

DUTCH OVEN PRIMER

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August 2017

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and tiny campers

**Building
Dorries**



On the Road with Cool Tears
Crossroads of America Gathering

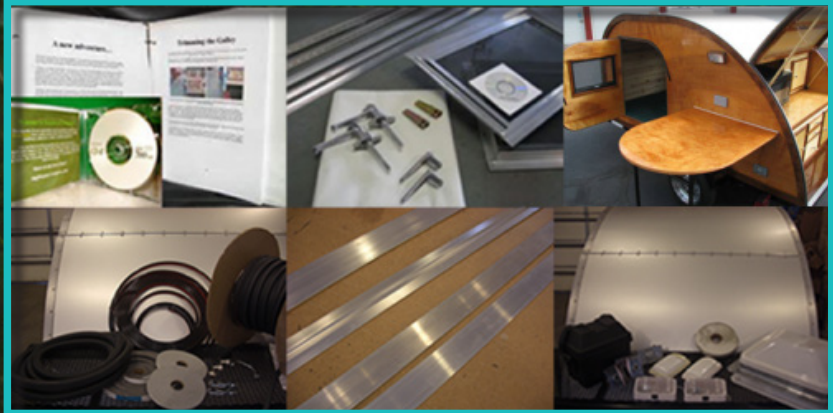
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
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Magazine

Vol. 5 No. 8

August 2017

18 COVER STORY

Building Doris

By Gordon Smith

5 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Sarah Tucker

7 ON THE TEARDROP TRAIL:

Teardrop Chicken Stew

By Marilyn McCray

8 ON THE ROAD WITH COOL TEARS: CRA 2017

By Sarah Tucker

16 CAST IRON PRIMER

By Sarah Tucker

25 BUG OUT

By Sarah Tucker

27 MANUFACTURE FEATURE: *Aero Teardrops*

Q & A with Brian Seeley



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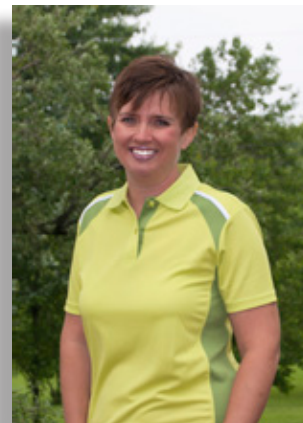
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Letter from the Editor:

Dog days of summer

Here we are, deep into summer of 2017. It's been a great summer here in the midwest...our garden has flourished, the girls have loved spending hours outside playing in the creek, and we had a fantastic time camping at McCormick Creek State Park.



I came home motivated once again to work on my teardrop as it was so awesome to see all the home builds at the Crossroads of America gathering. I came home and decided it was time to put the build inside some form of shelter as we don't have a workshop. After reading numerous reviews, we chose the portable shed from Harbor Freight and were able to put it up in one evening. So far I love having it under cover and a more dedicated place in which to build.

The side walls, bulkheads and roof spars will go up this week and by next week I hope to have the electrical finished and a good start on the upper cabinets. The goal still stands to be complete by the Oktoberfest gathering.



The **Oktoberfest** will be held **October 13 - 15, 2017** at the Clinton State Park just outside of Lawrence, KS. We do have a limited number of sites already reserved close to each other but the park is large and we have the option to use spots throughout the campground. The park offers full service sites as well as primitive. Shoot me an email sarah@cooltears.com and I will respond with reservation info needed. I hope to meet some of you this fall!

Until next time...enjoy every sunrise!

SARAH TUCKER

Editor
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ON THE TEARDROP TRAIL WITH MARILYN



Marilyn McCray is a published author of a cookbook titled *Canning, Pickling and Freezing* with Irma Harding, the International Harvester's fictional spokesperson. Marilyn and her partner, Jim Kerkhoff, travel in a beautiful teardrop to promote the book and she has graciously agreed to share some recipes with us in a regular column. Be sure to check out her book at teardroptrail.com/equipment-and-supplies/

TEARDROP CHICKEN STEW

Serves 4

1 ½ pound boneless chicken thighs or breasts cut into chunks
half of a yellow onion
2 garlic cloves
1 red, green or yellow pepper chopped (maybe a little of all?)
2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil
1 – 14.5 ounce diced tomatoes with liquid
½ teaspoons of oregano, basil
parsley
salt and pepper to taste

