

# SOI News



Fall 2009

Scamp Owners International

Volume XI Number 4



*1989 Scamp renovated by Floyd and Debbie Clark - see page 3 for details and additional images of their efforts. Photography by F & D. Clark*

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## From the Editor's Desk

This summer and fall has witnessed many great ScampCamps in various locations. A special THANKS goes out to each SOI Member who hosted these gatherings. **Lyndon and LouAnn Laney** - Scrambled Eggs Meet at the Apostle Islands, Bayfield, Wisconsin. **Dean and Virginia Moffitt** - Clear Lake, Iowa. **Dick and Linda Freed** - Lake Erie State Park, New York. **Floyd and Debbie Clark**, Starved Rock State Park, Illinois. South Dakota Eggs Rally at Hart Ranch, South Dakota.

Of course, **Alice and Jack Vernezze** are busy planning the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual ScampCamp at Highlands Hammock State Park in Sebring Florida scheduled for February 9 - 13, 2010. And, Doris Lawson has already announced the first ScampCamp being planned

for next summer at Shipshewana, Indiana. It will meet at the Shipshewana Campground South starting June 21, 2010. Check the Future ScampCamp listings for registration information and additional details.

A big THANKS goes out to **Floyd and Debbie Clark** for sharing the renovation of a 1989 Scamp. Floyd knows more about Scamps and small fiberglass trailers than anyone I know - and freely shares with anyone who asks. I also appreciate **Dave Knowles** contribution relating his experience with a first Scamp.

We've had a quiet summer in

Michigan. The only major Scamp outing we attended was the Wisconsin Scrambled Eggs gathering in June. On the way north and across Michigan's UP, we camped at Fayette State Park on the Garden Peninsula. At less than 20 miles off highway US 2, it is a fascinating place to visit. The park features a renovated 1800s town where iron ore from Michigan's iron ranges was smelted.

I have been making a list of SOI Members indicating interest in a potential trip to Alaska during the summer of 2010. So far, there are about 15 SOI Members who have expressed an interest. If this sounds like an adventure you would like to experience with your Scamp, drop me an E-mail. **Alice and Jack Vernezze** conducted an Alaskan trip in 2006 and have agreed to lead another in 2010 - see page 13 for more details. The tentative plan is to do some research during the fall and winter to assess the possibility and make an announcement in early spring. Watch future newsletters for details.

It is hard to believe fall is here already and a new year is just around the corner. This issue completes Volume X of the *SOI News*. It also marks the beginning of year 12 of our Scamp Owners organization. It also reminds us that it's renewal time for SOI Membership - a 2010 SOI Membership form is attached. This has been a good year for membership and there are currently over 600 SOI Members. It would be a great help if you could plan to return your 2010 SOI Membership Renewal form by December 1, 2009. Thanks.

As fall approaches, many RVers will be preparing for their annual trip to warmer climates. If that is your plan, best wishes for a safe and fun trip. We are looking forward to seeing many of you at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual ScampCamp at Highlands Hammock State Park in Sebring, Florida.

**Rod**



**Rod Cranson**  
Editor

Checking out a new bike carrier on the back of Scamp 1. See page 11 for additional details.

*Photograph by S. Cranson*

## Lake Erie State Park (NY) Fiberglass Rally by Dick Freed SOI #481



*Flat Stanley, our program director, announced the day's events*

The south shore of Lake Erie served as the backdrop for the first Lake Erie Fiberglass Rally. Lake breezes and spectacular sunsets were the norm at this location. As the group gathered, we noticed the diversity of trailers attending. One Compact Jr, two trillium 5500's, one Boler, eleven Scamps, two Casitas, and one brand new Eggcamper were in attendance. It was surprising how many of the small trailers arrived with very large dogs. Three of our attendees were from Canada, Roy Brown and Carol, Tony Armstrong and Cindy, and Ludlow and Marie Harris. Traveling the farthest distance were Ed Smith and Betty Hagberg, from Haines City, FL., and Steve and Betty McAdams from Webb City, MO. Overall, ten states and Canada were represented by attendees.

Monday evening we gathered to ex-



*At Barcelona Harbor the Sea Lion Restoration Project. 16th Century Sailing Vessel*



*ScampCamp Participants pose with Lake Erie in the background.*

plain the program over a hot dog supper. Our program director, Flat Stanley, listed the events daily for the campers. Wayne Felker did a great job starting and keeping the daily campfire going for the group.

On Tuesday, we walked the beach at Barcelona Harbor, picking up driftwood that would be used in the craft project and campfires. We also viewed the Barcelona Lighthouse, and the Sea Lion, which is a replica 16th century sailing vessel, being restored at the Barcelona Harbor. We had lunch at Jack's Restaurant, and then continued to walk the beach collecting driftwood.

