

# 2017 SUMMER MAGAZINE

# COAST<sub>TO</sub> COAST



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Mountain Adventures**  
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the mountain culture

**A Trio of Pacific  
Northwest Gardens**

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Ashdown, Arkansas

Ponderosa Falls RV Resort  
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# FROM THE PRESIDENT

PUTTING MEMBERS FIRST



## Digital Edition Improvements

After publishing our first digital-only edition of Coast Magazine in April, we spent a good deal of time critiquing this publication. Our conclusion was that we needed to re-design our magazine to make better use of the digital format. Therefore we have made some important design changes to

this Summer issue that we think will make it easier for you to read and enjoy. These changes include:

- Creating both the PDF and the flipbook in one-page formats rather than two-page spread formats we used for the Spring issue
- Increasing the type size
- Using photos at the top of pages and a bolder footer at the page bottom to help clearly divide the pages
- Adding distinctive colors and an article title to the page footer to help members better track which story they are reading

With these changes we are trying to take full advantage of the digital format for our magazine. After producing only print issues for years, it is admittedly an adjustment to think digitally versus print. For instance, our page count no longer matters, where with print issues we were forced to think in 8-page increments because of printing industry standards.

We tested our changes on both smartphones and tablets, in addition to our computers, and we think this new format will make the magazine a much more enjoyable read for our members. We welcome your feedback, so please send any thoughts or comments you have to [CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com](mailto:CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com).

## Let's Grow Our Network!

Coast to Coast continues to add new parks and resorts to our network of affiliates, and there are two new Good Neighbor Parks highlighted on page 6 in this issue. If you've ever visited a resort or campground that you loved and wished that it was a part of the Coast to Coast network, now you can nominate that park as a potential new resort or Good Neighbor Park. It's an opportunity for Coast members to help Coast to Coast grow our network so that members have more quality places to stay.

To recommend a new affiliate, Coast members must have recently stayed at the facility and must provide the following:

- Name, address, phone number, and contact at facility
- Indicate whether facility is a membership resort (potential resort) or an open-to-the-public park (potential Good Neighbor Park).
- Member's name and Coast member number
- Date that member visited the park or resort
- Submit Member Get a Park referrals to:

Email: [CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com](mailto:CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com)

Mail: Coast to Coast, Member Get a Park,  
PO Box 7028, Englewood, CO 80155-7028

If Coast signs a park or resort as an affiliate as a result of a member recommendation, that member will receive a \$50 Camping World gift certificate from Coast to Coast. All Coast members with active memberships are eligible to submit Member Get a Park referrals. In the case that Coast signs a new affiliate that is recommended by more than one member, only the first member recommending the new facility will be awarded the \$50 Camping World gift certificate

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## MEMBER MATTERS

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR COAST TO COAST MEMBERSHIP

### New Good Neighbor Park in Florida

**Belle Parc RV Resort in Brooksville, Florida**, is our newest Coast Good Neighbor Park. This top-rated resort is located on West Central Florida's Nature Coast in Hernando County just outside the city of Brooksville. Belle Parc is French for "beautiful park," and the resort prides itself on the natural beauty of its grounds as well as offering guests quiet country charm with big-city accessibility.

The resort's location offers local access to gulf beaches, rivers, and springs for kayaking, canoeing, fishing, or just relaxing. Croom State Park, "Rails to Trails" and the Suncoast Trail are nearby and offer paved, dedicated bicycle trails and off-road trails. Belle Parc is a short drive to Disney, Busch Gardens, Weeki Wachee Springs and Water Park, Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park, and Citrus County Speedway.

Resort amenities include spacious sites with full hookups, a seasonally heated pool, hot-tub, laundry facilities, sparkling restrooms, an exercise room, complimentary Wi-Fi, escorts to your site, and more. While on the resort enjoy plenty of room to bike and walk or enjoy the lake

and the shade of the old-growth live oaks. Belle Parc RV Resort is conveniently located near restaurants, shopping, and all required services.

For more information on Belle Park RV Resort visit [www.belleparcrvresorts.com](http://www.belleparcrvresorts.com).

### Receive Exceptional Service? Let Us Know!

Each year Coast to Coast awards individuals at our affiliated parks and resorts for outstanding service in the areas of customer service and resort operations. If you receive excellent service during your stay at a Coast Resort, please let us know about it by emailing [CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com](mailto:CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com). In your email please provide us with a summary of your experience and the individual you would like to nominate for special recognition.

Coast announces our awards for customer service and resort operations during the first quarter of every year, and winners receive an attractive award to celebrate their achievement. So please help us select the winners of our annual service and operations awards by sending your nominations to [CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com](mailto:CCRPresident@CoastResorts.com).



## RESORT UPDATES

### ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE 2017 DIRECTORY

The *2017 Coast to Coast Resort Directory* is packed with everything you need to navigate the network of Coast to Coast Resorts and Coast Good Neighbor Parks. To keep members up-to-date, each issue of Coast magazine includes any updates that have occurred since the last issue.

#### GOOD NEIGHBOR PARKS

##### GOOD NEIGHBOR NEW

###### FLORIDA

###### Gulf Coast Camping Resort,

24020 Production Cir, Bonita Springs, 34135; 239-992-3808; URL: [gulfcoastcampingresort.com](http://gulfcoastcampingresort.com); Email: [info@gulfcoastcampingresort.com](mailto:info@gulfcoastcampingresort.com). Directions: From I-75 Ex 123: W on Corkscrew Rd to US-41. S on US-41 3 mi. L on Production Cir. Look for big blue/white Gulf Coast sign. Latitude: 26.38475; Longitude: -91.8053. Notations: Check-In: Noon; Check-out: Noon. Special discount rate for Coast members. Additional charges: Extra adult \$3/night, extra child \$3/night, dump station \$10, tax 11%. All sites are level, back-in, grass. Max electrical: 50-amp; Max RV length: 42 feet; Season: October 1 to April 30. Amenities: Recreation hall, billiards, bingo, church services, crafts, dump station, entertainment, fishing available, game room, group activities, horseshoes, hot showers, laundry, library,

picnic tables, pool table, propane, shuffleboard, outdoor pool, tenting. A 55+ resort.

###### FLORIDA

**Belle Parc RV Resort**, 11089 Ancient Trail, Brooksville, 34601; 352-593-5852; URL: [belleparcresorts.com](http://belleparcresorts.com); Email: [Info@belleparcresorts.com](mailto:Info@belleparcresorts.com); Directions: From: Jct I-75 & US-98 (Ex 301): W 9.6 mi on US-98. N 2.3 mi US-41. Resort on L. Latitude: 28.58613; Longitude: -82.37573. Notations: Check-In: 2 p.m.; Check-out: Noon. Special discount rate for Coast members. Rate includes 2 people. Additional charges: Extra person \$5/night, 50 amp \$5/night, tax 9.5%. Drive-ups not accepted. Max electrical: 50-amp; Max RV length: 45 feet; Season: May 1 to September 30. Amenities: Outdoor pool, hot tub, laundry, Wi-Fi, internet, fitness center, horseshoes, shuffleboard, corn-hole board, library, lodge, boating nearby, fishing nearby, shopping nearby, tourist attractions nearby, golf nearby.

##### GOOD NEIGHBOR PARK TERMINATIONS

###### CALIFORNIA

**Redwoods River Resort & Campground**, Leggett

###### NEW HAMPSHIRE

**Blake's Brook Campground**, Epsom

###### NEW MEXICO

**Enchanted Trails RV Park and Trading Post**, Albuquerque

###### TEXAS

**Artesian RV Park**, Brenham



## KM Resorts Celebrates Milestone

### Coast to Coast is a proud partner

RVers have the 1980s real-estate bust to thank for the option of visiting one or more of the eight K/M Resorts. Ever resilient, when Owner Doug McLeod’s realty options went south, he purchased a small RV park in the East, managed it to success, and sold it. With his appetite whetted on the joys of hosting RVers, he traveled to his home state of Washington and purchased Travel Inn Resort in Elma in 1986. And the rest is history.

