

Ken Myers' First Travel Trailer Tow of the Apex Nano 187RB

Note August 3, 2019: At the time I picked up the trailer, I believed the Haul Gauge to be a useful tool. It is referenced several times, but the more I used it, the more problems that I found with it. I stopped trying to use it. It did not prove useful to me.

May 16, 2019

I left the house at 7:02 a.m. for the 103 mile trip, southwest, to Haylett Auto and RV Supercenter in Coldwater, Michigan.

The trip took longer than usual. I was in rush hour traffic here in southeastern Michigan. I arrived at the Meijer gas station in Coldwater, to fill the Ascent's gas tank, right across the street from Haylett, at 9:56 a.m.



Before I left, I calculated, using previously measured weights, that the weight of the Subaru Ascent was about 4,740 lb. That included my CAT scale weight of 4,520 lb. plus myself and everything I had in the car to take with me. Yes, I'd weighed everything.

The CAT scale weight of 4,520 lb. included what I normally carry in the Ascent Premium trim and a full tank of gas, but without me. I also did the CAT scale weight with me in the car. It was 4,700 lb. I do weigh 180 lb.

I took a Haul Gauge Weight reading in a little used, little trafficked area of the Meijer parking lot after filling the gas tank. The reading appeared accurate enough. It is really hard to get too specific with the analog type gauge of the App. Note that the line between the 4 and 6 is 5, not 4.5.

Haul Gauge

<https://www.amazon.com/HAUL-GAUGE-Connector-Measures-Combined/dp/B07DQ44JFB>

I arrived at Haylett about 10 a.m. That was a half an hour before my 10:30 a.m. appointment for my walk through and purchase of the Forest River Coachmen Apex Nano 187RB with Summit package.

I had a list of items to purchase and take home with me. Several of the items are mentioned on my Essential Purchase page.

<http://theampeer.org/thoughts-on-towing/RV-Essentials-Prices.html>

The items included:

- Rhinoxflex 45 degree clear sewer hose fitting connector
- Rhinoxflex 90 degree clear sewer hose fitting connector
- 25' 30 Amp extension cord
- Water filter
- Rhinoxflex 15' Sewer hose kit
- Sidewinder sewer hose support
- Rhino 21 gal. Tote tank (35.8 lb.)
- 2-5/16" x 1" Shank (AKA tow ball)
- Curt #45030 ball mount (the Ascent's would not work with this trailer)
- Fresh water tank filler with shut off
- 1 pr. Wheel chocks
- Hose Saver 90 degree elbow

LP Tank gauge
50A to 30A adapter
Broom and Dustpan combo
The weight of the other items is 23.4 lb.

All of these items were taken home with me in the car and they added 59.2 lb. to the Ascent. I weighed them after arriving home using a Brecknell Digital Shipping Scale, Model PS150 that I'd ordered from Amazon.
<https://www.amazon.com/Brecknell-PS150-Receiving-Warehouse-Industrial/dp/B019OGBX1>

That brought the Ascent's weight up to about 4800 lb. on the way home. I did not reweigh it with the Haul Gauge, nor were any of these items in the car when I got the Haul Gauge weight for the combined weight of the Ascent and Apex Nano 187RB

I also ordered a cover for the trailer, which was to be shipped when they received it.

During the walk through, I noted the unloaded vehicle weight (UVW) of the trailer as 3100 lb. The trailer had pretty much empty water tanks, but the 6 gallon water heater was full, which is about 50 lb. The propane tank was basically full, 20 lb. The battery, battery box and strap weigh 38.6 lb. This surprised me as the Marine/RV battery I use for field charging my flight batteries for RC flying weighs 47.0 pounds in a similar battery box.

There was also a starter pack, provided by Haylett, in the trailer.

The Haylett RV Starter Kit included:

Disposable gloves
30A surge and circuit protector
4 pack RV toilet paper
Sewer hose
Drop in toilet treatments
25' white water hose
30A to 20A/110V adapter
Water pressure regulator
A large bucket containing all of the items

The Starter Kit weighed 10.0 lb. and was in the trailer on the way home.

The new ball mount is a CLASS 3 BALL MOUNT (2" SHANK, 7,500 LBS., 2" DROP, 7-1/2" LONG) #45030 (<https://www.curtmfg.com/part/45030>)

The ball mount, ball, hitch pin and clip, and tongue lock (provided by Haylett) weighs 9.2 lb.

Per Jim's comment below, the 9.2 lb. was added to the car's weight.

The trailer weight was then about **3220** lb.

The combined weight, without the items purchased, should have been about **4750** lb. (Ascent) + **3220** lb. (trailer) or about 7970 lb. That would be really close, either way, to 8,000 lb. on the Haul Gauge App.

Note that this section has been updated and changed on May 18, 2019

Before I left the dealership to Haul Gauge weigh the Ascent and trailer combo at an almost vacant parking lot that I knew about, I used the Haul Gauge to take the tongue weight. The Haul Gauge read just shy of 500 lb., maybe 470 lb. or 480 lb.

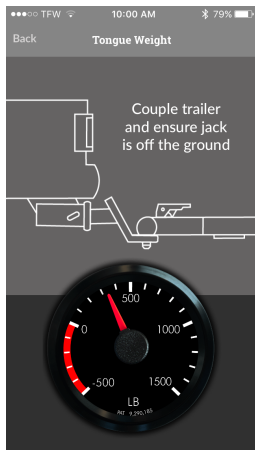
As it turned out, that number was erroneous. I am not sure what caused the error. It could have been something I did, as I was doing and thinking about a lot of 'stuff'. It could also have been the high wind, but I really doubt that.

Originally, in this section, I tried to explain the high tongue weight. That section was removed.

I recalibrated the Haul Gauge suspension. That made very little change when I weighed myself after the recalibration. My 180 lb. was used for the calibration weight.

Coachmen notes the shipping tongue weight as 316 lb.

<http://www.coachmenrv.com/travel-trailers/apex-nano/187RB/1594>



There was about 20 lb. of propane in the LP tank and the battery weighs 38.6 lb. That's about 60 pounds. The front fiberglass cap, with windshield, adds about 100 lb. to the total trailer weight near the front end. There was also about 50 lb. of water in the water heater. All in all, based on those numbers, I expected the tongue weight to be between 320 lb. and 350 lb., if the 316 lb. shipped tongue weight, provided by Coachmen, was anywhere near correct.

The redo of the Haul Gauge tongue weight this morning showed about 320 lb. to maybe 330 lb. That certainly is close enough.

***** Update of May 18th Ends Here *****



At the parking lot I took two readings of the combined weight. Both read about the same, about 7,200ish lb., and both were wrong when compared to the previous information.

I returned to Haylett and picked up the items that I purchased. They were put into the Ascent.

I thought I was ready to head home at about 12:30 p.m. I did one final walk around of the trailer and checked the trailer door lock, I realized that I did not have the trailer keys, when I want to take a final look inside to see that all items were secured.

About 45 minutes later, after a lot of searching by myself, and the staff at Haylett, the keys were found in the pocket of the gentleman that had walked me through the trailer. Whew, sure glad I noticed that before returning home!

One of photos shows the car and trailer hooked up at Haylett before I tried the Haul Gauge.

US 12 was followed from Coldwater east to just east of Saline, MI, where it intersects with US 23, a freeway.

US 12 is a very curvy and hilly two lane highway with a speed limit, in some spots, of 55 mph. The Ascent easily pulled the Apex Nano along at whatever the posted speeds were. The



Tekonsha P3 brake controller was set by the guy that did the walk through, and I never changed it on the way home. It seemed to be working just fine.

I stopped about halfway home, a little over 50 miles, in Clinton, MI to check the lug nut tightness. They were fine. I also snapped a photo of the car and trailer combination while there. (photo on next page)

Going north on US 23, I drove at about 60 mph for about 7 miles to the exit at Geddes Road.

The remainder of the trip was on two lane roads through the suburban area between Ann Arbor, MI and Detroit, MI. Unfortunately, I arrived at that point during rush hour. Rats!

During the whole trip, I felt very comfortable pulling the trailer with the Ascent.

I hadn't backed up any trailer in a long time, but with a couple of attempts, and my wife's guidance, via her phone into my phone over the media system in the Ascent, we got it done.

The temperature was in the mid to upper 70s during the whole time. The wind was supposedly in the 15 to 20 mph range from the south, southwest. It was definitely in the 20+ range. US flags were standing straight out and whipping like crazy, even the very, very large ones. The majority of the route had the wind behind me and from the back, right side of the trailer as I was headed east. The Ascent handle that well.



The real surprise was how well the Ascent handled the bow wave of the big rigs flying by me on US 23. I could tell when they went by me, but really nothing to note. The wind at that time was mostly blowing on the left, driver side of the combo.

Another surprise, which I attribute to the “tailwind”, was the gas mileage per the onboard computer. It was 16.5 mpg for 96 miles. It was only 96 miles of the 103 miles because I’d forgotten to reset the trip meter when getting gas, and I had gone several miles before I realized that. Still that was a weird figure, even with a “tailwind” in that extremely hilly country with twisting roads.

I wanted to fill my tank to do an actual mpg, but by that time it was time for me to head down to our RC flying field for our monthly flying meeting. The winds were still so high that no one chose to fly! That’s windy!!!

I am looking forward to our first trip, once I get the rest of the RV Essentials and do a lot of other prep for the trailer.

I was disappointed with the Haul Gauge results. The combined total accuracy is a mystery to me, as the Haul Gauge’s Ascent weight, shown on the gauge, is extremely close, yet when they are combined, it is off by almost 800 lb. I’ll be contacting Haul Gauge about that.

Update: 05/24/2019

I did the water system check on the trailer today. It appears that I pulled home a lot of water in the grey water tank because there was a lot more water that came out of the the tank than I put in, so the trailer was heavier than I thought.

Bringing the Trailer Home Ends Here

05/19/2019 Start date of my inspection at home:

05/21/2019 Note: I tried seating the screws in the cabinet hinges and bathroom door. They are in as snugly as possible, so they'll just be the way they are.

The Good means I didn't have to do anything but check it out.

The Not That Bad means that I could do something about it

The Ugly means that it looks like we are stuck with it and can't do anything about it

07/25/19 I thought that I did a good initial inspection at Haylett, but I continued to find problems. They are noted.

Interior inspection

Bathroom:

The Good

The medicine cabinet and circular hand towel ring looked okay and appeared to be secure.

The under sink cabinet looked okay.

The toilet and ceiling vent look physically okay and the vent cranks up.

The access panel to the water heater has its screws in it.

The access panel under the shower pan has its two screws in it.

The Not That Bad

Rear Storage Cabinets: just had some vacuuming to do. The doors and their hardware look okay.

The bathroom door has some issues. Most of the screws on the door jam and door are not seated into the hinge hardware. Most are also driven in at an angle. (Can't really budge them.)

The shower pan was not caulked between the bottoms of the plastic wall trim and shower pan. (05/30/19 & 06/01/19 caulked the shower pan.) The top of the trim piece was already caulked.





The wall between the bathroom and rear bench is EXTREMELY flimsy. Construction debris had to be cleaned from the area behind the panel that allows access to the water heater and its bypass valves. (The water pump is located to the rear of the water heater and not easily



accessible.)

The Ugly

The right, cold water, handle is marred or appears to have lost some of the plating material.



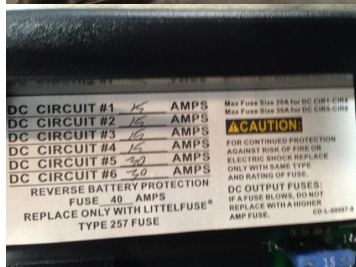
07/24/19 The bathroom faucet spigot is too low and doesn't stick out over the sink far enough to get your hands under it.

In the kitchen

The Good

The pantry and fusebox looked okay. More fuse info is found below.

The 15AMP black fuse is not a fuse. (Info in fuse note dated 06/01/19.)



The inside of the refrigerator looked okay.

The two burner range/stove top looked okay.

The kitchen sink and faucet appeared to be okay and the sink looked well sealed into the counter.

The kitchen faucet runs at an angle to the sink side.

The microwave, furnace vent and panel under the furnace vent seem physically okay.

The kitchen window and shade work okay and the valance and screen look okay. (But there was a leak - see 06/05/19 note)



The Not That Bad

The panel under the fusebox was missing a screw. This was noted to Norm during the walk through at Haylett, but never taken care of, as he said he would. (I put in a new screw. I had to vacuum out the construction debris from inside of the compartment that the panel was covering.)

The cabinet over the refrigerator just needed some vacuuming. The cabinet door hardware and door looked okay.

The cabinet under the sink has screws that are not seated on the latches and hinges. (Can't really budge them.)

There is no drawer under the sink, but we knew that when we bought, but the Coachmen Website was still noting it as part of the Summit package.

The upper kitchen cabinets looked okay, but again, the screws for the latches and hinges are not seated. (Can't really budge them.)



The Ugly

The refrigerator has some physical problems. The front panel on the refrigerator was installed incorrectly. The bottom of the front panel, on the left hand side, was not behind the little post, as it should be. There is a mar or scuff on the rear, lower refrigerator door trim that is holding in the panel along the side. (Fixed panel problem on Thursday, May 24, will have to live with the mar. The mar won't wash off.)



The kitchen sink faucet was not installed parallel to the long sink sides. It is noticeable.

07/24/19 The kitchen sink spigot is too low to rinse large pans well under it.

The bedroom

The Good

The front, driver side escape window and blinds work.

The front upper cabinets looked okay.

The driver side shirt closet looked okay.

The camp side shirt closet looked okay.

The under the bed storage was clean enough.

The camp side window and shade worked and the valance and screen looked okay.

The fire extinguisher showed that it had pressure. The green button on top was pushed down and it did pop back up. Extinguisher okay.

The dining area

The Good

The cushions all looked okay.

Under the front and back benches looked okay.

All of the screws were present in the leg holders on the underside of the table.

The pedestal holders, on the floor, have all of their screws in them.

The table pedestals looked physically good.

The upper cabinet, above the dinette and its hardware, looked okay.

The Not That Bad

There is no insert in the plywood finger hole of the front bench seat. (The plywood was actually cut by Haylett RV to replace the warped plywood that the unit was shipped with. Either the hole wasn't the same size, or the person just forgot the plastic ring for the hole. The back plywood bench top came with two screws in it keep it closed and unusable. I removed the screws to gain access to a little storage space under there for light things like bedding.

The floor under the table was very dirty and it wasn't from us.

The propane/carbon monoxide detector was covered with dust.

The screen door latch was barely holding the screen shut. (05/21/2019 Adjusted the latch.)

The screen door slide is too difficult to slide well. (05/21/2019 Worked on the slide with large flat-blade screwdriver, sandpaper and finally silicone spray. It's better but not good. I does seem to be wearing in.)



The Ugly

There are mars and glue on the front bench seat back panel on the door side.

The dinette window valance and shade are okay, but the screen had quite a gap between it and the window frame on the right side.

05/21/2019 I was able to move screen into position just pressing with my hand. All better now.



A question

There is a piece of Velcro, both the hook and loop sides, on the table lip of the front bench. Maybe it goes on the table bottom to keep it from moving when being used as a bed.

The Exterior, May 23, 2016

Roof

The Not That Bad

I inspected all seals on the roof, and they all looked okay at that time. Someone had been on the roof, as I saw their bootprints coming up from the rear, driver side toward the front of the unit.

Re-inspection on 06/07/19

I was up on the roof taking video today. When I originally checked the roof, I didn't notice that the two rearmost "screw" holes for the refrigerator vent were not completely sealed with caulk. I sealed them with DAP Dynaflex 230.

I also found what I thought was a crack in the roof. It was a line, on the roof, near the rear of the trailer. I rubbed my finger over the diagonal line and it rolled right off. It was just a line of caulk going from one place where the roof was caulked to another. It was really no problem.

Driver's Side Exterior

The Good

The gray and black tank drains appeared to be secured to the trailer, but they weren't. The seals on the marker lights, pass through door frame, magnetic latch, and bedroom window looked and felt okay.

The furnace vent frame, water heater door frame, 30A receptacle, refrigerator access frame, outdoor shower frame, cable/satellite connection, city water connection, and black tank flush seals felt and appeared to be okay.

The physical appearance of the outdoor shower seemed okay.

The wheel, tire and hubcap looked okay.

The tire pressure was read as 66 PSI (using the Slime Digital Tire Gauge from Lowe's (double checked) The same gauge was used for all tire pressure readings. (Tire pressure is supposed to be 65 PSI as noted on the driver side placard on the trailer.)

The rear marker light seals looked and felt okay.

The stabilizer jacks worked but were extremely hard to get down, and they still are.



The Not That Bad

The kitchen window right, bottom glazing bead looked a little hinky and the top part of that window's glazing bead was cut too short.



The stabilizer jacks appear to be on securely, but they aren't fitted well. No care was taken in attaching them. They are all attached differently!

Left, front driver's side - one screw extremely angled.

Right, rear driver's side - rear sheet metal screw angles to the right.

Left, front camp side

Right, rear camp side - one of the sheet metal



screws comes up from the bottom.

07/25/19 The connection to the black tank flush leaked a lot. It didn't have a hose washer in the connection. I put in a hose washer and the leak stopped, duh!



The nut and bolt on the bracket that holds the drain tube for the black tank and gray tank was not tight. I tightened it and put the tools I used in my basic toolbox.



07/22/19 The low point drains leaked at the first campsite. I had not noticed that. I tightened them and they seem fine now.

The Ugly

Both pass through locks are EXTREMELY difficult to get the keys into using either of the provided keys.

The Rear Exterior

The Good

The marker and brake light seals looked and felt okay.

Both caps were on the combination sewer hose holder and bumper.

The spare tire and wheel looked okay.

The air pressure of the spare was 64.5 PSI (double checked)

The Not That Bad

The spare tire bracket appeared secure, but rust was already forming in spots on the vertical bracket.

The Ugly

The combination sewer hose holder and bumper is not big enough to fit the RHINO sewer hose that I purchased and the RHINO hose must be carried elsewhere.

The Camp Side Exterior

The Good

Both marker lights, the AC outlet box and solar plug seals appeared and felt okay.

No defects were noted in the awning when it was in the rolled-up position.

The speaker seals looked and felt okay.

I couldn't tell if the door frame seal, seal around the window in the door and the seal around the latch was okay, but I am assuming they are.

The door latch itself works well and the attachment points seem okay.

The wheel, tire and hubcap looked okay.

Tire pressure was 67.5 PSI (double checked)

The seal around the magnet for the pass through door appeared and felt okay.

The pass through door frame seals looked and felt okay.

The pass through storage was clean.

The 1"x2" wood cross-members, under the bed, looked a little bowed, but not too knotty.

The Not That Bad



The dinette window bottom glazing bead was cut too short. The door only opens 90 degrees. (We knew that before we bought it.)

The door will not open unless it is pushed in while the latch is being pulled. Once the latch is released, the door opens on its own, as it should.

The front bedroom window frame doesn't fit well in the upper righthand corner. There is a huge



gap there, but it is sealed.

The Ugly

The step is extremely difficult to pull out and down. Extremely! All of those kinds of steps are like that.



The Front Exterior

The Good

The chains, tongue jack, and and break-away switch are all there and appeared to be firmly secured.

The propane tank and regulator appeared well secured.

The Not That Bad

There is a bit of rust on the 'A' frame at this time, especially on the bottom. I can't tell if the top marker lights are sealed well because of their design.

There is no way to tell if the front windshield is sealed well, because of its design.

There is rust on the propane tank bracket on both sides.

The Ugly

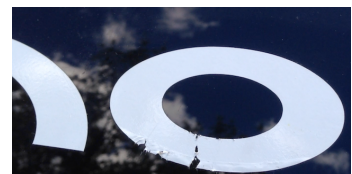
The MASON brand battery, supplied by Haylett, runs down too quickly when left plugged in. I have a whole write up about the tests I did on it. A battery disconnect was installed to solve this problem. (Notes on the battery disconnect install are noted later.)

06/06/19 Battery note:

I used the battery to supply three lights in the trailer yesterday to take photos of the kitchen window leak. They were ON no more than 10 minutes. After use, the battery disconnect was used. Today, I wanted to work in the trailer. Before I hooked up the AC shore power, I turned the battery disconnect on, and using the panel in the bathroom, it showed 2/3 full. Again, demonstrating what a poor battery this is. **06/19/20** - it never reads above 2/3 full.

The letter O in NANO, on the windshield, was either lifting or not originally pressed down against the front windshield. When I pressed it down to "fix" it, I found that it had a fold in it. I

used a paper towel and pressed the bottom of the O self-stick graph down onto the windshield. The fold cracked opened forming a V shape and bits of the graphic fell off. I touched it up with some white enamel paint.



07/31/19 A replacement graphic arrived from Coachmen arrived today and I replaced the O.

Underside (05/24/2019)

The Good

Nothing appeared to be protruding down under that trailer that shouldn't be.

The Not That Bad

There is rust forming on the frame, and in one spot, where it looks like something was attached and then removed, it is quite rusty.

The Ugly

As noted with photos in the driver's sided exterior section, all four stabilizer jacks are attached poorly and wobble terribly when being lowered. They are difficult to lower and raise and my portable electric drill cannot initiate getting them down nor all the way up.



Systems Check: (05/24/2019)

Note: A propane gauge was attached to the single tank propane bottle before the systems checks were started. It appeared to be working.

The DC power check

The burners of the 2-burner stove top were lighted using a handheld grill lighter. Both burners lit and the flames could be adjusted with the knobs. This also showed that the propane system was working.

The refrigerator was turned on using propane with battery power. It was started at 7:55 a.m. At 9:55 a.m. the freezer was about 18 degrees F and the refrigerator was at about 43 degrees F. The refrigerator was turned off at 9:55 a.m., as there was no reason for it to be on longer at that time. It appeared to be working okay.

The refrigerator interior light worked.