Wednesday morning found Lynda Freed leading the craft program called "making genuine Lake Erie driftwood wind clunkers" (which are like wind chimes, that "clunk" when they are moved by the wind). Campers also had the opportunity to crochet a dish scrubbie from nylon mesh. Betty McAdams assisted in both craft projects. Steve McAdams served as the camp photographer, and took the group picture with Lake Erie in the background. Tech Talk followed — an informal discussion of issues and questions about "care and feeding" of our fiberglass trailers. Later that afternoon, the "great giveaway" was conducted. An amazing amount of giveaway items appeared and everyone left with



*The Barcelona Lighthouse overlooks the harbor.*



*Gerry Felker displays her "Genuine Lake Erie Driftwood Clunker" with the alligator head shaped top.*





*Wine Tours and tasting are always fun at Penn-Shore Winery in North East, PA*



*Campers climbed the lighthouse at Dunkirk, NY -- many made it to the top!*

*Photographs by S. McAdams and D. Freed*



*Everyone enjoyed dinner at Freeport Restaurant*

one or two excellent items. That evening, we went to dinner at Freeport Restaurant, a local eatery known for fabulous local fish dinners.

Thursday was winery tour day. We went to three Pennsylvania wineries just over the NY/PA state line. Probably the most memorable was the tour

given us by the owner of Penn-Shore Winery. Everyone enjoyed the tour and plenty of tasting. We returned to camp for a salad bar potluck. After the potluck, Steve and Betty McAdams received the grand prize, a complete wine set — carafe and goblets, for their efforts in the game “the Couch Potato Art Gallery.” This was followed by campfire with Dick Freed on Guitar, and Lynda Freed and Gerry Felker assisting campers in making S’mores, a new treat for many.

On Friday, we toured the Dunkirk Lighthouse (70+ steps to the top), museum and grounds. The museum included fine displays honoring all the branches of the military service. We then

walked the Dunkirk Harbor boardwalk, which provided plenty of shopping and eating. That evening we had a final potluck dinner (amazing amount of food!) followed by “Friday night at the movies” featuring the Lucy/Desi clas-

sic, *The Long, Long Trailer*. Thanks to Judy and Kevin Johnson, and Gerry Felker for providing popcorn for the movie.

The camp out ended on Saturday, with lots of coffee and donuts. Thanks to all the participants of the Lake Erie Fiberglass Rally. Special thanks to Bill Kelleher for all his help in taking down the carport and helping us pack on Saturday morning, as well as his assistance and aid throughout the week.

## From Shell to MeShell

**Floyd and Debbie Clark  
Morris, IL**

Attached are some pictures of “Me-Shell” the 1978 Scamp that we recently did a “turnaround” on. Bear in mind that the pictures are taken at various stages, and most do not represent the finished product, some trim and detail work was not yet done when the pictures were taken.

“Shelly” got her name from the fact that she was only a shell when we purchased her. No cabinetry or kitchen, only the partial remains of the front and rear seating. She wobbled like a “pillar of Jell-



*Floyd and Debbie added a special strip to Shelly*



*Rear view of Floyd and Debbie's 1978 Scamp - note the special wheel covers.*

O" on the way home from Kentucky!

My wife, Debbie and I have taken on a hobby of what she calls "fiberglass rescue." Our goal is not so much perfection, as it is to produce a solid finished product that will give years of reliable service, while staying within the reach of a modest budget.

This particular trailer was designed around the idea of a fixed front dinette and a queen size permanent bed. It has a SMEV stove-sink combo which allowed for a 32 inch kitchen. That along with the shortened closet allowed for the "Queen sized" bed.

The air conditioner was incorporated into the dinette and the fridge is a Coleman 12V cooler which is permanently wired, through the switch on the cabinet, to a new American converter. The trailer received all new wiring, lighting, and fantastic fan as well as onboard grey and fresh water storage along with other enhance-

ments. Also, exterior paint and stenciling, the curtains, and other



*Sink and 2-burner stove combination*

sewing items, is largely credited to Debbie.

The nice couple who bought "Shelly" spent the summer on a sabbatical trip of 2-3 months before returning home and passing her along to another new owner. They reported great satisfaction with her and only minor door problems and a slight annoyance with the sink pump and drain.

It is our goal to present an enjoyable, dependable and affordable camper to each person who gets one from us, and to return a bit of the fun and enjoyment that we have had in our adventures with Scamp and fiberglass trailer owners everywhere.



*View of custom table and benches in the front of Shelly. Note the air conditioner just above the table.*

*photographs by F. & D. Clark*



*With some modifications, a queen-size bed was installed*

## Heading South?

As winter approaches many SOI Members are preparing to head south to warmer weather. It is that time of year when many RVers are looking forward to meeting new people, enjoying new experiences and having fun. Here are some tips that might be useful to consider with your planning.

