



# NATCOA NEWSLETTER NORTH AMERICAN TRUCK CAMPER

## OWNERS ASSOCIATION

VOL. 4 ISSUE 2  
FALL 2011

### TAKING YOUR TC TO MEXICO— BAJA A TRUCK CAMPER PARADISE **BY DAN & LISA GOY**

We have been traveling and camping in Mexico, including Baja since 1985 and everywhere we go we always see Truck Campers. More recently we have had some folks travel in our Baja Caravan Tour with Truck Campers. One could say Baja was built for Truck Campers! Although we have seen every size of RV on Baja imaginable; from a Mercedes Unimog, a VW Westfalia, a 38' triple axel 5<sup>th</sup> wheel or a 45' Prevost Motorhome, nothing is better suited to travel both the paved routes and more remote destinations on Baja



then a truck and camper. What many folks do not realize about the two (2) Mexican States— Baja California (north) and Baja California Sur (south) — is just how vast Baja is and how few people actually inhabit this magnificent peninsula. Did you know Baja at 1300 km/800 miles, is longer than the state of California in the United States? Baja is still referred to as Mexico's frontier and the main highway, Mex 1 (officially named the Benito Juarez Highway) was only completed in 1973; prior to that 4 wheel drive, including lots of supplies and time,

was mandatory to make the trip to Cabo San Lucas by vehicle. Whereas California, the American State, has a population of over 38 million, Baja California(s) has only 3.5 million people. Given that the majority of people that live in Baja California reside in Ensenada, Rosarito, Tecate, Tijuana and Mexicali, approximately three (3) million people. And about 450,000 populate La Paz, Todos Santos, Los Barriles, San Jose Del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas in Southern Baja, this means everything in between is remains sparsely populated and twice as much coastline as the northern US sister state. The reality of few people, barren beautiful beaches, stunning vistas and inexpensive fuel makes it a dream destination for RVers.

Although Mex 1 has improved immensely since 1973, much of the road remains narrow and without  
*(Continued on page 3)*

#### Inside this issue:

Events	4
Sponsor's Corner— Host RV	3
Forum Tips and Tricks	3

- Rick Law – President
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#### NATCOA LEADERSHIP

## CORPORATE SPONSOR'S CORNER

The owners of Host Industries, Inc., Dave Hogue and Mark Storch, are second generation RV builders with over 65 years of combined experience in the industry, first in the family business, Beaver Coaches Inc. and for the last eleven years, with their own company Host Industries, Inc.

They may not be the biggest in the industry but they are definitely among the best. With the excellent quality of their product and their innovative industry leading designs like the triple slide "Everest" Truck Camper with its 8-foot wide main floor, or the 330 Quad slide motor home built on the Ford F-550 Crew Cab 4-wheel drive chassis, Host has found it's unique niche in the marketplace.

Host RV's are built with you in mind and include features and comforts you won't find anywhere else in the industry. Host builds all of their campers and motor homes to order allowing the customer the opportunity to participate in not only choosing the standard features and options, but in many instances, custom features the customer would like to suit their own personal needs as well.

Whether you're retired and live in your RV most of the year, or you use it for short trips and vacations, you deserve the high quality and durable construction of a Host RV.



You can check them out yourself at [www.hostcampers.com](http://www.hostcampers.com), contact them directly at (541) 330-2328 or stop by the factory in Bend Oregon for a tour.



**BIG WIG from Hellwig Products—check out the video by clicking on the link below!**

<http://www.hellwigproducts.com/gallery/videos/before-and-after-effects-of-sway-control/>

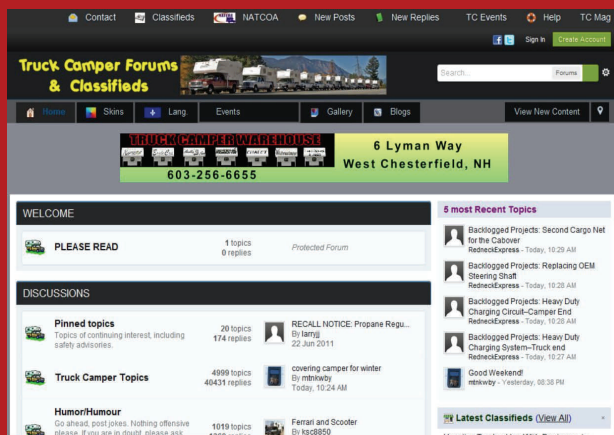


Hellwig Products Co., Inc. is proud to introduce the new Big Wig Series of rear sway bars built specifically for Heavy Duty trucks with a high center of gravity. Truck Camper, Heavy Hauler, and Heavy Tow applications need the extra control that the Big Wig provides with its larger diameter for more stability in heavily loaded conditions. The larger diameter will increase stability over 20% and extra heavy duty hardware provides lasting durability.

Hellwig recommends you also upgrade with a Hellwig Front sway bar for a complete performance and handling package. Backed by Hellwig's lifetime warranty, the Big Wig will be a lasting investment in your vehicle's performance.

**Hellwig Products**  
**800 367-5480**  
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# NATCOA Forum tips and tricks



This column discusses how to use the NATCOA online forum. While the forums can be viewed by non-members, there is a wealth of features available only to members.

## NEW FORUM LAYOUT!!

Since our last newsletter we've had a major upgrade to the NATCOA forum. Once you log-in, take the time to go into "My settings" (top right click icon to the left of your "handle" or nickname). Click Notification options and select the ones you wish receive. You'll receive an email with those notifications.

Don't forget the new classifieds section. There is also a not too obvious box to give you a pop up when you receive a new personal message.