Options:

1 cup sliced Baby Bella mushrooms
1 sliced zucchini
2 cups sliced okra

We enjoy taking some of our favorite entrées on the Teardrop Trail. Here are some tips:

- Freeze the chicken and add to your ice chest or travel refrigerator. This helps conserve ice.
- Find small bottles of your favorite olive or avocado oil. Measure for the recipes you plan for your road trip and transfer to small plastic bottles with tightly fitting lids to conserve space. I like square plastic bottles because they are a better fit in our kitchen boxes and less likely to rattle. I save plastic bottles for a variety of uses on the road.
- Buy only the quantity of herbs and spices you will need for each recipe or for your entire trip in the bulk department. Use the small plastic bags

to save space. If your travels take you near a farmers market, buy fresh herbs for the meal.

DIRECTIONS: Thaw the chicken and pat dry with paper towels. Chop the onions and garlic. Place the oil in a skillet and simmer until the onions are clear. Add the chicken and brown over medium heat. Add vegetables to skillet, simmer. Add tomatoes and juice and herbs. Cook until vegetables are tender. Salt and pepper to taste.

For a slow-cooker: Brown onions and chicken in skillet with oil. Add to slow cooker with vegetables, tomatoes, juice and herbs. Cover cook on LOW for 8 to 9 hours, stirring occasionally. During the last hour, season with salt.

Serving suggestions:

Serve over cooked rice or pasta.





ON THE ROAD

WITH

COOLTears
MAGAZINE



by Sarah Tucker

In May I had the honor of attending a Tearjerker's gathering in Nebraska with the Heartland chapter. It was there I decided to make the journey to Indiana for the 2017 gathering of Crossroads of America. This event happens every two years and is a culmination of several chapters of the Tearjerkers group. It was a packed weekend of games, food, fireside chats, new friends, old friends and pure FUN!



My husband, Joel and I took a 2016 Little Guy Silver Shadow Limited Edition from Missouri Teardrop Trailers. It is a gorgeous teardrop that is both functional and fun. The throwback look of the exterior is certainly what grabs your attention but I love the beautiful interior. It's light birch walls and ceiling is accented perfectly with dark walnut cabinets. All of those features are nice but by far the best thing about the Silver Shadow during CRA 2017 was the air conditioner! With temps in the high 90's and the humidity at unheard of levels, it was so nice to crawl in the teardrop to cool off and

rest several times during the day.

We pulled out of Kansas City on Thursday afternoon and staying the night in St. Louis at a



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newer campsite on the outskirts of town called 370 Lakeside Campground. The county turned a flood zone into a lake that is surrounded by a bike/walking path and added three campground loops. The campground rents bikes, kayaks and paddle boats and has playgrounds and volleyball courts throughout. Each site is fully equipped with water, electrical and sewer hook-ups. It's very flat throughout the campground and the only negative was the lack of shade. In a few years time, the trees they have planted will provide a nice canopy but for now the campground sits in full sun.

Friday morning we headed out and enjoyed some beautiful scenery as we got closer to Spencer, IN which is the nearest town to McCormick Creek



State Park. The first thing you notice as you draw near the park is the national forest that the park resides within. The trees loom tall overhead and the forest floor is covered with lush greenery. The park is known for its hiking paths, waterfalls and caves that all visitors are encouraged to explore.

By the time we pulled into the park, the gathering was in full swing and it was so neat to see all the teardrops snug in their sites. Numerous campers brought their Tearjerker flags that showcased chapter logos from all over America. It was also interesting to see all the different types of small trailers represented from enclosed cargo trailers to refurbished Serro Scotty's!

After we set up camp (took all of 15 minutes and that was only because we used an EZ-Up that we haven't used often), I immediately headed out to meet folks and check out trailers. We ran into Frank Bear from Vintage Technologies and enjoyed chatting about the industry and hearing how busy he has been in spite of knee replacement surgery this year.

That night we enjoyed a wine and cheese tasting and met several of the Tearjerker directors and even the founder Todd (he's as much of a character in person as he is on the phone!) It was fun to chat with so many teardrop lovers and hear stories of camping going back for generations in families.