“I chose to go with Coast to Coast,” he says. “They kind of put us on the map. In fact, when we finally got the acceptance to be part of Coast to Coast, we sold 100 memberships in two days. People were just waiting for us to be approved.”

Coast to Coast may have given K/M Resorts a boost, but the relationship has worked both ways.

“Coast to Coast is proud to have K/M Resorts as one of our top resort partners. K/M is synonymous with the Northwest, and their network of eight resorts offers the

very best of outdoor recreation in Washington State,” says President Bruce Hoster of Coast to Coast Resorts. “We salute K/M Resorts on their first 30 years and look forward to working with them to make the next 30 years even more fun and exciting for their members.”

Organizing and managing eight resorts may seem like a herculean task, but that’s where McLeod’s genius shone through along with the name K/M Resorts. Children Kevin, Kraig, Kelli, and Michael (K/M) joined their father in the business and took over many of the duties. Now in 2017, K/M Resorts continues to be a family-owned business with high standards for its private camping sites. Their goal: be the leader in reciprocal campground systems in the Northwest.

“Our family legacy goes on,” says McLeod. “Mike owns three parks and works with two of his boys, Kelli is our marketing director and her daughter works here part time. Kraig owns two parks and Kevin operates K/M.”

Following are profiles of the eight resorts owned and operated by K/M Resorts of America.



## Travel Inn Resort

Elma, Washington

One of the best locations for Washington State camping, Travel Inn Resort is strategically located at the gateway to ocean and mountain recreation, just 30 minutes away from the coastal beaches. Local rivers and streams have salmon, steelhead, and trout, while the surrounding forests are abundant in game birds, deer, and elk.

## Ocean Mist Resort

Ocean City, Washington

There's nothing like Washington beach camping. Located on the Pacific Ocean, Ocean Mist is on 400 feet of oceanfront property, enclosed by a beautiful forest setting. The area has something to offer visitors of all ages.

## Diamond Point RV Park

Sequim, Washington

Diamond Point is one of K/M's most popular RV parks. It is located 7 miles east of Sequim off Highway 101. Sequim, a short drive from the resort, includes attractions such as the Game Farm, a ferry to Victoria, hiking, delicious Dungeness crab, shopping, a casino, and more.

## Old American Kampground

Newport, Washington

Eastern Washington camping offers some great outdoor activities. Old American Kampground is located on the Pend Oreille River, 32 miles northeast of Spokane. Eastern Washington has a great climate to sunbathe, water-ski, snow ski, snowmobile, and more.

## Columbia Shores Resort

Chinook, Washington

K/M's Long Beach campground is located between the Astoria Bridge and Ilwaco in the cozy little town of Chinook. The park-like setting is fully equipped with 57 sites. This is truly a fishing campground with sturgeon and salmon all within casting distance and a fully stocked bait and tackle store on site.

## Maple Grove Resort

Randle, Washington

With Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Adams forming a triangle around Maple Grove Resort, adventure is never very far away. This RV park is located on 1,400 feet of the Cowlitz River near Randle. Amenities include a 9-hole golf course, indoor pool, hot tub, clubhouse, playground, horseshoes, volleyball, and fishing.

## Ponderosa Falls RV Resort

Cheney, Washington

Ponderosa Falls RV Resort offers great outdoor fun, 24-hour gated security, and planned activities. Ten miles west of Spokane, the park is conveniently located just off I-90 in Cheney. Plenty of fun for the family.

## Ocean Breeze Resort

Ocean City, Washington

Ocean Breeze Resort is the perfect place for ocean shores camping. The park has more than 200 secluded campsites amid 170 acres of forest and trees and is loaded with amenities. Just minutes from the beach.

In August, a celebration of K/M Resort's 30-year anniversary will be held at Travel Inn Resort in Elma, Washington.





**RESORT TYPE**  
Coast Deluxe

**LOCATION**  
East Otto, New York

**SEASON**  
May 1 – October 15

**WEBSITE**  
[alleganymountainresort.com](http://alleganymountainresort.com)

# Allegany Mountain Resort

This mountain resort features a spring-fed lake

Plan on creating a lot of great memories when you spend time at Allegany Mountain Resort in East Otto, New York. There are numbers of ways you can appreciate this resort. You can participate in the wide variety of activities, events, and fun for all ages. Or, if so inclined, just relax and enjoy family and friends and the natural wonders that abound at this resort.

One of the most prominent natural wonders is Rainbow Lake, the freshwater spring-fed lake. Visitors have pulled out trophy-sized bass, perch, bluegill, crappie, bullhead, and catfish. Whether you call it relaxing or sporting, time spent fishing is memorable. Non-motorized boating is allowed on the lake. Paddleboats, kayaks, and canoes are available at the boathouse for your enjoyment. Bring your own sailboats, paddleboats, canoes, and kayaks, which are all welcome.

Other forms of recreation are abundant. Three swimming

pools and a hot tub create other opportunities for water fun. Two of the pools are outdoors with a Poolside Café to curb bouts of hunger. An indoor pool and hot tub are accessible for those who want to stay out of the sun or weather. Activities include fishing, boating, pools, ball courts, and games. The activities department plans themed weekends to help you meet new friends. Little ones can enjoy one or more of the playgrounds located around the park.

Campsites are numerous and spacious surrounding Rainbow Lake. Or you may choose to set up your RV on a beautiful hillside campsite overlooking the lake. Sites have water and electric hookup.

Not everyone in your party may travel in an RV. If this is the case, rent one of the cabins at special member rates. There are one- and two-bedroom units with a living room. You may also store your RV onsite.





**RESORT TYPE**  
Coast Premier

**LOCATION**  
Ashdown, Arkansas

**SEASON**  
March 1 – November 1

**WEBSITE**  
[oceancanyon.com](http://oceancanyon.com)

# Millwood Landing Golf & RV Resort

Golfers and anglers find paradise at this Arkansas resort

Even if you're not traveling in the southeast corner of Arkansas, you'll want to head your rig that way for some of the best fishing and golfing in the South. Millwood Landing Golf and RV Resort, in Ashdown, features Arkansas' longest 18-hole golf course--a challenging par 72 course woven through the tall and wispy pines. There's also a pro shop, driving range, and putting green.

Bring your fishing gear because the resort has two fishing ponds. Nearby Millwood Lake is a renowned fishing lake with a wide variety of fish, including largemouth and spotted bass, crappie, white bass, striped bass, channel and flathead catfish, and bluegills. Each year the 29,000-acre lake hosts numerous bass fishing tournaments and fishing derbies held by local and out-of-state organizations. The lake and its surrounding environs are also rated one of Arkansas' best birding locations with 333 different species sighted in the area.

But if fishing and golfing are not your "thing," we're quite sure one or more of the amenities will grab your fancy. Relax in the large clubhouse or meet new or old friends at the tennis and basketball courts. In season, the swimming pool offers a chance to take a refreshing dip or just sit and soak up some rays. Horseshoes and volleyball are other ways to get some exercise. The activities staff plans many scheduled events. Your teens will enjoy relaxing in the teen center.

Take your apron off and enjoy a meal at the Green-Side Grill at Millwood Landing Resort. If you're traveling without your rig, the resort has 14 recently remodeled lakeside cabins equipped with kitchenettes.

Millwood Landing Golf and RV Resort is just 25 minutes from Texarkana, Arkansas.



## RESORT PROFILES



**RESORT TYPE**  
Coast Deluxe

**LOCATION**  
Cheney, Washington

**SEASON**  
Year-Round

**WEBSITE**  
kmresorts.com

# Ponderosa Falls RV Resort

One of K/M Resorts deluxe holdings in Cheney, Washington

Nestled among beautiful pines in the foothills of Eastern Washington, Ponderosa Falls RV Resort offers the very best in amenities and local attractions. Once you enter the 24-hour monitored security gate, your fun begins.