The furnace was turned on using the thermostat set on high. It came on and put out heat. I left the trailer closed up for several minutes.

The smoke detector went off - it's working. I opened the door and windows and the smoke detector alarm stopped - the smoke detector is sounding the alarm okay.

The thermostat for the furnace works. It shut the furnace off when set to low heat.

The seven (7) interior lights worked.

The speaker and awning lights worked.

The ceiling vent fans worked.

The radio worked. The inside and outside speakers worked.

The awning was rolled out and back in with no problem. No defects were noted.

The Ugly

07/24/19 We found that the radio/clock, microwave and antenna boost light provided too much ambient light at night, while camping, when we were trying to go to sleep.

The Water System Check

Notes: To prepare for the water system check, sheets of newspaper were placed under both sinks and the shower drain to detect leaks in the faucets and drains.

The pump switch works.

The gauge, in the bathroom, that shows the relative battery and tank levels appeared to work.

I put only about 6 gallons of water in the fresh water tank to start with. The gauge in the bathroom read E (empty). The fresh water tank is said to be about 30 gallons, so 1/3 tank, as displayed by a red light on the gauge, would be about 10 gallons. The water pump pumped water through the system, but the air did not bleed out of the water lines and the pump did not shut off with only about 6 gallons in the fresh water tank.

When the gauge in the bathroom showed 1/3 full, I was able to bleed the air out of the lines using the pump to fill the sinks.

Both kitchen sink compartments and the bathroom sink were filled using both the hot and cold water lines. The water heater was not turned on yet. The sinks were allowed to drain.

The water heater was turned on. It lit in a few seconds and started heating water.

Water was run through the shower unit and it seemed to be okay.

Water was run through the outside shower. It worked.

The shower drain was checked through the rear bench compartment and didn't appear to leak.

The toilet was filled with water and didn't appear to leak around the floor area.

In several minutes, there was hot water coming from the hot water faucets in the kitchen and bathroom.

All of the sinks were filled and drained several times using both cold, and now, hot water.

No leaks were found in any part of the water system.

The fresh, gray and black water tanks (which contained only water) were drained at the end of the day.

Note: There appeared to be more water drained from the gray and black tanks than I put in. I must have hauled some water home from Haylett's.

The Ugly:

The bathroom faucet spout is too short and not high enough to get hands under for washing.

The AC power system check

An outdoor extension cord was plugged into 110V AC power in the garage and the cord run out the backdoor of the garage. The trailer's 30A shore cord and a 30A to 110V adapter were used to provide AC power to the trailer. I did not attach the surge protector.

(05/26/2019) The following day, I attached the surge protector in the above circuit. The surge protector and circuit problem detector seemed to be working okay.

The converter, near the refrigerator, makes a noticeable hum with the shore power plugged in.

The refrigerator was turned ON and set to Auto at 12:45 p.m. At 2:42 p.m. the freezer was at about 5 degrees F and the refrigerator was about 40 degrees F. It appeared to be working on AC power. It was turned off after recording the temperatures.

(05/26/19 Refrigerator recheck: I plugged the AC power back in with the surge protector inline now. Turned on refrigerator at 7:55 a.m. with only AC power, no propane. The thermometers were at about 58 degrees F when placed in the refrigerator and freezer. At 9:30 a.m. the freezer temperature was about 20 degrees F and the refrigerator about 50 degrees F. It appears to take MUCH longer to cool down using 110V electricity rather than propane.)

The microwave was used to reheat a leftover cup of coffee. It worked.

The air conditioner worked on my 110V 20A service in the garage. It is EXTREMELY noisy.

Both sockets of the 6 interior 110V plugs and the exterior plug checked out okay at 121V.

The four (4) USB sockets, located near the bed, were tested and found to be providing power to charge an iPhone via USB connection.

City Water

The city water was hooked up to the house with two 25' lengths of fresh water hose, the pressure regulator and the 90 degree elbow were installed inline. It worked fine with no apparent leaks.

More water was run through the system with the hose hooked up. No leaks were noted.

Note: If the 90 degree elbow is used, attached to the trailer, the outside shower cannot be opened.

Exterior Running Lights

The car, with trailer brake installed, had the trailer's 7-pin cord attached.

All of the trailer's running lights and turn signals worked okay.

The brake lights worked okay.

The LEDs under the front window work. (The switch is in the pass through storage for them.)

All systems were go on May 25, 2019.

May 26, 2019

A TV mount and 24" TV were added to the trailer.

Locating the TV backer or a stud was extremely difficult.



View from rear dinette bench



View from bed laying down

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE TRAILER CARGO CARRYING CAPACITY			
Capacité de transport de chargement de caravane de véhicule de récréation			
CARGO-CARRYING CAPACITY IS DETERMINED WITH THE FRESH WATER TANKS FULL AND THE WASTE TANKS EMPTY			
Capacité de chargement est calculée avec les réservoirs d'eau douce pleins et les réservoirs d'eaux usées vides			
Dry weight/Poids Sec:	1406 KG	VIN/NIV:	5ZT2CXHC7LL006967
Cargo carrying capacity:	172 KG	Capacité de transport de chargement:	172 KG
Calculated with the fresh water tanks full	Cold: 113 KG	Calculé avec les réservoirs d'eau douce pleins	Froid: 113 KG
	Hot: 23 KG		Chaud: 23 KG
Mass of waste water tank full:	226 KG	Masses de réservoirs d'eaux usées pleins:	226 KG

TIRE AND LOADING INFORMATION			
The combined weight of Cargo should Never Exceed: 308 Kgs or 679 Lbs			
TIRE	SIZE	COLD TIRE PRESSURE	SEE OWNER'S
FRONT	ST205/75R14D	65 PSI / 448 KPA	MANUAL FOR
REAR			ADDITIONAL
SPARE	ST205/75R14D	65 PSI / 448 KPA	INFORMATION

MANUFACTURED BY / FABRIQUE PAR: FOREST RIVER, INC.			
VIN/NIV: 5ZT2CXHC7LL006967			
GVWR/GVW: 1724 KG 3800 LB			
COUPLER SIZE: TYPE/TYPE: TRA/REM			
FRONT/AVANT	1588 KG (3500 LB)	ST205/75R14D	14X5.5JJ
INTERMEDIATE	0 KG (0 LB)		
REAR/ARRIERE	0 KG (0 LB)		
TIRE AND LOADING INFORMATION			
The combined weight of Cargo should Never Exceed: C			

May 27, 2019 Photos of placards on trailer



308 Kgs = 679.024 lb. CCC should be 700 lb. but tires note 679

Dry Weight: 3100 lb.

GVWR: 3800 lb.

I'm really not sure what the yellow placard, is trying to inform us about.

1406 KG = 3099.699

172 KG = 379.195 lb.

113 KG = 249.122 lb.

23 KG = 50.7063 lb.

226 KG = 498.245 lb. That is for both gray and black tanks

May 29, 2019

Added battery disconnect to battery box.

IMPORTANT: Key MUST BE IN AND SYSTEM TURNED ON when pulling trailer.



OFF position

ON position. Key removed & cap shown on for long term storage

The key can only be removed in the OFF position. The key MUST be in for traveling and when hooked up to shore power to charge the battery.

The key is removed and the cap put on for long term storage.

May 30, 2019

Rear Bench Storage

When I inspected the area under the rear bench, I found that I could not put in a false bottom or even make a decent size compartment. Besides wiring running through the area, it is the access for the shower plumbing. This area can be used to store bedding to make up the dinette when necessary.



Shower pan caulked, first 'run around' the pan this morning. I'll do a second run tomorrow.

05/31/19

I set up and used the 4-Ton scissor jack, some Lynx Levers and a 4"x4"x24" piece of treated wood post and was able to lift the trailer so that the wheel spun.

The Coleman X Cursion Grill was assembled and I tried it out. It is stored under the bed. It is much easier to move with the grates out. The grates are stored in garbage bags in the grill for transport. The grates and drip pans are stored under the front bench.

06/01/19 A second coat of caulk was put on the shower pan.

Fuse Note: The black looking 15AMP fuse is not a fuse. It is a circuit breaker by Snap Acton. It is a 15AMP AT2 Type II. It should not have to be replaced. The two gold looking 30A fuses are not fuses. They too are circuit breakers. They should not need replacing, but I do have a spare.

06/05/19 Kitchen Window Leak

It rained hard, very, very hard for about two hours, starting about 6 a.m. this morning. I went to check out the size of the kitchen sink, and found a lot of water behind the kitchen faucet on the right hand side between the faucet and the wall.

I investigated the kitchen window further and found, from the outside, the left side of the window, which is the right inside, does not fit well, similar to the front camp side window. There is a huge gap that appears to be sealed with some kind of caulking. That is the side where the leak is.

I dried up the water and taped dry newspaper, on the counter, under where the leak appeared to be.

It is supposed to rain hard again this afternoon, so I might get to test it today.

It started to sprinkle just as I finished sealing the left, outside of the kitchen window with DAP Dynaflex 230.

Mark Polk uses DAP Dynaflex 230 in this video for resealing windows.
<https://youtu.be/c1SxN-IBIUQ>

The sprinkles stopped almost immediately.

I checked all of the other windows, front windshield, ceiling vents and skylights for leaks on the inside and found none.

It started raining again about 6:30 p.m. Moderate rain this time, not a torrential downpour like this morning.

Unfortunately, the sealing of the top and left outside of the window frame did not prevent further leaking.



Photo 1: Kitchen Window, outside left taken this morning before I resealed it with Dynaflex 230.





Photo 2 & 3: Gap on inside of kitchen window on the left side, not the side that is leaking.

Photo 4: Dry newspaper in position.



Photo 5: Top, right pane inside kitchen. A large drop can be seen on the inside and a smaller drop on the inside, just to its right. Small drops are on outside of window.



Photo 6: More large drops can be seen on the inside top of the right pane. The large drops are on the inside of the window, not outside.

Photo 7: Water on bottom right pane.



Photo 8: Goopy stuff can be seen on bottom of window pane, and I did not put it there. The goopy stuff looks like light or white scratches, but it is some kind of caulk.

06/08/19 More evidence of an attempted repair was noted this morning when I saw caulking on the far left side of the pane and I had not put it there.



Photos 9 & 10: Wetness can be seen on the newspaper as dark spots.



06/06/2019

It appeared that the kitchen window frame was not leaking. The glazing bead around the window appeared to be the problem. The seal on the pane was not flat and flush to the frame, like the other three windows.

The driver side front pane was sealed across the top, as the gap varied from 1/16" to 3/32". The gap is not too visible in the first photo, but the other three photos, shortly after I filled the gap with DAP Dynaflex 230 clearly shows the gap.



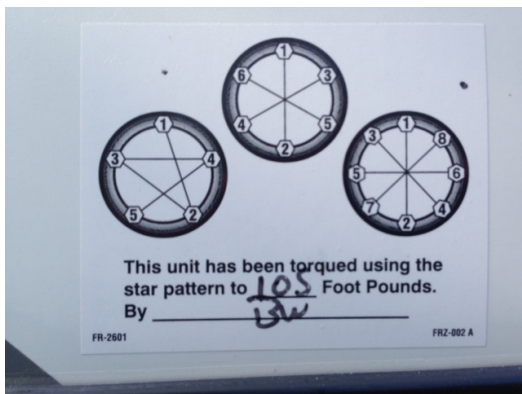
I also sealed around the top, inside, of the right kitchen window pane with DAP Dynaflex 230.

06/07/2019

Some interesting "stickers" on the trailer.



I mean, seriously! :-)



Lug nut torque specification. I was told 100 ft./lb. at Haylett. Guess that's close enough.

I water tested the window, with a hose, 24 hours later. It was still leaking!
I applied more DAP Dynaflex 230 to the interior and exterior of that window.

I found the water pump. It is behind the water heater and looks like access is through the outside shower if it needs replacing.

The rubber around the window pane is called the glazing bead.
https://youtu.be/_69D3mr0aBs

3:08 p.m. I did the hose down of the kitchen window. It does not appear to be leaking.

It seems that I fixed it incorrectly. I did not know about the rubber glazing bead around the window pane until about 1/2 hour ago. The first thing I should have tried was reseating the glazing rubber, not caulking it. Since my "fix" appears to be working, I'll leave it alone for now, but if it starts leaking again, I'll remove the DAP Dynaflex 230 and try reseating the glazing bead.

Shore cord was plugged in all day. I pulled the AC 110V power shore cord and immediately turned off battery disconnect at 5:15 p.m.



06/08/19

The LP tank cover was assembled and attached to the trailer "A" frame using two bungee cords.

06/10/19

At 5:29 a.m., approximately 60 hours from when the shore cord was pulled, I grabbed a flashlight and went to the trailer. The battery disconnect was activated and the battery gauge in the bathroom was checked. The battery gauge blinked full for just an instant and then indicated 2/3 full. The battery had been disconnected the whole time with the battery disconnect. No lights were turned on in the trailer until after the battery reading was checked using the gauge in the bathroom.

It rained most of the night, and it was still raining when I did the battery gauge check.

Next, I turned on three lights and checked the kitchen window pane for leaks. The newspaper had been left in place on the counter behind the faucet. There was no sign of a leak on the window, or the framing around it, nor on the newspaper. Three lights were on no longer than five minutes, at the most, while the window was checked.

License plate note: It took forever to get the license plate! The temporary plate ran out on May 31st and the permanent plate did not arrive in the US mail, from Haylett RV, until 1:23 p.m., Friday, June 7. That was a full week after the temporary plate expired.

I was given the excuse that they had to wait for my personal check to clear, but my bank account noted that the check was cashed on May 20. That was four days after I gave them the check on May 16.

9:45 a.m. I looked around the trailer for leaks and didn't note any. It was still lightly raining.

06/11/19

After watching several videos on RV kitchen sink faucet installation, I looked again at the trying to loosen the nuts on the kitchen sink to align the faucet parallel to the sink. I still couldn't do it. I cannot reach them.

As a last resort, I just firmly pressed the faucet base, on top of the sink, and it moved. I was able to align the unit parallel to the sink lines.

06/12/19

It was late, in a very long day, when I moved the faucet parallel to the long side of the sink. Newspapers were once again placed on the shelf under the sink plumbing and around the sink faucet to check for leaks. The test started at 7:30 a.m.

The city water was hooked up using our backyard house faucet.

Water was run into both the bathroom and kitchen sink to bleed the air. Paige had turned on the water faucets when no water was available to the trailer.

Water was left in both compartments of the kitchen sink with the city water hooked up and turned on. The pressure regulator and 90 degree elbow water hook-up were used.

I decided to store the pressure gauge and 90 degree water hook up attached to the Haylett water house for storage and not in their own container.

I decided to store the water hoses together in the front pass through storage.

I started working on the a means to lift the bed. I had to go to Lowes twice.

2:15 p.m.

I checked the battery gauge and mysteriously, it read full. It had been disconnected since 06/10 and as previously noted, there had been three lights on for a brief period of time.

I plugged in the shore power to work on the bed lift.

3:15 p.m.

I finished up the bed lift legs project. The top of the legs are held in alignment by the sticky backed Velcro. The sticky backed Velcro was stapled to the top of the legs and the underside of the under the bed hatch. The screws are to help carry most of the weight, so that the Velcro is not the only thing holding the legs in place. The bottom of the legs just rest against the back frame of the bed pedestal.



The water was let out of both side of the kitchen sink. There were no apparent leaks under sink or around the faucet.

The Boost button was tried on the TV and it seems to stabilize digital stations that came and went. It does seem to be a much more stable picture when the boost is on. I rescanned the TV for channels with the boost on to see if we can get Fox 2, channel 2, because it didn't find it before. Channels 4 and 7 came in well along with several other stations that we don't get on our local stations through DirecTV in the house.

Even with the Boost on, the local station, Fox 2, does not come in on the TV.

06/13/19

6:00 a.m. We had heavy thunderstorms through the night last night. I took a flashlight and piece of paper towel to the trailer. Visual inspection of the front kitchen window pane showed no signs of water on the inside. The newspaper on the wall and counter under the window showed no signs of water. The paper towel, wiped all over the window pane, showed no evidence of water.



06/14/19

7:50 a.m. It rained all day yesterday. The rain was sometimes hard. I inspected the kitchen window and then all windows, vents, the skylight in the shower, all lights, the air conditioner, and inside all cabinets. There was no sign of water anywhere in the trailer.

The spare tire cover was put on the spare tire.

06/15/19

While investigating if the mar on the left refrigerator door panel, near the bottom, is really a mar, and it is, I discovered that the trim on the outside, left of the refrigerator is bowed. It is bowed because it doesn't fit properly.

06/17/19

I spent a lot of time trying to get the tongue weight to 400 lb. or less on the Haul Gauge. Much of the load had to be rearranged. All of the items under the front bench had to be moved to the bottom cabinet in the rear, as well as the lawn chairs and under-the-bed storage bin with all of the equipment for the sewer hose. The Coleman grill was moved under the bed and the RHINO tote was taken out of the trailer.

When the tote is necessary, it will be loaded into the car and become part of the car weight. The tote weighs 25.8 lb. Hopefully, clothes and food loaded into the rear of the trailer will make up for this weight loss.

I was very surprised that so much weight needed to be added to the rear of the trailer and so little weight could be stored in the pass through storage. The hitch weight, as delivered by Coachmen, was said to be 316 lb. and the UVW 3100 lb. That was a tongue weight of about 10%, which was okay on the way home from Haylett.

The heaviest weight in the pass through, at this time, was the two 2"x10" leveling boards. The Coleman grill is in the under bed storage.

08/03/19 One of the 2"x10" boards is no longer loaded in the trailer and the other is carried across the bathroom floor.



06/22/19

The Suburban stove top cover was screwed into place.

I made a sink cover out of an 18" x 12" cutting board that I picked up at Target. The piece I cut off is used on the bottom to hold the sink cover/cutting board in position.

06/23/19

I rolled out the awning today to shoot some camp side video with the awning out. When it rolled out, it was dripping a lot of water. The only other time the awning was out, at our house, was for about 5 or 10 minutes, on a sunny day, to show our granddaughter how it worked and then it was rolled back in. This is the day I started making video segments to put together a video for YouTube.

There are gutters between the roof and sides. The camp side gutter was full of debris from trees. I had to go on the roof and sweep that gutter out with a wisp broom.

I made sure the awning was dry and then rolled it up.

07/23/19 I put out the awning again this morning and, once again, it dripped a lot of water. There was a big rainstorm on Friday night. It bothers me that the awning seems to be holding water, which means that I need to watch carefully for mildew.

06/24/19

I discovered that the screws holding in the panel cover access to the water heater were no longer biting into the "fake" sawdust and glue type wood behind the panel. Since this panel has to go on and off, at least twice a year, I decided to replace the screws with 1" long 6-32 bolts with washers and blind nuts. While I was at it, I replaced the screws under the panel for the fusebox and under the microwave.

The last blind nut of the six buggered up. I thought that I'd leave it that way, because it looked okay.

06/25/19

After sleeping on it, I decided to 'fix' the blind nuts and bolts going through the panel under the fusebox.

I did manage to get the old blind nuts out. I replaced them with 8-32 x 1" bolts and blind nuts. The panel was rotated 180 degrees so that the new blind nuts would have fresh 'wood' to grab into.

06/28/19

The Weigh Safe WS6-2 adjustable height ball mount arrived yesterday. It came with only very brief instructions and the warranty notice.

I cannot find anything online that shows anyone testing the accuracy of this gauge. It seems that everyone is just taking its accuracy for granted. I'm not sure why.

There are a lot of YouTube videos demonstrating how to measure for the drop, or rise, of the ball mount to match the tow vehicle and the trailer. Here are links to just three of them.

Curt video on rise and drop

“How to Determine the Proper Rise or Drop of a Ball Mount - CURT”

<https://youtu.be/Dgmo5w7ddVw>

“How To Determine the Rise or Drop For Your Ball Mount - Draw•Tite®”

<https://youtu.be/bbhgRUTyGDg>

How to Select the Correct Ball Mount for your Hitch

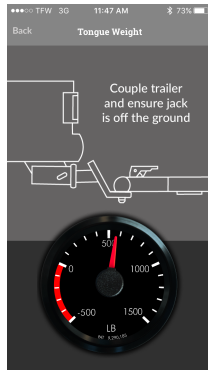
<https://youtu.be/iIZElU6Js8>

Reese-Hitches Website:

https://www.reese-hitches.com/learning_center/general-towing-mounts

I did some tongue weight comparative tests between the Haul Gauge and Weigh Safe ball mount today.

First I inserted the Haul Gauge OBD II device in the car in garage.



The Tongue Weight part of the App was started to see if the Haul Gauge noted the ball mount weights when I inserted the two different ball mounts as the tongue weight. It wasn't clear if the needle moved at all with the Reese ball mount, but it sure looked like the needle moved some with the Weigh Safe ball mount.

Note: One of the 2"x10"x4' treated lumber boards was not in the pass through storage at this time, as it was under the camp side tire for leveling purposes, so the noted tongue weights are without it being in its traveling place.

The Reese Ball Mount was on the car. The 187RB was coupled to it. The readings were:

Haul Gauge: 500 lb.

Measured coupler height: 22-3/4"



100 lb., not 0!

The Weigh Safe was adjusted to the 6" drop position. Haul Gauge read about 570 lb.

The Weigh Safe was set with a two inch drop so that it was somewhat equivalent in height to the Reese. The trailer was coupled and the readings were:

Haul Gauge: 550 lb.

Weigh Safe: 300 lb.

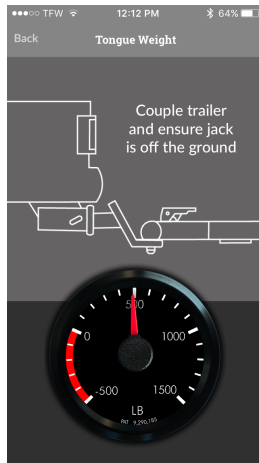
Measured coupler height: 22-5/8" (about the same as the Reese, as expected)

Note that the dark black line on the Weight Safe mount is



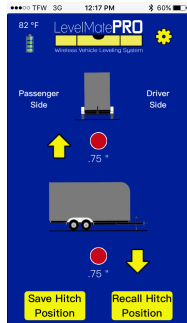
Weigh Safe about 400 lb.
Measured coupler height: 17-5/8"

To verify, I took the measurements again.



