

TRAVEL | WORK | EXPLORE

ISSUE 8 • MARCH/APRIL 2021

# ROOTLESS LIVING

## The ADVENTURE ISSUE

SAWTOOTH  
MOUNTAINS

Solo  
Vanlife

Turn Your  
Passion into a  
Remote Business





Sawtooth Hotel and Restaurant. And for dessert, make sure to swing by Stanley Scoops for ice cream!

Note: Most of these establishments are only open certain days of the week, so make sure to check their hours in advance!

### GO ON A GUIDED TOUR

If you're looking for activities beyond hiking and kayaking, there are a few tour companies in Stanley that can take you fishing, horseback riding, and rafting.

### Where to Stay in the Sawtooth Mountains

One thing we loved about the Sawtooth Mountains is the abundance of free, dispersed campsites. We boondocked at Stanley Lake Dispersed one of the nights of our trip and loved it!

If you'd prefer a paid campground with a few more amenities, we'd suggest looking into Stanley Lake Campground, Glacier View Campground, Point Campground, and Sunny Gulch Campground.

For something a bit more luxurious than camping, Stanley has a handful of nice Airbnbs to choose from, as well as cabins for rent at the Triangle C Cabins and a mix of hotel rooms and cabins at Redfish Lake Lodge.

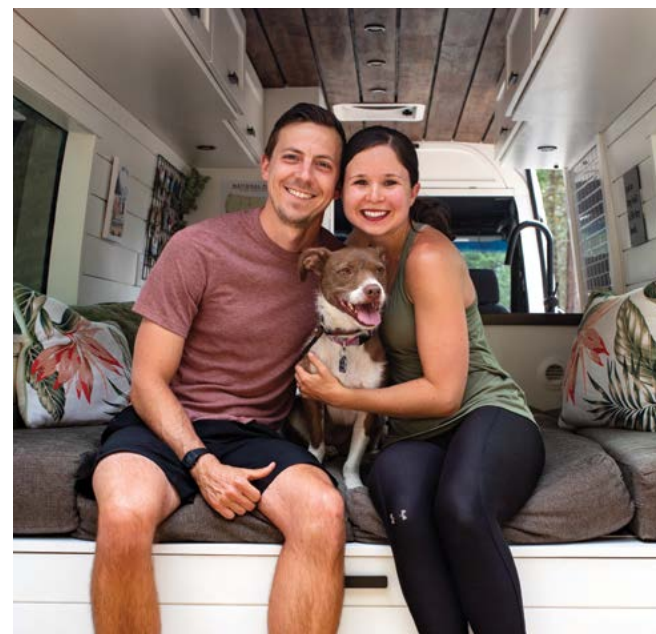
If you have yet to visit Idaho, especially the Sawtooth Mountains, add it to your U.S. bucket list immediately! With a small town vibe, barely any cell phone service,

and views as far as the eyes can see, the Sawtooth Mountains are an untouched, hidden gem. We hope you fall in love with them as much as we did.

### About Adventures of A+K

We're Adam, Kathryn, and Kona, an adventurous married couple (+ pup!) living on the road in our self-converted sprinter van! You can often find us driving all around the U.S. and Canada scoping out the best coffee shops, eating tacos and ice cream (we're a 5+ taco and 2+ scoop household), and enjoying nature.

To see more of our travels and our detailed travel guides, check out our website at [adventuresofaplusk.com](http://adventuresofaplusk.com), on Instagram and YouTube at [@adventuresofaplusk](https://www.instagram.com/adventuresofaplusk)



In 2009, Kay Morris-Robertson did something no one else in the country was considering during a global financial crisis: She spontaneously bought an RV and decided to take the trip of a lifetime. This wasn't going to be your average, run-of-the-mill vacation through national parks and touristy areas, though. Kay had something else in mind.

"The rules were simple," she explained. The first rule was that she'd begin her U.S. road trip somewhere that began with the letter 'A,' then go to another location that began with 'B,' and so on until she had visited all 50 states with the 26 letters in alphabetical order. The second rule was that the locations couldn't be a major town or city. The third rule? Well, that's what made the trip interesting.

"The best and most important rule was that America voted where I went next, even if it was 3,000 miles in the opposite direction," said Kay. Her followers on social media, including many Americans she met during her trip, voted online to determine her next destination. Whichever location had the most votes is where Kay would drive next. "I've been through Kansas probably 17 times, Oklahoma 22 times, and I've seen the Grand Canyon 15 times."

In total, Kay logged over 300,000 miles and 3 sets of tires on her RV trip across America, visiting unique landscapes and small, tiny towns all along the way. Unfortunately, this



trip didn't start from a yearning to see the country or to get away from a 9-5 office job — Kay's RV journey was born from a tragedy.

At the age of 32, Kay and her husband John moved to Los Angeles for an incredible job opportunity. Kay had grown up in Manchester before meeting John in Australia, and the couple felt they'd hit the lottery when Kay landed this dream job in the city of angels. It was a high point for them — Kay was enjoying her career and John had taken up sailing in his free time. After some training, he had Kay join him for his maiden voyage sailing the Pacific Ocean, but once they were out on the open water, his heart suddenly stopped, leaving Kay stranded on the boat with no sailing experience.

“You can imagine it was a fairly scary experience at the time,” said Kay, “and what followed next was a series of events that led to me buying an RV and traveling across America.” Going from such a high to such a low was a major, disruptive event for Kay, but sometimes hope and joy are born from tragic events.