**Reservations** - Are they necessary? If you have plans to be on one location for a specific length of time, they



*The SOI Bird sez "Do you have an experience or story to share with other SOI members?"*

are likely a good idea. However, reservations can limit your options to move around and take advantage of interesting opportunities or special events. Many RVer's prefer the freedom of not having to commit too far in advance. Another factor to consider is the availability to campgrounds in the region you plan to go - do they tend to fill up. For example, some of the popular state parks are often booked up in advance.

**Communication** - What do you need in this area? Cell phones and E-mail are the two "biggies" to keep in touch with those back in the snow and cold. If you don't have a cell phone, you might wish to consider a prepaid phone such as Net 10. For a few dollars you can get 300 minutes good for 60 days and they seem to work almost everywhere. Another inexpensive (free most of the time) communication technique is to use WiFi offered by many fast food restaurants such as Paneras, Wendys, and many others. These are readily available and their wireless connections are often announced on their outside signs.

**Television** - If you plan to take a TV, check to insure that it will work since everything is digital now. Older sets require a special receiver box to receive a signal and may not work with an antenna.

#### **Other Ideas -**

Make up some business cards or fun travel cards to exchange with people.

Confirm that your insurance is adequate for vehicle and trailer to cover both theft and accidents.

Medical insurance — don't neglect this — confirm with your medical supplier that you have coverage for

the planned length of your trip.

You can stay in everything from a luxury resort to boon-docking in the desert -- anything is possible for every budget.

It's possible to reduce costs by staying in one location rather than being on the move constantly. Remember you are a guest in another country the same as if you were a guest in another home - treat the people you meet accordingly.

Have fun!

by Carol Ann Quibell, *RVwest e-Newsletter*, October 2009

## **Questions & Answers**

**Basic Information** - We are a very interested potential buyer and have questions about where to purchase and how to purchase. We currently know nothing about the scams and own a pop-up. We would be very thankful if someone could send information about the scams, pricing, options, floor plans, brand names, etc. Thank You. **Lynn & Danny**, PH: 414-456-0554 or E-mail: lreed15@wi.rr.com

**HD Antenna** - Has anyone done any research on a new HD antenna? My 2000 5th wheel came with the Delta Model that has the two opposing retractable rods. Controlled inside and with a power booster. I would like to upgrade to one that will fold so taking the ADCO cover off and on will be less of a chore plus receiving the new HD signal. Here is one I have been looking at. Any comments or suggestions about this one or others you know of. <http://www.adventurerv.net/winegard-sensar-antenna-rv3095-amplified-p-110.html> Appreciate any input. Thanks. **Chris Kidd**, E-mail: [CHRISATREDRAKE@aol.com](mailto:CHRISATREDRAKE@aol.com)



## SOI Mailbag

**SOI News** - Thanks for the back issues of the Scamp Newsletter. We read them as soon as they come. I especially like reading about the modifications that owners make to their campers. We are like the rest of the campers, making our modifications to make our "home away from home" a nicer place to spend time in. We were happy to spend a week-end at the Moffott's Scamp Camp at Clear Lake, Iowa. We met so many nice people there. Why they were so nice they even let me play my mandolin for them. This was the first one of these that we have attended and I'm sure that we will be attending others in the future. While living in northern Minnesota and still working, we might find it difficult getting to the big camp-out in Florida, but maybe someday. **Gerry and Sue Schlueter**, Park Lake, MN

**Scamp Motorhome** - We were previous owners of a 1984 Scamp on a Ford Ranger. According to Backus, MN they had only manufactured 14 of those models. We loved it, but were challenged with having no vehicle to drive once we arrived at our destination. We sold and recently purchased the 16-foot Scamp and have only camped once. However, we are going South this winter - with final destination San Diego. We have worked out most of the "kinks," but would welcome information about towing bikes/bike racks. Any help would be appreciated. Thank you very much! **Patty Cole**, Marshall, MN.

**Baja 2010** - I plan to leave for Baja in mid to late December for exploration, camping and fishing. I've been planning

this trip since purchasing my Scamp in '04. I've made many upgrades to better secure it and make it much more comfortable. I understand you have made the Baja run personally so I thought I would seek your input for suggestions I might not have considered yet. I plan to stay primarily on paved roads with the Scamp using it as a base camp with side trips to more remote camps. I will be towing with the Jeep for obvious reasons. One of my last planned preparations is to put the Scamp on a rack and add additional strap supports for everything attached underneath and further seal all surfaces to keep out dust and possible bugs. I did the sealing thing early on but not on a rack where I can see things well. Oh, tires are a consideration I have yet to come to grips with. Mine are original with limited miles. They appear fine, have been covered when stored, but they are now 6+ years old. I'm considering new ones just because of age. What do you think about this? Any suggestions would be appreciated. Probably will try to talk with you as well. **Bob Neal**, Alameda, CA.