2nd set of data with the 6" drop
Haul Gauge: 500 lb.
Weigh Safe: 400 lb.
Measured coupler height: 17-5/8"
Haul Gauge was not consistent with the first reading.

Even though the accuracy of the Weigh Safe Ball Mount is unknown, it yields repeatable data, while the Haul Gauge doesn't.

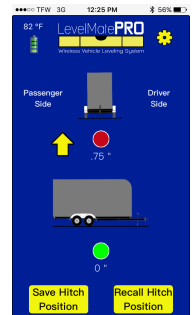


I started the Level Master Pro in the trailer with the trailer still attached to the car. The screen capture at left is with the trailer still hooked to the car.

The Level Master App showed that the front was 3/4" high and the camp side needed to be raised 3/4".

After the car was unhooked, the trailer was leveled front to rear, but I left the camp side down 3/4", which is level enough for in the driveway.

The Weigh Safe FAQ is found here:
<https://www.weigh-safe.com/frequently-asked-questions/>



The most relevant FAQ for my trailer and tongue weight is MY GAUGE IS NOT READING ACCURATELY.

"It is important to know that "zero" is anywhere between 0 and 100 pounds. There is a dampener built into the gauge to protect it from spiking any time you go over large bumps or dips. With that being said, light-weight trailers and lighter loads with only a few hundred pounds (below 300lbs) will sometimes take a couple minutes to read the correct weight. Heavier loads (over 500lbs) will take the gauge less time to read the correct weight.

** Standing on your hitch is not an accurate way of testing the gauge"

It bothers me that I can find no one who has tested the accuracy of the Weigh Safe ball mount.

06/28/19

Another Costly Mistake?

This morning I continued to search, using Google and YouTube, for any information that substantiated the weight shown on the **Weigh Safe ball mount**.

I couldn't find anything.

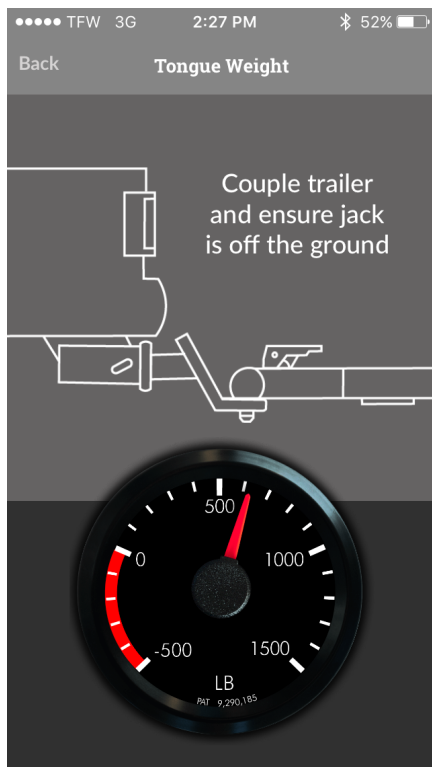
I did find this on the Weigh Safe site itself. Unfortunately, I'd not seen it when I ordered the Weigh Safe adjustable ball mount!

<https://www.weigh-safe.com/company-news/the-only-hitch-that-measures-tongue-weight-the-weigh-safe-adjustable-ball-mount/>

"It is important to know that anything between 0-100 pounds on the gauge is considered "zero". There is a dampener built into the gauge to protect it from spiking anytime you hit a bump or dip while driving which sometimes will make it slow to read the applied weight. Lighter loads of 300 pounds of tongue weight or less will sometimes take a couple minutes to read accurately whereas heavier loads with 500 pounds of tongue weight or more will usually read a lot quicker. It is also important to know that our gauges are accurate within +/- 50 pounds."

The note about plus or minus 50 pounds is, to me, not at all useful.

Yesterday, the Weigh Safe ball mount showed 400 lb. on the gauge as the tongue weight.
 $400 \text{ lb.} - 50 \text{ lb.} = 350 \text{ lb.}$ divided by 400 lb. means that the weight could be off by 12.5%



$400 \text{ lb.} + 50 \text{ lb.} = 450 \text{ lb.}$
 $400 \text{ lb.} / 450 \text{ lb.}$ means that the tongue weight could be off by 11.1%

If the Weigh Safe ball mount indicated 1000 lb., the percentages change.

$1000 \text{ lb.} - 50 \text{ lb.} = 950 \text{ lb.}$ divided by 1000 means that the weight could be off by 5%
 $1000 \text{ lb.} / 1050 \text{ lb.}$ means that the weight could be off by 4.8%

Going to the maximum of 1500 lb., the weight error percentages drop even lower.

1450 divided by 1500 means the tongue weight could only be off by 3.3%

1500 divided by 1550 means the tongue weight could only be off by 3.2%

Stating plus or minus 50 lb. just makes no sense to me.

Using plus or minus 50 lb. means that the tongue weight should NEVER read more than 450 lb. for the 500 lb. maximum tongue weight of the Ascent.

I contacted Weigh Safe through their contact page at 8:15 a.m. this morning. It is Saturday, so I don't really expect an answer until Monday, but it is also the 4th of July weekend, so it may take even longer.

Surprise:

At 8:16 a.m. I received the following from Weight Safe:

"Thank you for contacting us. I will review your information and respond shortly.

Thanks,

Chris Procopio

Director of Sales

801-820-7020"

I'm pretty sure a sales person won't be able to respond to my question. I provided the data from above and then asked, "Is the accuracy really plus or minus 50 lb. across the spectrum of the scale once the weight is above 100 lb., ie. between 100 and 500 lb., between 500 and 1000 lb., and between 1000 lb. and 1500 lb.?"

This video shows why I **did not** order the Sherline.

Sherline Scale Project

<https://youtu.be/Uhw53oldpRY>

The mattress pad and sheets were tried on the dinette bed today. They fit perfectly.

Mattress pad: [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B06X9YST6J/](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B06X9YST6J/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1

Sheets: [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B079NQJX4S/](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B079NQJX4S/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s01?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s01?ie=UTF8&psc=1



The tension rod, purchased at Meijer, and mesh shower caddy were installed in the shower today.

Mesh shower caddy: [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B079NQJX4S/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s01?](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B079NQJX4S/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s01?ie=UTF8&psc=1)
ie=UTF8&psc=1

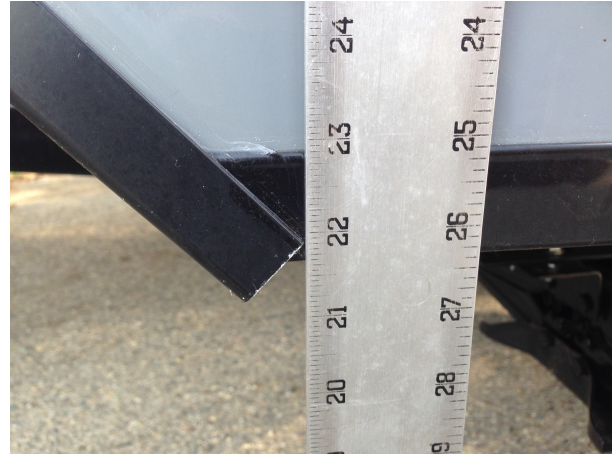
06/30/19



I stored the mattress pad, sheets and blankets under the back dinette bench today.

07/01/19

Before I took the trailer to be weighed at Angelo's Supplies on



Wixom Road, I had to get the hitch height adjusted correctly. I had previously done it incorrectly.

The trailer doesn't need to be level, using a level, it must be parallel to the surface that measurements are being taken from and measured at a convenient position near the front and back of a the trailer that parallel the surface. A yardstick is needed for the measurements. It took hours and hours to learn the following.

The unloaded Ascent's top of receiver height is just a tad over 24", but when the tongue weight of the trailer is put onto it, it drops to 21-1/2". (Today's tongue weight is noted below.)

When the trailer is parallel to the hard surface it is sitting on, the coupler height is 19-7/8". $20-12/8" - 19-7/8" = 1-5/8"$. That is a 2" drop, which Haylett provided with the Reese ball mount that I purchased from them when they did the initial hook-up of the trailer.

Once I had the trailer level to the surface, which took several hours and a lot of vexation, it was taken to be weighed.

I had previously weighed the Ascent with me in it and a full tank of gas, along with all of the stuff I always carry in it. The CAT scale ticket read 4700 lb. total.

Today, everything was the same in the car, including a full tank of gas, except that I had the baby seat still in the car, the Weigh Safe hitch on it and the brake controller installed. The Ascent weighed 2.36 tons or 4720 lb. That is what was expected.

The combination of the car and trailer weighed 4.13 tons or 8260 lb.

$8260 \text{ lb.} - 4720 \text{ lb.} = 3540 \text{ lb.}$ for the trailer weight. My data sheet shows the trailer weight, for today, is 3545 lb. That's what I call close.

Both the car and trailer weights were very close, indicating that Angelo's scales are reasonably accurate.

The Ascent, with the trailer hooked to it, but with the trailer wheels off the scales weighed 2.4 tons or 5200 lb.

5200 lb. - 4720 lb. equals a hitch weight of 480 lb. The Weigh Safe showed about 420 lb. That is a difference of 60 lb. or 12.5%. That's NOT what I call really close. I've not heard back from Weigh Safe today.

The Haul Gauge did not provide an accurate tongue weight. I will no longer be trying to use it.

07/02/19

Made video of dinette window squeak.

I wrote up the info on the Sherline tongue weight scale for an Ascent forum post.

I put the toilet paper holder back up for the third time. This time I used epoxy plus the self-stick.

07/03/19



I investigated calculating the hitch height again.

My findings are posted to the Ascent Forum.

<https://www.ascentforums.com/threads/how-to-determine-the-rise-or-drop-of-the-ball-mount-for-the-ascent.8165/>

I left the photo I took this morning to show why bubble level is not level to the surface the trailer is setting on.

In the photo, the trailer has been leveled with a level. The photo shows hard ground that is obviously not level under the trailer. This would not be the ideal place to measure coupler height, but it could be done. It is obvious that the bottom of the coupler is

closer to the ground than the same point would be at the rear of the trailer.

I purchased BLASTER brand Advanced Dry Lube with Teflon to try and fix window squeak.
\$3.99 + \$0.24 tax = \$4.23 total

The problem with the window squeak is not in the track. The latch rubs across the window if you let go of it and makes the screeching sound. After cleaning the glass several times and trying to get dry lube on the part that rubs on the window glass, I could not get the screeching to stop. The solution is to hold out the latch when opening and closing the window.

I tried to see if I could get the height needed to use the physician's scale, which can weigh up to 550 lb., to measure the tongue weight directly. I need 20". Right now I'm 3" short using all 10 of the Lynx levelers and a 4x4 fence post. Maybe I could get the 4x4 cut in half at Home Depot or Lowes.

I did test the physicians' scale and it worked using a 4 lb. bag of sugar. It weighed 4 lb. when placed on my scale and 4 lb. when placed on top of 6 Lynx levelers and the 4x4 post.

07/09/2019

The trailer with the Summit package appears to be quite tongue heavy for the Ascent's maximum of 500 lb.

A Hint:

Mfg. specs as post July 2019
Hitch Weight: 316 lb.
UVW: 3034 lb.
GVWR: 3800 lb.
CCC: 766 lb.

Placards on trailer
GAWR: 3500 lb.
Cargo Never Exceed: 679 lb. (Tire placard)
Cargo Carrying Capacity: 172 KG = 379.195 lb.
Fresh Cold Water: 113 KG = 249.122 lb.
Fresh Hot Water: 23 KG = 50.7063 lb.
Gray & Black Tanks: 226 KG = 498.245 lb.

The numbers do not make sense to me.

Forest River/Coachmen notes the cargo carrying capacity (CCC) of 766 lb. The tire placard is 87 lb. less at 679 lb. Why? The yellow placard notes "Cargo-Carrying Capacity is Determined with the Fresh Water Tanks Full and The Waste Tanks Empty". Fresh water tanks = 299.8 lb. plus 379.2 = 679 lb. just as it says on the tire placard.
Why the difference. The Summit package unloaded vehicle weight (UVW) weight is 3100 lb. That's 66 lb. heavier than the standard one. That knocks the Coachmen CCC down to 700 lb., but where did the other 21 lb. go?

My guess is that the tongue weight leaving the factory does not include the propane tank, as I've seen them stored in the pass through and other places for transit. There is no battery on the trailer until one is put on at the dealership.

That brings the tongue weight with full propane tank (38 lb. + 3 lb. cover + 0.6 lb. meter) and a battery (39 lb.) to a bit less than (316 lb. + 41.6 lb. + 39 lb.) 397 lb. as the propane tank and battery are not right at the coupler.

Update: 07/18/19

See the date below for the name of the spreadsheet I created.
I miscalculated the tongue weight of the trailer, as I brought it home from Haylett as about 390 lb.
That included the full LP tank, battery and 50 gal. of water in the water heater.

Note: I left this original statement because I was close.

Most of the (3100 lb. - 3034 lb.) 66 lb. difference between the Summit package and standard unit is the fiberglass front cap with windshield. Let's say 90% of the 66 lb. weight increase with the Summit package is do to the fiberglass cap and windshield, as the other additions are quite light. That's about (66 * 0.9) 60 lb. for the front cap, which is not on the coupler but close. If all of those weights were on the coupler that would be a tongue weight of 457 lb. The hot water tank was full, 50.7 lb. When the water heater water is subtracted that is 402.3 lb. Because of their placement, I can't calculate what the tongue weight would actually be, but it has to be close to 400 lb.

When I took it to the landscape scales on July 1, it had the two 2 x 10s (34.3 lb.), a 4x4 (5 lb.), 3 water hoses (11 lb.), the X lug nut wrench (3 lb.), the electric drill (4.4 lb.), the power cord (8 lb.), the stabilizer jack crank (1.2 lb.), the sewer hose support (4.8 lb.), the Anderson leveler (6.4 lb.), and wheel chocks (1.2 lb.). Total: 79.3 lb.

Under the bed was the grill (37.8 lb.), grill brush, the 1 x 2 (1.2 lb.) cut in two for the bed braces to hold up the bed and the patio mat (4.8 lb.). Total 43.8 lb.

The TV was on the bed and mount (10.2 lb.)

Front weight total (79.3 + 43.8 + 10.2) 133.3 lb. (note - this is wrong, see spreadsheet)

The front cabinets and pantry were empty. Items were in the other main cabinets and under the front bench.

The bathroom bottom cabinet had the heavy tools in it and the upper two cabinets had 'stuff' in them, as well as the bath tub.

Lower cabinet: Air pump (6.4 lb.), 2-Ton Jack (7.4 lb.), Tool box (4), 30A cord (8), 110V chord (1.8 lb.), 2 small LP bottles (3.8), Haylett portfolio (2.2), rain poncho (need), screw driver set (1), ratchet set (2.6), new water filter (1.2) Total: 39.2 lb.

Top shelf: coffee maker (4.2 lb.), paper products (2.8 lb.) total: 7 lbs

Middle shelf: towels & wash cloths (6.4 lb.)

Bottom shelf: empty

Hanging closet: broom & dust pan (1.2 lb.)

In shower: welcome mat & sewer box (8.6 lb.), bath mat/rug (1.4 lb.) Total: 10 lb.

2 camping chairs (18.8 lb.)

The tongue weight, according to the landscape scale was 480 lb.

07/18/19

Using the same spreadsheet, but on sheet 2 I used the above data and came up with a tongue weight of 486 lb. That is great. It is only off by about 1.25%.

The physician's scale came on July 8 and I confirmed the tongue weight of 480 lb. on July 8 and 9.

There were more changes to the placement of the stored items in the trailer. It was the third placement and the tongue weight is down to about 415 lb. or so. This was achieved by adding 5 gallons of water to the black tank (42 lb.).

See my notes on 07/18/19

I have since moved the grill grates and drip pans back under the front bench along with the electronics box and grill brush.

Stuff will have to be loaded carefully for the final pack and the tongue weight reweigh.

There are only a very few items in the pass through, and only the grill, without the grates or drip pans is under the bed with the two pieces of 1 x 2 used for supports.

This trailer is tongue heavy for sure.

07/10/19

7:00 a.m. Going to check tire pressures. Ambient temperature 72 degrees. Trailer hasn't been moved in a long time.

Driver side: 64.0 psi Camp side: 66.5 psi Didn't do spare today

Yesterday, I started looking at why the tongue weight was so heavy when I took it to the landscape scales on Wixom Rd. on July 1. The tongue weight calculated to 480 lb.

Today, I took the data that I gathered and created a spreadsheet to try and understand why the tongue weight was so high. (calculating-tongue-wt-NO.xls) This was the WRONG way to do it, but I left the spreadsheet as it has some valuable weights on it.

I tried to just compare the front weight to the back and it does not work.

I did two tries on July 9 to redistribute the weight for a lighter tongue weight. They did not lower the tongue weight significantly.

I got a bit more radical on July 10 and made some major changes in where the items are stored for transit. I decided to leave out the one leveling 2 x 10 that is under the wheel on the camp side and cut the other 2" x 10" board to 40-3/4" to fit across the bathroom floor.

The new tongue weight, according to the physician's scale was about 415 lb. after the redistribution.

The trailer weight was 3569 lb. on July 10. $415 \text{ lb.} / 3569 = 11.6\%$ of the trailer's GVW as the tongue weight, and it is very close to my target of 11% of the trailer's GVW.

07/18/19

I found an article and copied the part about the tongue weight change when items are add. tongue-weight-change.pages

Based on that information, I created a spreadsheet and the data worked out extremely close demonstrating that the data worked out well. tonuge-weight-change.xls

On that spreadsheet, sheet 1 it showed a tongue weight of about 427.5 lb. The physicians' scale noted about 415 lb. That is off by only 11.5 pounds, which is about 3%, therefore it appears that the spreadsheet is working as well as can be expected.

On that spreadsheet, sheet 2, I worked out the weights for July 1, when I took the trailer to the landscape scales. The landscape scale calculated to about 480 lb. The spreadsheet estimated 486 lb. That is only off by 6 lb. or about 1.25%. Still looks very good to me.

07/21/19

6:10 the weather was partly cloudy and 63 degrees.

I unlocked the trailer and checked the refrigerator, which had been plugged in since Saturday with the refrigerator fan running. There was frost on the top of the freezer door, which indicated a leak to me. The freezer was at 0 degrees. The refrigerator was below 30 degrees, not good.

I'm wondering if we'll be having a problem with this refrigerator.

07/22/19

Refrigerator seems to be working well.

After setting up at Groveland Oaks Campground and turning on the City Water, after a bit, both low point drains started leaking. I had had the City Water hooked up at the house, and they didn't leak when I checked the City Water system, OR they did leak and I didn't notice it. I was able to get the leaks stopped by hand and with some of the tools in the toolbox.

07/23/19

I put out the awning again this morning and, once again, it dripped a lot of water. There was a big rainstorm on the Friday night before we left. It bothers me that the awning seems to be holding water, which means that I need to watch carefully for mildew.

07/24/19

Unfortunately, I'd not tried the black tank flush at home. When I hooked up the water hose to it and turned on the water, it blew a lot of water out the sides of the connection and all over the trailer. When I got home I discovered that there was not a washer in that connection. I put a washer in.

We found that there is too much ambient light in the trailer at night when all of the overhead lights are turned off. There is a lot of light from the radio, which can't be shut off, the microwave and the TV antenna boost.

The bathroom faucet spigot is too low and doesn't stick out over the sink far enough to get your hands under it.

The kitchen sink spigot is too low to rinse large pans well under it.

What we did on this first trip and the photos are in the folder camping trip 1 photos.

07/25/19

While taking video recreating the black tank flush connection problem, I discovered that the bracket that holds the black tank and gray tank tubes was loose. I found a wrench that would fit the nut and a Phillips screwdriver that would fit between the frame of the bracket and the nut. I tightened the bolt and nut. I added the wrench and Phillips head screwdriver to the basic toolbox.

More on the tongue weight problem

On July 1, the tongue weight was 480 lb. on the landscape scale and 482 lb. on the physicians' scale.

The pass through storage originally contained:

Two 2" x 10" x 4' (34.3 lb.)

One 4" x 4" x 24" treated wood post (5 lb.)

Two 25' fresh water hoses and a green 50' hose (11 lb.)

X lug nut wrench (3 lb.)

electric drill (4.4 lb.)

Trailer's detachable power cord (8 lb.)
Stabilizer jack crank (1.2 lb.)
sewer hose support (4.8 lb.)
Anderson leveler w/mat (6.4 lb.)
Two wheel chocks (1.2 lb.)
Total: 79.3 lb.

The pass through storage now contains:

One 4" x 4" x 24" treated wood post (5 lb.)
Two 25' fresh water hoses and a green 50' hose (11 lb.)
X lug nut wrench (3 lb.)
electric drill (4.4 lb.)
Trailer's detachable power cord (8 lb.) (This was moved to the lower bathroom cabinet later.)
Stabilizer jack crank (1.2 lb.)
sewer hose supports (4.8 lb.)
Two wheel chocks (1.2 lb.)
Total: 38.6 lb. - a reduction of 40.7 lb.

Under the bed storage contained:

Coleman grill with inserts and grates (37.8 lb.)
grill brush and a 1" x 2" X 8' cut in two and shortened, for the braces to hold up the bed (1.2 lb.)
patio mat (4.8 lb.). Total 43.8 lb.

The under the bed storage now contains **only** the grill and not the inserts and grates nor any of the other items that were stored there. (23.8 lb.) That is a weight reduction of 20 lb. from the under the bed storage.

