

RV travel big for 2003

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“There are some new construction techniques that have really improved RVs,” said Belanger. “Some manufacturers are trending toward an ultra-light design with a fiberglass laminated exterior and an aluminum framework. They’re very lightweight, so people can pull them with less vehicle horsepower. Plus, they’re insulated on six sides with a sealed underbelly to protect tanks and plumbing, and that makes them winter friendly.”

Though the economy may be in a state of flux, but the RV industry is thriving.

“The industry had a record year last year and this year has started off the same,” said Dellinger. “People just don’t want to fly, and they’re getting more and more into camping as a family unit. Plus, we’re seeing trends toward more local vacations and that’s good for Michigan.”

Denton notes that there are 9.3 million RVs on the roads nationwide and 10 percent of Michigan pleasure travelers camp. With many retailers up as much as 42 percent in RV sales, campgrounds nationwide may expect to see a leap in visitors this year.

“For many people, a really nice campground is less than

a tank of gas away,” added Dellinger. “That means that it’s very easy to pack up the family and head out of town for a nice, relaxing weekend. Plus, Michigan has some of the best campgrounds I’ve ever seen. People really enjoy getting out into the woods by the water. This state has a lot of undiscovered magic.”

According to Belanger, while many northern

United States. Of course, Florida and the western states remain very popular destinations.”

RVers can choose to join travelers’ clubs that bring RVing enthusiasts together. Most of the major manufacturers sponsor owners’ travelers clubs that hold yearly camping trips. There are also a few non-manufacturer sponsored camping clubs in the Traverse City area.



Michigan RVers camp within 25 miles of their homes, others are planning on hitting the open road.

“We hear people talk about RVing to Alaska,” added Belanger. “It’s really seasonal though and people are heading everywhere in the

“Clubs offer an opportunity for people to get together, get to know new friends, and share stories,” said Denton. “RVing is a great way to relax and with all of the comforts of home, your vacation possibilities are almost endless.”

Stacie Carlson is a local freelance writer.

Record-Eagle/Jim Bovin

More from the Northwest Michigan Camper and RV show: At right are bunk beds, RV style and below left is an RV living and dining area.



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