**Branson and Blue Ridge** - It was good to see you here in Branson! We just returned from the Blue Ridge Trip, and enjoyed some of the back roads in North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. We are thinking a little more on the Alaska trip. Do you know any more? Also, if you hear about anyone wanting to sell a 16 footer we would take a look at it. Where can one find out about possible ones for sale. I called the factory and they were of little help. They are



*Bill and Connie Castle with Sharon and Rod Cranson at the Branson Belle showboat in Branson. Photograph by B. & C. Castle.*

sending me a brochure on the new ones, and of course, most of the info is on line. I also called Casita, and they also don't deal in used ones. Thanks. **Bill and Connie Castle**, Orange, CA.



*Tate Tag-Along*

**Tate Tag-Along** - This baggage hauler was built for Richard and Dorothy Tate by their son. It is all fiberglass, attaches to their Scamp by 2 ball hitches and backs easily. Report and Photograph by **L. Laney**

**Interesting Quote** - Recently, I saw a quote by Charles Kuralt that could be included in the newsletter. *"Thanks to the interstate highways, you can now drive from coast to coast without seeing anything."* **Jack Freed**, Punxsutawney, PA.



*Fast-Hitch Mirror*

## What's New

**Fast Hitch** - Assists in aligning any trailer hitch by yourself, without leaving the driver's seat! The Fast Hitch gives you a clear, unobstructed view of the hitch and ball, and makes alignment a snap. The convex mirror gives a broad field of vision, and fold easily to a compact size. One person approach and alignment is made simple. Slide the mirror arms onto a pickup tailgate, or use suction cups for mounting on virtually any vehicle. With a 9" diameter, the convex mirror provides

a broad view of view.

**5th Wheel Help** - A device to assist 5th Wheel Scamp owners in hitching up is available from Keystone-Cougar. The Hitch Vision System allows RVers to use their rear-view mirror for lining up their hitch to the ball. A mirror above the hitch allows the driver to see exactly where things line up properly. Reported in the 2009 September/October issue of *Rvwest*.

**Align-Quick** - A highly visibility fluorescent orange magnetic set of rods assists in aligning the hitch with the ball. One is good for a hooking up a Scamp 5th wheel. It sells for a low price of \$20 for a set of two



**Fiberglass History** - **Matt Hirota**, a California small RV enthusiast, is conducting research on the history of small fiberglass trailers, including Scamps. It is going to take him a couple of years to complete this project and agreed to let us know when it is done. SOI has provided background information related to the history of Scamps. He has a web site where you can



review his work at: <http://www.fiberglassrv.com/board/index.php?showtopic=35360&mode=threaded>

**Editor's Note:** Have you encountered a gadget or technique that might be useful for other Scamp owners? Why don't you send it in to share with other SOI Members?



## SCAMP STEW

Ray Johnson.....New York

- 3 lg. carrots
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 med. potatoes
- 1/3 C water in a shallow bowl
- 1 lg. cooking onion
- 1 lg. jar roast beef gravy
- 2/3 pkg. McCormick stew mix
- 1 1/2 C Canie Rose wine
- 1 lb. stew beef 1 C water
- 2 Cans of peas

In a 2 quart pot put in 1 quart hot tap water. Cut the vegetables to your liking and put in pot on low heat. Add peas while heating. Slowly bring just to a boil then turn off. Cube stew meat and brown in frying pan. Add water, gravy, wine, and bay leaves in a crock pot, turn on High. Drain beef and add to crock-pot. More water can be added for a thinner pot or thickened with cornstarch. If serving outdoors on a cool day add two shots of

*"I believe every human has a finite number of heartbeats. I don't intend to waste any of mine running around doing exercises."*

Neil Armstrong

Bourbon to crock pot. Cook 4 to 5 hours checking carrot doneness occasionally.

**Editor's Note:** The recipes in the SOI News are from Alice Vernezze's SOI Cookbook. It is a goldmine of outstanding recipes and is available from Alice for \$8.00 plus postage. You can contact Alice at: E-mail [ezzeal@bellsouth.net](mailto:ezzeal@bellsouth.net) or by phone: 321-773-2676.

## Tech Corner

### Catalytic Heaters

by Lyndon Laney

Catalytic heaters use a unique property of metallic platinum to grab onto the propane molecule and hold it in exactly the right position for oxygen molecules to come cruising along and attach themselves to the carbons and hydrogens.