One of the 2 x 10s was totally eliminated. The other 2 x 10 was cut to 40-3/4" inches. It, along with many other of the heaviest items, were shifted to the bathroom for travel storage.

To reach a tongue weight of about 421 lb., 5 gallons of water, about 42 lb. was added to the black water tank.

The total tongue weight changed was about 65 lb.



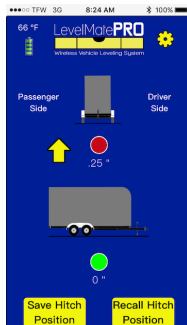
07/29/19

I purchased a Pfister LF-048-MC Masey bathroom faucet at Lowes for \$62.54 with tax. I replaced the inadequate plastic stock faucet with it.

I spent the day checking for any leaks from the new faucet.

07/31/19

I redid the tongue weight this morning to see if I should add a porcelain toilet to the bathroom for weight.



First I checked the level on the trailer to see how many boards to use on top of the 10 Lynx levelers. I found out that the 24" long 4 x 4 was all that was needed for perfect level. I captured the LevelMate PRO screen showing that.



The trailer was loaded with all of the items that live in the trailer with their new placement changed on the 25th. There was no water in the any of the tanks, including the black tank. I had double checked that it was empty when we got home from out camping trip on July 24.

I had started our first camping trip with 5 gallons of water, 42 lb., in the black tank to get the tongue weight down to 421 lb.

We had only used a small amount of trailer propane to boil the sweet corn and run the water heater, so the LP tank should not have made much of a difference in the tongue weight

I took three tongue weight measurements using the physicians' scale. With just the new faucet installed, that added an extra 1.6 lb. near the rear of the trailer, the three tongue weights were; 433.6 lb., 433.6 lb., and 434 lb. for an average of 433.7 lb.

I moved the 9.2 lb. shore cord to the storage in the back, lower cabinet. That removed that weight from the pass through storage and moved it toward the back of the trailer.

The four tongue weights with the shore cord moved were; 424.8 lb., 425.2 lb., 423.2 lb. and 423.2 lb. for an average of 424.1 lb.

The trailer weight when we went camping was 3685 lb. It could be about that when we go on our next, longer trip, as it won't have the 5 gallons of water, 42 lb. in the black tank.

Our next trip for almost a week should be closer to 3700 lb. with more food and clothes.

Tongue weight percentage at 3700 lb. would be 11.5 %

Adding a porcelain bowl toilet was not necessary, even through I looked into it, but I am still considering it.

Hopefully, adding the stuff in the refrigerator/freezer and pantry can get the tongue weight down a little further.

I also applied silicone spray lubricant to the hard to crank up and down stabilizer jacks.

The O arrived from Coachmen to replace the peeling O on the windshield. It came with all of the letters for nano. I'd made the request on July 8 at 3:15 p.m. EDT. The contact person was Ben Kruip

Apex Customer Service/Warranty Manager

Plant 127 at 220

PH: 574-358-0401

Fax: 574-825-9233

Email: bkruip@forestriverinc.com

08/01/19

I put the new O graphic on windshield after thoroughly cleaning the windshield.



Old O



Old O removed



New O applied



New O from afar

08/04/19

Chris helped me video the stabilizer jacks going up and down and showing that the electric drill could not be used to take them all the way up and down.

I also observed that the long threaded rod on all the jacks have 'bends' in them, and they were NEVER put down with any force that would 'lift' the trailer.

05/05/19

Do the stabilizer jacks need replacing?

I started with the **rear camp side stabilizer**.

I found that the locknuts for the bolts that go through the top of the jack and its attachment plate are 1/2" but that the bolt heads are 13mm, which is just a tad over 1/2". I did find one bolt that the 1/2" wrench end would fit on, but that is all.

First I tried running the stabilizer jack up and down all the way with the drill. Just as always, it would not go all the way up, so the crank had to be used. When it was all the way up, I could use the drill to put it down. It was rough, wiggled and squeaked a lot. I had previously used silicone to lubricate all of the stabilizer jacks.

Next I loosened the lock nuts one complete turn on the bolts that go through the holes in the attachment plates of the rear camp side jack. The stabilizer jack now rocks in its mount. It is very loose. The drill will still not take the jack all the way into its full up position. It will move the jack down from the full up position, even though the jack is extremely wobbly now.

I tightened the lock nuts to just snug by my 'feel' when turning the wrench and pulling with my middle finger. The drill will not take the jack up all the way. The jack wiggles back and forth in the full up position, lengthwise, in the mount.

The front camp side bolt appears to be shorter than the rear one. The front bolt has a 1/2" bolt head, while the rear one has a 13mm bolt head.

Next I moved to the **front camp side stabilizer**.

I found the lock nuts appear to be 1/2" and the heads of the bolts to be 13mm and the bolts appear to be the same length, unlike the camp side rear bolts.

The drill was used to run up the jack and the jack would not reach the full up position.

The locknuts were loosened and then retightened using the middle finger method as previously described.

The drill would still not raise the jack into the full up position and the jack rocks back and forth in the full up position in its mount, lengthwise.

Next I moved to the **front driver side stabilizer**.

I found the lock nuts appear to be 1/2" and the heads of the bolts to be 13mm and the bolts appear to be the same length, unlike the camp side rear bolts.

The drill was used to run up the jack and it reached the full up position. It also ran the jack down relatively smoothly and without the squeaking and creaking of the other two jacks, looked at so far.

The jack DOES NOT rock back and forth in its mount, lengthwise.

Next I removed to the **rear driver side stabilizer**.

I found the locknuts appear to be 1/2" and the heads of the bolts to be 13mm and the bolts appear to be the same length, unlike the camp side rear bolts.

The drill was used to run up the jack and the jack would not reach the full up position.

The locknuts were loosened and then retightened using the middle finger method as previously described.

The drill would still not raise the jack into the full up position and the jack rocks only very, very slightly back and forth in the full up position in its mount, lengthwise.

On the driver side, the bolts holding the jack to its mount on the trailer are inserted with the heads to the front of the trailer and they are opposite on the camp side. I don't know if this has any significance, but I did not it.

I removed the rear camp side stabilizer from its mount on the trailer. The front bolt is shorter. Both bolts have 48 stamped on their heads. The front, shorter, bolt head fits into a 1/2" wrench but the rear bolt didn't. The locknuts fit into a 1/2" wrench.



Photos were taken of the bolts used in the rear camp side stabilizer. The bolts ARE two different lengths. The locknuts both fit in a 1/2" wrench. One bolt head fits in a 1/2" wrench and the other one doesn't. It fits in a 13mm wrench.

The threads on the locknuts do not appear to be the same. One locknut threads on by hand to both bolts, but the other lock nut does not, which is what it should be doing.

I removed the rear camp side stabilizer. I had to put it back on to get the jack all the way up, while doing that I learned how to attach them and the plate that goes inside the jack between the two jack sides.

The stabilizer was removed from the trailer once again and is ready to go to Harbor Freight with me later today.

I took video of how much play is in the hole the bolts go through in the jack mount on the trailer.

I went to Harbor Freight this evening and they didn't have the 2.5 ton scissors jacks in stock and said to check back Thursday.

I noticed tonight, when showing my wife what I learned about the scissor jacks on the trailer that the short bolt is short because someone cut it off. I noticed the angle cut on the thread end of the bolt.

08/07/19

I finally got to Harbor Freight in Howell today. Their 2.5 ton trailer scissor jacks are NOT a drop in replacement for the mount already on the trailer. I decided NOT to purchase them.

I reinstalled the rear camp side, original scissor jack after lubricating it.

08/08/19

I posted my review to YouTube. I started the upload about 3:30 p.m. and it didn't finish until about 10 p.m.

08/09/19

When I was looking at the trailer last night, while I was outside, I noticed that the stone guard is plastic. I am not sure how well it will hold up, but I was disappointed that it is not metal.

08/11/19

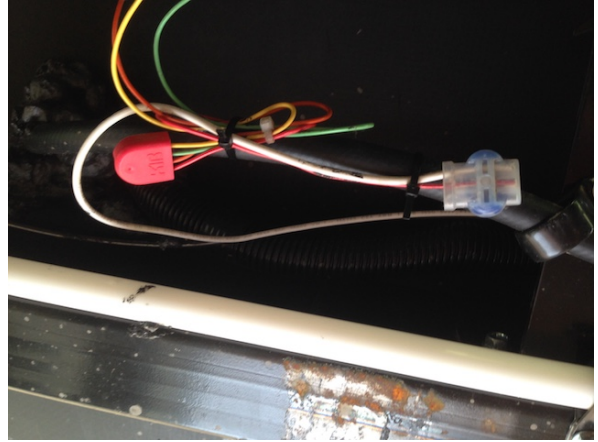
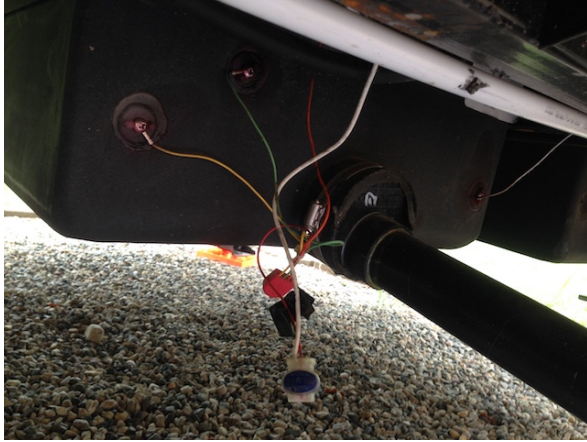
We started loading the trailer for our Covert KOA trip yesterday.

I plugged in the shore power and started the frig at 5:05 a.m. The temperature in the frig and freezer was about 66 to 68 degrees at the time I started the frig.

While mowing today, I noticed something dangling from the underside of the trailer. It was the wiring for the gray tank sensor. It had had only one wrap of electrical tape holding it in place, wherever it was. The tape let go, duh!

I got a couple of small tie-wraps and secured it much better.

That reminded me to add tie-wraps to the tool kit in the trailer.



At 1:15 p.m. the freezer was down to 0 degrees F and the frig was down to 32 degrees F, which is too cold for the frig. I moved the bar down that supposedly adjust the temperature to warmer. We'll see.

08/12/19 - Trip to Covert, MI KOA

The majority of items were packed into the trailer yesterday.

I looked at the trailer weight this morning and it was just over 3700 lb. with a tongue weight of 411 lb.

We pulled out for the KOA at Covert about t 11:30ish and arrived at the KOA about 4:30.

It was a 5 hour trip. We stopped for about 20 minutes for Chris to have some lunch about 2:30. The trip meter showed 187.4 miles when we arrived at our site at the KOA. It should have been only 170ish miles to here, but we got "lost" quite a few times and there were some closed roads. My iPhone still managed to get us here. We averaged 37.5 mph.

The weather for the drive was partly sunny for most of the day with the temperatures ranging from the low to mid-80s. The temperature gauge was mostly in the middle for the whole trip. The Ascent pulled the trailer with no problem and recorded 14.9 mpg for the trip according to the onboard computer. We did not fill up the car that evening, so I couldn't mathematically calculate the milage yet.

I learned that the TV must be plugged into the antenna connector in the trailer when cable is used. It is hard to attach the cable for cable TV to the connector on the exterior.

08/18/19 addendum: I added wrench to electronics box that fits external cable nut.

08/13/19 addendum: I did the math for mph when we filled up today. 191 miles total, so not many miles were put on this tank without the trailer attached. The math calculates to $191 - 187.4 = 3.6$ miles without trailer. The car took 12.667 gallons to fill it; $191 / 12.667 = 15.0$ mpg

The tow was all rural, 2-lane towing on paved roads, except for a detour that we took on a nice unpaved road. The traffic was mostly very light using this route.

Our site here is okay, but not great. We are a bit too close to the main road, M-140.

When I went to set up, I noticed that the lower shelf in the bathroom closet had collapsed and pulled down from where it was originally attached, and had fallen on top of the water heater. It looks to be a difficult fix. I didn't realize how poorly that shelf was attached. I had placed a lot of heavy items there for balance. At the time of the collapse, the shelf in the lower closet had about 40 lb. on it according to my previous records.

08/18/19 Addendum It appears that I did not have all of the items accounted for that were on the shelf that gave way. I weighed them this morning and the total was a whopping 65.8 lb. No wonder that shelf, designed for towels and the like broke out.

What was in that lower closet: the 2 ton scissors jack, the air pump, two small propane bottles, both shore cords, two chain locks, the box with my tools in it, the haylett folder, rags consisting of 3 large towels and a hand towel, the sink cover, and the Andersen leveler, screw driver set, ratchet set, 20' outdoor extension cord, breaker bar, 1 large plastic garbage bag.

I got the weight of the items when I got home

Once camp was set up, I fixed dinner.

We wanted to eat outside, but it sprinkled intermittently. It never really rained. Dinner was grilled pork chops and potato salad.

After dinner we walked the park and checked out the trailers. There was only one other single axle trailer here. It is an A-frame from Washington state.

We talked with Savannah, watched TV and went to bed.



08/13/19

I was up about 5:50 and it started breaking dawn about 6:20ish.

I went on the computer for a bit. We do have WiFi here. I walked around the park, and few people were up yet, except the ones with dogs and young kids.

We had breakfast; coffee, toast, eggs, sausage and orange juice.

We got cleaned up and went into South Haven and arrived there about 10:30.

We walked the hole tourist district of a town, and Chris investigated many of the shops.

We had Rubens at the Black River Tavern (BRT) for lunch.

We walked all the way out to the lighthouse on the pier from town. It was an extremely long, hot walk.

We left town and looked for some sweet corn to have with our BLTs tonight for dinner. We did find a farmers market and bought some corn. We got back here about 3:30ish.

The trailer had been shut up and was extremely hot, so we turned on the air.

It is in the mid-80s here today, but luckily there is quite a breeze. I'm sitting outside, at the picnic table under the awning. It's not too bad just sitting here.

We had BLTs and sweet corn for dinner and ate outside on the picnic table.

08/14/19

I got up at 6 and Chris noted that she's not sleeping well in the trailer.

It is a cool morning, 63 degrees. I'm sitting outside the trailer at the picnic table and the sun is just coming up.

Chris got up about 7:30ish and we had our coffee. She had peanut butter toast for breakfast and I only had coffee.

Chris said that she thought the trailer was not level and was down in the front, as she felt like she was sliding forward in bed. I checked the level with a level that I carry in the toolbox, and the trailer is perfectly level side to side and front to back. Glad I packed a level in my tool kit.

I shaved and took my shower in the trailer. That went well.

Chris showered in the trailer and then did her hair.

While I was waiting for her to get ready, I had a thought. If we are going on day trips to see the sights, we don't need to pack as much lunch stuff, as we eat out while on our day trips.

We left about 10:30ish and arrived in Saugatuck a bit after 11. It is a wonderful, shady tourist town and very easy to walk around in as there is very little street traffic.

Chris had a great time shopping while I sat on the various benches in town people watching. We had a good lunch of burgers at the Buttler Hotel deck restaurant.

Dinner was grilled chicken, fried potatoes and broccoli.

When we walked around the park tonight, we noticed that a lot more folks had come in today. Except for some pop-ups, the only other single axle trailer here is an old KZ Sportsman.

08/15/19

I got up about 6ish again. It was quite cool, totally overcast and windy. The temperature was 63 degrees, but it felt cooler because of the wind.

We just hung out at the trailer until noon and then went to get Savannah. We got back here about 4:30 and got her settled in. We went for a walk around the park and Savannah tried out some of the equipment and had fun on the huge, air filled, jumping pillow.

We had burgers and chips for dinner.

Chris and I had collected sticks for kindling to start the fire for the Somores.

After our long evening walk through the park, we got the fire going and made somores to top off the evening

08/16/19

I was up at about 7. I walked around until I decided it was time for the girls to get up, a little after 8.

While the girls were getting up, I set up the supports for the sewer hose and emptied the gray tank.

Savannah had Mini-Wheats, orange juice and toast for breakfast.

The girls rented recumbent bikes and road for awhile. Chris couldn't really do it, but Savannah rode her bike up here to the campsite.



I discovered, that, once again, one of the low-point drains was leaking, so I tightened it. I have a short video clip of it leaking titled "low-point-drip-cover.MOV".

A couple stopped by and asked about Apex trailer, so I gave them the grand tour and told them what I liked and didn't like.

The girls went down to the pool about noon.



It is a pretty day, with plenty of sunshine. The temperature has risen into the high 70's now, but with the sun and humidity, it felt a lot warmer.

We had tuna sandwiches for lunch with chips and dip.

We walked after lunch and then the girls went swimming again.

Dinner was tacos. They turned out well and were all eaten up.

We walked after the dishes were cleaned up and Savannah played on the equipment again.

When we got back to the campsite, we got the fire going for somores. We could see that there was a thunderstorm rolling in. Our neighbors, from Illinois, came over for somores with us.

The storm put an early end to making our somores.

The storm was moderately intense and lasted for a few hours. We did go to bed with the sound of rain on the roof.

08/17/19

I was up super early, 5:25 a.m. and everything is super wet. Trying to find a place to work on the computer was difficult.

I filled up the tank in Covert about 7:30 a.m.

It took a long time to get ready to leave, so we didn't leave until 11:14. It took about four hours and 16 minutes to drive home via I-96, M6, and I-96. That was all freeway driving, for the most part.

We stopped for about a 20 minute break at 1:00 in a rest area and had lunch.

We all pitched in to get the trailer cleaned out of our stuff and the remainder of the food.

The weather was sunny but there was some wind to contend with and temperatures were in the mid-80s.

After we arrived home and unpacked the trailer, I filled the car at the BP station 3 miles away. It took 11.819 gallons and the car had traveled 197 miles since the fill up in Covert. From our camping site to the Marathon station in Covert was less than 2 miles.

197 miles divided by 11.819 gallons is an average of 16.7 mpg while pulling the trailer at 55 mph. I-96 crossing Michigan is basically flatland type towing. The total trip time was about 4.25 hours, so the average mph was 46.4 mph, or about 10 miles per hour faster than the two lane roads.

I reweighed all of the food items while taking them in from the trailer. My records showed that we packed 153.4 lb. of food and bottled water and returned with 79.4 lb. of food.

08/18/19

I weighed all of the items that were in the lower bathroom cabinet. They came to 65.8 lb. as previously noted. No wonder that light shelf broke away!



The Shelf in the Lower Bathroom Cabinet Fix

The shelf in the lower bathroom cabinet collapsed on the way to Covert.

I removed the "top" three rails. The end rails were only held on by two long Phillips screws and the rear rail by three Phillips screws. The front rail was loose and needed to be reattached.

I vacuumed the compartment and checked that I did not inadvertently cut



something under the 1/8" Lite Ply with veneer on it shelf.

The original shelf measured 36" long and 21-31/32" wide (just under 22"). There were two holes in the original shelf. One hole was for the black tank breather pipe and the other has two water tubes that stick up and I don't know what they are for. They have end caps on them. The shelf weighed 1.65 lb.

I pulled the staples out of the top of the front rail, where they had pulled through. I had to cut off the staples on the inside where they attached to the front facing. I roughed up the veneer with sandpaper. I predrilled 1/16" pilot holes for the small nails that I had that could replace the staples that they used. I glued and nailed the front rail back into place.



I glued and screwed the rear, left and right rails back into place.

The back and side rails were 1-1/16" higher than the front rail.

I used a piece of 5/16" x 3" x 36" hard balsa to create a 5/8" x 1-1/16" x 34-7/16 laminated piece to raise the front

rail. That piece was glued and nailed in on top of the original front piece creating a level top with the rear and side pieces. That piece weighed 0.1 lb.



Two shelf boards were cut from 1/4" x 2' x 2' real plywood that I had on hand. The shelf boards weighed 3.6 lb. The difference between the old shelf and the new shelf material is 2 lb.

The shelving is not attached and now allows access to the water pump from inside the trailer.

This was a full day, all day project.

I hooked up the city water to my back faucet, to check for possible leaks from bumping the water lines around in the lower bathroom closet. I turned the gas on to check that the water heater was still working. It was. I found no leaks in the pipes in the lower bathroom closet.

I shut off the water heater and the gas and drained the gray tank, as I'd run water through the system checking for leaks.

I shut off the propane and battery disconnect.

08/19/19

I put all of the items that were on the shelf back in except for a checkered bath towel and the hand towel.

The total weight on the shelf is now 64.4 lb. with the white bath towel. The total shelf area weight is now 66.4 lb. including the shelf.

I had to vacuum the Ascent and wash the mats because of the mud that got tracked in at the KOA on the day we left because of the hard rain the previous evening.

I put a new roll of paper towel and new box of Kleenex in the trailer. I also refilled the Dawn dish soap.

I swept the floor with the broom that I purchased at Haylett and then moped the floor using Spic 'n Span and a scrubber sponge.

08/20/19

During our second camping trip, Chris mentioned that she thought that it felt like her head was going 'downhill'.



I investigated yesterday and found the carpet makes about a 5/16" drop to the plywood over the pass through at the head of the bed.



I purchased four sheets of Dollar Tree foam board and cut them into 14-3/4" x 30" strips to fit across the plywood at the head of the bed. The foam board pieces weighed 0.7 lb. The pieces are stacked two high, which makes their thickness just a bit higher than the height of the carpet. That allows for the foam board to compress some over time.

08/30/19

I switched out the 12" frying pan and lid for a 10" frying pan and lid. The new pan weighed one pound less and fits the 2-burner stove top better, allowing a second pan to be used more easily.



08/31/19

I noticed that the frames for the pass through storage doors do not fit the cutouts in the side of the trailer, like the kitchen window and front, camp side bedroom window. Why I never noticed or noted this before, I don't know. It just occurred to me this morning.

09/04/19, Wednesday, The Harbor Beach Trip

We packed up on Tuesday and Wednesday morning.

