

# RVs popular despite chance of gas shortage

By LEM MESSEE  
Outdoors writer



## Outdoors

A gasoline shortage? You can't tell it from the recreation vehicle market.

RVs, as everyone knows, burn more fuel than automobiles. Fuel has risen one-third or so in price this year, it will rise even more, and there may be shortages.

But they're not worried at Ford Motor Co. "We believe industry sales of travel trailers, motor homes and other RVs will increase nearly 10 percent this year over 1978, which was itself a record sales year," said Robert C. Honke, Ford Division RV sales manager.

"By year end, sales should reach 579,000 — nearly 5 percent above the pre-oil embargo peak of 1973."

But he quickly adds today's RV market is different from the gold of cheap-gas days. "Not too long ago, the market

place was dominated by large trailers. Now motorized campers account for the vast majority of sales," he said. In 1973, vans and mini-homes were 12 percent of all RV sales. Today they are 55.5 percent of the RV market.

The reason: The down-sizing of autos to meet federal fuel economy goals means they can't pull trailers the way

they used to, Honke said.

Honke said the average RV owner — 44 years old and the father of two — tends to move around during a vacation trip instead of staying in a single campsite. So a motorhome, to him, is a far more convenient method of travel.

The buyers of fold-down campers tend to be in their early 30s and are going from backpacking to tent camping. "They are also purchasing trailers to carry boats, snowmobiles and off-road vehicles," Honke said.

Buyers of 6,000 pound, bus-sized travel trailers average 55 years of age. Many are older and retired. "For these buyers, a large trailer often serves as a

home away from home for extended vacation trips," Honke said.

So if there's a fuel shortage, an energy crisis or a gasoline shortage, you can't tell it to the American RV buyer.

THIS WEEK'S hot weather should prompt bluebirds to start moving onto the spawning beds, where they will be easy marks for anglers. Otherwise, fishing for Michigan's most popular species has been slow.

A hot spot is off the River Raisin, a half-mile onto Lake Erie. There large numbers of perch and walleye are available.

Kent Lake, a good producer of crap-

pies in recent years in Oakland County, is still good, according to the state DNR fishing report.

The trout opener on Paint Creek wasn't as good as last year, but the portion downstream from Gunn Road was yielding good catches of substantial brown trout.

On the St. Clair River, salmon fishing is slow and walleyes spotty. Small perch are being taken in Anchor Bay off Fair Haven and New Baltimore.

STONY CREEK Metropark, near Rochester, has three special programs next weekend:

"Owl Prowl" at 8 p.m. Friday, May

18. Naturalist Roger Bajorek will use slides and show off Oscar, the barred owl. Then there will be a prowling in the woods to look for owls.

"Voices of the Night" at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 19. Naturalist Bill Thomas will lead a walk to discover the sources of these voices.

"Swamp Tromp" at 8 a.m. Sunday, May 20. Bajorek will lead an exploration of the aquatic plants, animals and reptiles on the swamp shores of the lake. Wear old clothes and sturdy footwear.

Programs are free once you're in the park, but register in advance by calling the park nature center at 781-4621.

## Silent movie show planned

An educational and historical program, titled "Entertainment 1920s, The Way It Was," will be presented free Saturday, May 12, at 1 p.m. at the Redford Theater, Detroit.

Dr. Henry B. Aldridge, associate professor of speech and dramatic arts at Eastern Michigan University, will lec-

ture at the program, which includes silent movies.

Fred Fahrner, organist at Greenfield Village, will play the overture and accompany the movies.

For further information, contact the Redford Theater at 837-2560.

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FREE VALET PARKING for the Friday evening and the Saturday auctions.



Edmund Osthaus, oil on canvas, Size 18" x 24". Sun. #88

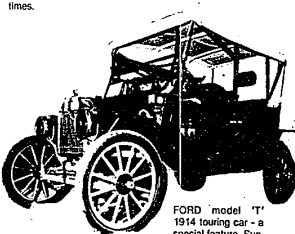


KPM plaque "Hagar and Ishmael leaving House of Abraham", Impressed KPM & Sceptre, 19th cent. 11" x 13 1/2". Sun. #33

Friday evening May 18th at 7 p.m.  
Saturday morning May 19th at 11 a.m.  
Sunday afternoon May 20th at 12 noon



Parlor Grand Piano by C. BECHSTEIN, Berlin Germany, Circa 1885. M. Black ebony case. Sun. #59.



FORD Model "T" 1914 touring car - a special feature. Sun. #43.

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