The Centering Pins Sets are used when mounting the wheels and then removed from the wheel. This sleeve set stays on the wheels at all times, is for use on STEER AXLES ONLY and will center the brake drum as well as the wheel.

This 2-piece sleeve set also stays on the wheels at all times, is for DUAL AXLES and is available with or without brake drum centering.

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so he prefers two 8D standard Caterpillar batteries with the inverter, at a cost of about $160 apiece.

The camper has a propane furnace with a 20-pound cylinder that provides hot water for showers, as well as power to the refrigerator when the inverter isn’t running, and heat on cold nights when it’s time to sleep. Stears said he gets about two to three weeks of use on one tank during winter. When he shuts the truck off at night, it kicks over to propane.

“I eat out of that refrigerator for $100 a week, and I eat good,” he said.

**OOIDA Life Members**

**Bob and Linda Caffee**

began their over-the-road careers after their children left home for college. Linda says it took a couple of tries to “find their groove” but since 2000, that groove has been trucking. As team drivers, they haul expedited freight for Landstar Express America.

In June of 2014, Land Line Editor-at-Large John Bendel joined Bob and Linda Caffee to watch their 2015 Freightliner Cascadia Evolution roll off the assembly line. From there it went to Bolt Custom Trucks in Fort Wayne, Ind., for its customized sleeper.

Last September, NBC Nightly News aired a TV feature on the pair and their innovative home on the road, which is interesting because even though the “Caffcadia” may have plenty of coolness, there is no TV.

“We don’t need one; we have a computer,” says Linda. “We want things that have dual use. It’s the rule for living in a tiny house. Everything has its place; you cannot have clutter. I love collapsible everything, bowls, cups, etc. You can have a lot of stuff, but you’ve got to keep it organized. Stackables, small see-through containers. You have to when you live in 100 inches by 100 inches.”

Linda and Bob say you learn to move around each other. “It’s like the waltz when you are both getting dressed,” she says. “You get to where you don’t even think about it.”

The Caffees have an Onan 7000-
Photos by Suzanne Stempinski

As the dump body is installed, electronics and wiring are ready to connect. A watt generator, shorepower, and a 6,000-watt sine wave inverter. At night, they plug in their electronics and charge them. “We are very connected. You have to be when you stay out as long as we do. I have a complete office.

“Sometimes we are out three months at a time. In the truck, a swarm of business is going on all the time. Going home to Silex, Mo., only four times a year actually makes your house time a vacation.”

Linda says the “Caffcadia 2” really is their tiny home. One day she’ll write a book about it. LL

Power is knowledge

Wanting to upgrade your own tiny house with more power? Better have a list of what you want heading in.

By Charlie Morasch, contributing writer

The veteran driver had a question for these power experts.

Visiting a truck fleet, Xantrex inverters had described the benefits of upgrading the company’s trucks from its 1,000-watt capability.

The driver, who happened to be bald, reached into his bunker and showed Xantrex representatives the device that had flummoxed his company truck’s battery system.

An 1800-watt hair dryer.

“He said, ‘my wife uses this every morning,’” said Steve Carlson, Xantrex sales manager. “He didn’t understand why it wouldn’t work. We were trying to get them to realize they need to offer a bigger inverter.”

Carlson said Xantrex usually suggests truck owners sit down with authorized inverter installers and spec out the electric appliances and devices they expect to use by looking at the back of the product or owner’s manuals.

“We usually say to add about 20 percent to that just to have a little overhead; then you choose the wattage of your inverter based on that number,” Carlson said. “We’ve found that the 1,800-watt range is kind of the sweet spot, so for many of the truck OEMs that we supply inverters to, they all use an 1,800-watt charge to work from. It works good in every application.”

In the last few years, Carlson said, truck owners have seen batteries drained and inverters damaged by small appliances that require brief surges.

Microwaves, for instance, often have a soft-start capability that allows a cooking power of 700 watts to use about 1,100 to 1,200 watts.

“With some microwaves you can buy at Wal-Mart, the soft start capability has been removed to save money and that 1,200 watts for cooking starts out at 5,000 watts,” Carlson said. “You want to make sure whatever inverter you buy has the capability to handle high loads because that split-second surge will really damage that inverter.”

Inverters sold from truck stops or other sources often oversell the proper amount of power needed, Carlson said. “Inverters that carry the UL 458 listing, he said, have been tested and approved for safety by the Underwriters Laboratories association.

Carlson said that bald trucker wound up using his hair dryer and a Xantrex inverter to thaw an engine component while in minus 30 degrees in North Dakota.

“That hair dryer saved him,” Carlson said, with a laugh. LL