Ponderosa Falls RV Resort is one of eight resorts managed by K/M Resorts, which is celebrating 30 years in business. Begun by Doug McLeod in 1986, it has grown to include some of the best resorts in the country—all in Washington State. Children Kevin, Kraig, Kelli, and Michael (K/M) joined their father in the business and took over many of the duties. Now in 2017, K/M Resorts continues to be a family-owned business with high standards for its private camping sites. Their goal: be the leader in reciprocal campground systems in the Northwest.

Ponderosa Falls RV Resort, ten miles west of Spokane, is conveniently located just off I-90 in Cheney. Amenities

include 30-and 50-amp electrical and Wi-Fi. There is plenty of outdoor fun for the entire family along with planned activities. Enjoy the community fire pit and, if you haven't traveled with your rig or you have friends and family visiting, rent one of the five bungalows or seven cabins.

Need to exercise? Swim laps in the heated indoor pool, sweat in the workout room, and meet old and new friends on the sports court. Play sand volleyball or have fun putting on the themed mini golf course. The youngsters aren't left out because Ponderosa has built a kiddies' lagoon and children's craft area.

Downtown Cheney is the region's gateway to the Columbia Plateau Trail and the Fish Lake Trail, both of which explore the unique geology of the Great Ice Age Floods.



## RESORT PROFILES



# KEEPING YOUR COOL

Explore three Pacific Northwest Gardens



*Red leaved trees and bright floral displays look glorious against Glacier Gardens' green rainforest backdrop.*



## **Glacier Gardens Rainforest Adventure** Story and Photos by Paula Loehr

As the weather starts sizzling this summer, consider beating the heat by visiting three fabulous gardens in the Pacific Northwest. If you decide to tour these cool botanic gems, you can expect breezy afternoons, lots of deep shade and energizing fresh air.

First up is Glacier Gardens Rainforest Adventure—a 50-acre floral oasis in Southeast Alaska's temperate rainforest—within the 16.9-million-acre Tongass National Forest. Located in Juneau on Glacier Highway (the original connector road from Juneau to the Mendenhall Valley), Glacier Gardens is just 7 miles from downtown Juneau and 1 mile from the city's airport.

Juneau records an average 65 inches of rainfall and 85 inches of snow each year. That translates into 240 rainy days annually. The steady level of precipitation combined with steeply sloped mountainsides, a lean layer of topsoil and fierce 'taku' winds cause frequent

landslides in Southeast Alaska.

In 1984, one such mud slide occurred at Glacier Gardens' current site. It flooded the valley below Thunder Mountain, leaving sludge, uprooted trees, rocks and general mayhem in its path. Gardening entrepreneurs Steve and Cindy Bowhay purchased the landslide-damaged property in 1994 and embarked on clean-up efforts that stretched over several years. Steve, Cindy and their six children worked together to expand and improve their family enterprise. In order to reclaim the onsite stream to prevent future landslides, the Bowhays redirected the stream's flow by constructing settling ponds and a series of waterfalls. Each step in the process was designed with care to mesh perfectly with the existing natural landscape. Following restoration, the family acquired more acreage, developed two miles of paths, and partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to plan their guided tour. In 1998, the Bowhays launched Glacier Gardens Rainforest Adventure—their family's exceptional way of highlighting Juneau's natural wonders.

A leisurely go round at Glacier Gardens takes up to two hours, but your admission pass is good for the whole day—in case you decide to stroll through the lovely lower gardens at your own pace. You can wait for a



*Unique upside down flower towers are signature sights at Glacier Gardens.*



*A towering lemon-lime-colored glass monolith (with surprising spiky edges all around) stretches steadfastly out of the ground toward the deep blue sky in Chihuly Garden and Glass.*



*Contrasting color bursts of flowers, foliage, forest and sky make the Portland Rose Garden a visual gem.*

guided tour just outside the gift shop in the visitor center atrium. Be sure to look skyward to see planters with pastel petunia blooms cascading 12 feet from the atrium's greenhouse ceiling. Tram tours begin every 10 to 15 minutes. Reservations are not necessary for small groups of eight people or less.

Knowledgeable guides transport garden visitors via covered open-air vehicles through the lower landscaped gardens and into the natural rainforest immediately above. At the lower level, thousands of flowering annuals like brocade geraniums, impatiens, and begonias share nooks and crannies with shrubs and splendid perennials such as dracaena spikes and peonies. Red-leafed Japanese maple trees contrast gloriously with the deep green rainforest backdrop. Gentle waterfalls from the onsite stream enhance the idyllic scene. In the upper rainforest area, your driver will likely point out red elderberry and blueberry bushes, skunk cabbage, feathery ferns, buttercups, and velvety patches of moss. Tour paths are pleasantly shaded by the tall green canopy of the surrounding Sitka spruce and western hemlock rainforest.

“Upside-down flower towers” are signature sights throughout Glacier Gardens. The very first topsy-turvy flower tower was overturned in the heat of the moment—

when Steve Bowhay's rented excavator clunked into a boulder. The plucky tree stayed standing with root ball pointing upward and its former top planted deeply in the soft mud of the lower gardens. Bowhay was instantly inspired to plant colorful annual blooms in the tree's bowl-shaped jumble of roots, and Glacier Gardens' trademark upside down flower tower was born. Since then, many more flower towers have appeared at Glacier Gardens, thanks to trees uprooted by natural causes, then flipped so their unearthed roots can be re-purposed as sky-high flower pots. (You can learn how to build your own flower tower on the Glacier Gardens' website.)

During the tour, you might see a pair of Alaskan bald eagles that started nesting at Glacier Gardens in 2004. The pair returns every year and their eaglets development may be observed from the ground or close up through Eagle Cam with live video feed on the website.

After you roll 580 feet up the rocky face of Thunder Mountain, you can hop off the tram with your guide to take in sweeping narrated views of Taku Inlet, the city of Juneau, its airport, and harbor. When skies are clear, Gastineau Channel, Douglas Island, Mendenhall Valley, and the distant Chilkat Mountains are also visible.

Glacier Gardens Rainforest Adventure is a best bet



*Chihuly's outdoor gardens feature a totally complementary blend of leafy green shapes and color-drenched glass - including a spherical yellow and orange sun shining brightly in the center of everything.*

excursion for gardening enthusiasts and nature lovers who want to visit Southeast Alaska's rainforest. Fortunately, the gardens (open May through September) are readily accessible for travelers with limited mobility.

To learn more about Glacier Gardens Rainforest Adventure, visit [www.glaciergardens.com/](http://www.glaciergardens.com/).

## **Chihuly Garden and Glass**

Next up on our great gardens circuit is the widely acclaimed Chihuly Garden and Glass, adjacent to the Space Needle at Seattle Center in downtown Seattle, Washington. Artist Dale Chihuly is a native son of Washington State. His wildly popular 1.5 acre Seattle exhibit intermixes Pacific Northwestern plants and trees with his signature glassworks. Chihuly offers visitors a visual feast as he makes use of every lively color, shape, texture, and size imaginable.

Chihuly Garden and Glass includes a showpiece glass house with suspended floral sculpture, eight individual indoor galleries featuring Chihuly's diverse and dazzling glass creations, plus a gracefully landscaped, color infused outdoor garden.

While Dale Chihuly's glass artistry always incorporates brilliant colors and extraordinary textures, his stylistic

interests have shifted with each passing decade. Chihuly was fascinated with cylinders and baskets during the '70s, seaforms and Venetians in the '80s, floats and chandeliers during the '90s, and so on. His widely acclaimed glass art appears in 200-plus museums throughout the world. And Chihuly's commitment to promoting art in his home state is evidenced by his partnering programs with Seattle Public Schools as well as several non-profit community organizations.