Grieving the death of her husband, Kay threw herself into work and began having panic attacks, night terrors, and even fainting and finding herself unconscious occasionally. “Long story short, my employer freaked out, called 911, and I ended up in a mental institution for 10 days, held hostage in my Armani suit,” chuckles Kay, noting that being sent to a mental institution against her will was the least helpful thing for her employer to do in the situation. “But that led to me getting a lawyer and the help I needed.”

Professional help offered Kay the life-changing advice she needed most when they asked why she was still in Los Angeles when she could be off doing anything, anywhere

in the world. Kay nodded and took their advice to heart, immediately driving to the nearest airport and buying a ticket to a city she couldn't even pronounce — Albuquerque.

When she arrived, she had a great weekend exploring the city, and to her astonishment she realized that she actually felt normal again. The return flight came way too soon, and while she killed time on the airplane she found a magazine in the seat compartment that advertised a trip to Bend, Oregon.

She landed, booked a ticket for the following weekend, and felt even better.

“I started to realize that [while I was traveling], nobody knew me. I could be whoever I wanted, and this whole tragic story that had set me on this journey — I didn't actually need to tell it. I could be anybody I wanted,” she said.

Kay knew that she was onto something: traveling was just

what she needed to begin healing and working through her trauma — and just as importantly, she was starting to have fun. She felt like she was in her own body again, and she started to envision what an even bigger journey would look like. A for Albuquerque, B for Bend, C for ... Coney Island, the next stop on her trip. But first, she'd need a different way to get there.

The very next weekend after her trip to Bend, Kay bought an RV in California, named it Reggie, outfitted it to her needs, and hit the open road. The more miles she traveled, the more her following grew online, and soon elementary schools were even getting involved in her journey as a geography experiment. Kay sent postcards to the students as they learned about different states, cities, and parks she was traveling through.

Traveling to new places and meeting new people offers a fresh perspective on life, and it was no different for Kay. There's something exciting about stumbling on a cute new town, finding a campsite with a phenomenal view, and enjoying the freedom that comes with spending time however one wants. The open road was a tonic for Kay and for the many people that followed her journey and voted where she should go next. And the spontaneity that comes with not knowing where you'll end up next? Kay loved it.

Doubling back on different routes across the U.S. and sticking to lots of small towns and campsites along the way makes

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for a unique way to experience the country. For Kay, small towns in particular stood out along the way, like the coastal village of Ogunquit, Maine — reminiscent of the English countryside Kay calls home — and Lake Lure, North Carolina, where they filmed the movie “Dirty Dancing.”

Kay's travels brought her from Alaska to Kawaii, Coney Island to Yellowstone. Far and away the funniest small town experience was her stop in Xenia, Illinois for the letter “X.” It's a tiny, tiny town in the Midwest made up of a bank, a coffee shop, and a railroad. That's it. The whole town came

out to meet her and take a photo together, including the mayor, the bank manager, and all the other 150 residents of the town.

As for a favorite state, Kay doesn't hesitate: “My favorite state was Utah,” she said. “I call it the screensaver state. From my experience, you drive around Utah, you pull in anywhere, and you'll see this fantastic scenery with no one around. Then you'll see it on a computer screensaver later and realize you were there.” Her trip ended in Zion National Park near St. George, Utah, a favorite place for travelers and hikers that love the red rocks, open country, and vast amounts of public land to boondock for long periods of time.

In a time when RV travel was mainly done by retirees, Kay's travels proved to be an inspiration to others and a healing process for herself. She found refuge in the RV, since it allowed her to literally pull over whenever she was struggling with PTSD, find a quiet moment alone, and work through it until she felt better. And the people she met along the way only added to her healing.

As she traveled back and forth across America, people began gifting Kay with souvenirs — stickers, teddy bears, snow globes, caps, and other small items. Realizing she couldn't part with them, Kay did what anyone would do: she covered the RV in memorabilia. One side of the RV was plastered with gifts from the east coast, the other side from the west coast, and the middle from the Midwest. Kay's story of loss and growth, tragedy and joy struck a note with her followers — and you can experience it today by visiting her RV and the memorabilia for yourself at a museum outside Tacoma, Washington.



People tend to get hung up on the obstacles and fears that come with being a digital nomad, but Kay is an inspiration to all of us to throw caution to the winds, go with the flow, and take the leap to live a life outside the norm.

“If there’s anyone out there who’s thinking ‘that’s way too scary,’ my advice would be to just go for it.” says Kay. “You have nothing to lose.”

Traveling alone as a single female in a country she wasn’t from wasn’t just about pushing the boundaries and living outside the lines, however — it was about working through her pain and finding the joys that lie in living on the road, experiencing different places and different people.

After all those miles, Kay put those hours on the road to good use. She had plenty of time to record her journey while she logged long, cross-country trips, and she wrote down all the charm of the small towns she visited and the many characters she met along the way. When at last the trip came to an end, she compiled her notes into a travel guide named “A to Zee Across America” and donates the proceeds to charities specializing in PTSD, heart health, and bereavement.

To learn more about Kay’s personal story, however, you’ll have to wait to see it on the big screen: Kay’s story is currently in pre-production with a film company that will bring the story of her journey across America to theaters. Visit [AtoZeeAcrossAmerica.com](http://AtoZeeAcrossAmerica.com) for more on Kay’s adventures and to grab her book A to Zee Across America on [Amazon](http://Amazon).



## Get reliable cell signal, no matter where you find your next campsite.

Boondocking isn’t just about getting away from crowds, enjoying nature, and seeing where the road takes you. To maintain their nomadic lifestyles, full-time RVers always need a way to stay connected, wherever they go.

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