When we pulled out the trailer weighed 3,684.3 lb. We had packed 96.8 lb. of food and 46.4 lb. of personal items in the trailer. No water was carried in the tanks. The tongue weight was 425 lb. or 11.5% of the total trailer weight.

We left home at 11:50 a.m. and drove the 130 miles on the trip meter to North Beach Campground in Harbor Beach, MI. We arrived at 3:10 p.m. with one short stop in North Branch. That is an average speed of 40 mph.

We drove in a lot of wind all the way up there. It was at least 15 plus mph. The Ascent did a great job of keeping the trailer behind us. We only felt one real bump when a large truck passed us in the opposite direction. It was going at a high rate of speed, well over the 55 mph speed posted on the two lane road. The wind was pushing against the driver side at that time. That was the only time we've ever felt a bump.

The wind caused our gas mileage to go down. The onboard computer noted 14.1 mpg.

We got the trailer set up on a concrete pad. Set up went well and easily.



We had brauts for dinner with potato salad.

After dinner we walked the nice campground here.

Note: I had lubricated the stabilizer jacks on Tuesday. I was able to lower them from the up, travel position to fully down with the drill. That's the first time that happened.

09/05/19, Thursday

We both noted that we slept well when we got up. The temperature had dropped well into the low 50s over night.

Chris got up about 7:30 a.m. and I got breakfast going. Breakfast was sausage gravy and biscuits, coffee, eggs and orange juice.

We cleaned up the breakfast dishes and made the bed and then Chris got ready for our day to start.

We left about 11 a.m. from our trip around the north shore of the thumb.

First, we stopped in Harbor Beach for a fill-up. We had traveled 135 miles then. 131.2 miles of that was pulling the trailer. The tank took 9.259 gallons for an average of 14.5 mpg.

We head south on M-25 to Forestville and took the Forestville-Bay City Road west across the top of the thumb. In Unionville we turned north on M-25. We stopped in Caseville and walked around. Chris got a nice, new sweatshirt at a real discount price.

On the way up to Port Austin, we stopped at a scenic lookout and took some beautiful photos of Saginaw Bay, as seen from the east side.

We had a very nice lunch at a restaurant in Port Austin called "The 1884 Bank". It was pretty good.

Next we stopped at the Point Barques Light House. It is a beautifully restored and working lighthouse on the point between Lake Huron and Saginaw Bay. There is a county campground there, and we drove through it noticing that the majority of RVs there were seasonal campers.

We got back to Harbor Beach about 5 p.m.

Since we had eaten so late in the afternoon, we only had some snacks and no official dinner.

The weather was beautiful the whole day. There was a lot of sun with a blue sky with puffy clouds and the temperature was around 70 degrees most of the day.

09/06/19

Up about 7ish and got the coffee on. Very cloudy this morning. It wasn't as cold last night and only ran the furnace a few moments to take off the chill in the trailer.

We both had our showers in the trailer this morning and got ready for our trip to town.

We left in a fine mist about 10:50 a.m. When we got to Lexington, our first stop, it was raining pretty hard. We visited some of the tourist stores in Lexington and drove down to the marina. We headed on down to Fort Gratiot. Our first stop was at a Dick's sporting goods store to look for a lamp for the trailer. There was an Ulta next-door so Chris went in, looked around and brought a makeup blender. (No clue.)



We continued on to the Briarwood Mall. We continued looking for a lamp, tension rod and bathroom puff. The mall is nothing like it was 15 years ago. Many of the stores are closed. We did have a good Chinese lunch in the food court.

The final stop in Fort Gratiot was at the WalMart. We purchased a small table lamp, a tension rod and a bath puff.

The lamp is a Mainstays 3.5 Watt LED Desk Lamp. Ours is white, but I can only find the pink one on the Walmart Web site.

[https://www.walmart.com/ip/Mainstays-3-5-](https://www.walmart.com/ip/Mainstays-3-5-Watt-LED-Desk-Lamp-11-6-Inches-Height-Pink/594192563)

[Watt-LED-Desk-Lamp-11-6-Inches-Height-Pink/594192563](https://www.walmart.com/ip/Mainstays-3-5-Watt-LED-Desk-Lamp-11-6-Inches-Height-Pink/594192563)

On the way back up to Harbor Beach we stopped at a scenic lookout over Lake Huron and took several pictures.

We now have pictures on both sides of the thumb, Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron.

We tried the table lamp, and it was just what we were looking for. It worked out perfectly.

Ken put the new tension rod up lengthwise in the shower for a towel rack. That worked out well too.

Ken noticed a family pull in and set up, but their power cord was not long enough to reach the power box on the pole. He loaned our extra 30A extension cord to them.

He also put the Italian dressing on the chicken breasts for our dinner of grilled chicken breast and sweet corn.

We just relaxed some before dinner.

Dinner was excellent.

After dinner we took the garbage over to the trash and walked the campground.

We had vanilla ice cream with Hershey syrup as our evening snack and watched TV.

09/07/19

The day started off with total cloud cover at 7:30 a.m.

The clouds dissipated quickly and it was sunny most of the day.

We drove into Lincoln Park in Harbor Beach and took the long walk out on the observation pier. It was a beautiful day for it.

Next we roamed the small town of Harbor Beach and found that they roll up the streets at noon. It was a nice walk.

Finally we drove back out to the Harbor Beach Marina and checked it out, but we did not walk the breakwater out towards the beautiful lighthouse.

We came back over to the campground and had lunch.

After lunch we walked the nature trail out from the campground. It was a nice long and pleasant walk through the marsh and woods.

We just relaxed until dinner.

Dinner was fried potatoes and Manwich sandwiches.

After dinner we strolled the campground for one last time.

09/08/19

I was up pretty early and started preparing the trailer for our return home. The wind had blown hard all night long and it was still very windy when daylight broke.

I went into Harbor Beach and filled the tank on the Ascent. It took 8.433 gallons for our 270 miles of traveling in the thumb for an average of 32.0 mpg.

Chris got up about 7 a.m. She had a shower while I continued to prep the trailer for the trip home.

We pulled out at 10:32 a.m. and drove straight through with no stops. We arrived home at 1:30 p.m. The trip took about 3 hours and covered 129.8 miles towing the trailer for an average of 43.3 mph. The total miles, including the mileage to the gas station in Harbor Beach and the BP station for the fill up here in Walled Lake was 134 miles. The fill up took 9.039 gallons for an average of 14.8 mpg pulling the trailer.

It was extremely windy, 15 plus mph, for most of the trip home. The Ascent handled the tow very well. There was no noticeable sway and I was comfortable driving at all times on the two-lane highways. There was no highway driving during the trip, so speeds never exceeded 55 mph.

After arriving home, we removed our food and personal items from the trailer.

Note: There were no trailer "issues" that needed taking care of during this trip, except that the refrigerator seems to be too cold and sometimes freezes items with it set to the higher highest level. Ice cream and foods in the freezer stay frozen well.

I did add 5 gallons, 42 lb., of water to the black tank for towing home to try and get the tongue weight down some, as we'd used up some of the food and bottled water that were in the trailer when we left.

The plan was to reweigh the tongue weight before unpacking the trailer at home, but we had some problems backing into the parking spot at home and I did not get the tongue weight before unloading the trailer.

Synopsis of Our Three Camping Trips In 2019 - With Towing Data

1st Trip July 22 - 24 to Groveland Oaks County Park

This was a short trip, close to home.

The Ascent contained two adults and a 5-year-old along with her bike, clothes and swimming gear.

Trailer Weight Before Loading: 3523.3 lb. (included 306.3 lb. of items that stay in the trailer)

Loaded Trailer Weight: 3,685 lb.

Food: 82.9 lb.

Personal Items: 36.8 lb.

5 gallons water in black tank: 42 lb. (needed to achieve tongue weight)

Tongue Weight: 421 lb.

Tongue Weight as % of Total Trailer Weight: 11.4%

Total Distance Pulling Trailer: 60 miles

Road Type: 2-lane suburban

Average Miles Per Hour: not noted

MPG Pulling Trailer: not noted

Note: Ascent easily pulled trailer at posted speeds.

2nd Trip August 12 - 17 to Covert, MI KOA Near South Haven, MI

On the way over the Ascent contained two adults and on the return trip the two adults and an 11-year-old.

Trailer Weight Before Loading: 3532.7 lb. (included 315.7 lb. of items that stay in the trailer)

Loaded Trailer Weight: 3,744.5 lb.

Food: 153.4 lb.

Personal Items: 58.4 lb.

Tongue Weight: 411 lb.

Tongue Weight as % of Total Trailer Weight: 11.0%

Total Distance Pulling Trailer Out: 187.4 miles

Road Type: 2-lane

Average Miles Per Hour: 37.5 mph (included 30 minute stop for lunch in trailer)

MPG Pulling Trailer: 15 mpg

Note: Ascent easily pulled trailer at posted speeds.

Total Distance Pulling Trailer Home: 194 miles

Road Type: Mostly Freeway

Average Miles Per Hour: 46.4 mph (included 15 minute rest stop)

MPG Pulling Trailer: 16.7 mpg

Note: Drove mostly at 55 mph on the Freeway

3rd Trip September 5 - 8 to North Park Campground, Harbor Beach, MI

On the way up the Ascent contained two adults and a few other items.

Trailer Weight Before Loading: 3541.1 lb. (included 324.1 lb. of items that stay in the trailer)

Loaded Trailer Weight: 3,684.3 lb.

Food: 96.8 lb.

Personal Items: 46.4 lb.

Tongue Weight: 425 lb.

Tongue Weight as % of Total Trailer Weight: 11.5%

Total Distance Pulling Trailer Up: 130 miles

Road Type: 2-lane

Average Miles Per Hour: 40 mph (included a brief stop in North Branch)

MPG Pulling Trailer: 14.5 mpg

Note: Ascent easily pulled trailer at posted speeds. It was very windy.

Total Distance Pulling Trailer Home: 129.8 miles

Road Type: 2-lane

Average Miles Per Hour: 43 mph (non-stop)

MPG Pulling Trailer: 14.8 mpg

Note: Extremely windy for the first half of the pull across the thumb. Drove into a headwind a lot of the time.

All three trips could be considered flatland towing, even though there were a lot of "hills" and curves going up and down, there was no signage indicating significant grades.

The Ascent handled the trailer well in some pretty good wind and no sway was ever noted, although I could feel the Ascent "working" to keep the trailer straight, my wife didn't notice anything. I believe that my feel was feedback through the steering wheel and just being aware of all of the little movements. The "feel" wasn't much, but I was aware of it, but it never bothered me and I felt confident at all times.

09/10/19

While making up the bed with clean sheets, the 'missing' battery disconnect key dropped on the floor. Maybe it was trapped in the mattress pad or between the mattress pad and under

the bed storage top. The spare key for the battery cutoff was stored in the box of electronics accessories under the front bench.

I brought in the TV, TV remote, refrigerator fan, and new D cells for the refrigerator fan from the junk drawer. The batteries were removed from the TV remote and refrigerator fan and stored in a plastic baggie with the used D cells from the fan marked with masking tape.

The shore power cord was hooked up to the outlet in the garage so that the computer can be used in the trailer and the awing extension and retraction speed can be timed.

Emptied the pass through storage and unwound the green hose. I forgot to do that before returning from our last camping trip and water came out of it getting all of the stuff in the pass through storage wet. The green hose was unwound and emptied.

I dried out the pass through storage compartment, which wasn't very wet now, as I'd left both doors open all day after we got home, vacuumed it and wiped it down before returning the items to the pass through.

I moved the 2x10 board with its styrofoam ends and the two lawn chairs to the pass through storage.

I moved the entry mat, patio mat, bath mat, sewer accessory box and welcome mat to the pass through storage.

I took the extension and retraction times for the awning using Josh's 2 second pause each way; extension 22 sec., 23 sec., 22 seconds, retraction 38 sec., 39 sec., 40 sec.

I wound up the 30A extension cord and the green hose again as it is beginning to look like rain.

I lubricated the awning bolts with BLASTER brand INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH SILICONE LUBRICANT with Teflon. I also did the stabilizer jacks again, even though they worked well during our last camping trip. I had lubricated them before we went.

I finished the inventory and took the items into the house that needed to be out of the trailer for storage.

I vacuumed the shower pan and inspected the shower pan seals. At first the seals looked and felt good, but while cleaning the shower pan with a Mr. Clean eraser, to get off the black marks left by the Welcome mat, I noticed that the corner of the shower pan, by the sink presses down and opens a crack in the rear seal of the shower pan between the pan and the wall.

I put on the first coat of caulk to seal that seam.

Tools and other items that might be used before spring and items that probably would not do well in the cold were brought into the house.

I made up a separate file with the inventory below. It is titled 2019 end of year inventory.

I updated the list on June 13, 2020.

If the item has been removed from its allocated storage place in the trailer, where it was moved to is noted. This list was updated in early June 2020 to reflect the current inventory.

Items in Pass Through

Lynx Levelers in bag
Empty Gallon Jug
Light, flexible hose
2 white fresh water hoses
90 degree hose elbow
Water Filter
Water pressure regulator
4-way lug wrench
Stabilizer Jack Handle
Sewer Support in box
Short 4x4 treated post
Cordless elec. drill

Refrigerator/Freezer

Thermometer in each
Frig Fan

Cabinet Over Sink

Meijer disinfecting wipes
Tube of Med. size
stretch cords (house)
Bottle of Sm. Size
stretch cords (house)
2 pot holders
2 hot pad/trivets
5 1-gallon size slider bags
Roll of Cling wrap
8 various size plastic
storage containers
with lids
Lots of coffee filters
4 marshmallow
skewers
6 Mr. Clean Premium
reusable wipes
1 new salt & pepper
1 tall kitchen bag
1 sandwich size
plastic bag
1 new grill mat
1 scrubber sponge
1 over the door towel
hanger
1 almost new roll of
paper towel on holder
with rubber band

Under Kitchen Sink Storage

Flatware drawer with
8 forks, 4 knives, 4 tea
spoons, 4 lg. spoons
Utensils drawer with
potato masher, can opener,
potato peeler, black spatula,
white stirring spoon, small
stirring spatula, coffee scoop,
tongs, lg. Black spoon,
lg. Black spoon w/holes
10" frying pan w/lid
8" frying pan w/lid
Medium size pot w/lid
Waste basket with some
plastic shopping bags
Plastic box for sharp knives
Cardboard Box with Sparkle,
Spic 'n Span, Pam, canola oil,
Dawn, toilet chem

Cabinet Over Refrigerator

Reversible stove top griddle
2 unused OFF! Spray
Sewing kit
Spray sunblock (not found)
Rain poncho
Fly swatter
Picnic tablecloth
First Aid Kit
Junk Drawer plastic box
with 1 twist tie, 6 sm. screws,
roll of masking tape, roll of
Scotch tape, 2 grill lighters,
ruler, nozzle for filling fresh
water tank, deck of cards,
3 pencils, 2 pens, 2 utility
knife blades, 4 #64 rubber
bands, 4 picnic table cloth
holders, extra key for bike
lock, sm. notepad, scissors
safety pins
Cabinet Over Bed
3 beach towels
Beach blanket in bag
Driver Side Closet
Empty

Passenger Side Closet**Shower Pan**

Entry rug (pass through)
Bath mat/rug (pass through)
Patio mat (pass through)
Sewer Accessory Box with
lots of gloves in plastic bag,
metal tote handle, 45-deg
elbow, 90-deg elbow, all the
parts from tote tank. 15'
Rhino sewer hose, plastic
sewer hose rinser head (pass
through)
Welcome mat (pass through)

Bathroom Floor

Waste basket
Two lawn chairs in cases
(pass through)
2x10x40.75 leveling board
(pass through)
2 styrofoam chunks that fit
the board ends (pass through)
Box of btl. water (pass thru)

Bathroom Hanging Closet

Broom & Dust Pan
Tension rod
Wood cutting board used
to cover bathroom sink
Over the door towel hook

Left Side Bathroom Closet**Top**

Hand soap bottle
coffee pot in box
6 toilet paper
1 new box Kleenex
10 black tank tablets
38 tall kitchen bags in box

Middle

5 wash clothes
3 bath towels
2 hand towels
3 kitchen towels
1 partially used Kleenex
Small table lamp

Bottom

Empty

Medicine Cabinet

Toothbrush holder
Rubber band for toilet paper
7 bathroom 3 oz. paper cups

Cabinet Under Sink

Empty

Toilet bowl brush
Hair dryer
Scrub brush

Lower Bathroom Closet

2-Ton scissors jack
Breaker bar with socket
20' outdoor extension cord
2 bath towel rags
2 bicycle chain locks
1 full sm. propane tank
1 partial sm. propane tank
30A Extension cord
30A Shore cord
Circuit Analyzer/Surge Protector
30A adapter to 110V plug
Andersen leveler w/mat in box
1 42 gal. black trash bag
Cutting board for sink cover
Ratchet set (house)
Screwdriver set (house)
Shop Force 12V Air Pump
Quinn torque socket
Plastic Box with Tools,
hammer, level, bathtub
caulk, utility knife, duct
tape, lg. flat & Phillips
screwdrivers, plumber's
tape, zip ties, channel
locks, pliers, adj. wrench,
4 wrenches, set of hex
keys, tube Dynaflex 230,
2 #64 rubber bands
(house)
Haylett portfolio

Under Bed Storage

Coleman RoadTrip Grill
2 1x2 wood props for
holding up storage lid

Under Front Bench Storage

2 grill tops & drip pans in
plastic bags
Wire brush for grill
Box with electrical items, 50'
coax cable, wrench for coax,
plug in AC voltmeter, 50A to 30A
adapter, 2-way hose adapter,
spare fuses, spare battery cutoff
key
Grill mat

Right Cabinet Above Dinette

4 each Malamine lg. plates, sm.
plates, lg. bowls
9 heavy duty paper plates
Radio light blocker

Left Cabinet Above Dinette

Metal picnic holder with
some napkins & 1/2 full salt
& pepper shakers
4 plastic drinking glass
2 long stem plastic glasses
Ceramic coffee cup
Lg. glass coffee cup
Happy Camper wine glass

On Bed

2 sheets
2 pillow cases
2 lg. decorative pillows
1 sm. decorative pillow
New bedspread
Battery cutoff key
Mattress pad

Under Rear Bench Storage

2 sheets
2 pillow cases
2 blankets
Mattress pad

Other Items added

Toilet paper roll holder
Tension rod (rear of shower)
Shower caddy on tension
rod

New shower curtain
1/4" real plywood to replace
original 1/8" Lite Ply shelf
in bottom bathroom closet
Some foam board under the
front of the mattress
between top of pass through
and the mattress

09/11/19

I put on a second coat of white bathroom caulk on the right rear of the shower pan and extended the caulk along the wall to the end of the shower pan.

I am still thinking about adding a porcelain toilet to add more weight to the back of the trailer for added weight.

09/14/19

For winterizing the trailer, on the way to the flying field, I stopped at Menard's and purchased a brass blow-out fitting and gallon of RV antifreeze. I also picked up a four pack of toilet paper for next year.

After coming home from the flying field, I went to Harbor Freight and purchased a 1/3 hp oil-free pancake air compressor, air hose and fittings. They are all to be used to blow out the water lines for winterizing the water system.

09/17/19

I started looking for some means to cover the radio clock light at night. Using Google and amazon.com, I tried to find a small, blackout window shade and ran into the pull-down rear window shades for cars. The problem is that they are not truly opaque.

I think we could make a quick install and remove “shade” using two suction cups, a piece of twine or wire and a piece of black material.



09/18/19 The Not That Bad

The position of the AC outlet in the rear bench was a problem. It was awkward to reach the receptacle to plug anything in and a cord, plugged into the outlet, interfered with the legs of the person sitting on the rear bench seat.

There was enough wire on the plug to move it to a position over the wheel well and out of the way, if the plug was rotated to the horizontal position.



A paper template was made for the new location. A jig saw was used to cut the horizontal cuts and a Dremel to cut the vertical lines for the new AC outlet hole position.

The AC outlet was moved to its new position and screwed in. The original AC outlet hole was covered with a blank cover plate.

It is much easier to plug anything into the outlet now and there is no cord interference for the legs of the person sitting on the rear bench.



09/19/19

The suction cup idea, to hold fabric over the radio, did not work. The suction cups would not hold on the slick veneer of the cabinet.

WE decided to wrap material around a dowel rod and place the dowel rod on top of the upper cabinet doors over the dinette. It works perfectly, and since we do not open the doors when we are sleeping or getting up during the night, it should not be a problem.

A New Looks at Weight Data

Brand: Lionshead **CASTLE ROCK ST RADIAL ST226**

<https://lionsheadtireandwheel.com/Castle-Rock-Radial-Tire>

There is no information about this tire on their Web site.

MADE IN CHINA MLR11

DOT JUJT UMT(3418)

The letters after DOT , followed by a series of eleven or twelve numbers/letters that indicate the manufacturing location, tire size, manufacturer's code, and age of the tires.

3418 means the 34 week of 2018. (Week 34 of 2018 was August 20 thru August 26)

<https://www.honkforhelp.com/explore/2015/how-to-read-a-dot-tire-code-and-why-it-matters/>

SPEED RATING "L" (75MPH/ 120KM/H MAX)

TUBELESS STEEL BELTED

8 PR (8 ply radial equivalent)

LOAD RANGE D 105/101L

The D only indicates the ply rating equivalent of 8 Ply Rating at 65 PSI

<https://www.discounttire.com/learn/load-range-load-index>

105 = 2039 lbs 101 = 1819 lbs and I can't find the L after 101

LOAD INDEX AND LOAD CARRYING CAPACITY

<https://www.discounttire.com/learn/load-range-load-index>

The 105 designation at 2039 lbs matches the

MAX LOAD SINGLE 925kg (2040 LBS) AT 450kPa (65 P.S.I.)