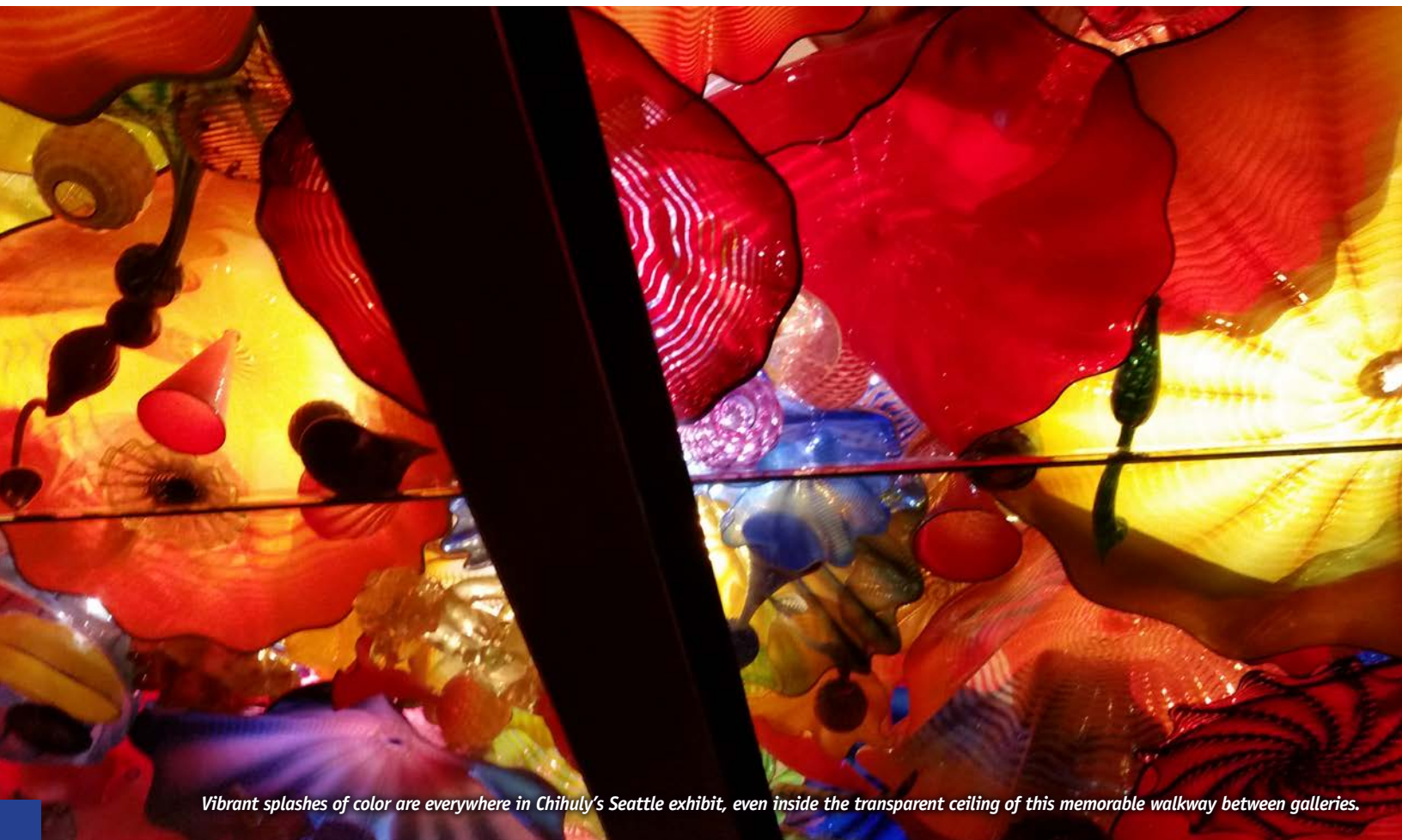
Chihuly's indoor Seattle exhibit contains an entire wall of woven blankets that reflects his passion for Native American cultures and crafts. In another room, one of his luminous blue and gold glass sculptures swims with fantastic sea-life elements. Vibrant splashes of color and shape are everywhere, even inside the transparent ceiling of a walkway that connects two galleries.

The exhibit's standout 40-foot-high Glasshouse draws all eyes upward to a 100-foot-long suspended floral strand with vivid shades of yellow, gold, orange, and red glass. Colors streaming down through the overhead structure change remarkably, depending on the sunlight's intensity and time of day.

Chihuly's outdoor garden plot presents complementary blends of leafy green shapes and color-drenched glass



*Chihuly's luminous blue and gold glass sculpture swims with fantastic sea life elements.*



*Vibrant splashes of color are everywhere in Chihuly's Seattle exhibit, even inside the transparent ceiling of this memorable walkway between galleries.*





*Chihuly's art pops with multi-hued glass in every lively color, shape, texture and size imaginable.*

pieces, viewed from a network of pedestrian paths lined with foliage. On one edge of the outdoor space, a towering lemon-lime-colored glass monolith (with astounding spiky edges all around) stretches out of the ground toward the deep blue sky. The color contrast appears surreal. There are dogwood and magnolia trees, hydrangeas and honeysuckles, Chinese wild ginger and sapphire blue sea holly. Passion flower vines, Japanese ferns and fountain grasses co-exist peacefully with irises, orchids, and apricot chrysanthemums. In a cheerful instance of art imitating life, a spherical yellow and orange sun shines brightly at the center of everything.

And there's yet another plus point at Chihuly Garden and Glass. From the outdoor grounds, visitors can look up-up-up to gain a very clear perspective of Seattle's iconic Space Needle.

To learn more about Chihuly Garden and Glass, visit [chihulygardenandglass.com](http://chihulygardenandglass.com).

## **International Rose Test Garden/ Portland Rose Garden**

The third jewel in our Pacific Northwestern garden series is the International Rose Test Garden in Portland, Oregon. Located in popular Washington Park on Kingston

Avenue, this 4.5-acre paradise features breathtaking blooms of roses, roses, and more roses—of every conceivable color and type. In fact, you can see 8,000 roses representing more than 610 varieties from all over the world. April through October are prime months for visiting the International Rose Test Garden (commonly called Portland Rose Garden), with June being the peak month for blooms. Garden admission is free.

Portland earned the name "City of Roses," back in the early 1900s, largely because of community-wide efforts to line city sidewalks with 500,000 rose bushes (all namesakes of a trendy French dressmaker Madame Caroline Testout). The resultant 200-mile-long trail of pink petals was credited with attracting tourists to Portland's Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905. A decade later in 1915, another avid rose enthusiast, Jesse A. Currey, convinced city officials to start a test garden to preserve European rose species that were at risk for destruction during World War I. Established in 1917, Portland's International Rose Test Garden still stands proud as the USA's oldest public continuously running rose test garden.

Today's visitors can attend a free public tour of the Portland Rose Garden at 1 p.m. seven days a week between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day weekend.



*Each rose in each part of the Rose Test Garden is a masterpiece.*



Tour participants should arrive at the garden gift shop 10 minutes before a tour begins.

Each rose in each part of the garden is a masterpiece. There are pale yellow blooms with glossy green leaves, deep pink blossoms, variegated buds, and clusters of climbing roses on wooden archways that invite guests to stroll on shady pathways. Grassy trails lead to quiet spaces. The garden amphitheater and lawn are popular spots for musical concerts, picnics, and outdoor games. And don't miss strolling down the brick pathway at Queen's Walk where bronze stars honor all the Rose Festival Queens since 1907.

Chronologically, the first phase of Portland Rose Garden is the Royal Rosarian area. It was established in 1924 in honor of Rosarians who serve as goodwill ambassadors for the City of Portland. When Royal Rosarians are knighted as members, they each choose a namesake rose, and the club's Prime Ministers' favorite roses are subsequently planted in their section of the Rose Garden.

Portland Rose Garden's second parcel was dedicated on the anniversary of William Shakespeare's birthday in 1946. The Shakespeare Garden features rose bushes named after characters in Shakespeare's plays and a memorial brick wall with a relevant quote from the

author, "Of all flowers me thinks a rose is best."

The third Gold Award section of the garden was established by rose curator Rudolph Kalmbach in 1967. The world's most revered roses (as selected by the City of Portland) are included in the Gold Award Garden. An open-air gazebo that's positioned to oversee the award-winning blooms is a popular local spot for weddings and a great vantage point for visitors.