Getting the propane lined up in this precise manner lowers the amount of heat energy that's required to bounce the propane molecule around enough for it to randomly run into oxygen molecules when bent and twisted at just exactly the right angle for the oxygen to glom onto the propane. (Technically, the platinum grabs the propane's eight hydrogen atoms, exposing the three carbon atoms and making them available for oxidation, leaving the hydrogens, which are pulled off the platinum by other oxygens.)

Because the platinum grabs onto the propane and won't let go until it's completely burned away, making carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and water vapor (H<sub>2</sub>O), the only by-products of the reaction are CO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O, and heat. The platinum itself isn't changed in any way, so it's ready to repeat the process over and over again. This is exactly the same thing the cata-



*Olympian Catalytic Safety Heater*

lytic converter on your car does, except it grabs on to partially burned hydrocarbons and makes sure they're fully burned off before leaving the exhaust pipe.

The only way a catalytic heater can release carbon monoxide, or any other chemicals, is if the propane valve is opened too wide (catalytic heaters are designed so this shouldn't ever happen). If this were to occur, raw propane would enter your trailer or the platinum plating on the catalytic element could flake off or become contaminated by other metals, making it less efficient. That is why cars with catalytic converters can't burn leaded gasoline; the lead contaminates the platinum catalyst.

So, a catalytic element can last for many years before contamination becomes a problem. So, what does this mean for a small RV? You'll need a fresh air inlet so you don't deplete the oxygen supply in your trailer. Also, you'll want to leave a ceiling vent cracked open so the water vapor can escape and not condense all over your windows and other surfaces. I, personally, would also install a propane gas detector (a wise precaution in any case) and a carbon monoxide detector (more for peace of mind than anything else).

Some down side aspects of a catalytic setup are:

- 1) they don't have a fan to circulate the heat around your trailer, so heating will be uneven.

- 2) the water vapor the catalytic heaters give off puts humidity in the air and can condense on cold surfaces in your trailer.

- 3) finally, most catalytic heaters have just three settings, off, low, and high, and no thermostat so you can't set

your heater to keep your trailer at, say, sixty-four degrees (18c) at night and seventy-two (22c) in the day.

On the plus side: pound-for-pound of propane, they are very efficient; you'll get the absolute maximum heat possible for every pound of propane.

## Turning up the heat

Recreation vehicle water heaters are available in two configurations. The most common type have an insulated tank made of aluminum or glass-lined steel. These are available in either six- or 10-gallon sizes and may have an electronic direct spark ignition (DSI) system or a manual light pilot valve. Main manufacturers of this type are Atwood and Suburban - both safe and reliable products. Another type, rarely found in RVs, is the instantaneous or continuous flow system where the water is heated on demand. These eliminate the need for a tank liner and are efficient and lightweight.

Water is heated by a propane-fired burner in a flue assembly within the liner and vents to the outside of the vehicle. Some also have a 110-volt AC option to heat the water when connected to an outside electrical power source. These elements are usually in the 1,400-watt range and will draw about 13 amps when operating. The LPG burner is quicker to provide heated water, but if you use both systems at the same time it will speed up the recovery time.

The manual pilot light system is lit by engaging the pilot setting on the valve depending on the manufacturer; and when the pilot flame is providing heat to the thermocouple, the milli-volt circuit provides voltage to the gas valve magnet device to keep the gas flowing. You can now switch to the on position and start the heating cycles. With

most manual-type valves you can also set the water temperature a little higher or lower than normal settings.

To provide a safety factor the main burner will shut down if the pilot goes out; or if the thermostat fails within the valve the ECO (emergency cut out) will open and also stop the flow of LPG to the burner if the temperature exceeds 180 degrees F on most models.

The direct spark ignition (DSI) uses a circuit board to produce a spark to light the burner and sense the flame within about six to eight seconds. If there is a flame present the valve will continue to supply LPG and keep operating until the preset thermostat opens and shuts the burner off until the next heat cycle. If no flame is sensed, because of lack of LPG for instance, the circuit board will provide a spark for three more ignition cycles and then will go into what is known as a lock-out. A red light will stay on at the switch to indicate a problem. These tanks also have an ECO, but are configured differently than the manual valve system.

An additional safety device that is provided with all RV water heaters is a pressure temperature relief valve. These valves will pop open immediately if the pressure in the tank exceeds 150 psi or 210 degrees F. A common problem we see at our shop are folks who are concerned about the valve weeping or dripping. This issue does not always determine a faulty or defective valve. You can sometimes resolve the dripping or weeping by providing an air gap at the top of the tank liner. If you read the manual provided with your RV or go to either the Atwood or Suburban web site there may be information about this procedure.