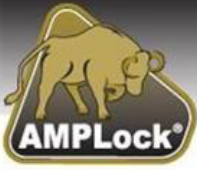


At dusk, I heard some pretty sounding banjo picking not far from our site, so we went out in search of the musician. Turns out Wayne (and Vicki) from North Carolina were camping in their Retro Ride teardrop and Wayne could pick a pretty awesome sounding banjo.



Saturday morning dawned hot and humid but we enjoyed a fantastic breakfast of bagels, pancakes, eggs, sausage, coffee and juice. After chatting with more new friends, we decided to head over to Loop B and check out the teardrops over on that side of the campground. We met Brian from Dad's Rambles and got quite the tour of his beautiful teardrop built for four as well and the brand new teardrop he just completed for his parents. Be watching a future issue for more in depth details about Dad's Rambles!

We barely made it back in time for the Dutch Oven Primer course presented by Bob Henry. One knew simply from first glance at Bob's red-barn style teardrop that this little seminar would be unforgettable. While full of wonderful trips and trick on dutch oven equipment (see page 16 & 17), Bob certainly lived up to his name by weaving jokes, tips throughout his talk. Even a mishap with the aluminum foil box (special shout out to Boy Scout parents Melissa and Tony on being prepared with the needed bandage) couldn't distract Bob from presenting his seminar!




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The afternoon was spent visiting with more teardroppers, including a fantastic visit with previously mention Boy Scout parents as we learned all about their 7 course, 7 pot Dutch Oven Thanksgiving feast. More on their Dutch Oven adventures in coming issues as well!

We received a visit from founder Todd with a special delivery of "Tearjerker Juice" (aka left-over wine and fruits mixed together) on his little motorcycle. Life is never dull at a Tearjerker gathering!

The Dutch Oven contest happened next and yours trully was able to help judge! I have never tasted such amazing food while camping! Entries ranged from garlic rolls, to whiskey soaks beef tips and potatoes to strawberry-rhubarb pie!

The contest was followed up by the largest potluck dinner imaginable! I believe I counted 22 tables packed full of food. I filled my plate not once but twice and enjoyed every bite!

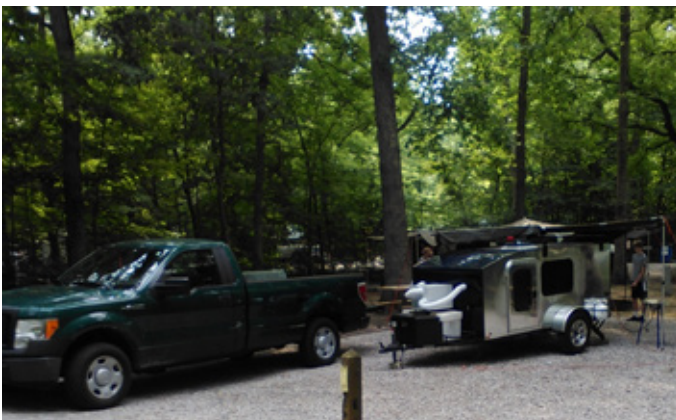
All weekend, I kept thinking the humidity was



building and was watching for a storm. You see, I'm midwest born and raised, so I know all about humidity and thunderstorms. Sure enough, right before sunset the storm moved in and stayed all night. But we were snug tight in the Silver Shadow and by breakfast the storm was gone and the temps down a bit.

It was sad to pull out of the campground Sunday morning, but we had left our most precious possession (two beautiful daughters) back in KC so the road was calling us home.

We are already looking forward to going back in just two short years! Thanks for the fun, Tearjerkers!





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CAST IRON PRIMER



Bob Henry, the King of dutch oven cooking, gave a wonderful primer on cast iron equipment for camping at the Crossroads of America Tearjerkers gathering. He had several types of cast iron to show and talked a bit of there uses. Over and over, Bob stressed the importance constant maintance of cast iron to ensure its longevity. If a liner is used in the cast iron, it drastically reduces clean up. He had a great list of items needed (Amazon links provided) and ways to find budget-friendly substitutes for each item.

DUTCH OVEN TABLE



[Camp Chef Dutch Oven / Camp Table](#) - \$104

Bob's walker table - \$10

* An unused Satellite Dish, attached it to a walker from Goodwill (the fold-ing variety), used electrical pipe holders to attach to the Dish, and added a few more storage holders and he has the most portable Dutch Oven stand. It is already coated with something that makes it fire retardant, and people even put their charcoal starter chimney's on it as the briquettes are warming up.