COLD

And

MAX LOAD DUAL 825kg (1820 LBS) AT 450 kPa (65 P.S.I.) COLD

TREAD PLIES: 2 NYLON & 2 STEEL SIDEWALL PLIES: 2 NYLON

Article: LOAD RANGE AND PLY RATING

<https://www.discounttire.com/learn/load-range-load-index>

This explains why this four ply tire as an 8 ply equivalent rating.

My tires can carry 4080 lb. (4038 lb.) at 65 psi.

Sticker on A-frame of trailer notes: Dry Weight: 3100 LBS

Top Sticker, front driver side notes:

GVWR/PNBV 1724KG 3800 LB

GAWR/PNBE 1588KB 3500 LB

Middle Sticker, front driver side notes:

The combined weight of the Cargo should Never Exceed: 308Kgs or 679 lb.

All three tires noted as ST205/75R14D

Cold Tire Pressure: 65 PSI/448 KPA

Bottom Sticker, front driver side notes:

Dry Weight/Poids Sec: 1406KG (converted 3099.699 lb.)

Cargo Carrying Capacity: 172Kg (converted 379.195 lb.)

Calculated with free water tanks full (*I believe that is referring to the Cargo Carrying Capacity value with the fresh water and water heater full. Combined they weigh 308Kg or 679 lb.*)

Water tanks full Cold: 113KG (converted 249.122 lb.)

Hot: 23KG (converted 50.7063 lb.)

Mass of waste water tank:

Full: 226KG (converted 498.245 lb.)

172 KG plus 113KG = 285 KG (converted 628.317 lb.)

285 KG plus 23KG = 308KG (converted 679.024 lb.)

What is the TRUE Cargo Carrying Capacity of this trailer?

The simple method indicates a totally incorrect answer.

3800 lb. GVWR - 3100 lb. Dry weight = 700 lb. but...

The propane tank needs to be filled - ~20 lb.

A battery needs to be placed on the unit - Mason RV/Marine Battery & Battery Box 38.6 lb.

The 6 gallon water heater filled - 50.7 lb. (from the sticker value above)

AND 2 gallons of water (estimate) in the water lines - 16.7 lb.

The total is 126 lb. of "cargo" that most people would not think of as "cargo"!

700 lb. (simple method) - 126 lb. equals 574 lb. for everything else going into the trailer, but...

The stickers indicate 679 lb. as the maximum.

679 lb. - 126 lb. equals 553 lb. for everything else going in trailer, but...

Today's weight for just the trailer, and the stuff that lives in the trailer, is 3552.2 lb.

3552 lb. - 3216 (3100 lb. + 126 lb.) = 336 lb. for the combined weight of the stuff that lives in the trailer.

553 lb. (from above lower figure) - 336 lb. (stuff in trailer) leaves 217 lb. for food, beverages and personal items.

For the first trip the food, beverages and personal items totaled 162 lb., the second 212 lb. and the third 143 lb. It looks like we were close to the maximum on the 2nd trip.

09/21/19

While thinking about winterizing the trailer, I started looking into products that stop rust including paints, and a product that I'd never heard of, called rust converters.

This morning I was looking closely at the “A” frame that is welded to the front of the frame and has the battery box rails, LP tank holder, tongue jack holder and hitch lock plate welded to it.

I found out some very interesting things about it that I had not noticed before.

On both the driver side and camp side outside of the “A” frame rails, the number 6967 is visible, or at least part of it is. The numbers do NOT wash off. When I run my finger over the digits, they feel somewhat raised and they are, maybe, under some kind of paint or coating.



Camp
side
photo
on left



Driver
side
photo
on right

I also found some very strange bumps on the top of both sides of the “A” frame rails. I cannot determine if they are drips, or blobs, from welds or something else.



The top photo shows the bumps on the camp side towards the rear of the “A” frame. What appears to be black paint overspray is on the sticker. There are also scratches that can be seen to the far left, and there is nothing on the trailer that could scratch there.



The bottom photo shows the bump with what appears to be black paint overspray along the top of the sticker and rust on the LP tank bracket near the bolts. I did not remove the LP tank to look at the other side yet, but I imagine there is also rust on the other side of the LP tank bracket as well.



(Camp side left)

There was "missing" paint on the bracket that holds the tongue jack bracket and hitch lock plate.



(Driver side Right)

There is a lot of rust around the tongue lock mechanism.



The tongue jack plate has rust on it.

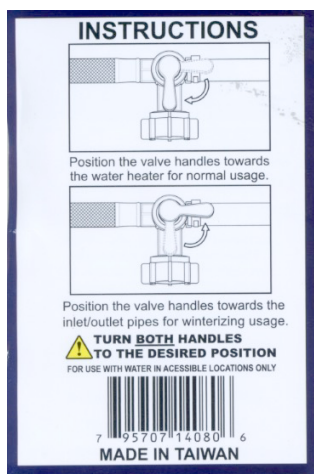
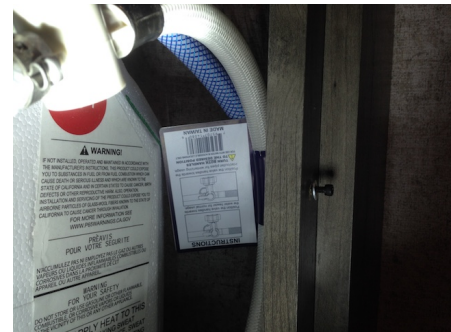
09/24/19

The broken shelf in the lower bathroom cabinet allowed for clarification of the water system plumbing for winterizing purposes when part of the replacement shelf was removed.



The Coachmen manual shows the bypass system using three (3) two-way valves. **THIS IS NOT WHAT IS USED ON THE 2020 APEX NANO 187RB.**

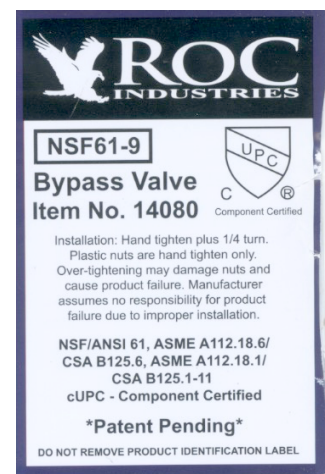
Tucked into the far right corner of the water heater access area, where it can't really be seen, is a tag attached to a water line with tape. It really cannot be read, or even noticed, in that position. It is even taped on upside down.



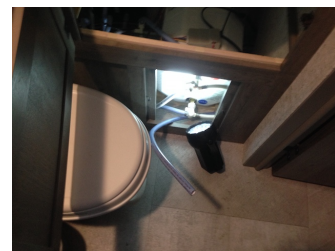
The tag was removed and scanned.

The tag, and visual inspection, showed that this unit uses two (2) three way valves to bypass the water heater.

How to use this type of bypass is described in the Instructions.

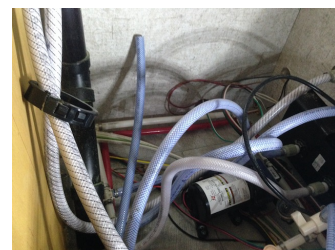


During the visual inspection, it was discovered that the pump has a 2-way valve and an unconnected water line connected to it so that the valve can be turned and then the pump can pump RV antifreeze directly from the gallon jug using the unconnected water line.



The unconnected water line is the one on the floor in water heater compartment that is closest to the access panel opening.

The unconnected water line can be pulled through the access panel opening and inserted into the jug of RV antifreeze. The



antifreeze can then be pumped through the water system using the water pump.

Finding this pump and winterizing set up already onboard the trailer negates my recommendation number 14 in the video, as Coachmen already has it set up.

The Actual, Physical Winterizing of the Water System

First, the two 3-way valves, on the back of the water heater, were set to their winterizing positions. (See Instruction tag)



The air hose fittings, 1 male and 1 female 1/4" quick connect, were attached to the air hose for the CENTRAL PNEUMATIC® 3 Gal. 1/3 Hp 100 Psi Oil-Free Pancake Air Compressor item number 60637. The Quick Start Guide and User Manual are found online and packed with the compressor.

<https://manuals.harborfreight.com/>

[manuals/60000-60999/60637.PDF](https://manuals.harborfreight.com/manuals/60000-60999/60637.PDF)

All of those items were purchased from Harbor Freight.



The compressor was broken in using the manual's directions on page 7. The regulator valve and drain valve were opened. The Sioux Chief tomahawk Brass Garden Hose Blow Out Fitting (937-95301001), purchased at Menards and found in the plumbing department, was fitted to the hose to allow the air to flow during the break-in.

Winterization and De-winterization per Coachmen

<https://forestriverinc.help/#/coachmenrv/guide/2020/917-apex-nano/browse/topic/GUID-B7E25C06-560F-46F3-83D4-A12295F46267>

Information from that page indicated that the air pressure should be set to no greater than 30 PSI.

The inside access panel to the water heater was removed and the two valves attached to the back of the water heater were moved to the pass through, winterizing, position.

The water heater pressure release valve was moved to the open position. A 1-1/16" socket was used to remove the water heater plug and anode combination. The plug was screwed in very tightly and was hard to get started.



Even though a lot of the anode was still there, it didn't look good near the plug. I noted rust on the screw head of the anode and plug combination and the hole that the plug screws in to.

The Suburban water heater manual states that water should not be left in the water heater for prolonged periods of time. Water was in the water heater from the middle of May until the end of September. This was never discussed during the walk through at Haylett RV.

While the water heater was draining, the low point caps were removed so the water could drain directly onto the rear, driver side scissor jack, as the low point drains emptied. The cap for the black and gray tanks was removed and the handles opened to drain them. The cap was removed from the fresh water tank to drain it.

The shower faucets, bathroom sink and kitchen sink faucets were opened, as well as the outside shower faucets. The outside shower compartment was wiped out as it was full of sand and road dust.

A small, flat tipped screwdriver was used to remove the washer and screen combo from the City Water inlet.

The compressor was moved into position and plugged in. The brass blow out fitting was screwed into the City Water inlet on the trailer.

The compressor was allowed to fill its air tank and then the pressure going into the trailer was adjusted to 25 psi. Quite a bit of water blew out of all of the open lines. The toilet pedal was held down while the compressor was working. After a few minutes the pressure was down on the compressor tank, so it was allowed to run to, with the outlet valve closed, fill the tank again. The compressor was set to 25 psi and the lines blown out again with the toilet foot pedal depressed.

Another run was made with all of the inside and outside faucets closed, but with the low point drains open. More water came of the low point drains onto the scissors jack. Another run was made with only the low point drains open after the pressure built up in the tank again.

Getting the exterior shower hose and head back into its compartment was difficult. Wrapping the hose around the faucets tended to turn them on. This will be something to check in the spring.

The blow out fitting was removed from the City Water inlet and placed into the Black Tank Flush inlet. The washer with screen was returned to the City Water inlet.

The compressor was used to blow out the black tank.

While the compressor was refilling its air tank for another blow on the black tank, the fresh water and low point drain plugs were hand tightened back into their respective places. The water heater door was temporarily put back in place, until a new anode rod arrives.

Two cups of RV antifreeze, purchased at Menards, was placed into the shower drain, bathroom sink drain, and both sides of the kitchen drain, even though they drain to the same trap. Two cups of RV antifreeze was also put into the back tank with a 1/2 cup added to the toilet.

The gray and black tank valves were closed and the cap put back on the system.

The rear, driver side scissor jack was dried from where the low point drains had drained on it and then lubricated with silicone spray.

The water heater bypass valves were returned to their normal position, per the Instruction sheet.

The water heater access door panel was screwed back into place.

09/25/19 Under the trailer photos

An under the trailer inspection was performed today to check the tightness of the nuts and bolts on the spring hangers and axles, note whether or not all of the tanks are strapped, and to check for rust.



All of the bolts on the spring hangers and axle appeared tight, but I did not check them with a wrench yet.

A photo of the Dexter sticker on the axle shows a date of 03/30/19, which appears as the due date.

It is a 3500 lb. axle, as previously noted.



The 30 gallon fresh water tank is strapped into place as well as being held in by "L" shaped cross-members.



The 30 gallon gray water and 30 gallon black water tanks have no straps.



The gray water and black water tanks are only held on by some "L" shaped cross-members.

More Rust Found on the Frame and Frame Components



Rust on the lower, outside area of the spare tire bracket.



Rust on a black tank cross-member.



Rust high on the frame on the camp side in front of the axle.



The photo shows rust on the camp side between, and on, cross-members.



There is rust and some black stuck on stuff the frame bottom on the camp side, near the axle.

There is a ripple in the underlayment too.



There is a crack or ripple in the underlayment on the camp side somewhere near the rear bench and wheel well area.

09/26/19 The New Anode Rod Arrived



The new Suburban brand anode rod arrived from Amazon yesterday evening and it was installed this morning.

That is a simple enough statement, but...

The threads were wrapped with Teflon plumber's tape.

The plug would not screw back into its threaded hole. What?

A Google search revealed that this is a common problem, and several solutions were given on various Websites.



I chucked a steel rotary brush into my Dremel tool and cleaned the “goop” and debris out of the threads. The threads were wiped with a rag.

By pushing in on the plug with the thumb of my right hand and turning the plug with my left hand, I was able to get the threads started.

Once it was started, the 1-1/16” socket, using the socket wrench with an extension, was used to tighten it snugly, but not too tightly.

09/27/19 Preparing to Paint the Frame

A few sections of the frame, along with the rest of the bottom of the trailer, were washed today to be able to locate rusted areas of the frame.

Three more areas of rust were found and marked on the frame and there locations were marked with sidewalk chalk on the frame. A very large, long rusted area was found on the frame rail bottom near the sewage outlet plumbing.

09/28/18 Washing the Wheels and More Preparing to Wash Washing Under the Trailer

The underlayment between the frame and the flooring is called Darco.

<https://youtu.be/-V61D9isso0?t=113>

Even though it was sprinkling, the tires, wheels, plastic wheel liners and plastic hub caps were washed. There is some type of “dirt” in the embossed writing on the camp side tire that has been extremely difficult to remove. Even after washing and scrubbing several times, there is still a bit of that “dirt” there.



09/29/19 Finish Preparing Frame Washing to Paint It, Found Minor Problem Under Trailer

The washing of the frame and its components for painting was completed. Most of the areas of the locations of rust on the frame, cross-members and out riggers were noted on a sheet of paper to be able to locate them during the rust converting and painting.

There were a lot more rusty places, like the one shown on the bottom of the frame, on the driver side to the rear of the wheel.



The plastic conduit, that crosses from the driver side to the camp side over the axle, that carries electrical wiring, was just hanging over the axle. I zip tied it up through a hole in the cross-member above the axle.



09/30/19 Uncooperative Weather - Rust Converting and Painting on the Frame

Under the Trailer

RUST-OLEUM RUST REFORMER is their brand name for a product type known as a rust converter. The instructions for the 8 fl. oz. plastic jug container, for painting on with a brush, contains no information about the temperature and humidity conditions for application. The instructions on the jug container do note, “For aerosol paint, wait three days.” The 10.25 oz.

spray container of RUST REFORMER notes, "Use when temperature is between 50F and 90F (10-32C) and humidity is below 85% ..."

The 8 fl. oz. can of GLOSS BLACK notes, "Use when temperature is 32°F (0°C) and 92°F (32°C) and humidity is below 65%." The 12 oz. spray GLOSS PROTECTIVE ENAMEL (black) notes, "Use when temperature is between 50°F (10°C) and 90°F (32°C) and humidity is below 65%..."

A Weather Forecast Problem:

Today: High Temperature 79°F, Humidity 79% (raining in the a.m.)

Tomorrow: High Temperature 85°F, Humidity 72%

Wednesday: High Temperature 69°F, Humidity 87% (rain)

Thursday: High Temperature 67°F, Humidity 81%

Friday: High Temperature 54°F, Humidity 65%

Work has NOT started yet on the spare tire bracket, the steps and the "A" frame.

The roof needs the seals inspected and to be washed.

The whole exterior of the trailer needs to be washed and the awning inspected for dirt and stains and dried out.

2:20 p.m. Temperature 68°F, Humidity 84% and dropping.

The vertical surfaces on frame were sprayed with RUST REFORMER. Masking tape, with arrows created with a black marker, was used to point to sprayed areas and to delineate sections that were painted. The sidewalk chalk was not working well.

3:10 p.m. Temperature 71°F, Humidity still 84% but supposed to be dropping. Sun is out now. The rust on the bottom of the frame was painted with the liquid RUST REFORMER.

The steps were washed and dried very well and the rusted areas were noted.

The spare tire cover was removed. Surprisingly, there was water on the top area of the tire even though it had been covered with the tire cover. The tire and the spare tire bracket were removed. The lock washers and nuts that hold the bracket to the rear bumper were rusted a little. They were placed in vinegar to remove the rust.

The spare tire bracket was washed and dried.

The lock washers and bolts, that had been in the vinegar, were rinsed with water, given a bath in baking soda and water, rinsed again and then dried. They were sprayed on both sides with dry lube.

The bolts on the spare tire bracket were wrapped with painter's masking tape, since they were not easily removed and the rusted areas of the bracket were sprayed with RUST REFORMER. The rusted areas and wear spots on the steps, and the brackets for the steps, were also sprayed with RUST REFORMER.

10/01/19 RUST REFORMER on the "A" Frame



It appears that the "A" frame had been spray painted before I received it. There is black paint on the safety chains and overspray on the stickers on the "A" frame. There is also black spray paint on the bottom, rear of the LP tank.

The bungee cords, holding on the LP tank cover, were removed along with the propane meter and padding under the LP tank. They were stored in the basement.

The LP tank has a TW (tare weight) of 18.6 lb. The whole tank now weighs 29.0 lb. There is 10.4 lb. of liquid propane in the tank after three camping trips.

Several spots of rust were noted on the propane tank.

The battery strap was removed. The battery was disconnected, including from the battery disconnect. The acid fluid level, of the MASON 12V Marine/RV battery, was checked and each cell appeared to be slightly low. A very small amount of distilled water was added to each cell.

The battery was placed on charge on the NORCO genius GT7200 battery charger. It took no time for the battery charger to indicate a full charge with a steady green light. The battery and battery box were taken to the basement after the charger stopped charging.

Surprisingly there was water on the battery and quite a bit in the battery box.

The scissors' jacks were retracted and the tongue jack cranked up 30 cranks to wash the underside of the "A" frame. Rust was noted on the bottom of the tongue jack post.

The underside of the "A" frame doesn't look too bad. The top side, and its components, have quite a bit of rust on them, as well as the lower portion of the tongue jack.

Liquid RUST REFORMER was used to touch up rust spots in areas where the spray RUST REFORMER would have provided too much overspray. The rest of the rust on the "A" frame and tongue jack pole bottom was sprayed with RUST REFORMER.

Correction to video: there is NOT a lot of rust under the "A" frame, there is some, but not a lot.



There is a bulge on the bottom of the driver side tire (left photo) that is not in the camp side tire (right photo). The driver side tire measured 66.5 psi and the camp side measured 67 psi at the time the photos were taken.



The tongue was lowered, the trailer leveled and stabilizer jacks put down.

The CAMCO Flow-Through Wash Brush was opened to sweep the roof. The roof seals were also checked at this time.

The roof was too wet, from the heavy dew this morning, to sweep, so all of the debris on the roof was picked off by hand. The seals looked good and the sealant was pliable.

The new 5L (liter) VIVDSUM Compression Sprayer was opened and tried.

About 32 oz. of a 64 oz. bottle of THETFORD PREMIUM RV RUBBER ROOF CLEANER was poured into the sprayer.

The new zero-G 25' hose was opened, and tested.

Our light metal garden hose was wrapped around the stepladder, vertically to hold it in place and the zero-G hose hooked up the the garden hose so that only the zero-G hose went on the roof with me. The flow through brush was tested.

The cloud cover was 100% and the temperature 79°F.

The rubber roof cleaner was sprayed on in small areas, scrubbed with the flow-through brush and rinsed with the flow-through brush with the nozzle turned on.

Once the whole roof was washed, the roof was rinsed with clear water.

The little remaining roof cleaner was poured back into the Thetford bottle.

The sprayer was rinsed out and then Meijer wash & wax concentrate and water was put into the sprayer. The Meijer product is supposed to; have sheeting action, a high sudsing formula and dry to a spot free finish.

The whole trailer was washed using the sprayer and flow-through brush.

After washing the trailer, the inside windows, vents and air conditioner were checked for leaks and none were found.

The zero-G hose was folded up and had two small bungees wrapped around it. It then replaced the green 50' garden hose in the pass through storage. The weight difference was already taken care of on the spreadsheet.

Start here for HTML: 10/02/19 New Info on the Poor Stabilizer Jacks and Filling the Propane Tank

It rained today.

A YouTube video shows that the stabilizer jacks are supplied by the frame supplier, and that Coachmen is not directly responsible for the selection of the poor quality stabilizer jacks.

Jacks on frame: <https://youtu.be/-V61D9isso0?t=85>

Digging Deeper Into This Video Showing Rust On the Brand-new Frames

Rust on the spring hanger bracket: <https://youtu.be/-V61D9isso0?t=140>

More Rust on the Spring Hangers
<https://youtu.be/-V61D9isso0?t=158>

Some LP Information:

A one gallon of propane weighs 4.2 pounds. A "full" 20 lb. cylinder should have 4.7 gallons of propane in it. That would be a weight of 19.74 lb. With a TW of 18.6 lb. the full tank on this unit should weigh 38.34 lb.

<https://www.orangecoat.com/the-truth-about-filling-20-lb-bbq-grill-propane-tanks>

2.2 gallons of propane was put into the tank at Tractor Supply for a total of \$5.93. 2.2 gallons should weigh about 9.24 lb. The "full" LP tank weighs 38.2 lb., which is very close to what it should weigh as noted above.

10/03/19 Window and Pass Through Storage Frames Not Fitting Well Looked Into - Sidewall Nuts Checked

It rained today.

The "indoor" time was used to investigate the following question concerning the ill-fitting window frames and pass through storage door frames.

Are Coachmen cutouts in the exterior wall hand routed using a template or CNC routed?

