

# MERRY CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas 2004

The news this year is what we are calling, "The Great Escape." In May of 2003, we took our truck camper to Baja and had a wonderful time. After that trip, the idea of RVing full time became an obsession. For about the last year, we have been thinking of selling our property and other assets and becoming vagabonds in some sort of RV. At first, we thought we could do it in the truck camper which had the advantages of 4 wheel drive and all weather capability, not to mention, it was paid for and very well set up. However, the problem became storage. It didn't look possible to live full time with only 3 shirts and 2 pairs of pants each. Gradually, the dream turned to life and travel in a motor home.

Well, the great escape has finally started. At long last we are completely off our old property in Douglas City. The property sold in only one week, but it took us nearly 3 months after close of escrow to completely vacate the premises. Getting out was a huge job. We ran yard sales 7 days a week for about two months and then started sorting and moving the rest. A lot went to the dump, much was given away, the stove business was moved to a large storage shed in Weaverville, the remaining items for sale were moved to a second large storage shed in Weaverville, and the things we wanted to keep were moved to a third small storage shed in Weaverville. It didn't help that Donna broke her ankle and leg about 15 days before escrow closed. It was such a bad break that she had emergency surgery that night. Six weeks in a cast and then six more weeks in a brace, she's now doing pretty well. It made the selling, packing, and moving a real challenge.

Our former next door neighbor has allowed us to store our Lance camper and an enclosed cargo trailer on his property, and another friend in the Indian Creek Trailer Park (Douglas City) has given us his spare bedroom to use as a temporary office. We are very grateful to have such wonderful friends.

After months and months of active motor home shopping in our local area, Southern Oregon, Nevada, Southern California, Central Oregon, and the Internet, we came to the conclusion that nothing we saw suited us and that we would have to place a factory order for a coach built to our requirements. We finally selected Monaco as the brand, Cayman as the model, and DeMartini RV in Grass Valley as the dealer.

While waiting two months for the coach to be built, we established residency in La Pine, Oregon. We are renting a mobile there and Oregon is our current legal address

and home base. If you're going to travel in a motor home full time, you might as well pick a home state that has more advantages than California. We chose Oregon in that they have no sales tax and their vehicle registration fees are very low, and it's a beautiful area to experience with an RV.

We picked up the new motor home right near the factory in Coburg, Oregon late in October and drove it to Weaverville as a shake down cruise. Recently we moved it to our current temporary location at Indian Creek Trailer/RV Park in Douglas City, California. This is quite convenient for us as our helper, George, lives here and our temporary office is here. If you'd like to visit us, we are in Space #20, but call first to be sure we're still here.

The new motor home is wonderful. We had it specifically built for us and so just about everything is exactly the way we want it. For the technically inclined, it is a 34 foot, 2005 Monaco Cayman, diesel pusher. It is very comfortable to live in and quite nice to drive down the road. Our plan was to get the shortest coach that we thought we could live in on a full time basis, and that's what we've accomplished. This is now our full time and only home.

Ultimately we will have no fixed home base, just a mail forwarding service. We will own only what we can carry. No debts, and no extra stuff. This is our idea of freedom. Having been homeowners all of our adult lives, this is a major transition in lifestyle and thinking. Not everyone can imagine such a rootless lifestyle. It has taken almost a year to get our minds around the concept. So far, we love the idea. Not having to work on the house and property is such a relief. Now the question is, can we become complete vagabonds? We think so! If you're curious about the technicalities of this lifestyle, and/or the psychology that drives it, please get on our email list and we will keep you updated with computer newsletters. (Nope, we are definitely not going to mail out paper newsletters.) On the other hand, if you think we're nuts and you don't want to hear more, just drop us a note and we'll take you off the email list. If you choose to be on the list, you may very well get more information than you ever wanted. There is a good possibility that our newsletters will form the basis of a book or a lecture series dealing with selecting an RV and living the RV lifestyle.

Most of our future correspondence needs to be accomplished via computer. Having our mail forwarded is very slow and very expensive. Our mail will be held in Oregon until we call the forwarder and tell her where we are or will be the following week. Your letter could chase us around for a long time and maybe never get to us.

Your email could also be delayed until we get somewhere where we can get a good computer connection. Happily, this problem will diminish in the future as more and more locations develop wireless "hot spots." Currently, our laptop computer is set up to utilize Wi Fi hot spots, if available and to a very limited degree, we can also get online using our cell phone. The cell phone is painfully slow so please do not send us jokes and please no photographs or complicated graphics. You can bet that if we visit you, the first thing we'll ask for is access to your local phone line.

HOME IS WHERE YOU PARK IT! If you would like to see recent pictures of us and the new home, please direct your computer to [www.doctordiesel.com/motorhome](http://www.doctordiesel.com/motorhome)

Our ultimate goal is to travel the United States, Canada, and Mexico at least 8 months of every year. Unfortunately, we have many loose ends to clean up first, i.e., selling the stove business, the Lance camper and Ford truck, maybe our 2003 Volkswagen diesel Golf, our biodiesel processor, a professional treadmill, a large digital copy machine, and a ton of this and that. Thus, we will spend some of our time in or near Trinity County, California through income tax season, i.e., April 15, 2005. This will also give Donna the opportunity to serve her current tax clients for at least another year.

In the meantime, we will try to travel a little as time permits. We expect to go away for a week or two around Christmas and New Years. Perhaps December 22 through January 3. Want a motor home in your driveway?

The major downside to the full time RV lifestyle is the potential of losing contact with friends and family. That possibility saddens us. We hope you'll take the time to stay in touch. We're running from the work and burdens that our assets have become, and toward a more adventurous life. We have not, and never will, abandon our friendships.

We send our love and our best wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

Chuck & Donna Cole

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