If you have been using the water heater quite often it is good preventive

maintenance to flush the inner liner a couple of times during the camping season. Just remove the tank plug or anode rod and turn on the city water to remove any accumulation of dirt or scales until the water is clear. If there is an anode rod, check it for signs of wear and replace it if there is a great deal of the center steel rod showing.

Another common problem that develops when folks are getting their RVs ready in the spring is not turning all of the bypass valves back to the proper summer positions. If the center valve is still allowing water to flow then it will mix the cold water inlet line with the hot water outlet line which will provide hot water for a few seconds only. This can be an expensive mistake.

A water heater is an excellent addition to a well-equipped RV, and usually only requires a minimal amount of preventive maintenance like flushing and winterizing. If there are any additional problems, especially with the LPG part of the heater, it is best left to an RV technician with a gas fitter's ticket to ensure a safe and reliable repair.

Revised from an article by Reg DeYoung in *RVwest* - February 2009 issue

## Modifications and Changes

**Bike Carrier** - Recently there has been an increased interest in various techniques to transport bikes while towing a Scamp (or other small trailers). We have used a bike rack on top of our Dakota in the past and it works well. Others have carried bikes on the back of their trailers with a carrier designed for a trailer hitch receiver. And, of course, there are other more ingenious methods.



*Typical Scamp 6-gallon water heater*

*Photographs by K R. Cranson*



*Bikes mounted on the bike rack*





*View of underside of the Scamp showing details of the new hitch receiver.*

While the top rack had it's advantages, we decided to install a receiver on our 5<sup>th</sup> Wheel and use it to transport our bikes.

When Leon and Janice Greisen visited this past summer, we discussed the matter of

having a receiver hitch welded to the frame of the Scamp. Leon is a certified welder and he prepared a sketch detailing how such a hitch should be designed and installed. Details of his design are included with this newsletter as a separate attachment. A visit to a local welding shop with Leon's sketch, and \$300, a receiver was quickly installed on our Scamp.

The next job was to secure a receiver bike carrier system. A search of possibilities and review of owners comments on the tions to one that seemed to fit our needs. It is SportRack offered by SportRack Accessories Inc. Their toll-free number is 1-800-561-0716 and you can review various models on their web site: [www.sportrack.com](http://www.sportrack.com).

The bike carrier we selected is a Model A30901. It carries 2 bikes and is rated for up to 90 lbs - the rack weighs about 25 lbs. Installation is easy and it folds to store. Two rubber "hooks" secure the bikes, protect their finish, and is designed to fit any size bike frame. If you have a vehicle with a trunk or rear door(s), the bike carrier tilts away for easy access. The carrier is constructed of high-grade (14 gauge) power-coated steel and will fit either a 1 1/4 or 2-inch receiver opening. It cost \$160 and ours was shipped free of charge.

With our bikes in place, this system will add about a hundred pounds to the rear of the Scamp. We plan to compensate by shifting some of the items, normally stored under the bench seats inside the trailer, forward to better distribute the weight. R. Cranson, Lansing, MI.

## Alaskan National Parks

Alaska has more national park areas than any other region of the United States. Seventeen National Park units represent natural, cultural, and historic features of this immense landscape. Ten were created by the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Alaska's total land area is a little over 570,000 square miles and about 6% is within the seven National Parks (over 33,000 square miles).

While Danali National park is by far the best known, others include Glacial Bay, Wrangell-St. Elias, Katmai, Lake Clark, Gates of the Arctic, and Kenai Fjords.

Danali National Park and Preserve is located in interior Alaska and contains Mount McKinley (danali), the tallest mountain in North America. Danali" means "the great one" in a one of the native languages and refers to the mountain itself. It was originally named after president William McKinley of Ohio in 1897, although he had no connection with the region. The park and preserve together cover 9,492 square miles (24,585 square kilometers).

The park was established as Mount McKinley National Park on February 26, 1917. However, only a portion of Mount McKinley (which did not include the summit) was within the original park boundary. Later, a separate Danali National Monument was proclaimed by President Jimmy Carter on December 1, 1978.



*SportRack Bike Rack - a model designed for two bikes.*

Danali habitat is a mix of forest at the lowest elevations, including deciduous tiaga. The preserve is also home to tundra at middle elevations, and glaciers, rock, and snow at the highest elevations. Today, Danali hosts more than 400,000 visitors who enjoy

wildlife viewing, mountaineering, and backpacking. Wintertime recreation includes dog-sledding, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling where allowed.

Danali is home to a great variety of mammals and birds, including a large population of grizzly bears and black bears. Caribou roam throughout the park along with dall sheep that frequently observed on mountainsides. Moose and grey wolves are abundant along with many smaller animals, marmots, beavers, and snowshoe hares. Pikas, fox, lynx, wolverines, and martins also inhabit the park, but are more elusive and rarely seen. The park is also well known for its bird population - both migratory and predatory species.

