

# ESCAPING AN RV FIRE

By “Mac the Fire Guy” McCoy

Recently, an RV fire took the lives of John and Sue Thomas, long-time American Coach owners. The fire started from a front right tire blowout and they were forced to the rear of their coach. We will never know why they couldn't escape the fire, but maybe this would be a good time to practice your egress in case of an emergency.

As many of you know, I am a fire safety instructor at FMCA rallies. We just finished the Great Lakes regional rally and while there, Jane and Jerry Lihou and I made a video showing how to get out of your coach using the emergency window. You can view this video at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-or4RMunZU&feature=youtu.be>

It is important that everyone who stays with you in your coach, including your

it was stuck shut. After much pushing and prodding, it finally came open. They sprayed the rubber trim with The Solution, a simple dry wash containing polymer wax, detergent and UV Protectant (available at [shinyrv.com](http://shinyrv.com)). This will make it open easily and you will want to do this a couple times every year.

The emergency window in their American Coach is very large and very heavy. You will want to have a dowel stashed nearby to



body strength as we age. As Jane said, “Once my butt was past the sill, the rest of my body just went with it.” She looked at the bruises on her arms as the cost of knowing they will be able to get out when the time comes.

It might be a good idea, if you are parked along the highway, to throw a flare out the window and a few feet away from the coach, so cars and trucks will drive around you and you won't get run over while escaping. These flares are small and won't take up much room next to the bed.

How much preparation you can do will depend on your emergency situation. You may not have time to throw out a flare or even a blanket, but having a solid fire escape plan may help you replace panic with logical, life-saving actions if a fire occurs.



hold the window open. You can order a “Mac Stick” at [macthefireguy.com](http://macthefireguy.com). It would be very difficult to slide through the window space with the weight of a heavy window hanging on top of you.

The window sills are metal so throw a blanket over the edge, corner to corner, and use it for padding on the way out. The stronger person can hold one end of the blanket, letting the other use it to slide down. This blanket will also come in handy to cover up in inclement weather or if you are under-dressed.

Going out the window can be difficult for some of us because we tend to lose upper



grandchildren, know how to get out in case of a fire.

The first thing you need to do is stand outside your window and see how high it is. How far can you expect to drop? For the purpose of practicing, you might push the RV park's picnic table under the window.

Next, open your emergency window. This was difficult for Jane and Jerry as they had never opened the fire escape window and



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He travels in his American Coach to all of the Family Motor Coach Assoc. rallies and teaches fire safety.