This link to the following video indicates that they might be hand routed by Coachmen.

How ARCTIC FOX RV'S Are Made | FULL FACTORY TOUR !!

<https://youtu.be/x9rmC2iacvI?t=632>

And

Keystone wall construction

<https://youtu.be/VqyUr1KQ4-c?t=97>

No definitive answer was found to the question.

Using my fingers, I tried to unloosen all of the nuts that run through the outriggers and hold the walls on. None were found to be "finger" loose.

10/04/19 An Excellent Mod YouTube Video

There is an EXCELLENT YouTube video on modifications and upgrades for a travel trailer.

Here is the link to a YouTube video with several travel trailer modifications and helpful suggestions.

<https://youtu.be/vHbSELx6IC0>



Several of these ideas will be used on our 187RB.

10/05/19 A Look At Our Trailer's "A" Frame As It Was Shipped to Haylett RV, Coachmen's Take About Rust On the Frame (screen capture from video)

2020 Apex 187RB Summit vs Standard Edition

AZDEL Ultralite Couple's Coachmen Travel Trailer
<https://youtu.be/NyemkaJOE94>

The YouTube video shows the “A” frame as received by Haylett RV near the first part of May 2019. The white numbering is clearly visible on the “A” frame. This indicates that someone at Haylett did the painting on the “A” frame.

Some changes found today to a newer 187RB are noted in this video:

APEX NANO BY COACHMEN 187RB EXT @ OTTAWA'S #1 RV DEALER PRIMO TRAILER SALES

<https://youtu.be/d9uwUu0VDIE>

Shown in the video is an additional informational sticker near the LP bracket that is not on ours. The sticker may, or may not, be something that is required in Canada.

The narrator states, “If you have a 3500 lb. rating, this is an ideal couple’s model.” Really?

He also notes that the front cap is ABS plastic.

<https://youtu.be/d9uwUu0VDIE?t=47>

This version of the trailer is noted as having an Atwood water heater.

<https://youtu.be/d9uwUu0VDIE?t=178>

There is an orange spinner tightener on the black tank flush.

<https://youtu.be/d9uwUu0VDIE?t=153>

There is only one furnace exhaust outlet. That might indicate a different brand of furnace.

<https://youtu.be/d9uwUu0VDIE?t=199>

More About Rust on the Frame

I thought that I was getting a bit anal about the rust on the frame until I found this in the 2020 Coachmen online Owner’s Manual in the section titled “Frame/Extrusions/Aluminum Surfaces”, “Check the condition of the frame regularly. Keep it clean and repaint as necessary, to help avoid rust.”

10/06/19 Tire Rotation, Frame, Step and Spare Tire Bracket Painting

The humidity did not drop down to the 65% range until this afternoon, when it was suitable for painting.

Checking Out the Driver Side Tire To See If the Bulge Exists and If It Is Really A Problem

The QUINN 1/2” DRIVE DIGITAL TORQUE ADAPER, from Harbor Freight, was opened. The Certificated of Inspection sheet, packed with the unit, noted that it was Version 2 and dated August 2010. The Owner’s Manual & Safety Instructions had a copyright date, by Harbor Freight, of 2017.

The spare tire was inflated to 67 psi. It was at 57 psi.

The trailer was hooked up to the Ascent and the parking brake engaged.

For the camp side tire, the 2-ton Delco scissor jack was set on top of the 2 x 10 carried in the trailer and the other 2 x 10 that the wheel was on in the gravel drive. 8 Lynx levelers and the 4 x 4 x 40 were placed on top of the 2 x 10s.

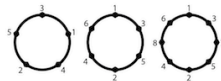
The Delco jack handle, supplied with the 2-Ton jack, could not be used to raise the jack. It is too far under the trailer. The breaker bar, with an appropriate socket and adapter were used to raise the jack.

The breaker bar was used to loosen the lug nuts, the jack raised, the lug nuts removed and the spare tire was used to replace the camp side tire.

The lug nuts were torqued in the three stages as shown below, but the final torque was to about 100 ft.-lb., as that is what is noted on the trailer informational sticker. The first stage was to 29.5 ft.-lb., because that was the lower limit of the tool.

Lug nut information from the Coachmen Interactive Manual

Tighten Each Lug Nut In The Order Shown



Typical torque stages

1ST STAGE 20 TO 25 ft./lbs.

2nd STAGE 55 TO 60 ft./lbs.

3rd STAGE 85 TO 95 ft./lbs.

Note:

Start all lug nuts by hand to prevent cross threading. Wheel nut torque requirements vary depending on the size and manufacturer of the wheel. Always use the wheel manufacturer's recommendation but do not exceed 100 ft./lbs. on 1/2 inch studs, or 130 ft./lbs on 9/16 inch studs. Unless otherwise specified by the wheel manufacturer, use a final torque of 85-95 ft./lbs.

The camp side tire was inflated to 67 psi and the driver side tire marked with chalk, where I think there is a bulge.

For the driver side tire removal, the 2-ton Delco jack was placed on a 2 x10, four (4) Lynx levelers and the 4 x 4 x 40.

The breaker bar was used to free the lug nuts free on the driver side.

The trailer was jacked up and the camp side tire was swapped for the driver side tire.

The driver side tire was inflated to 67 psi.

I still couldn't tell if the original driver side tire, now off the trailer, had a bulge, but it still looked like it to me.

Painting

The vertical surfaces on the frame, under the trailer, were spray painted with gloss black and their corresponding painter's tape, marking the area, was removed. One side of the spare tire bracket was spray painted. After the step treads and the nuts holding on the steps were taped, the steps and the areas that could be spray painted with the steps in the OUT position were sprayed.

The tops and vertical parts of the "A" frame were spray painted. The other side of the spare tire bracket was spray painted. The parts of the steps, when the steps are folded, were spray painted.

The masking and painter's tape was removed from the "A" frame.

10/07/19 Brush Painting the Underside of the Frame and "A" Frame

The painter's tape was removed from the nuts and bolts of the steps and the spare tire bracket as well as the tread grip material on the steps.

The front stabilizer jacks were put down on 5 Lynx levelers while the tongue jack was at its highest point, so that the underside of the "A" frame could be painted.

Gary came over to look at the suspect tire. Gary was the head, hands-on, guy of the tire and brake testing area at the Ford World Headquarters in Dearborn, MI. He said that the tire seemed solid in the area of the bulge that I'd marked and that it should be good enough to be used as the spare without worries. The "bulge" is NOT a bubble. A bubble in a tire is an entirely different thing and a tire with a soft bubble in the sidewall MUST be replaced.

The bottom of the frame was painted with the liquid gloss black RUST-OLEMUM paint using a brush in the areas that I had noted with tape after the RUST REFORMER was put on.

The trailer was leveled.

The spare tire bracket, spare tire and spare tire cover were put back on.

The full propane tank was put back on and connected to the LP line without the meter placed back in line. The meter is in the basement for the winter.

The battery wires were bungeed to a battery cross-member of the "A" frame so that the ends are not touching the frame, or each other, and so that they are up off the ground.

The brake adjustment holes were checked for dust covers. There are none.

10/08/19 Washing the Awning

The battery had previously been removed from the trailer and the propane was off.

The shore cord was plugged in. The furnace blower came on, although the thermostat was set to off. The ambient temperature was 62 at the time, but the inside of the trailer "seemed" cooler.

The microwave started on its own and was running. It was truly on, not with just the clock showing that it needed to be set. The question is, why?

For the awning to work, using the shore cord, the 30A AC circuit power breaker, branch 3 must be turned on, as well as branch 1, which is the 30A service. The other breakers were turned off.

There was a lot of water dripping off the the awning when it was rolled out.

There was a line of dirt, about a foot down from the top of the awning, on the top side, and at least one "white" spot towards the front, about 1/2 way down the awning.

The underside was not really all that dirty, but it was washed to wash off all of the bugs that got rolled up in the awning.

The awning side rails were pulled all the down and the awning locked in that position.

A tall, eight step, stepladder was used to reach the top of the awning while washing it with the fully extended CAMCO soft bristle brush. The top of the awning was hosed down with water. A DAWN and water solution was scrubbed onto the top side of the awning and then rinsed with water again.

Then both sides of the flap, at the front of the awing, was scrubbed using a handheld brush.

The underside of the awing was scrubbed in rinsed in the same manner as the top, using the CAMCO soft bristle, long handled brush.

As much of the awning as possible was wiped down with dry towels and the awning was left to air dry.

10/09/19 Finishing the Winterizing

The temperature, humidity and lighting were just right on the driver side this morning to show some of the sidewall framing and where the TV backer actually is, which is to the rear and above the front window.



Coachmen has a YouTube video that shows their wall construction on Apex Nanos. The photos can be compared to what is shown in the video.

Coachmen Apex with the Summit Package - Extended Edition
<https://youtu.be/2JjdEGR1dRA?t=60>

Checking the awning and trailer before covering it with the ADCO RV Cover.

The awning was rolled out. No water dripped off it and it looked quite clean, top and bottom. It was rolled back up.

A spill was found in the bottom door rack of the refrigerator. It was cleaned and returned to its position in the refrigerator.

All of the cabinets were checked to be sure that nothing was left in the trailer that could possibly freeze or that might be needed over the winter.

All of the shades were pulled down and the blind in the kitchen let down and closed.

The door was locked.



Putting on the Cover

Before putting on the ADCO RV cover, while putting the “booties” on the down spouts, to protect the cover, it was discovered that some trim was loose on the righthand side of the door.

Several methods, and tools, were tried to get the trim back into its slot, but none really worked well. Finally, the trim was pressed back into place by pulling it towards the front of the trailer and pressing the trim

in with a thumb. It seems to be holding now.



The cover had been rolled up correctly when put away after the trial fitting in the spring. The ADCO cover was pulled up onto the roof and spread out over the sides, as demonstrated in the ADCO video.

How to Install An RV Cover by ADCO Products
<https://youtu.be/LMwjepZ6x8>

Before tightening up the cover, the stabilizer jacks were raised so that they would not be resting in the snow.



Everything went well when tightening the straps in the order that ADCO recommended in the video until the last strap. The rear, top, driver side strap pulled right out as I pulled on it to tighten it.

The photo shows that it is frayed at the end where it was sewn into its pocket. It just pulled right out without all that much pull on it.



A cheap, blue plastic tarp, from Harbor Freight, was laid over the “A” frame and secured to the ground with rocks. The trailer was now ready for winter.



10/11/19 Registered ADCO Warranty on line at 3:00 p.m.

10/14/19 Called ADCO

I called ADCO about the ripped out strap and started a warranty claim by giving the lady on the phone the information.

I sent the three requested photos, invoice, production tag under bottom, front of cover and torn out strap, at 2:58 p.m.

10/15/19 Heard from ADCO & A New Iteration of the 2020 187RB Noted in Haylett Video

I received an email from ADCO (Vicki Poepke) at 5:07 p.m. requesting more information about the torn strap. I sent a response containing more details at 5:20 p.m.

Josh Winters posted a video on YouTube of a **2020 Coachmen Apex Nano with Summit package and Off Grid package** in the mid-afternoon.
https://youtu.be/d0ARh_dLyJU

The Off Grid Package includes; dual LP tanks with cover, Jaboni 100 Watt Solar Panel with 10 AMP Control Charger to Battery, High Volume Power Roof Vent, 12 Volt Outlets (Pass-thru), and Showermiser Water Miser Water Saver System.
<https://coachmenrv.com/brochures/2020/2020ApexOffGridPackageposter.pdf>

Some of the things that I would have liked changed and noted in the original video have been changed. I don't know if they are changed on the "standard" 187RB with Summit package yet or not.

Things that were changed; the kitchen sink now comes with covers, the two-burner stove is now inset with a metal cover, a faucet with a high spigot is used in the kitchen.

Other known changes seen in the video include;

The 110/120 AC outlet in the rear bench was moved further out to an even worse position for when someone is sitting on the rear bench.

There are dual 20 lb. propane tanks with a cover and auto regulator changeover valve.

There is a Showermiser water flow diverter in shower.

There is a 12V cigarette lighter style plug and two USB plugs in the pass through storage area.

The order of the connections for the satellite/cable, fresh water hook-up and black tank flush has been changed.

There is an orange tightening ring on the black tank flush. It was black.

There is a 50 gallon fresh water tank instead of the 30 gallon on mine.

There are 12V tank heaters, or at least one.

There is a large 12V MaxAir style vent fan with cover over the bed

A bottle cap opener is mounted on the front of kitchen cabinet

The sink is a different shape. It is totally rectangular. It looks like it might still be a 60/40 split.

The 2-burner inset stove cover is metal.

There are three double hanging hooks mounted on a board in the bathroom above the original circular towel holder.

The tank heating pad switch is in the bathroom above the fresh, gray, black meter and water pump switch combination.

The charge controller for roof mounted solar panel is in the pass through storage area.

There is a roof mounted, 100W solar panel.

Other possible changes include:

A possible change from a Suburban 6 gallon water heater to an Atwood 6 gallon water heater. The furnace manufacturer might have changed as there is now only one outlet for the furnace seen on the outside of the trailer and the vent of the face of the furnace, inside, is different.

The trailer is noted in the video as weighing 3165 lb. for its UVW, which is 65 lb. heavier than mine.

The graphic near the beginning of the video shows the Cargo (capacity) as 766 lb. That can't be. The 766 lb. value comes from the Coachmen Website where it noted the trailer's UVW weight as 3034 lb. with a GVWR of 3800 lb.

The informational stickers on mine note two different cargo capacities, as previously noted; 700 lb. and 679 lb.

The 50 gallon fresh water tank is a problem. 50 gallons of water weighs approximately 417 lb. or 189KG.

My version has a GVWR of 3800 lb. using the 3,500 lb. GAWR.

Original Bottom Sticker Info:

Bottom Sticker, front driver side notes:

Dry Weight/Poids Sec: 1406KG (converted 3099.699 lb.)

Cargo Carrying Capacity: 172Kg (converted 379.195 lb.)

Water tanks full Cold: 113KG (converted 249.122 lb.)

Hot: 23KG (converted 50.7063 lb.)

Mass of waste water tank:

Full: 226KG (converted 498.245 lb.)

The following were my estimate numbers before actually receiving photos of the weight informational stickers on the Off Grid version at Haylett.

Bottom Sticker changed to 3165 lb. and Cold: changed to 50 gallons and using 3800 lb. as GVWR

Dry Weight/Poids Sec: 1435KG (converted 3165 lb.) Below is the actual informational sticker from that trailer and it notes the Dry Weight as 1407KG or 3102 lb.

Cargo Carrying Capacity: 75.9KG (converted 167.3 lb.) The sticker below notes it as 87KG or 191.8 lb.

Water tanks full Cold: 189KG (converted 417 lb.) The sticker below notes it as 188KG or 414.5 lb.

Hot: 23KG (converted 50.7063 lb.) The sticker below notes it as 23KG or 50.7 lb.

Mass of waste water tank:

Full: 226KG (converted 498.245 lb.) The sticker below notes it as 226KG or 498.2 lb.

From above, the total cargo carrying capacity could be 3800 lb. - 3165 lb.= 635 lb.

For off the grid camping with full fresh Cold & Hot water that leaves 167.3 lb. of cargo capacity, but two full 20 lb. propane tanks and a battery weigh about 80 lb. leaving only 87.3 lb. of usable capacity for tools, dishes, pots & pans, clothes, other necessary items and food and beverages. 87.3 lb. is unrealistic. This math was based on originally just guessing at the values, before the photos of the informational stickers arrived.

10/16/19 Emailed Haylett requesting more info on the numbers

I sent an email to Scott Sharpley requesting a photo of the three informational stickers on the front, driver side for clarification on this issue. **Scott NEVER replied.**

I heard from ADCO again and I decided NOT to get replacement cover, yet, and sent email to that effect.

10/17/19 Haven't heard from Scott

8:19 a.m. Still haven't heard from Scott.

I sent a message to Haylett using their contact area on their Website at 9:40 a.m., since I've not heard from Scott.

10/19/19 Still No Word from Haylett Regarding the 187RB Off Grid - Contacted Aaron Suozzi

I found out this morning that Josh is taking a couple of weeks off and that Aaron Suozzi will be posting the videos while he's gone. In Arron's video on installing an RV roof vent, I noted that his email address is aaron@haylettrv.com.

I emailed him at 5:42 a.m.

"Hi Arron,

Just watched the video of Josh welcoming you onboard, so welcome. :-)

We purchased a 2020 Coachmen Apex Nano 187RB on May 16, 2019 from Haylett.

Josh recently posted a video of the OFF Grid version of this unit that recently came into Haylett.

I had a question about this unit and Josh, via email, said to ask the sales folks.

Very early Wednesday morning, I sent an email to Scott Sharpley (sp), our sales person.

Very early on Thursday morning, I sent a message through the contact page of the Website asking for the same help.

I've received no reply from anyone.

What I asked, which may not be possible, was if someone would take a photo of the three informational stickers on the front driver side of the OFF Grid version of 187RB that show the capacities, tire information and axle information and then email it to me. I even told them that the specific unit is the version with the two LP tanks and black tank cover to help them find it on your lot, which I am familiar with.

If you folks can't, or won't do, this for some reason, okay, but an email saying so would be nice.

Thanks for your time, which I know is valuable,
Ken Myers
Commerce Township, MI"

and received the following reply at 8:47 a.m.

“Hey Ken,

Thanks for reaching out. I will be back in the office on Monday and will take care of that for you.

We just went to a new website and we have been completely re-doing the entire lot so we can add even more product. With those two huge projects going on simultaneously, we are experiencing some growing pains.

Thanks for your patience.

Aaron

Aaron Suozzi
Haylett Auto and RV
800-256-5169 ext 1132”

10/21/19 Aaron’s Reply and Request for Photos

Scott Sharpley NEVER replied at all.

Arron replied with the following email and photos at 3:40.

“Hey Ken,

Here are the stickers you are looking for. Any reason why you are interested in these? Just curious. Thanks.

Aaron”

MANUFACTURED BY / FABRIQUE PAR: FOREST RIVER, INC.		DATE: 09/25/2019	
VIN/N.L.V.: 5ZT2CXHC7LL008055		AAPT187RB	
GVWR/PNEV: 1724 KG 3800 LB		TYPE/TYPE: TRA/REM	
COUPLER SIZE:			
FRONT/AVANT	1588 KG (3500 LB)	TIRES/PNEU	ST205/75R14/D
		RIMS/JANTE	14X5.5JJ
		COLD INFL. PRESS/PRESS DE GONFL. A FROID	448 KP SINGLE DUAL (65 PSI/LPC) ☒ ☐
INTERM/INTERM	0 KG (0 LB)		0 KP SINGLE DUAL (0 PSI/LPC) ☐ ☐
REAR/ARRIERE	0 KG (0 LB)		0 KP SINGLE DUAL (0 PSI/LPC) ☐ ☐

TIRE AND LOADING INFORMATION		RENSEIGNEMENTS	
The combined weight of Cargo should Never Exceed: 298 Kgs or 657 Lbs		Le poids combiné de la cargaison ne doit jamais dépasser: 298 Kgs	
TIRE	SIZE	COLD TIRE PRESSURE	SEE OWNER'S
PNEU	DIMENSIONS		

10/26/18 My Reply to Aaron at 8:38 a.m. (I was at the cabin from the 21 through 25.)

(Photo: 3500 lb. axle, 14” diameter wheels, tires same as on my 187RB)

“Hi Aaron,

In your reply with the photos of the weight stickers, you noted that you were curious as to why I asked for the weight information.

As I previously noted, we

REAR			ADDITIONAL	0	ARRIÈRE
SPARE	ST205/75R14/D	65 PSI / 448 KPA	INFORMATION	5	DE SECOUR

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE TRAILER CARGO CARRYING CAPACITY					
Capacité de transport de chargement de caravane de véhicule de récréation					
CARGO-CARRYING CAPACITY IS DETERMINED WITH THE FRESH WATER TANKS FULL AND THE WASTE TANKS EMPTY					
Capacité de chargement est calculée avec les réservoirs d'eau douce pleins et les réservoirs d'eaux usées vides					
Dry weight/Poids Sec:	1407 KG	VIN/NIV:	5ZT2CXHC7LL008055		
Cargo carrying capacity:	87 KG	Capacité de transport de chargement:	87 KG		
Calculated with the fresh water tanks full		Calculé ave les réservoirs d'eau douce pleins		Froid:	188 KG
Cold:	188 KG			Chaud:	23 KG
Hot:	23 KG				
Mass of waste water tank full:	226 KG	Masses de réservoirs d'eaux usees pleins:	226 KG		

purchased a "2020" Coachmen Apex Nano 187RB with Summit package from you folks on May 16, 2019. I've since become extremely familiar with the whole unit, including its specifications, short comings, build problems and more.

(Photo: dry weight, cargo carrying capacity weight, fresh & hot water weight all in kilograms)

I have a 2019 Subaru Ascent and I am on the Ascent forum and particularly active in the towing section of that forum.
<https://www.ascentforums.com/forums/towing.127/>

TIRE AND LOADING INFORMATION			
The combined weight of Cargo should Never Exceed: 298 Kgs or 657 Lbs			
TIRE	SIZE	COLD TIRE PRESSURE	SEE OWNER'S
FRONT	ST205/75R14/D	65 PSI / 448 KPA	MANUAL FOR
REAR			ADDITIONAL
SPARE	ST205/75R14/D	65 PSI / 448 KPA	INFORMATION

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE TRAILER CARGO CARRYING CAP	
Capacité de transport de chargement de caravane de véhicule de r	
CARGO-CARRYING CAPACITY IS DETERMINED WITH THE FRES	

The towing capacity of the Ascent is 5000 lb. with a maximum tongue weight of 500 lb.

(Photo: cargo weight and that tires are the same as mine)

In the forum, we've discussed the travel trailers that are a possible good, safe match for towing with this vehicle.

I'm an analytical kind of guy, and that led to us choosing the 187RB, which has worked out very well for us this year.