WELDING GLOVES TO HANDLE HOT CAST IRON



[Revco Welding Gloves](#)
- \$19

Heavy canvas - \$1

* Hand protection is very important when handling any type of cast iron, as the units get hot quickly and remain hot to touch for long periods of time.

CAST IRON LIFTER



[Lodge Deluxe Lid Lifter](#)- \$19

Pliers from home - \$0

* For better grip when lifting lids to check on the contents of the cast iron, some type of lifter is necessary.

BRIQUETTE PLACEMENT FOR COOKING

Baking 3/1	More heat from top so the bottom does not burn. Place 3/4 coals on top and 1/4 underneath.
Roasting	Heat comes equally from top and bottom. Place 1/2 coals on top and 1/2 underneath.
Stewing/ Simmering	Most heat from bottom. Place 1/4 coals on top and 3/4 underneath.
Frying/ Boiling	All heat from bottom. Place all coals underneath.



CHIMNEY TO START BRIQUETTES

[Weber Compact Chimney Starter](#)- \$13

Can in a can - \$0

* Use an empty (and clean) large metal coffee can and cut triangle hole in the bottom. If wanted, add a second metal can with holes inside the can. This allows the air to flow as the briquettes begin to heat up.



COAL SHOVEL

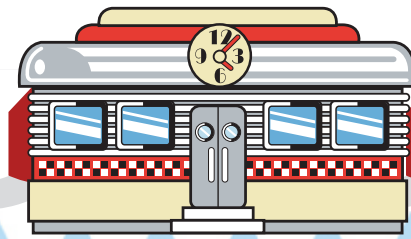


[Behrens Coal Shovel](#)- \$19

Big spoon from home - \$0

* A utensil is needed to remove the coals after the food is finished cooking.





Building Diners



by Gordon Smith

I first discovered the existence of teardrop trailers by accident while searching for camping equipment many years ago. Although I instantly fell in love with the teardrop concept, the practicality did not meet our family needs - i.e. mom, dad 3 children and a dog. Approximately 5 years ago I came across The Teardrop Club of Great Britain and was inspired! The variety in types and styles of teardrops (in particular the home builds) but also the hints, tips and sharing of information to assist its members currently building their own projects is very inspiring.

Three years ago we became foster parents after our eldest two flew the nest. We subsequently started camping again and at this point my intentions were to construct a trailer to carry our equipment. One of my neighbors was disposing of an old trailer tent, initially I thought this would be an ideal foundation for a trailer. Then I began pondering if I could build a teardrop would be used as a trailer as well as provide additional sleeping space. The added benefit of having cooking facilities in the rear would make our family tent safer for children within our care. From this my first teardrop, Simon named due to its simplicity, was born. Constructed with the assistance of some of the foster children, to assist in teamwork as well as teach skills to young ones that they could use throughout independent living.



Simon provided a fantastic learning opportunity for myself. Instead of looking at a teardrop as a large project, I adopted the mind-set of it being lots of manageable projects, which come together upon completion. While we now own a larger rv to better meet the needs of our foster children, I began pondering another teardrop build as a means for my wife and I to enjoy quiet along time every couple of months. This would be something with a completely different criteria, while still administering everything learned from my previous build.

The design had to meet a criteria. It had to be different; to stand out from the crowd. I wanted not just a bed but to also have seating when escaping the British weather. Headroom was needed to allow seating at each end to replicate



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a diner type seating booth, as well as out of sight storage for clothes and bedding within main cabin. To have the ability to house a generator, thus providing electricity and increase ability to go off grid with both a 12v and 240v was needed. Last but definitely not least, we cannot pass up the necessity of a small bar.

We needed a theme that both myself and Michelle could agree on and a pipe dream of wanting to travel Route 66 turned into an American Diner 50's styling theme.

From start to finish there were many challenges; some were expected, some of which were a complete surprise. The design was in my head; a vision that I could not really put down on paper. In

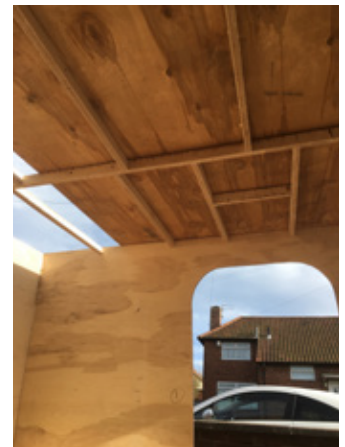


order to transfer the image into reality, the sourcing of parts became paramount. Thanks to eBay, I spent hours looking for something that complimented my design. For example, I didn't want square windows in the doors, nor round portholes, so I sourced yacht windows at a great price to compliment my design.