The fourth distinct phase of the garden was founded in 1975. The Miniature Rose Test Garden showcases nationally recognized small rose varieties. The Frank Beach Memorial Fountain on the upper level is an enduring tribute to a man who championed the city's original Rose Festival and who first called Portland the "City of Roses." When entering the miniature area, stop to see the raised beds where the rarest rose cultivars are grown.

Contrasting color bursts of flowers, foliage, forest and sky come together delightfully at Portland's Rose Garden. Beyond the neat rows of fresh blossoms and Northwestern pine forest background are sprawling perspectives of downtown Portland and the Willamette River. On clear days, Mount Hood and the Cascade Mountains are visible too. Rose-colored glasses aren't needed when you visit



*Archways shaded by jumbles of climbing roses invite visitors to stroll on breezy garden pathways.*



*A charming gazebo overlooks the Gold Medal Garden where the world's most celebrated roses are planted.*

Portland Rose Garden. Rosy visions are always on hand for your viewing pleasure.

To learn more about the International Rose Test Garden (Portland Rose Garden), visit [www.portlandparks.org](http://www.portlandparks.org).

Please note that now through March 2018, parking is extremely limited at Portland Rose Garden due to a Water Bureau project. Visitors are advised to take TriMet MAX Light Rail to the garden to avoid parking delays.



*The standout 40-foot high Glasshouse draws all eyes upward to a huge suspended floral strand with vivid shades of yellow, gold, orange and red glass. Colors streaming down through the overhead structure change remarkably depending on the sunlight's intensity and time of day.*



*An*  
**APPALACHIAN  
MOUNTAIN**  
*Sampler*

Find mountain  
magic in North  
Carolina and  
Virginia

*Duggers Creek Falls is the crown jewel on an easy hike.*



*The Blue Ridge Parkway emerges from a tunnel under the peaks.*



## **Appalachian Mountain Adventures**

Story and Photos by Emily & Mark Fagan

The Appalachian Mountains span almost the entire length of the eastern states, from Georgia to Maine. Within that range, between North Carolina and Virginia, stand the Blue Ridge Mountains, and the 469-mile-long Blue Ridge Parkway winds its way from North Carolina's Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Virginia's Shenandoah National Park along their crest. Following this parkway makes for an extraordinary RV trip that showcases not only America's beautiful natural landscapes but special aspects of its culture too.

We began our Appalachian adventures at the southern end of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Cherokee, North Carolina, and our first explorations were by bike on the easy Oconaluftee River Trail from the heart of town to the Oconaluftee Visitors Center. What a thrill it was to see elk casually munching the underbrush and wading in a stream by the trail. Arriving at the visitors center, we discovered that a whole herd of elk had taken up

residence there. As we wandered among the historic homes and buildings that make up the Mountain Farm Museum outside the visitors center, we were as delighted by the elk as we were by the historic buildings.

Cherokee is a small but bustling tourist town filled with shops and restaurants. Although it's a bit of a tourist trap, we were entertained by some Native American street performers who did an Eagle Dance and a Warrior Dance for us. The whole crowd enjoyed watching their performance.

Keeping our 36-foot Hitchhiker fifth-wheel trailer parked in Cherokee, we headed into Great Smoky Mountain National Park with our truck and drove the beautiful Newfound Gap road to Clingmans Dome, the highest point in the park. Looking out across the vast landscape of hills and valleys, the mountains faded into the distance in layer upon layer of silvery blue just as their name describes. As the sun set, the sky cast a pink glow across the mountain tops.

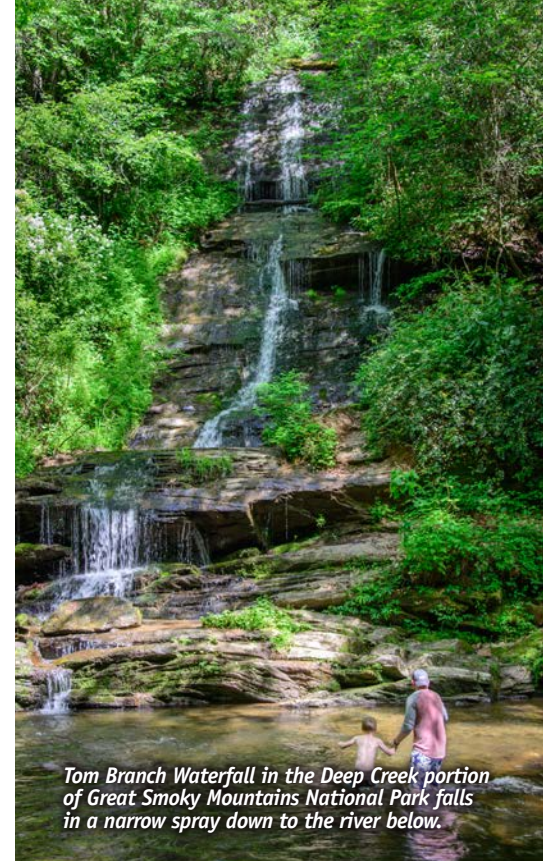
These rugged mountains are filled with streams and waterfalls, and we drove down to the Deep Creek region of the park one day to explore three waterfalls. The hiking trail to the falls was easy. We strolled slowly through the woods to the Juney Whank Waterfall first.



Map by William Tipton



*The New River Trail in Galax, Virginia, offers 57 miles of flat and easy cycling on a scenic rails-to-trails route.*



*Tom Branch Waterfall in the Deep Creek portion of Great Smoky Mountains National Park falls in a narrow spray down to the river below.*

The park has built a viewing platform just an arm's reach from the waterfall, and a bench opposite the waterfall is ideal for watching the water plummet from high above. We enjoyed a picnic lunch in this wonderfully tranquil setting.

A little further down the trail, the Tom Branch Waterfall fell in a tall thin stream and a pair of tubers floated by us on the river. Indian Creek Falls was a wider expanse of falling sprays, but it was the many fragrant and delicate mountain laurel flowers in the blossoming trees near these falls that really caught our eye.

Cherokee is also the southern terminus of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and on another day we drove north along this unique highway. Often shrouded in a canopy of trees and rolling up and down through sweeping turns, this famous parkway provides a wonderful escape into nature, although the views at many of the overlooks are obscured by tall trees. It is favored by motorcycles, because it is such a fun road, but RVs can drive on it too, as long as they skip the southernmost few miles where there are two low tunnels at mileposts 458.8 and 459.3.

We opted to drive our rig on other roads nearby to travel from south to north instead, and we hopped on and off the Blue Ridge Parkway in our truck to see some of

the highlights as we made our way north. Just over the Virginia border, we stopped in at the Blue Ridge Music Center, an unusual National Park Service destination with a fabulous museum dedicated to the history and sound of Bluegrass music. They also offer an array of concerts. Bigger concerts are held on the lawn outside the music center at the Music Center Amphitheater, and more intimate daily concerts that are free take place in a breezeway on the edge of the building every afternoon between noon and four.

We took a seat in the informal setting of the breezeway and were charmed by the happy melodies filling the room from the guitar and banjo played by Scott Freeman and Willard Gayheart. They talked and joked a little between songs, and their joy in making music together was absolutely infectious.

Inside the museum we found lots of fascinating exhibits of musical instruments, soundbites of bluegrass music, and glimpses of the history of this unique genre. Bluegrass has some roots in Africa (the banjo is a modified version of an African musical instrument) and other roots in the British Isles and in German liturgical choir music. When people whose heritages were these vastly different cultures found themselves living side by side in Appalachia in America's early days, their common



*At Floyd Country Store in Virginia the free Friday Jamborees are lively Bluegrass music jams that are fun for the whole family.*



bond was music, and they gradually created the unique sound of Bluegrass that is so beloved today.

Free Bluegrass jam sessions can be found in many other intriguing nooks and crannies in this part of the world, and we were blown away by the huge gathering at the Floyd Country Store in Floyd, Virginia. With shelves of unique goodies for sale in the front of the store—along with delicious homemade ice cream—the huge area in the back of the store was filled to overflowing with musicians and an enraptured audience that was seated around them.

