



By Brian Diehl

## The Big Hairy Deal - 1985 MCI 96A3

Ever since I was a kid I wanted to travel around the country as much as possible. I think this was ingrained in me during my young and impressionable years by my parents. I can remember many day trips we took in our van. When I was about 11 years old my Dad purchased a 1956 Crown school bus. The bus still had the number "5" on it from the school district and we simply called her "Old Number Five".

My dad put in a bunch of bunks, a port-a-potty, a homemade couch, and a countertop and called it good. Of course, finances being what they were for us at that time it was a very nice conversion. We used a Kerosene heater for warmth and opened windows for cooling. The trips we took in that bus were real memory builders.

Later in my life, I found the enjoyment of weekend tenting trips with my wife to be times of real contentment, bonding, and enjoyment. However, the weather didn't always make it so nice to be out in a tent. So, a couple of years into our marriage I started talking about how nice it would be to get a bus and convert it into a real nice motorhome. My wife, knowing we didn't have the money for it, gave me the impression she was actually considering the idea. However, to her it was really just a "Big Hairy Deal"!

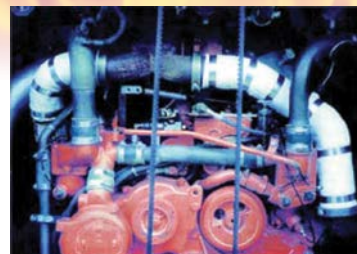
A number of years later, much to her dismay, we found ourselves in a position financially where we could seriously consider getting a bus. We

looked at some buses, met other people who were doing conversions, looked at used products, and had a very rainy tenting experience with a flat air mattress (the last one). After many long conversations/discussions and much trepidation, she finally agreed to the project ONLY if I would not let it become the only thing I ever did!

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