As per the 1950's pointed lights look I wanted to replicate the jet era and space race theme. I was unable to find anything suitable but finally settled on LandRover lights as the main rear lighting and replica 1960's

MG number plate lights.

I looked at a number of options for the seating, and even visited an upholsterer to enquire about



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© Tear Jerkers 1997



the booth. The price was ridiculous, and with a £2000 GBP budget, having seating that could convert into a bed would take up almost half the budget. By purchasing extra padded headboards from E-bay, they gave me all the materials I needed for less than £200 GBP.

The flat roof had the potential to sag from the weight, thus causing water to pool during rain. So when installing the beams, I made them convex. The difference from the side wall and the centre beam was only 5cm which prevented the weight of the roof materials from making the surface concave prevent pooling.

The biggest challenge was bending the aluminum coping around the door edge as well as the door frame. My tool collection is similar to what you would expect most DIY enthusiasts to have, no specialty tools or bending equipment. When trying to bend the trim, the outside edge bends more than the angled edge which results in an untrue bend. I remedied this at a cost of less than £6 GBP by visiting my local Toolstation and purchasing a rubber mallet. I drilled and screwed

a straight edge so when bending around the curved edges, the rubber mallet would strike the angled edge of the trim. This bent more than the inner edge and leaves no damage or indentations like a standard hammer would.

Securing the hatch posed additional issues. On my first build, I simply attached the hinge to a thick strong back wall. Although this took the weight, I had to use a number of hinges covered in a rubber strip with plenty of sealant and trim on either side. This joint was only 90% effective, as water found its way into the main cabin as well as the galley despite my attempts to remedy. On this build I wanted the hinge to be at least 6 inches away from the rear dividing wall so should there be any leaks the main cabin would be spared. In order to do this, I incorporated an overhang using the same principles as the roof. (one of the pics shows this clearly)

Although the hinge and joints are watertight at present and should remain so for many years; in the event of future issues, damage should be minimal.

The building process started with renovating the 80's caravan chassis. New brake shoes and bearings were located on E-bay, and I removed the outriggers and the back shortened. I did consider moving the axle and suspension forward,





however, I knew the majority of the weight would be within the rear. I also love the wheels set back, in my mind as long as the nose weight and total weight did not exceed our touring caravan, I would be happy.

Prior to commencing the actual build, I purchased some sheets of 4' x 8' hardboard, drew the design, cut door openings, rear curve etc. In order to establish a life size model I knew I would be happy with, and minimize waste and prevent me starting over, these hardboard sections did not go to waste, they became templates for the main construction.

After cutting the rear curve of the side wall, the off-cuts were used to brace the walls and ensure the walls sat 90 degrees to the base no specialist tools required, just common sense.

After setting the walls in place, then came the framing of the front. I curved around the front instead of up and over, the curve cut into the floor and was used to generate a new template from the now redundant hardboard. I curved the framing cut from a sheet ensuring they remained one piece to maximize strength and rigidity.

Curving the plywood around the front took approximately 10 days. No steaming equipment resulted in me pinning the front and attaching ratchet straps. The morning dew softened the wood, the sun during the day dried the wood but softened the glue slightly. Tightening the straps a little each morning, as well as each night, resulted in me being able to bend the ply without splitting or cracking.

One of the things I am proud of are the wheel arches. Sticking to a budget was not easy and chrome wheel arches can be expensive. I managed to purchase a chrome spare wheel cover rim from a 4x4. I then cut it into half sections so the edging would fit all the way around. This prevented friction rubbing against the skin on the inside while producing a safe outer edge.

Once I was happy with the wooded construction, the electrical wiring was quite straight forward. I am not a qualified electrician but was able to remember the basics from during my time many as an auto electrician. I applied the same science, coupled with skills I have accumulated over the year. Then came the aluminum skin. I amazed myself at how this brought everything together. A valuable lesson was learned that when bonding a sheet onto the side to be gentle - ease it into place - applying to much force can warp the material.

