

**NRVIA
Member of the Month**

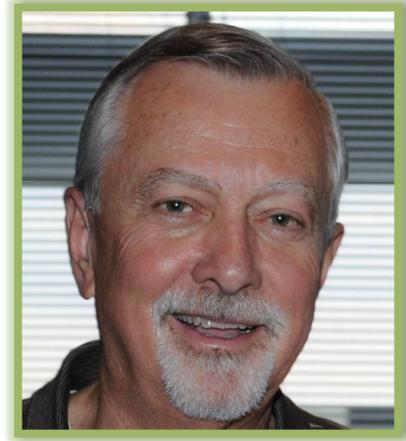


Lew King #26

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Kerrville, Texas



WHAT GOT YOU INTERESTED IN BECOMING AN RV INSPECTOR?

At first, I wanted to get some training and information so I could work on my own motorhome. After joining Workamper News, I was sent an email about a training event for RV Maintenance and RV Inspection near where we were going to be workamping in Colorado that summer. While at the training, I really enjoyed the maintenance part but realized that I was more interested in the inspection business for some retirement income and tax breaks.



WHAT WAS YOUR RV BACKGROUND BEFORE BECOMING AN RV INSPECTOR?

My wife, Linda and I began Rving in a Volkswagen window van back in the '70's in Arkansas. During those years, I learned how to work on VW engines and actually rebuilt four engines in my garage. So, when we bought a Newmar Dutch Star motorhome in 2006, it was natural for me to start making some repairs on the coach (not the engine!), learning from information on the internet, books and forums as I went.

DO YOU OWN AN RV AND IF SO, WHAT IS THE YEAR, MAKE, AND MODEL?

We currently own a 2008 DRV Mobile Suites 36TK3 Fifth Wheel Trailer with 3 slideouts.

STICKS & BRICKS OR FULL-TIME RVER?

Six months after we bought the Dutch Star in December of 2006, we sold our sticks & bricks house in Mississippi, had a humongous garage sale and moved into the coach. Some of our friends thought we'd lost our marbles! However, we had some special friends in Texas who were already full-timing and told us how great it was and that we weren't crazy to go ahead and do it. So we did it. Ten years later, we're still full-timing although we're stationary right now so we can concentrate on our Royal RV Inspection business in the Kerrville – greater San Antonio area.

WHAT TYPES OF MARKETING DO YOU DO ONLINE AND LOCALLY?

I market online with my Facebook business page, and I recently got my website operating, which is already earning me some leads. I've also gone around to local RV parks and local RV repair shops to get acquainted and leave some business cards. I've put magnetic signs on my van. Linda and I have worked the San Antonio RV Show in January for the past three years with Cooper and Lady E and other local



inspectors, giving out cards and talking to Rvers and wannabee Rvers - "pressing the flesh" as we say. Quick marketing story: I recently bought some tires for one of my vehicles. As I got acquainted with my salesman, he told me that Rvers come in their store all the time to buy tires. I gave him my best RV Inspection spiel about inspection benefits and gave him some business cards, which he moved to a great spot right in front of his computer for customers to see. Word of mouth is still effective, but I'm convinced that an internet website is the best way to get the word out online about our business. It's working for us 24/7, even when we're sleeping.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE INSPECTION/CLIENT EXPERIENCE AND WHY?

My most memorable inspection/client experience was my first paid inspection here in Texas after I had completed my training. A single lady was buying a used Class C at a large RV dealership in the area, and her salesman wisely had the RV parked at a nice RV park just up the road from the dealership with full hookups. When I went in to the dealership to get the keys from the salesman, I had on my Inspector cap, shirt and name

tag – all decked out, as we say in Texas. I gave him my business card and the RV Inspection brochure we were using at the time. He took it, started reading it, then looked up at me and said something like, "This is very professional. I can use you. I'll recommend you to folks looking for an RV Inspector." I was quite "blown away" and so gratified by his response. A good first impression is very important.

The inspection on the Class C mini went well. The lady client was very nice and so excited about her new traveling adventure as a first-time RVer. She pored over the RV as I inspected and got more acquainted with her soon-to-be "home on wheels." Linda was also there and shared some helpful tips and answered some of her questions. The last time I emailed her, she was in another state and having a terrific time.

I really enjoy helping 'first-time' RVer's get a good RV the first time out. It's so important that they have a good experience with their first RV purchase, and we RV Inspectors are key players in helping make that happen for them. My mission has a motto: "On Your Team to Your RV Dream." I like to be on their team and go to bat for them in finding that dream RV. It's very fulfilling.



WHAT TIP(S) WOULD YOU OFFER TO SOMEONE WHO IS CONSIDERING A NEW VENTURE IN RV INSPECTIONS?

- Get the foundational training of the RV Maintenance Course and the Advanced Inspection Training (Learn By Doing Course). Some of this can now be done online as well as in person.
- Get your own website as soon as possible. It will become your main source of inspection leads.
- Attend the National RV Inspectors Association Conference in October every year. The inspiration and information you will gain are vital, and the relationships you can develop with other inspectors is invaluable.
- Market your business at every opportunity with social media, dealerships, RV repair shops, truck tire shops. Talk to everyone about your business to help get the word out and pass out business cards wherever and whenever you can. Always carry them with you. Get caps and polo shirts with your business name embroidered on them and wear them often. Your marketing efforts will have a cumulative effect in helping your business get established in the business community.
- Get ideas for your business from other RV Inspectors by viewing their websites and Facebook pages.
- Take a look at the new RV inspection software called RV Inspector Pro at rvinspectorpro.com. It can be used with Apple products and most Android tablets and phones. I'm using it successfully and highly recommend that you check it out for possible use in your business.
- Realize that it's going to take some time and hard work to build your business, and it will not happen overnight. However, as you keep your eye on the goal, it's going to be worth it in the long run.



HOW HAS BEING A MEMBER OF NRVIA HELPED YOU IN YOUR RV INSPECTION JOURNEY?

My NRVIA Membership has done a lot for me. It has provided my foundational RV training courses, informative webinars, and notification of important news on the RV Inspection front. NRVIA sets the benchmarks of RV Inspection by its Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics. It has brought me inspection leads through the 'Find An Inspector' page on their website. NRVIA holds a national conference each year to keep me informed, inspired and connected to the association and other inspectors. It has offered me credibility as a Certified RV Inspector with the training that I've had.

I can't imagine being an RV Inspector without my membership in the NRVIA. It would be like a doctor not being a member of the American Medical Association. To me, it's very important to be connected nationally through the association. This is not just about me and my inspection business – it's all of us inspectors together representing our new industry collectively through the NRVIA. I am also very grateful for the leadership of Terry Cooper and Steve Anderson in the organization. Without them, I know that there would be no RV Inspection nationally as we know it today. I deeply honor their commitment and sacrifice that is ongoing to help forge the new industry of RV Inspection in the RV world and feel privileged and blessed to be a very small part of helping their dream come true.