As might expected, with such a wide range of elevations, there is a variety of vegetation zones. From bogs at the lower areas to spruce-poplar forests to upland spruce-hardwood forests to moist tundra, and finally the alpine tundra at highest elevations. Tundra is the predominate ground

### Alaskan Adventure

During June and July of 2006, long-time SOI members **Alice** and **Jack Vernezze** organized and led a trip to Alaska. They have agreed to conduct another Alaskan Adventure during the 2010 summer. Tentative plans will be made during the fall and winter. If you would like to receive information about this potential event, please contact the **SOI News** editor at [rcranson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rcranson@sbcglobal.net).

cover in the Danali.

Layers of topsoil collect on rotten, fragmented rock moved by thousands of years of glacial activity. Mosses, ferns, grasses, and fungi quickly fill the topsoil, and in areas of muskeg

“wet tundra,” tussocks form and may collect algae. The term muskeg includes very spongy waterlogged tussocks. As well as deep pools of water covered by sold looking moss. Wild blueberries and soap berries thrive in this landscape and provide the bears of Danali with the main part of their diets.

Over 450 species of flowing plants fill the park and can be viewed in bloom throughout summer months. Images of goldenrod, fireweed, lupine, bluebell, and gentian filling the valleys of Danali are often used on postcards and in artwork.

## Future ScampCamps

**ScampCamp 2010** - February 9 (Tues) to 13 (Sat), 2010. Plan to join us in Sebring, Florida. Call 800-326-3521 to make reservations, then email or call **Alice Vernezze**, the host, to report your information. Even if you have to cancel you won't lose all your money - the park withholds only one day's fee. Alice's email is: [ezzeal@bellsouth.net](mailto:ezzeal@bellsouth.net), Phone numbers are: 321-773-2676 (home) or 321-501-

*The SOI Bird sez “Got an idea for a ScampCamp?”*



**“Experience is the name everyone gives his mistakes.”**

*E. Hubbard*

3181 (cell), and address is: 610 N. Robin Way, Satellite Beach, FL 32937. If you have a GPS system, Highlands Hammock State Park is located at 5931 Hammock Rd, Sebring, FL 33872. **Come join us for a great experience.**



*A typical Isle at the Shipshewana Flea Market with over 1,000 vendors.*

**Shipshewana Scrambled Egg Meet** - Planned to start on June 21, 2010 at Shipshewana Campground South, 1105 S. Van Buren St. (Rt 5), Shipshewana, In. 46565. Phone No. 1-260-768-4699, good until October 15<sup>th</sup> 2009 or after April 15, 2010. To make a reservation between these dates, call 1-260-768-7770. Be sure to tell them it is for South Park Campground and you are with the Scrambled Eggs or Scamps. If you stay six nights, the seventh is free and they will honor the discount for a couple days before or after the gathering.

After making reservations call **Doris Lawson**, who will serve as host, at 1-319-754-5719. She will send a booklet in May to help you plan your stay. Some of the area attractions are: 900 booth Flea Market (T & W), antique auction (W), buggy rides, dinner in an Amish house, tour of Jayco Factory, RV museum, Studebaker museum, and more.

**Dulcimerfest ScampCamp** - July 15 - 18, 2010 at the

Osceola County Fairgrounds, Evart, Michigan. Campground information, reservation details and costs to be announced.. Hosted by **Rus Allen**, his E-mail is: rus\_judy@yahoo.com

**EggFest ScampCamp** - It will be held the second or third weekend in September 2010 (11 or 18) depending on the date of Labor Day. We are working with Goose Island Campground south of Lacrosse, Wisconsin and the Lacrosse Tourist Department - both the county (park owners) and the city are eager to help on this event. Some things being planned are the Eco River Boat cruise on Saturday afternoon - evening, an Amish tour, and other sites on Friday. There are also lots of Bike trails around the island and you can rent a canoe and paddle for hours around the island. There are two site options: the first is being near the shelter with some sites on the

### ScampCamps

*Gatherings of Scamps, and other small fiberglass RVs that join in, at various locations across the country are organized and hosted by SOI Members and others who wish to share the attractions of their area. These meetings have become a tradition of the group since the first gathering over ten years ago. All ScampCamps are independent of Scamp Owners International, with all arrangements made by the individual(s) hosting the event. SOI does not sanction or financially support any gathering or other activities conducted by a Scamp owner. SOI's involvement is simply one of announcing these events and offering suggestions to anyone interested in planning and hosting such a gathering. These suggestions may be requested and will be sent as an attachment to an E-mail entitled "Hosting a ScampCamp Guidelines."*



river. But there is a lot of traffic thru that area as there are 400 sites. The second option is at the far end of the campground and we could rent a tent type shelter. I have one 10 x 20 shelter and may be able to borrow another. **Jim and Jonell Hovind** are working on these arrangements.