However, the most important aspect of the build, from a personal level, is the fact three generations took part in the project. My son, Kieron, is almost 16 and like myself in that he is practically minded but not the greatest from an academic perspective. He is looking to obtain an apprenticeship in engineering. This teardrop was a fantastic opportunity for me to spend quality father - son time and pass on knowledge that may assist in his



future as well. I was also able to teach practical skills that should remain with him for life. In August 2017, my dad will reach the ripe old age of 80. During his visits he also got involved and got so much pleasure from working with not only myself but also his grandson. This will probably never happen again and as such makes Doris special and priceless to me.

The amount of local interest generated has really surprised me. The build was completed on my driveway and I live on quite a busy



street. Folks from all walks of life that would normally go past wrapped up in their own personal world started stopping, asking questions, taking an interest, and commenting throughout the progression. These are now people that stop and talk; if only sometimes to say hello!

I had to stick to a deadline as our first trip away was planned with close friends to a local VW festival scheduled for Friday 16th June 2017. This was just 12 weeks from the start of the build (excluding trailer). Following

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two weeks of constant rain, I was running the risk of not completing but then a break in the weather give me hope. Thursday June 15th at 20:00 Doris was completed and ready for a road test! during road test which went really well, I called my sister to show her my achievement and in my excitement failed to secure the rear hatch properly. While bending down to open a lower cupboard door, the hatch came down on my head which rendered me unconscious with a nice laceration on the top of my head. The following day, while suffering the effects, I made some adjustments to the hatch to prevent this from happening again.



absolutely loves her and is already asking when he can spend more time in her.

If ever I was to offer advice to anyone thinking of building their own teardrop it would be the following: Although you can compromise on various aspects of the build, never compromise on your foundation.

The trailer strength, reliability and safety is paramount. Research and planning are important and not only save you time and effort but ensure the legality of the build. If you struggle with part of the build, don't be afraid to stop and go back the following day. Frustration can lead to costly mistakes.

We have also taken Doris to our rv campsite and my Dad stayed in Doris alongside our rv. He

Own it, use it and enjoy it!



BUG OUT



So. Let's talk pests. Those teeny, tiny creatures can cause serious annoyances in the midst of what might be the best camping trip ever. I spent a weekend battling them and came home determined to find a few ways to beat them in our next go-around.

1. BE SMART

• **Choose a dry location** - Never choose the location where there is standing water. Mosquitos' larvae tend to develop in water. If there is standing water nearby your camping location, you will find plenty of mosquitoes flying around.

• **Create a bonfire** - The mosquitoes and other bugs will be attracted to the light of the fire and when they will come closer, the heat and smoke will burn them and they will go away.

• **Keep the doors shut** - The best way to keep away from mosquitoes is to keep the screens and doors of your teardrop shut. Utilize a screen-sided tent around your living areas if possible.

2. USE A WATERPROOF REPELLENT



Repel 94101 6-Ounce Sportsmen Max Insect Repellent

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OUR TAKE AWAY: It's sticky and does not smell like roses, but it works. We keep a bottle in our home, in our vehicles and in our trailer. **\$3.47** [ORDER HERE](#)

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The combination of these natural substances helps keep mosquitoes and other insects away. Stylish, waterproof & very convenient to wear outdoors or indoor.

OUR TAKE AWAY: If the chemicals and toxins scare you away from the spray repellents here is an excellent replacement. Our family will wear these every trip. **\$11.00/10 pack** [ORDER HERE](#)

4. SCREENED TENTS



Quicent 10x10 Ez Pop up with Mesh Side Wall

Most teardrop or tiny campers carry some form of a tent to provide shade. If you are looking to avoid bugs as well as shade from

the sun, an easy up tent with screened side walls is the way to go! The Quicent is created with unique Silvox fabric that is 100% waterproof. The side wall is 100% mesh with middle Zipper in the front and after. Keeps the boring bugs away and allow air circulation.

OUR TAKE AWAY: It's worth it. The sides take very little additional time to set up and create a great barrier from invasive bugs. **\$129.99** [ORDER HERE](#)



Adventure is Waiting

Q & A with Brian Seeley

COOL TEARS: How did your business get started?