At least 20 or 30 musicians were playing everything from dobros to stand up basses to fiddles, and without a single sheet of music in sight, they somehow made the most harmonious sound together, even though the jam session was totally impromptu. In between songs, a leader in the inner circle would crack a joke or two before picking up his instrument again to lead the group into the next melodic romp. All around us toes were tapping, people were grinning, and a little girl danced her own jig with an elderly lady who helped her get the wiggles out.

Not far from the Blue Mountain Music Center we discovered the small town of Galax, Virginia, and its

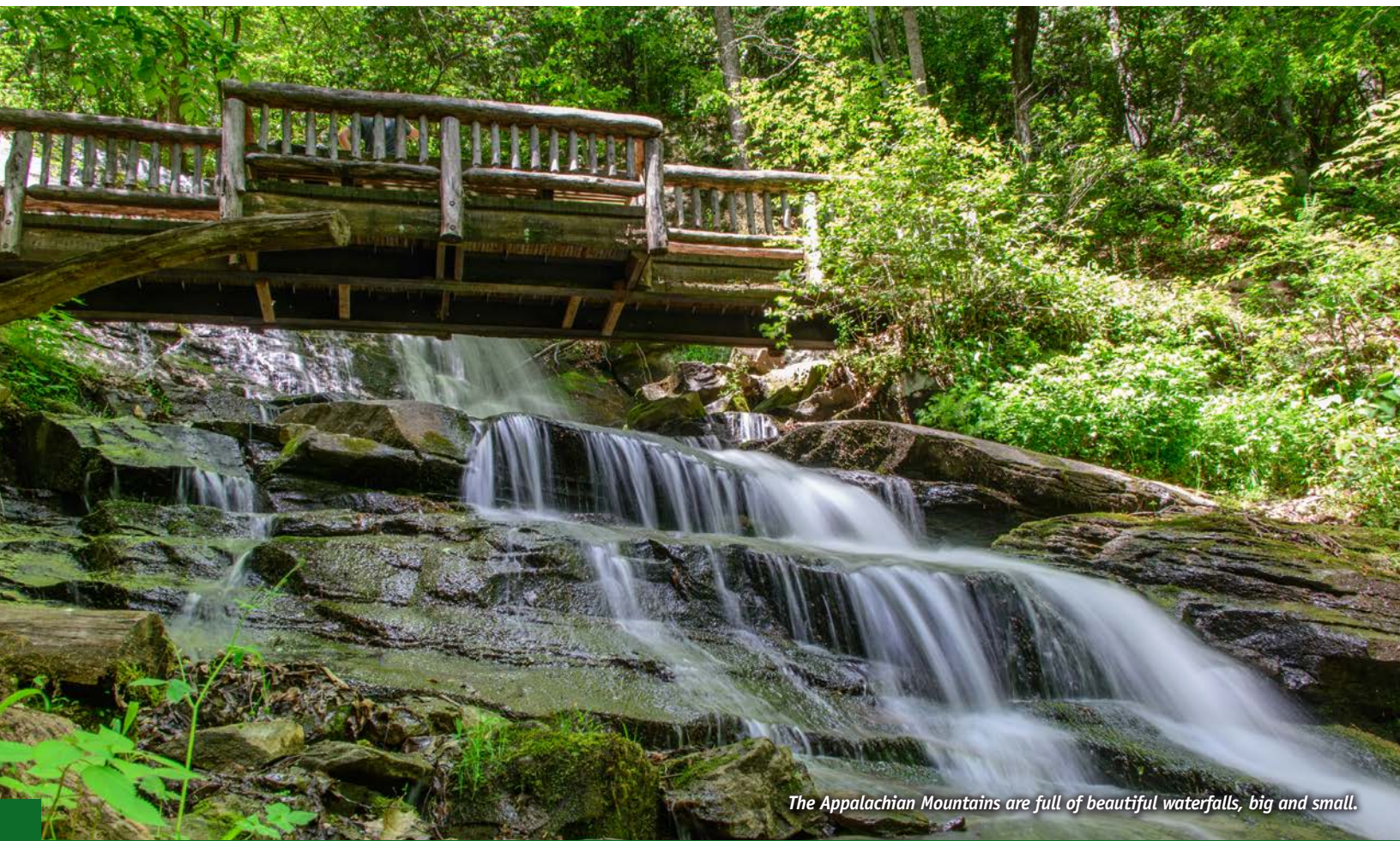
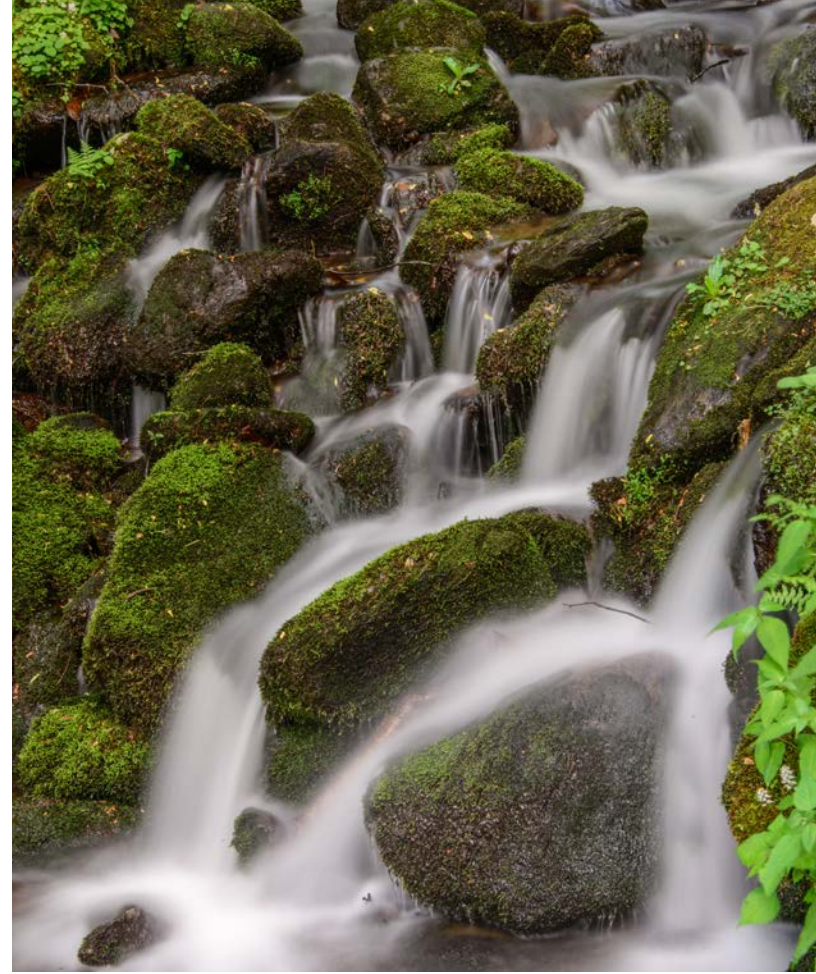
welcoming brewpub, Creek Bottom Brews. Their brick oven fired pizza and craft beers from all corners of the country were so tasty that we became regulars during our stay. This brewpub was also the place where we learned about the New River Trail that runs for 57 miles from Galax into the hinterlands of Virginia along an old train route. Ideal for walkers, joggers and bikers, we spent a day enjoying a fun and very easy bike ride along this well-maintained path.

As we traveled north through the Appalachian Mountains on roads paralleling the Blue Ridge Parkway, we followed the blooming of the wild rhododendrons and sought out beautiful hikes to waterfalls. This region is known for its stunning waterfalls and, like snowflakes, no two are alike.

At Soco Falls in North Carolina we did a very short scramble down a steep slope to find ourselves at the confluence of two towering waterfalls that flow into each other. Our first foray to Duggers Creek Falls was foiled by driving rain, but a second attempt took us to a gem of a waterfall that is best seen from under the bridge that crosses the stream below it.

