which will also help pull in more members. Our events coordinator Denise Gaug has been working hard to make sure we have plenty of activities planned, which has made for more comradery with members. We launched our premier issue of our new newsletter Coyote Corner. Any other chapters wishing copies please let Elsie Daringer, chapter facilitator, know. Also any articles are welcome. Our chapter is also in the process of figuring out what can be done to improve the Julie Miller Trail at Joshua Tree National Park. The trail is in very poor condition and our members are going to walk it during our Joshua Tree Campout May 13-17. We are hoping to involve all chapters in this cleanup. In February eight of us went to Lake Perris where and the snow-covered southern Sierras were a backdrop to the green hills. Beauteous. Five members in March hiked in Indian Canyon, Palm Springs, to visit the multitude of wild flowers after our welcomed rainy season. In May 13 to 17 we'll be at Indian Cove in Joshua Tree. Planned campouts include Doheny Beach, Sept. 19-22 and Big Bear Oct 7-11.

## **LA/Beach Cities**

The women of LA/Beach Cities have been busy planning this year's Invitational, usually at campouts, one at Quail Valley itself, one at Bakersfield hitching onto RVing Women, and one at a beautiful oak forest in Fillmore, once more with RVing Women. The committee consists of Penny Smith, honcho supreme, Kathy Arellano, Sandi Powe, Marla Horn (when she's not working), and Judy Haueter. We're hoping to have a superb turnout and gala time.

## **Spring Checkup-Inside the RV**

**By Rachel Harp**

This article is devoted to checking out the inside of the RV for the upcoming season.

If you have winterized your RV, be sure that you flush out the non-toxic antifreeze that is in the system. This should be done before you do anything else.

The next chore that I do every spring is to take out everything I have packed and accumulated in the inside throughout the year. This should also include the outside compartments. I know that it seems like a lot of unnecessary work, but, if you have never done it, it should be done. If this seems too much, make this chore an every

other year chore. You will be amazed at the amount of unnecessary stuff you have in the RV. Not only does it take up room that could be used for other necessary stuff, the extra weight will effect your towing and gas mileage. I use the 80/20 rule. If you don't use it 80% of the time and only use it 20% of the time, it can be left behind. Repack and reorganize your items. Now is the time to go to your favorite discount store and get those great organizing gadgets. If you are like me, you might even find those missing goodies you bought last year to use. I will guarantee you will be shocked at the amount of stuff you have packed in and

can do without. Get rid of that 20 piece pot and pan set you thought you would use.....

Now on to the appliances. Most roof top air conditioners have a filter on the inside ceiling assembly. The filter needs to be checked and cleaned each year. If the filter is in good shape, not falling apart, you can wash it with mild soap and water. If you have a basement model, it also should have a filter. It is at times difficult to locate. Check your manual for a possible location.

A propane inspection and leak test should be done once a year. This should be done by a professional that specializes in RV propane systems. At the same time you can request that the furnace, refrigerator and any propane appliances be cleaned and any pilots checked and adjusted if necessary.

RVs tend to accumulate a lot of moisture and it is always a good idea to have some type of dehumidifier unit. The units can be portable such as the "Dri-Z-Air" unit that uses special crystals or there are electric units. When you are storing the RV, if possible, keep closet doors and cabinets open. This helps to keep things dry with less chance of getting that musty smell problem.

Now is a good time to sanitize your fresh water system. The following procedure is the one that I have used for many years:

1. Use the following to determine the amount of bleach needed to sanitize the tank.

- a) Multiply "gallons of tank capacity" by 0.13; result is the ounces of bleach needed to sanitize the tank.

2. Mix into solution the proper amount of bleach within a full container of water.

3. Pour the solution (water/bleach) into the tank and fill the tank with potable water.

4. Run the water at all faucets (hot & cold) until the distinct odor of chlorine can be detected.

5. The standard solution must have 4 hours of contact time to ensure complete disinfecting. Doubling the solution concentration allows for contact time of 1 hour.

6. When the contact time is completed, drain the tank. Refill with potable water and purge the plumbing of all sanitizing solution.

Sometimes, if you cannot rid the tank of the chlorine, white vinegar can be added and than flushed again. Use 1/2 of the amount of white vinegar to the amount of chlorine used. This helps neutralize the chlorine.

The inline and portable filters that you may have in your system should be replaced at this time. It is recommended that you use a portable filter on the outside to help filter debris from coming into the RV and a permanent one under the sink for the drinking water. This helps eliminate carrying all those plastic drinking bottles. There are many different water filtration systems. Make sure you get the right one for you. Charcoal filters are great for the outside, but, you will want a much more complete system for the inside.

Check your entry door for proper closing and sealing. Doors come out of adjustment quite often. You should not

have to slam a door and push on it just to get it to close & seal. The doors also have a door molding that can get torn or worn and that may need to be replaced. Look at the interior of your windows to make sure there are no signs of leaks. Discoloration around the frame is usually a good (bad) sign of leaks. Also, check the condition of your screens in the window and roof vents. By now they probably need a good cleaning. If you have a roof vent that has an exhaust fan, dirty screens can labor the motor and could burn it out.

Your toilet should be checked. I don't mean just walking in the bathroom and think "Yeah, that's a toilet". Make sure that water is staying in the bowl when it is not in use. The water that is in the bowl is one of the traps that stops odors from coming into the RV from the holding tank. Also flush it several times to keep the gaskets in the bowl of the toilet lubricated. Check behind the toilet to make sure there are no signs of water on the floor or on the back of the toilet. If there are any signs of water where it shouldn't be, get it checked out. Better to find out now than in the middle of the night at an outing.

This time of year is when I also have my carpets cleaned. Whoever thought of putting carpet in an RV must have been crazy. I also clean and wax my shower, Formica and tile with a product called "Gel Gloss". By doing this it cuts my work

in half for the rest of the year. I do a wood treatment to the inside cabinets and walls. For years I have used a product called Speed-Brite, but any polish that you find for wood will do. Always put the product on the cloth and wipe on than off. That way it will not over use the product and it goes on easier with over application. By treating the wood, it helps prevent cracking and drying out.

I also check the expiration date on my food products and spices. Since I rarely cook, a lot of my items are expired, so I might as well dispose of them.

Test your smoke alarm and c/o detector. Make sure your fire extinguisher is up to date and the proper type. Check your first aid kit. I checked my and found the band aids I had don't even stick anymore. When I went camping recently I realized I was out of eye wash and burn cream and I was not even close to anyplace to get some. Thank goodness someone at camp had some.

By taking these steps now, you will have more time this season to enjoy your RV instead of fight your RV.

As always, be safe out there and keep on camping! If you have any questions, comments or concerns, you can reach me at [rachelharp@hotmail.com](mailto:rachelharp@hotmail.com).