BRIAN: My wife Janice and I were looking for a new project to do and we wanted to build something that our family could use for camping instead of a tent. We looked into building our own enclosed utility trailer to hold all of our camping gear. It was going to be just a simple box on wheels with a couple of doors and a rack on top for our bikes. The more we thought about it, the more we wanted to build something more interesting. Janice was researching solutions on a trip home from going tent camping and came across a tutorial on Instructables.com on how to build a teardrop camping trailer in 33 steps. Since we are avid woodworkers, we decided that this was the project for us! We actually founded the company on an iPhone while on a tent camping trip to Detroit Lake State Park. Then we started designing and researching teardrop trailers and after many months of planning and AutoCAD drawing revisions we were ready to build our first trailer. This trailer became our company's prototype, Annabelle. The construction of Annabelle started in September of 2015 and took 7 months to complete. We sold our first trailer last summer and have been building steadily ever since.

COOL TEARS: How did you come up with the name Aero Teardrops?

BRIAN: We liked the idea of the teardrop being something that is retro and we like that our trailers to have a retro feel to them with nice modern touches added where you need them. The name Aero to us harkens back to a time when many forms of transportation were being streamlined. There was a flare to these forms of transportation that we are attracted to. The AeroTRAIN built in 1955 by GM is one of my favorites.

COOL TEARS: What are your most popular models and/or accessories?

BRIAN: Our most popular model is the highway version of 5x10 Steel. The high clearance version is becoming very popular as well. Our most popular options are the stove slide-out in the galley, our interior table option, the tongue mounted cargo basket, and roof rack.

We build lightweight, affordable, and handcrafted teardrop trailers that allow everyone to enjoy outdoor living.

COOL TEARS: What do you think sets your trailers apart from others?

BRIAN: We've found that people who really get excited about our trailers are those looking to do more in their teardrop trailer than just sleep. Our customers enjoy cooking special meals while camping and appreciate that our thoughtful galleys and large countertops allow them to do so. They also prefer to have modern features on their trips but still want to feel like they're camping. Our customers also get to name their trailer so the trailer is special and unique to them. We strive to provide high quality trailers and like to focus on details that are simplistic and pleasing to the eye. Another thing that sets us apart is value for the dollar. Our goal is to build well equipped trailers at an affordable price that include many features that are additionally priced options from other teardrop manufacturers.

COOL TEARS: I noticed on your website that you offer a high clearance package, can you tell us more about that?

BRIAN: The high clearance trailer was first developed



for a customer that had a four wheel drive Toyota Tacoma. He wanted the trailer to have the same sized wheel and tires as his truck so he could share a spare tire between the truck and trailer. He also has a favorite fishing hole that can only be reached by driving through a washout so he wanted enough ground clearance to reach it safely. We figured out what it would take

to make this happen and with his input our first high clearance trailer, Gertrude, was born. It started as a one time build but while she was in the shop being built, five more customers wanted one for themselves. In most cases we can match the lug pattern on many popular tow vehicles. This helps cut down on having to carry an additional spare tire for the trailer.

COOL TEARS: How can our readers find out more about your campers or contact you to purchase a unit? (This is obviously the most important question.)

BRIAN: Our website is aeroteardrops.com, follow us on Instagram @aeroteardrops, our Facebook page is [facebook.com/aeroteardrops](https://www.facebook.com/aeroteardrops). We can be reached by phone 503-706-6044 and by email info@aeroteardrops.com



📞 503-706-6044

💻 aeroteardrops.com

📷 @aeroteardrops



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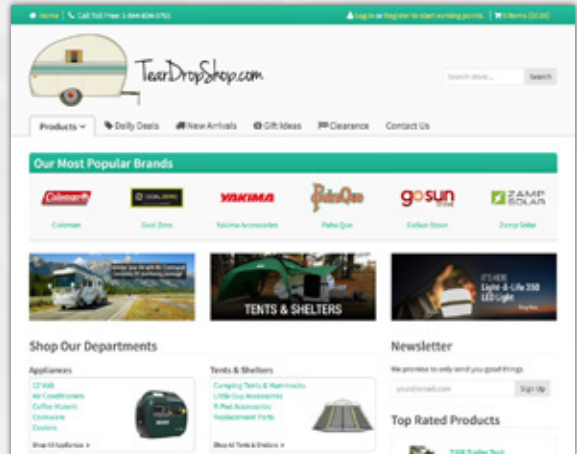
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