### Yooper's RV - continued

when not being used. When in use the table is secured against the back window with bungy cords.

After joining SOI, I read about the problem with rotted floors beneath the fresh water tanks due to leaks. My solution was to fashion a tray out of a sheet of aluminum inserted under the tank. It had a half-inch fence all around with a drain into the enlarged hole that accommodates the tank drain. I also made a gauge for the water tank using a quarter-inch wood dowel through a hole in the top with marks for each gallon.

My experience with the 3.3 L engine in my van caused me to buy a 2008 Dodge Grand Caravan with a 3.8 L engine and tow package. After it arrived in early 2008, I had to get a new hitch and wiring installed, but was able to use the electric brake controller from my older van. After learning about rollover accidents



*Hensley Arrow anti-sway and load equalization unit.*



*2008 Dodge Grand Caravan, 3.8 Liter engine and tow package, with 2007 16 foot Scamp at the Mackinac Bridge near St Ignace, Michigan. This was my first stop (for lunch) of a 10 week expedition to Montreal, 4 New England States, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., Virginia and Georgia.*

due to trailer sway, I also invested in an Hensley Arrow anti-sway equalizing unit - and was able to mount it myself. The equalizer brought the trailer and van to within an inch of horizontal.

With all the preparation completed, I loaded and weighted the van and trailer with my travel gear. The Scamp came to about 2,800 pounds and a 7,800 pound total for both trailer and tow vehicle. This was well below the 9,000 pound combined weigh rating for the Caravan. Had the Scamp's tires balanced, inflated the van's rear tires to the maximum (44 lbs) to inhibit wandering, purchased several items needed for use at RV parks and otherwise got it ready to travel. Then, it was time to go. The Trip, Part 2, will appear in a future issue of the **SOI News**.



*Interior with table up and folding recliner open (the elevated leg portion of the recliner not shown).*

## A Yooper's First RV Experience

Part 1 - A Scamp  
by David M. Knowles



*David Knowles and his 2007 Scamp in the driveway parking space.*

*All photographs by D. Knowles*

By way of introduction, a Yooper is a resident of the Upper (northern) Peninsula of Michigan (Da UP, Eh!), in my case from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, at the east end of Lake Superior.

Being retired from Lake Superior State university and having recently lost my wife, I decided in April 2007 that I wanted to explore much of the eastern US on a long family history and Revolutionary War expedition. I figured that a small trailer would be better than using motels and restaurants. I soon discovered Scamp ads and by early May had chosen a 16-foot side dinette model and made down payment to secure a place in the production schedule. My Scamp was started on July 9 and delivery promised for August 20.

In July, I went to the factory to see if Scamp would serve my ideas of a folding recliner chair in the back, a cabinet for a flat-screen DVD/TV, radio, etc. I planned to use a 1997 Dodge Grand Caravan (3.3 L engine) as a tow vehicle. Being satisfied with my visit, I completed the order that included air conditioner, large refrigerator, awning, power fan, TV antenna, step, vinyl floor and adjustable light under each rear cabinet.

On August 20 I returned to Backus with a class 3 receiver hitch, electric brake control and lights installed on the van and was soon on my way back home. As expected, I had to use the intermediate gear for easy towing, but noticed some overheating on long hills with

cruise control on. I disconnected the cruise after a few seconds - this gave me quite a fright, not knowing that the transmission had such a safety feature. Even so, I made it home by midnight intact after the 575 mile journey.

My new Scamp sat outside all winter as I was involved in a project at the University that prevented me from starting a trip. The electrical supply to the trailer was turned off, but I planned on charging the battery every month of so as I have done with my antique cars. Unfortunately, the battery was damaged and had to be replaced later - I discovered that the TV amplifier had been drawing current. During a trip, I noticed the ceiling was sagging near the air conditioner from the weight of snow, so I installed a support.

By April, 2008, I had made several changes, additions and modifications. I built a plywood cabinet that fit above the furnace to serve as a base for a flat-screen DVD/TV. It also provided a place for the radio. Others included the installation of a microwave over the refrigerator, an 18-inch fluorescent light over the mirror, switch for the shower light, towel rack, clock, paper towel holder, and voltmeter to monitor the battery voltage. My folding recliner from Wal-Mart is stored under the back table

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### SOI News

Fall 2009

Volume XI Number 4

Published quarterly for Scamp owners and intended solely for their education, enjoyment and entertainment. Neither SOI or this publication is sponsored or supported by, nor is there any relationship with Scamp Travel Trailers or EVELAND, Inc.

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