(Continued from page 1)

shoulders deterring many with larger RVs from making this a Snowbird haven. As always there are exceptions. Hwy 19 between La Paz and Cabo San Lucas has become a 4 Lane freeway with large shoulders (should be finished this year), Toll Roads are available for both Mex 1 from TJ to Ensenada Mex 2 from TJ to Mexicali and most recently almost all of Hwy 19 from Tecate to Ensenada has been rebuilt and extensively widened with including some four (4) lane sections. There are many fantastic camping locations on Baja for Rvers, traveling in a Truck Camper that provide many more excellent destinations, particularly those with 4 wheel drive. Here are a few of those special spots:

**Campo #5** just south of Ensenda overlooks the Pacific ocean only minutes from very popular La Bufadora (blow hole). The view is nothing short of spectacular as you are hundreds of feet up on a ridge, easy to get too but size is everything, smaller is definitely better.

Both **Laguna Hanson** and **Mike's Sky Rancho** can be reached off Hwy 3 west from Ensenada to San Felipe. Laguna Hanson provides very basic camping within the Parque Nacional Constitucion 1857, where you will be up in the mountains, surrounded by pines, birds and sometimes snow. Mike's Sky Rancho is very popular with many amenities hot showers, a restaurant and bar, and a pool. Your Truck Camper will be a good fit here!

Take the turnoff to Playa La Gringa, Bahia De Los Angeles at the junction off Mex 1. The first 45 miles/72 km is a dream, all paved, 2 lanes with some shoulder. The last 11 km/7 miles requires a slow go and can be quite rough, most larger RVs do not make the journey. We fell in love with Baja and Mexico in Bahia De Los Angeles, we are confident your experience will be similar. While Lisa sleeps, I cannot resist the draw of sunrise, nothing short of spectacular.

**Ojo De Liebre Lagoon Campground** is just south of Guerrero Negro (KM 207) and a magical place to stay overnight and watch whales the next day. Only accessible during whale watching season (January-April), you drive across the salt flats to the edge of the lagoon where you can camp for a small fee. You can book your whale watching and listen to the whales at night though you need to keep an eye on your pets as there are lots of coyotes.

At Km 63 south of Loreto is the road to **Bahia Aqua Verde**, where Mexico 1 veers inland from the Cortez coast, a part-graded, part-ungraded, gravel-and-dirt road heads southeast for 41 kms/26 miles to the fish camp of Agua Verde. The roadbed is steep and winding in places, not at all suitable for trailers or motor homes but a great place to take a truck camper.

In 1985 with our 1<sup>st</sup> Class C Van we camped at **Punta Conejo** on the Pacific coast south of Ciudad Constitucion, 80 km north of La Paz. Our children were 2, 7, and 4 years

(Continued on page 4)

# Let's Get Out There! Rallies and Gatherings

## Southeast Truck Camper Rally October 14-16, 2011 Cedar Keys, Florida

<http://setcrally.blogspot.com/>

### Two Buccaneer Tours & Excursions to provide transportation to Seafood Festival!

For everyone planning on going to the Seafood Festival we are working on arrangements for optional transportation.

Two Buccaneer Tours & Excursions will pick you up from the RV resort and return at designated times for only \$2.00 per person. This is great value considering parking for the festival can be hard to find and cost any where from \$5.00 to \$20.00 depending on location. A lot of the locals get in on the action by charging to park in their yards and vacant lots, which can sometimes be a good distance to walk to the event. The bus is limited to twelve seats, so we will have a sign up form when checking in for the rally.

Two Buccaneer Tours & Excursions also offer other Tours of the Cedar Key area.

*(Continued from page 3)*

old and we stayed right on the beach, this was a wonderful experience. Lots of surfers to watch and good fresh seafood available. Although this is quite isolated, it is good unpaved road with decent clearance, easily reached with a 2 wheel truck camper. Fees are low, sunsets stunning. Punta Conejo is very popular with Truck Camper RVers. Some of the better sites across the arroyo require 4 wheel drive.

This is only the tip of the Baja Iceberg for great places to stay with a Truck Camper. Jack Williams, author of **The Comprehensive Guidebook to Mexico's Baja California** stated "Baja California is a unique recreational *Paradise-in-the Sun* dominated by its 2,000 mile coastline. It pampers the jet set in its cities, hotels and resorts, without the high-rise, high-tension setting common in other resort areas. Those craving outdoor adventures find a largely undeveloped, beautiful land where escape to another environment and culture is only a step away. Few visit Baja without knowing they have been in a very special place, truly a magnificent peninsula." We could not have said it better ourselves.

My Mom and Dad were Truck Campers for 30 years and we wish they could have seen Baja.

Dan and Lisa Goy are with:

Baja Amigos RV Caravan Tours. Check out the website at [www.BajaAmigos.net](http://www.BajaAmigos.net).

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*Dedicated to the memory of Barry Monkman of "Baja & Back" caravans who tragically died of a heart attack last Spring doing what he loved the best, caravanning in Baja. Barry was known by several NATCOA members.*

*For those who do not wish to use a commercial caravan, there is a Travel Buddies matching site at [www.mexicotravelbuddies.com](http://www.mexicotravelbuddies.com). It is run by a NATCOA member, but is **not** endorsed by NATCOA. Traveling with others can make RV'ing in Mexico safer & more hassle free.*



## **Support the Corporate members that support NATCOA!**

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## Coming this winter... Northwest Caravan Report

By the time this newsletter is sent we will have had the SIXTH annual trip over the North Cascades Pass (SR-20) to see the beautiful changing fall colors.

## Watch for a report next issue

If you received this newsletter in the mail please provide us with your email so we may save on postage and provide you a color copy.

Email [newsletter@natcoa.com](mailto:newsletter@natcoa.com). Thanks for your support!

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