

BY JOHN JOHNSTON, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

LOVING THE RV LIFE

Marc and Julie Bennett are carving a niche as motorhomers who educate and inspire others.

The first time it happened, a couple of years ago, Marc Bennett was taken aback. While loading his car in an RV campground, he was approached by a man he'd never met. "Hey, Marc!" the fellow said in a tone of voice used by best friends.

Since then, Marc and his wife, Julie, F464400, have grown more accustomed to being recognized by total strangers.

"It is a little weird when you talk to somebody and they know so much about you, and you don't even know their name yet," Marc said. "The beauty of it, though, is most everyone who recognizes us says, 'Oh, Marc and Julie — RVLove — thank you for what you've done, because we've learned so much.'"

After just 3½ years of full-time RVing, the Bennetts are rapidly rising stars of the blogosphere and familiar faces on social media. Fans can find them on their website, RVLove.com; their YouTube channel (which has exceeded 16,000 subscribers and 1.3 million views); and their Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest pages. The couple also recently launched RV Success School, a series of online courses designed to help newbies with planning for the RV lifestyle, covering RV selection, budgeting, camping options, and more.

Marc and Julie, who are in their mid-40s, might soon gain an even higher profile because of their involvement in a feature-length documentary film now in the works. Plans call for the cast of *RV Nomads* to include more than two dozen full-time RVers, among them the Bennetts. What's more, Marc and Julie have been tapped to help manage development for the film's production studio, Nomadic Life Films, and to serve as project advisers. Production is

Since setting out in their motorhome more than three years ago, Marc and Julie Bennett have shared their journey with others via RVLove.com, as well as YouTube and other social media sites. Their goal is not simply to highlight the places they have visited, but to be a source of essential information about RVing.

expected to begin early in 2018.

It's exciting stuff, but the Bennetts never set out to build a big following so they could bask in fame.

"Everything we do is always driven by how we can share (information) in a way that helps other people, adds value to their life, and makes their life better," Julie said.

If that sounds a bit like it's coming from a life coach, well, it is. When living in her native Australia, Julie began coaching people who were at major crossroads in life. Such work grew out of her marketing and communications business, which

promoted workshops and seminars led by experts in the fields of personal growth and life transformation.

In 2008, while attending a conference in Colorado, Julie fell in love with the Rocky Mountains. So much so that later that year, the Aussie closed her business, sold her home, and moved to Boulder. That's where she met Marc, a Colorado native, in 2010. They married a year later.

Marc's career track has included stints in construction, law enforcement, information technology, and health and nutrition. When he worked for a sports nutrition com-



pany, he ran a 12-week physique transformation competition. His first motorhome experience came when it was time to award prizes. The company put him and some colleagues in a Prevost and sent them around the United States. "This is the way to travel," he told himself.

In June 2014, Marc and Julie set out in their own 2012 Tiffin Allegro Open Road 35QBA, a gas-powered Type A motorhome. They chose the bunkhouse model so they could create an office space there for Marc, with Julie's work space up front in the copilot area. Marc was working full-

time for a nutritional supplements company. Julie was doing some marketing work, but mostly was producing content for RVLove. "We really wanted to share the journey, all of it, not just the places that we visited, but what we learned along the way," she said.

Peruse RVLove and you'll see that they've learned plenty. Some articles and videos are mainly meant to inform, with topics that include driving on steep grades, meal planning, travel expenses, travel gear, managing RV weight, and more. Other articles and videos were

created to inspire. For example, "By sharing some of the emotional challenges I had while adjusting to life on the road, it helps people know that they're not alone in feeling the same way," Julie said.

Marc's greatest challenge has centered on finding a suitable work-life balance. It's something he has always emphasized, even choosing to pass up promotions in order to achieve it. But being a valuable employee worked against him; his employer piled on more responsibilities and placed more demands on his time. The resulting stress caused Marc's health to deteriorate.

And so early in 2017, Marc quit his job. A few months later, when he had regained his health, he used RVLove as a forum to write about his decision and what led up to it. One snippet: "For me, success is living a life filled with love, health and freedom — with more time to spend doing what I love, with the people I love, when and where I choose."

For Marc and Julie, RVing encompasses all of that. It's why they decided to create a business around it. In fact, they had been working on RV Success School behind the scenes for two years. After leaving his job, Marc was able to focus more intently on the effort.

"We wanted to create what we wish had existed when we were hitting the road," Marc said. People who purchase the online coaching program can use it in their own home, at their own pace.

Meanwhile, the Bennetts continue to populate RVLove with plenty of free, useful information. They're busy, for sure. But it's not a burdensome kind of busy.

"I'm actually working more hours than I used to at my old job, but it's a joy," Marc said. "The work is so much more intrinsically rewarding. This is what I used to do after work, for fun. Now, it is my work."

"Everything we're doing now," Julie said, "is a beautiful hybrid of everything we've done and that we love and that we're passionate about." **FMC**