I have no idea whether you want to, or have the time to, learn

more about one specific travel trailer that you are selling, but I have posted a LONG YouTube video that covers about half of what I've learned about OUR version of this travel trailer.
https://youtu.be/hN4f_4TnhDM

That video covered only about 1/2 of the information that I wanted to share on the Ascent forum. I then created a Web page that continued with much more information about our 187RB.

<http://theampeer.org/thoughts-on-towing/More-187RB.html>

I also have a Web page that notes all of the items that we carry in the trailer on a regular basis.

<http://theampeer.org/thoughts-on-towing/Actual-RV-Essentials-in-RB187.html>

It should be noted on that page that we never carried any water in the 30 gallon fresh water tank. The only water we carried was in the 6 gallon water heater. Right now the weight of the items that we always carry onboard is just shy of 325 lb. About 50 lb. of that weight is water in the water heater, plus anywhere of from one to two gallons of water in the water lines for and additional weight of somewhere between 8 lb. and 16 lb.

When I saw Josh's video of the Off Grid version of the 187RB, that you now have, I was hoping that Coachman had done, what in my opinion, was the "right thing" because of the added weight of the Off Grid package including an extra 20 lb. propane tank and other additions adding up to 65 lb. of stuff over the already 3100 lb. of dry weight for the Summit package version. I was also concerned about the potential added weight of a full 50 gallon water tank. I had hoped that they had used the 4,400 lb. Dexter D44 axle on it instead of the 3,500 lb. axle that's on mine. All of the Apex Nano single axle trailers, with slides, use the 4,400 lb. axle and have a GVWR of 4,700 lb.

The photos that you sent to me confirmed what I did not want to see. They are still using the 3,500 lb. GAWR axle with the 3,800 lb. GVWR for the 187RB.

The dry, or delivered weight, showing on the sticker you photographed for me is 1407 KG or 3102 lb. This differs from what Josh notes in the video, which is 3165 lb., which I assume he got off the informational sticker on the tongue that also has the VIN number.

I don't believe the yellow photographed informational sticker weight, because mine, with just the Summit package version weighs 3,100 lb. using information from both the tongue and yellow informational stickers on my unit.

Something is "hinky" there and I can't put my finger on it.

The 20 lb. propane tank on my unit has a tare weight of 18.6 lb. so the weight of the Off Grid version had to go up more than that because of the solar additions and other changes.

His video graphic also shows a "Cargo" capacity of 766 lb. That capacity only applies to the non-Summit version with a stated dry weight of 3034 lb. by Coachman on their Website. The 316 lb. dry tongue weight graphic on his video also only applies to the non-Summit, non-Off Grid version.

The informational sticker that contains the tire information on the Off Grid version states, "The combined weight of Cargo should Never Exceed 298 Kgs or 657 Lbs". My Summit package version notes 679 lb. on the same type of informational reference for the tires.

Using Josh's stated dry weight of 3165 lb., then 3800 lb. GVWR - 3165 lb. Dry wt. = 635 lb., which would be the cargo carrying capacity. Again, numbers that don't "jive".

Full Cold Water Tank from sticker 188KG or 414.5 lb.
Hot 23KG or 50.7 lb.

The cargo carrying capacity, with full cold & hot water tanks, for going off grid, is noted as 87KG or 191.8 lb.

Two full 20 lb. propane tanks and a battery eat up about 80 lb. of that 191.8 lb. capacity leaving only 111.8 lb. for bedding, clothes, tools, food, etc.

The bottom line for ME is that the trailer, with full fresh water, propane and a single battery, is almost maxed out without putting anything in it to go "off grid". The tools, food, and most of the other necessary supplies would have to be carried in the tow vehicle.

Sorry, but I tend to get carried away with stuff like this, and that is probably why Josh doesn't like getting emails from me, and now you probably won't either.

I don't know everything, or even all that much, about travel trailers. I am just an old, curious guy, who likes to "learn" stuff.

I very, very sincerely thank you for taking the time to obtain the information I requested and you should know that by doing so you've, once again, moved Haylett to the top of my list of folks to deal with.

Thanks for your time,
Ken Myers"

Aaron's reply at 9:01 a.m.

"Wow Ken,

You certainly have analyzed this entire camper and vehicle combo. Watched part of your video and I must say, most customers don't go over their units with a fine tooth comb like that.

Aaron"

11/26/19 Finally, a video of the latest 2020 187RB without the off grid package.

I had been extremely curious to see if Coachmen made any of the upgrades to the standard Summit package.

There was FINALLY a video posted of a 2020 187RB with Summit Package but NOT the off grid package. It was posted by Guaranty RV on Nov. 25, 2019. It should be noted that Guaranty is in Oregon, so it is a west coast trailer.

<https://youtu.be/cOljWcViagU>

The ONLY apparent changes inside were the addition of a wooden towel hanger for two towels above the toilet and circular towel hanger (it's three in the off grid) and a bottle cap opener on the front of the sink cabinet.

The only apparent change to the exterior was the orange ringed black tank flush.

I was very disappointed that it doesn't have the kitchen sink, kitchen faucet and stove top upgrades.

The water heater and furnace appear to be the same as the ones in ours.

01/10/2020

Guaranty RV posted a video on Jan. 7, 2020 of a recently arrived Coachmen Apex Nano 187RB.
<https://youtu.be/k-Ahm1BUNi0>

The off grid version that they videoed has two covered propane tanks, instead of one uncovered tank, and a different tongue jack. The dry weight is noted as 3,180 lb., which is 80 lb. heavier than the dry weight of ours. It appears to have the same furnace with the single outlet. There is a light and plug-ins in the pass through storage. There is something on the ceiling over the bed, near the light, that is not on ours. It has a double bowl kitchen sink with covers, a much taller kitchen faucet neck, inset cook top and bottle opener in the kitchen. It has a two hook towel rack on the wall above the toilet to the right of the circular hand towel holder.

02/17/20

RV Wheel Maintenance, What You Need To Know.
<https://youtu.be/VQsldi7dQ6o>

This video covers what I need to do this spring for wheel and brake maintenance.

06/13/20 Uncovering the Trailer and Getting It Ready

The Mason Battery fluid level was checked, found to be okay, and then brought up from the basement and put on the charger. It had been charged at least once, maybe twice, in the basement over the winter. It took no time for the charger to indicate that it was full.



I wasn't sure about the how to hook up the battery polarity. I found the photos in the 187RB Inspection folder. They are shown in this log on May 29, 2019. A frame at 4:16 in the video shows how the battery was connected to the battery disconnect.

This is a screen capture of the battery hookup. The screen capture is in the 187RB Inspection folder and is named battery-hookup.png.

The portable electric drill batteries were charged.

The ratchet set and box of tools for the trailer were brought up from the basement and taken outside. A 9/16" by 3" long socket was still on the ratchet, but I don't know why. That size socket is not used for battery removal.

The bricks and big yellow bungee cord were removed from the blue tarp covering the front of the "A" frame and the tarp laid out to dry and be cleaned before putting it away with the cover.

The propane gauge was brought up from the basement, the bungee cords holding the propane cover on were removed and inspected. The two orange bungee cords appeared to be okay. The cover was removed and the gauge installed.

The two small bungee cords, holding the wires for the battery up off the ground were removed and the battery was placed into position on its rails. (Note: the two small bungee cords were put into the bungee container in the trailer, once the cover was off.)

The wires to the positive battery terminal were, and should be, connected first and then the black wires to the battery disconnect/cutoff and finally the black terminal from the battery disconnect/cutoff to the battery.

The battery strap was fixed around the battery.

The ADCO cover was removed. It took a lot of time. I found a small rip in the front, top, left corner.

The ADCO cover was laid out on the side yard with the bottom down ready to be folded.

I tried the 12v battery electricity in the trailer, and it did not work. Investigation showed that the 12v electricity worked when the cutoff switch was removed from the circuit.

I fiddled with the cutoff switch, turning it on and off a few times and then checked the continuity. It seemed to be working, so I hooked it up again in the battery circuit, tested it, and it worked. The battery strap was once again tightened around the battery.

The propane tank cover was reinstalled with the two, long, orange bungee cords.

I brought the ADCO cover bag upstairs and discovered that it contained patch material and the broken strap.

I found an online video for patching the cover. The lady reads the directions for patching.
<https://youtu.be/aTKNPUAbeuo>

The front left, top corner of the cover was patched using the patch material found in the storage bag.

The cover was rolled per the ADCO instructions so that it will be ready to put on in the fall.

The ADCO cover, spout covers, instructions, patches, etc. were put in the ADCO bag and the bag put in the garage.

The blue plastic tarp was swept, folded and put it in the ADCO bag along with the big yellow bungee cord that holds the front of the tarp under the "A" frame.

The stabilizer jacks were lubricated and put them down.

The LevelMate Pro was found to be working. Level was double checked using the small level from the tool kit, and it was good.

The fire extinguisher was removed from its bracket and turned upside down on the front bench cushion.

All of the blinds were opened.

The 30A shore cord still had the adapter to standard 110v on it and the surge protector on it. It was hooked up. AC electricity was found to be working. The clock was set on the microwave, which needed cleaning of the glass tray.

The computer was taken into the trailer to continue note taking.

The screws to access the water heater were removed. The bypass valves were checked to be sure they were open. (**Important note:** I actually closed them at first. I reread my notes from winterizing and noticed that I'd returned them to the open position. Thank goodness I checked before I lit the water heater!) Both white colored water hoses were hooked up to the outside faucet on the house with the filter and pressure regulator between the two hoses. The 90 degree water elbow, that hooks to the trailer, was with the water hoses.

When the water was turned on, I realized that the outside shower was left in the on position after winterizing, so water was coming out of its door.

I thought that there was a problem with the outside shower not turning all the way off. Investigation showed that the handles move in opposite directions from each other to turn the water on and off. Weird!!!

I lit the stove to get propane through the lines. The water heater was turned on by using the switch in the bathroom. It came right on.

While putting the very thin water heater cover panel back in place, I noticed that it was warped a bit.

The kitchen hot water was run, and the water was getting warm.

The devices that hold the refrigerator and freezer doors were removed and put in the plastic container in the cabinet over the refrigerator. The refrigerator was set to Auto and turned on at 1:45 p.m, meaning it was using electricity for cooling. Both thermometers showed a little above 60 degrees.

The plumbing in the bathroom and kitchen was checked for leaks, and none were found yet.

I printed the document 2019 end of year inventory.pages found in the thoughts-on-towing folder.

I started going through the inventory and putting stuff where it belongs in the trailer.

Two D-size batteries were put in refrigerator fan. It was turned it on and put in the refrigerator, which was still cooling down.

I went through the 2019 inventory, updated it, and got all of the items from the basement put back into the trailer.

The refrigerator/freezer was Turned off at 4:45. It had been running on 110v AC electricity. The freezer temperature was about 15 degrees and refrigerator temperature about 46 degrees. The refrigerator fan was shut off. The door "holder openers" were put back in freezer and refrigerator doors to allow them to warm up and try gas tomorrow.

The water heater was shut off after checking to see that the water was hot. It was.

The electricity was unplugged from the garage.

The house water faucet was shut off.

The FirstWatch lock was put on the trailer tongue lock down.

The trailer was locked up for the night.

I redid the inventory as a spreadsheet so that items can be changed, add and deleted more easily.

I had seen online that the brackets that hold poles for the table in some trailers are plastic and painted to look like metal. Ours are plastic, painted to look like metal.

06/14/2020 Getting Ready for 2020 Camping (continued)

The water was turned back on and the trailer unlocked.

Visual inspection showed no water on the gravel at the rear driver side of the trailer, so hopefully the outside shower is off.

At 7:55 a.m., the battery was turned on. The battery indicator lights in the bathroom indicated 2/3 full. That was odd, since it was fully charged when attached too the trailer and the trailer was plugged into AC all day. (After checking ALL of my Log on June 19, 2020, I noted that it never reads more that 2/3 full.)

I lit the two stove top burners to make sure that there was propane in the line and then shut them off.

Gas was selected as the source for the refrigerator/freezer. Both the freezer and refrigerator temperature were at 50 degrees. The refrigerator fan was turned on.

Since it was 50 degrees in the trailer, the furnace “kicked on”, but I did not allow it too heat up the trailer and just shut it off at the thermostat.

Both sides of the kitchen sink and the bathroom sink were filled with water and then drained. No leaks were found in the drain piping either under the kitchen sink or the bathroom sink.

The glass plate from the microwave was brought in, washed and returned to the trailer.

Both grill bottoms and grills were washed, at separate times, in the dishwasher and returned to their location under the front dinette bench.

The microwave was cleaned.

The water was shut off, hoses, etc. disconnected and all returned to their place in the trailer.

At 9:15 a.m. the 18 freezer thermometer was at 18 degrees and the refrigerator as at 46 degrees. The unit was shut off and the hold the door openers returned to the doors.

The battery still read 2/3 full. The shore power was plugged back in to charge the battery

The furnace was turned on. Both vent fans were operative. The furnace worked.

I opened the vents and windows to let the heat out.

I noticed that the screen on the dinette window was "cocked" at an angle and not fitting in the frame rails correctly. A piece of 1x2 and rubber mallet was used to "straighten" it.

All of the roof seals were inspected. I visually inspected the roof seals, and felt them with my hands. All seals appeared to be in decent condition and pliable. I did find a small area on the front, driver's side where the roofing material is not adhered to roof and has formed a small bubble.

All of the seals on the trailer sides were inspected. They all looked and felt fine. When it rains, I'll know how the kitchen window is doing.

I broke the plastic Haylett license plate frame when I took off the cover. I brought it in, repaired it and put it back on the trailer.

I brought TV and remote up from the basement, installed and scanned for over the air channels. There were a lot found, but still no channel 2, Detroit.

I shut off the propane. I noticed that when I turned it on yesterday that the gauge was showing about 1/2 full, which I figured was right because it is a 20# tank, and it was filled last fall before buttoning up the trailer for the winter. It was still showing about 1/2 full when I shut it off.

A little after 6 p.m. I turned off the battery disconnect and disconnected the shore cord and put it away. The windows and vents were closed and the trailer was locked.

06/15/20

Early in the morning, I gathered my supplies to wash the roof with Thetford RUBBER ROOF CLEANER AND CONDITIONER.

I was able to do the whole roof without getting on it. I used my tall, 7-step, stepladder and moved it many times to get the washing done. After finishing the roof, all of the sides were rinsed.

It only took about 16 oz. of the cleaner to do the whole roof. The other 16 oz. was returned to the jug of cleaner. The sprayer was cleaned out.

The sprayer was filled with about 4L of a solution of Meijer Wash and Wax and water and the sides of the trailer were washed, but NOT the tires and wheels yet. They are still covered.

After washing the trailer, I turned on the battery disconnect and the gauge in the bathroom read 2/3 full, again, even though the shore power was plugged in until after 6 p.m. yesterday. The disconnect was turned off and shore power connected. The battery disconnect was turned back on.

Inside the trailer, all of the windows, vents and air conditioner were checked for leaks. None were found.

I spent a lot of time using YouTube to try and figure out how to get the screens out to clean the windows. Lifting up and pulling out did not work.

<https://youtu.be/QyOUx12xQVU>

The paint scraper trick did not work.

<https://youtu.be/dzTlgJxxeXc>

The reason that neither worked was because there is absolutely no vertical play in the screens on my trailer. The screens are just too tight!

I tried removing the window stop of the kitchen window to pull the window further open. I removed the screw and found out that the stop is inserted from the bottom and won't really come out.

I noticed that the screens are made in China.

All of the windows were cleaned, inside and out, as best I could do.

The awning was rolled out, inspected and retracted. I had forgotten how long it takes to retract.

All of the cleaning supplies, tools, etc. were put away.

I called Onsite Mobile RV Repair LLC at 12:44 p.m. and left a message regarding having the brakes calibrated. I never got a call back.

06/16/20

I removed the tire covers, and checked the tire pressure; passenger side 64.5 lb., driver side 64.5 lb., spare 63.5 lb. Air was added to the spare and it is now at 65 lb.

(I did the cars' tires too while the air compressor was out.)

I did not check the lug nut tightness on the trailer wheels, so will have to do before first trip.

I called Onsite Mobile again at 10:04 a.m.

I crawled under the trailer and inspected it. I didn't find anything obvious. The black and gray tank outlet appears to be well secured.

I visually inspected, and tried to turn with my hand, the bolts that hold the leaf spring to the trailer brackets and the bolts on the U-clamps that hold the axle to the trailer frame. I could not move any with my hands and they were all there.

I inspected, and felt, all the seals between the side, front and bottom between the moldings and trailer sides and over the wheels. I also inspected the front molding piece between the plastic stone guard and the front end cap.

06/18/20

I hand checked the tightness of the four bolts on the spare tire bracket.

06/19/20

I called Gary about the trailer breaks and we are planning to check/go over them early next week.

I checked the caulk around the shower pan bottom in bathroom, and it appears to be okay.

06/25/20 Brake Inspection Day

Cold tire pressure was 64 lb. in both tires.

Put P3 brake unit on car and hooked it up.

Tried to change the Boost, top right button, but it wouldn't change. Probably has to be hooked too trailer pigtail first.

Moved tools we might use out of the trailer.

Removed trailer hub caps and lock and put them into the Ascent.

Put up stabilizer jacks.

Removed rear bumper cover plate to access the pigtail and receiver.

Put key in the battery disconnect.

I completely hooked the trailer up to the Ascent, including the pin through the hitch coupler, per Gary's instructions this morning.

The Boost was set to B1 and the full engagement of the brakes is 11.2V.

I changed the Boost to OFF for checking the brakes.

I checked the lights, except the brake and turn signals. They were okay.

Gary got here about 9:30. We jacked up the passenger side of the trailer and tried the brakes. The break came on at about 2.3V to 2.5V. It was about the same with Boost 1 on, but then the voltage went down and then started to climb. We jacked up the driver side and repeated the process with about the same results.

When the wheels are spun by hand there is just the faintest sound of the brake dragging on both sides.

We took the trailer for a brake test to Western High. The brakes seem to be stopping the trailer well enough, but they do not stop the car. We both took turns driving and they seemed okay to Gary, and we just figure that's the way they work.

When we got back, I parked the car the new way by pulling around to the back. It went okay, but some branches need to be trimmed from the tree behind where the trailer is parked before we do it again.

The RAB OFF button on the head unit still sometimes works, and sometimes not. I could not get the RAB to go off when we got home and I was backing up the trailer.

The trailer was unhitched, leveled and all of the tools put away.

I got out the 7-step stepladder and inspected the roof, as some of the low hanging branches had touched the roof when I parked the trailer the new way. The roof looked fine, but I noticed that the roofing material was also loosening up on the passenger side rear and kind of bubbled, or had air under the material.

06/27/20

I rained last night for the first time in a LONG time. I inspected inside for leaks and put the devices to hold the freezer and refrigerator door open back in place. No leaks were detected using the flashlight, as it was still just breaking day.

The black and gray tanks were drained from winterizing and then running some water through the plumbing this spring to fill the water heater and water lines.

07/17/20

I posted the story about pulling with the Ascent in the Rocky Mountains. It notes the very poor gas mileage when using a fairly heavy tandem axle travel trailer and is a cautionary tale.

<https://www.ascentforums.com/threads/bill%E2%80%99s-great-rocky-mountain-towing-adventure.10149/>

Roof needs an adhesive sealant, not Dicor stuff.

There is a product called M-1 Structural Sealant/Adhesive & Sealant. It requires a primer for TPO roofs.

Adhesive Sealant

<https://www.bestmaterials.com/detail.aspx?ID=14959>

Primer:

<https://www.bestmaterials.com/detail.aspx?ID=15866>

RV Roof Install - DO NOT USE MINERAL SPIRITS. USE
DENATURED ALCOHOL!
FROM RV Roof Install

Hollis Clark 2 months ago

You forgot to tell us what the new caulking product was you used to recaulk the windows and doors. You guys do quality work, hats off to you!!!!

RV ROOF INSTALL

2 months ago

We use Metalink. it is a silicone which I generally hate but this is a commercial grade and stays cleaner than the M1 . It's a Chemlink product.

Hollis Clark

RV ROOF INSTALL

2 months ago

@Hollis Clark Yes. That's what I thought you were doing...the windows, doors and side exterior. If you are talking about the roof membrane you need to use a primer wherever...I stress wherever, plastics acrylic or roofing with come in contact with the caulk. We use M1 for most everything. It's an adhesive and a sealant. We don't use butyl tape at all...no where.

wayne ketter

2 months ago

@RV ROOF INSTALL is this the product you use Chemlink M-1 (WHITE) Structural Adhesive Sealant 10.1 oz Cartridge? I found it on amazon.

REPLY

Good caulking video "How to Caulk an RV | "DIY" NO LEAKS EVER!"

<https://youtu.be/d3iKbsFEh70>

3M 06580 Marine Adhesive/Sealant Fast Cure 4000 UV

<https://amzn.to/2LWXKtj>

More on caulk here:

RV Caulking - How To and Tools

<https://youtu.be/GREnJIWD1Tw>

How I'd Make a Coachmen Apex Nano 187RB

Apex RV Factory Tour December 2018

<https://youtu.be/-V61D9isso0?t=87>

Jacks are on.

Bumper is on.

Informational sticker is on bumper sewer hose holder

Coachmen Apex Nano - Extended Edition

<https://youtu.be/AUSqbOQz3hA?t=99>

Spokes person notes 4,400 lb. axles with 15" wheels. (The script said tires, but I'm sure it is wheels that are 15".)

On screen graphics notes "On Select Models".

Year End Summary

Total Cost of Trailer from Haylett RV: \$18,222.28?

Essentials on 10/08/19 \$4,040.57

Total Cost as of 10/08/19: \$22,262.85

Camping trips, 3 days + 6 days + 4 days = 13 days

Cost per 13 days of use: \$1,712.53

Cost per 10 night's of sleeping: \$2,226.29