

📍 AUTUMN IN NEW YORK 📍 RV TOILETS 📍 ADDING TRAILER CARGO STORAGE

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SEPTEMBER 2022

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VOL. 58 NO. 9 • \$3.99 US
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Page 4

THIS ARTICLE IS REPRINTED FROM THE APRIL 2022 ISSUE

BY BRUCE W. SMITH

Cargo storage space on most A-frame travel trailers is at a premium, especially when it comes to accommodating bulkier items such as coolers, toolboxes, or generators. Stromberg Carlson

Products, a Michigan-based RV after-market manufacturer of RV products since 1959, has utilized the air space above the trailer tongue to accommodate an innovative, sturdy, and easy-to-install storage tray that can support up to 300 pounds.

Stromberg's Trailer Tray (Model CC-255) sits about 30 inches from the top of the A-frame, designed to clear standard 30-pound propane tanks. It has curved, tubular support legs that are adjustable in order to fit a wide range of trailer tongue widths, frontal configurations, and tow vehicle applications. The tray measures 30 inches wide and 20 inches deep and can accommodate generators, coolers, compressors, welders, wood boxes, and other items, according to company literature. It includes eight tie-down locations along the edges to secure cargo, and it incorporates drain holes to prevent moisture buildup.

The accompanying photos show this tray being installed on a 2021 Grand Design Reflection 313RLTS at Bish's RV in Meridian, Idaho, to carry a 98-pound Cummins Onan P4500i digital inverter generator. Locating the generator here makes it easy to access and also frees up valuable compartment storage space.

CARGO TRAY AND ACCESS TO PROPANE TANKS

Stromberg Carlson's instructions offer three suggestions for RVers who have propane tanks installed on the A-frame tongue regarding the removal

ONE TRAY ABOVE IT ALL

Stromberg Carlson's A-frame trailer tongue cargo tray takes storage to a new level.

and/or refilling of the tanks without detaching the storage tray:

- Replace the existing propane tank's hard plastic cover with a soft vinyl cover (this seems to be the best solution).
- Replace the existing hard plastic cover with a flip-top version to access the tank valves (still requires removal of the crossbar to take off the cover and refill the propane tanks).
- Leave the tank cover off for direct access to the propane tanks.

BOLT-ON CARGO TRAY INSTALLATION

In addition to the tray utilizing what would otherwise be open space, one added plus is that Stromberg's Trailer Tray can be installed by just about any RVer who has a basic $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch or $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch ratchet set, a couple of standard box-end wrenches, a drill, and a tape measure. (Company literature suggests the installation be a two-person project, because of the weight and construction of the tray.)

The unit uses a T-style front support and a pair of sturdy mandrel-bent heavy-wall tubes for the rear supports. The rear tubes sit in steel pockets clamped to the A-frame rails, while the front support clamps across the trailer tongue, just behind the jack.

- 1)** The Trailer Tray comes as a bolt-together kit with all hardware and a parts diagram.
- 2)** Installation requires removal of the propane tanks. Then the T-shaped lower support brace bolts to the A-frame tongue against the jack bracket using the supplied $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch-by-8-inch bolts.
- 3)** The lower pockets for the rear support pipes are then loosely bolted to the frame using the $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch-by-4-inch hardware.

All mounting parts, including the tray, can be adjusted to move the tray fore or aft or side to side as required to fit the trailer and clear the tow vehicle when it's making a sharp turn. I found it to be a clean, well-designed cargo tray system.

Bish's Craig Martinez, a certified RVDA/RVIA technician, installed this one in less than an hour and said the average RVer should be able to do the install in the same amount of time.

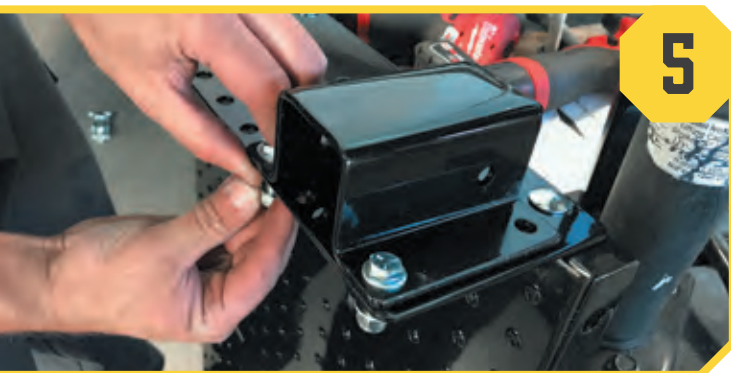


↑ Stromberg Carlson's Model CC-255 Trailer Tray uses the space above the trailer tongue and propane tanks of A-frame RV trailers.



Photos: Bruce W. Smith

ONE TRAY ABOVE IT ALL



4) The pair of side plates are attached to the Stromberg Carlson Model CC-255 Trailer Tray using the $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-by- $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch bolts and nuts and then finger tightened. **5)** The upper pipe pockets, closed end toward the tray, are attached to the side plates using the $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch-by-1-inch hardware, also finger tightened. **6)** The two rear support tubes are then placed into the lower pockets and turned so the curve places the upper ends toward the hitch. This provides the maximum tray clearance with the trailer. **7)** The next step is to set the tray on the rear supports and install the upper L-mounting bracket to the front support using the $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-by- $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch bolts and nuts, tightening the locknuts just enough to keep the tray and vertical support from moving. **8)** Now the tray assembly is adjusted so the bottom support brackets are equal distances from the trailer hitch, and then the rear bracket bolts are tightened. **9)** The Trailer Tray should be square to the trailer. This is done by twisting the tray, which moves the curved rear supports. It's best to have at least two inches of space between the tray and the closest point of the trailer. **10/11)** Tighten all the attaching hardware and double-check measurements. Once the tray is located where you want it, the pipes have to be drilled out using the bolt holes in the upper and lower pipe pockets as guides. The holes are drilled out with a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch bit so the locking bolts can be installed. The bolts prevent the curved tubes from rotating. **12)** In this installation, the tray cleared the propane tanks and the trailer's aerodynamic nose. **13)** It didn't budge when the 98-pound Cummins Onan generator was lifted and set in place on the tray. Stromberg Carlson rates the tray capacity at 300 pounds. It has plenty of tie-down and locking-cable attaching points to keep whatever is in the tray secure.



FURTHER INFORMATION
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