We were amused to discover that there is a Crabtree Falls in both North Carolina and in Virginia. The North Carolina





*The Appalachian Mountains are full of beautiful waterfalls, big and small.*



*Rhododendrons grow wild throughout the Appalachian Mountains.*



*Wildflowers fill the fields in the Appalachian Mountains.*



*Mabry Mill showcases the ingenious way people a century ago used water pouring across a paddle wheel to power mill saws and grindstones.*



*Just one of many wineries in the region.*

Crabtree Falls is a torrential cascade that crashes down a mountainside, but despite its sound and fury, it wasn't even known to a visitors center clerk in Virginia who was giving us info us on Virginia's much more famous Crabtree Falls.

Waterfall hikes are usually vertical hikes that head straight up or down alongside the water, and Crabtree Falls in Virginia is so tall and has so many sections to it that the trail builders have installed a variety of staircases on the trail. It is the tallest waterfall in the east, and the hike to the top was a great stair-stepping workout that was rewarded with continuously changing views of the falls all the way up.

Our hike to Apple Orchard Falls was particularly meaningful because the very steep trail down to the falls crosses the 2,200-mile-long Appalachian Trail that goes from Georgia to Maine. Just as we approached the signs at the junction of these two trails, a "though-hiker" on the Appalachian Trail approached. We stopped to chat with him and discovered he was six weeks and 770 miles into his trek. Sporting a surprisingly small backpack for a four-month journey, he said he was still using the same pair of hiking boots he'd started in and was really looking forward to seeing Mt. Katahdin in Maine.

Our drive north through Virginia passed endless rural farms with white silos and red farm houses on wonderfully rolling green terrain. These picturesque farms set against a backdrop of verdant hills seemed like classic images of America in a bygone era. The agrarian roots of our culture can still be found in the Appalachians, however. At Mabry Mill on the Blue Ridge Parkway we learned how a grist mill turned the energy of flowing water into power to operate tools and machinery back in the early 1900s.

A sprightly old fellow inside Mabry Mill showed us how a long wooden lever started and stopped the flow of water going from a flume outside to the big paddle wheel. As the water flowed over the paddle wheel, huge gears inside the mill would turn. These gears turned other gears to power everything from a big mill saw to a huge millstone that ground wheat into flour. Watching this ingenious contraption at work gave us a deep respect for our forebears who planted and harvested their wheat and corn, carried it to the local grist mill to be ground into flour, and then brought it home to bake bread and cakes and muffins. How incredibly easy we have it today.

When we finally reached Virginia's Shenandoah National Park at the north end of this Appalachian mountain route, we were fascinated to learn that it was the first



*RVing in the Appalachian Mountains is a great escape into nature.*

National Park built in the Eastern states and its creation was intended to give the people of the big Eastern cities an easy escape into the wonders of nature that didn't involve making a long trek out West.

On a plaque we saw a quote from John Muir's 1901 book *Our National Parks* that is as appropriate today as it was over a century ago: "Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life."

The views from Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park were unobstructed by trees and were sensational. A hike up to Mary's Rock at the north end of the park took us to an outcropping of boulders that gave us a 360-degree view of the surrounding mountains and valleys. Looking out at these magnificent views and pondering the 500-mile RV trip we had just completed alongside the ridges of this mountain range, we realized that we had just scratched the surface of all there is to see and do in Appalachia. We vowed to return again.



*Trillium bloom in the Blue Ridge Mountains.*

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Blue Ridge Parkway:** [nps.gov/blri/index.htm](https://nps.gov/blri/index.htm)

**Great Smoky Mountain National Park:** [nps.gov/grsm/index.htm](https://nps.gov/grsm/index.htm)

**Shenandoah National Park:** [nps.gov/shen/index.htm](https://nps.gov/shen/index.htm)

**Blue Ridge Music Center:** [blueridgemusiccenter.org](https://blueridgemusiccenter.org)

**Floyd Country Store Friday Jamborees:**  
[floydcountrystore.com/music/jamboree](https://floydcountrystore.com/music/jamboree)

# Appalachian ARTISANS

*West Virginia, dubbed The Mountain State, delivers beautiful scenery at every turn.*

## **The best of West Virginia at Tamarack** Story by Dee Whited

Each bend in the road—and there were lots of them—brought even more stunning scenery streaming past my car window. West Virginia’s famed country roads lined with rolling hills, green pastures, verdant forests, quaint farmsteads, and bountiful rhododendron were carrying me “home.” John Denver was right—Almost Heaven, West Virginia.

Fortunately for me and my travel weary body, signs indicating that “Tamarack: The Best of West Virginia” was a few miles away—so I exited Interstate 64. The striking, peaked red roof, ample parking (even for big rigs), and attractively landscaped grounds assured me I’d made the right decision to stop. The plan was to spend 15 minutes to stretch my legs, grab something to eat, then continue traveling east.

With the help of brochures and the friendly staff, I discovered the lure of the property. Tamarack with its unique retail artisan products and extraordinary menu started out as a vision to promote the Mountain State’s image. Opened in 1996, the half-million annual visitors prove that the vision succeeded. Visitors enjoy a warmly decorated retail store, working studios for resident

artisans, a fine art gallery, a theater, A Taste of West Virginia food court, and the Tamarack Conference Center.

The facility is built in a circle with the star quilt pattern as its architectural design and I examined every degree of the circle. Trends and traditions, as well as unusual specialty products were among the long list of artisan-made Tamarack items. Metal, apparel, jewelry, souvenirs, wood, glass, furniture, pottery, outdoor decor, fine art, fine craft, musical instrument, music, books, and homemade specialty food items and candies are all on the Tamarack shopping list.

One portion of the large circle promotes fine art and fine craft, as well as paintings, photography, mixed media work, and other imaginative pieces. Six art shows a year focus on themes that bring out the best in West Virginia’s artists.

As an amateur artist, my favorite section was watching the studio artisans. Glass, wood, pottery, and fine art are featured. From April until November, other artisans also work in the retail area to showcase their talents and products. It was impossible not to be inspired to work more diligently on my own art.

By this time, I was starving and followed the enticing aroma into the food court/restaurant. Again, the theme



*Each gallery features a different type of art. The sculpture gallery showcases big and small bronzes.*



*The iconic shape of Tamarack's building is welcoming to visitors from all over the world.*



*In season, the outdoor courtyard is inviting.*



*The restaurant features West Virginia favorites including fresh-caught rainbow trout and fried green tomato sandwiches.*

was to present a taste of West Virginia. Among the many favorites are fried green tomato sandwiches and the rainbow trout. The variety of menu items made it hard to choose just one.

When I found out about the theater, I wished it was Sunday. Every Sunday@Two, Tamarack schedules plays, dance performances, seminars, guest speakers, theater camp, movies, music, and competitions in the 178-seat facility.

After three hours and many purchases, I tore myself away to finish my journey with a promise to visit again and again.

Plan to spend more time in the area and visit the quaint town of Beckley, West Virginia. It was chosen in 2012 by *Smithsonian Magazine* as one of the 20 best small towns in America—The best places to get a job, retire, ski, golf, and fall in love. The focal points of Beckley's lovely New River Park, the Exhibition Coal Mine and the Youth Museum draw thousands of people to the area annually. The unique underground mine, the recreated coal camp, the Youth Museum and their Mountain Homestead are surrounded by inviting lawns, colorful flowers, picnic areas, an imposing coal miner statue and a whimsical 20-foot Peace Totem.

Because coal mining has been the main industry in West Virginia, the Federal Highway Administration created a National Scenic Byway—the Coal Heritage Trail. From Beckley, travel north or south on State Route 16. Wind through mountains and valleys showcasing America's remarkable industrial heritage. Numerous resources line the corridor, including coal company towns, tipples (a structure used to load the extracted product for transport), railroad structures, and reclaimed mining lands.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Tamarack:** [tamarackwv.com](http://tamarackwv.com)

**Beckley, West Virginia:** [Beckley.org](http://Beckley.org)

**Coal Heritage Highway Authority:**  
[fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/10346](http://fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/10346)



## RV REVIEW

BY HOWARD J. ELMER

### Keystone Avalanche 320RS All-weather fulltimers dream home

While any travel trailer is, strictly speaking, living space, some units will make longer trips more comfortable than others. The Avalanche series of fifth-wheels from Keystone falls into this category. These trailers, often referred to as fulltimers' units, are built so that you could comfortably spend all winter—or all year for that matter—on the road in a trailer like this.

Now, designing a trailer to meet a benchmark like that is no easy task, if you consider that many fulltimers have replaced a house and all its contents with a rolling retirement home. This puts a great deal of pressure on a trailer builder to provide the comforts of home in 400 (or so) square feet. This was my mindset when I picked up the Avalanche for a test late last fall.

The Keystone Avalanche series is made up of eight models varying in size from 34.5 to 40 feet. My test unit, new for 2017, is a floorplan designated 320RS and it's this trailer that I towed with a new Duramax-powered Chevy Silverado 3500.

In fact, this truck (seen in the photos), was the winner of our HD one-ton segment during this year's Canadian Truck King Challenge. If you'd like to know more about the truck and the fuel economy results we recorded, please go to my website at [www.canadiantruckkingchallenge.ca](http://www.canadiantruckkingchallenge.ca)

After a drive through the countryside northeast of Toronto, I stopped and opened the slides in the Avalanche. There are three—twin opposing slides in the main body and one in the bedroom. I noted the width of trailer first (it's a wide body at 100 inches closed) and also the height of the inside space at well over 7 feet. The clearance in the slides alone is 6 feet 8 inches. Even the entry door is 6 feet 4 inches tall and 30 inches wide. In fact, the trailer has an overall outside height of over 13 feet. This is actually a good way to increase inside space as tall walls make for taller cabinets and also lift the basement storage for more room and easier access.

Tall walls also mean the chance to install bigger windows and the Avalanche has them. Frameless automotive-style insulated tinted windows are as large as 60x48 inches. I particularly liked the view from the free-standing dinette where the window starts at table height and reaches the ceiling in the slide.

Because full-timers travel in all weather conditions throughout the year all Avalanche trailers are built to what Keystone calls "Therma-Shield 37" standards. This makes the Avalanche four-season capable. Mind you what does that really mean past the message that it will weather the cold? In the case of the Avalanche, independent testing by the Dometic Corporation was conducted to measure the consistency of the interior temperature from one end of the trailer to the other. They found it was within 3 degrees Fahrenheit when the thermostat was set at 74 degrees and the outside



temperature was 4 degrees below zero. This standard also includes enclosed, heated tanks and the temperature throughout the pass-through storage areas was recorded at 58 degrees during this test.

I mentioned the opposing slides in the body of the trailer—these create a huge living space when open. The passenger side slide houses a pair of reclining theater seats opposite the flat screen TV over the electric fireplace, which is housed in the opposing slide. Beside it are the kitchen appliances. When it comes to the kitchen, I always think that I'd want to have it as close to what I have at home in the way of amenities. Avalanche provides an 18-cubic-foot refrigerator, full-size microwave and four-burner stove with an oven. There is even a built-in wine rack over the microwave. For storage there are the drawers and cupboards you'd expect; however, there is also a large full-size pantry with a hard door. Hardwood cabinetry throughout the Avalanche features hidden hinges and quite a bit of glass. That pantry door has an opaque insert as does the wall-mounted curio cabinet and tinted glass in the cabinets over the TV.

The central kitchen island in the trailer is fixed and is home to the sink and water faucet. This location makes it a focal point and the main prep surface that I'm sure will be in use constantly. The tall ceiling here also allows handsome hanging fixtures and a ceiling fan, not to mention the powered vent. House lighting is the LED type and nicely flush mounted. This kitchen space is

bracketed with a solid wood, free-standing, four-seat dinette in the opposite slide.

The master bedroom in the nose of trailer is spacious and has good height. The 70 x 80-inch king bed in this master has its head in the third slideout. This opens up walking space at the foot of the bed and also provides small windows on each side of the bed—nice for a cross-breeze. Also found opposite the bed is the second TV, which is built into a chest with a stone counter top. The front corner of the bedroom has a handsome cabinet dedicated to a washer/dryer setup. This bedroom also gets its own sliding door bathroom access, while a second hard door is off the hallway for daily or guest use. Guests are accommodated with a hide-a-bed sofa sleeper that folds out at the rear of the trailer when needed.

The bathroom, as you'd expect, is large; however, the size of the shower is still just a bit surprising. This floor to ceiling moulded stall has an integrated seat and ledge. Above is a full skylight and the translucent glass shower door makes for a bright space—open or closed. The sink is large; however, the counter is not. Still there is a full mirrored medicine cabinet and a built-in two-door linen closet. The toilet is porcelain and set at an angle in the corner providing lots of elbow room on either side.

Spend a lot of time on the road and storage becomes a prime concern. Working my way through the trailer, I found a wide variety of spaces, most of which are well



designed into the fixed cabinetry including under the lifting master bed. Under the unit in the basement you'll find over 145 cubic feet of space. Keystone has installed non-skid rubber diamond-plate flooring in there. Doors are large and feature weather seals and "slam" latches.

A full-timer typically spends weeks and months parked; however, they also tend to drive very long distances to get to and from their destinations. This means that the towing characteristics of a unit like the Avalanche are important.

To this end I first looked over a couple of features that will make the towing of this trailer easy and comfortable. It goes without saying that towing 36 feet of trailer demands as much maneuverability as possible. How much you've got is determined by the pin-and-nose design of the unit. In the case of the Avalanche, the pin is set far forward and the shape of the nose is tapered. According to Keystone, this offers as much as 30% better turning radius than some comparable units. This unit also uses the Trailair Rota-flex pin box, which features rubberized shock absorbers and a pivoting mechanism that soaks up the rough pitching of the trailer rather than transmitting it to the truck. I also noted there is a backup mirror and light in the unit's nose—both are helpful.

The other factor in a comfortable ride is the suspension and tires.

A look at the axles and Dexter suspension on the Avalanche reveals upgraded 7,000-pound axles that are greaseable, have bronze bushings, and bump absorption. The Nitrogen filled tires are on 8-spoke bright rims and feature 15-inch "G" load radial tires that support more weight than the "E" range tires found on many units in this size class.

My test unit was fitted with the optional "one touch" auto level system. With six legs, this unit plants the trailer. It's all operated from one location behind a locked exterior door. Also, the jacks operate in pairs, so there is no worry of twisted or bent shafts due to uneven lifting.

When it comes to ride, the trailer design certainly has a lot to do with it—but then so does the truck. The Chevy Silverado 3500 had no problem with this load and its suspension was the other half of the great ride equation. All in all a fine tow—with a really nice trailer. Makes me want to retire, right about now.

### KEYSTONE AVALANCHE 320RS

**GVWR:** 15,000 pounds

**DRY WEIGHT:** 11,530 pounds

**LENGTH:** 25 feet 10 inches

**WIDTH:** 8 feet 4 inches

**HEIGHT:** 13 feet 2 inches

**FRESHWATER:** 66 gallons

**BLACK WATER:** 49 gallons

**GREY WATER:** 83 gallons

**LPG:** 60 pounds



# For Deluxe & Premier Members Only



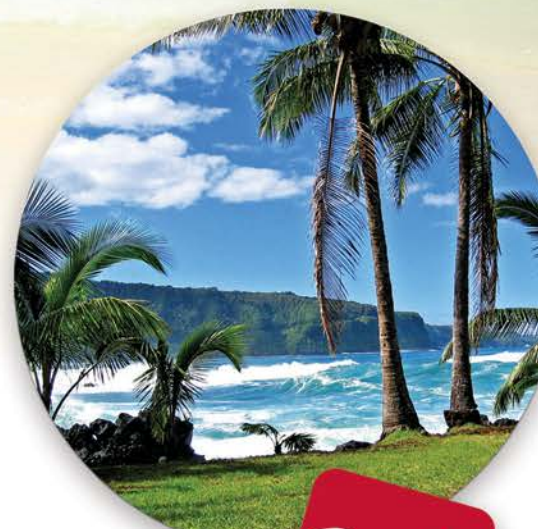
AS LOW AS  
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