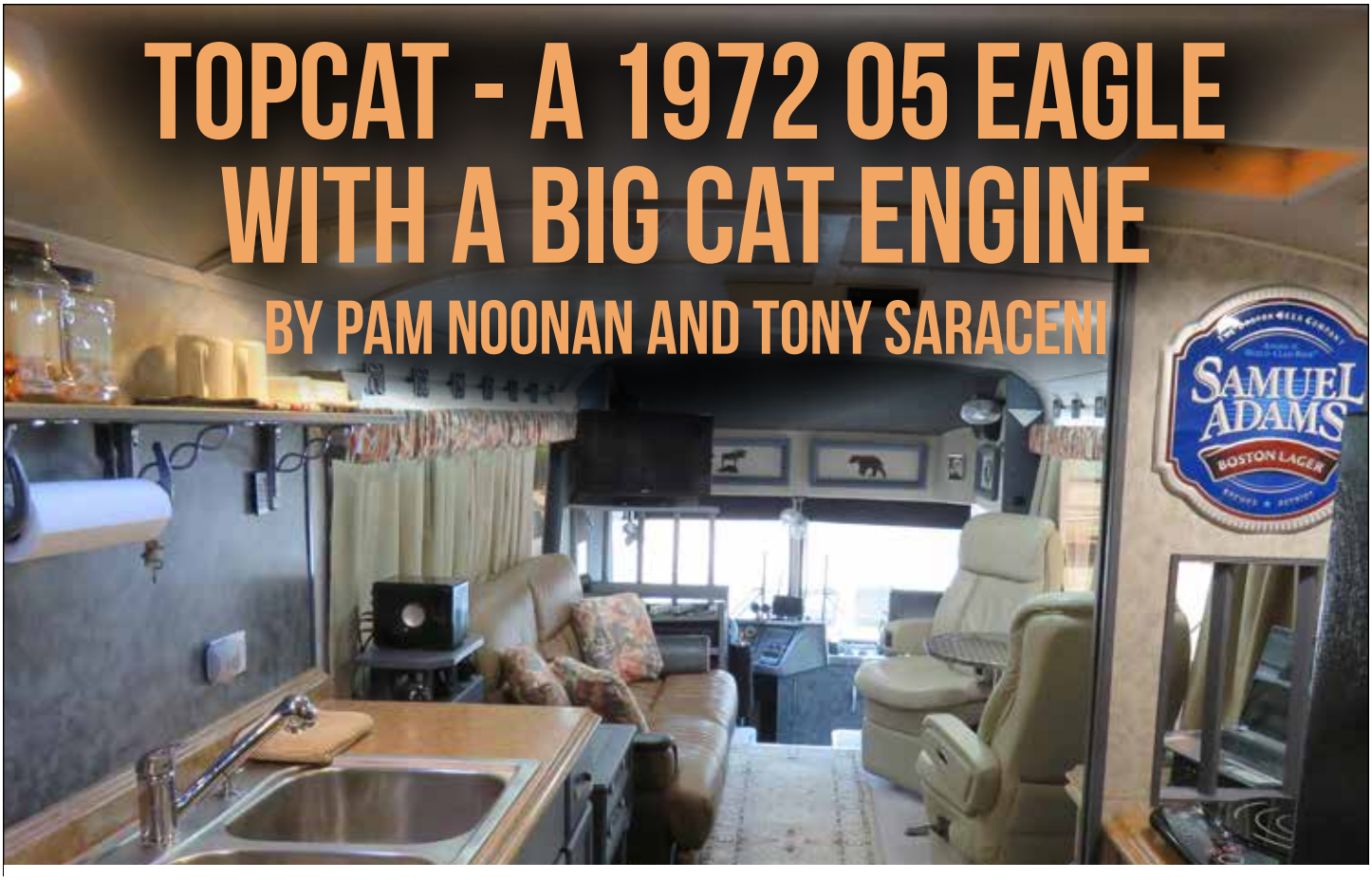
TOPCAT - A 1972 05 EAGLE WITH A BIG CAT ENGINE

BY PAM NOONAN AND TONY SARACENI



Kitchen/Living Room Looking Forward.

It was October of 2015. We had just unexpectedly sold our house in Cody, Wyoming. Our plan was to sell all our belongings and live in our 1974 Eagle Model 05 that we had converted in 2005, travel the country and decide where we wanted to set down roots for the next chapter of our lives. In the middle of all the confusion, I saw on one of the internet bus groups that a unique 1972 Eagle Model 05 was up for sale. It was previously owned by recently deceased bus guru, Sonnie Gray.

We loved our current Eagle, but it had an 8V71N Detroit. She loved to roll on flat land but she painfully chugged up mountains here in the west. Tony constantly talked about changing out the motor for a larger power source. Instead, we decided to buy Sonnie's bus.

We were parked at the RV resort in Pahrump, Nevada when negotiations were finalized. Tony flew to Dallas to pick up the bus in Pottsboro, Texas. He drove it back to Nevada and then we had the dilemma of owning two buses and nowhere to convert our new acquisition.

We finally found a property in Pahrump that was conducive to owning two buses, building a bus shop, and remodeling a house. Remodeling the house is another story for another time.

The 1972 Eagle has quite a history as you can see by reading the feature article in January 2007 issue of Bus Conversion Magazine, reprinted in this issue. One of the many unique features is that it was converted to direct drive, eliminating the need for the dropbox. Also, there is a lift tag axle.

The 3406B Cat engine has more power than needed. This power train combo is amazing. Pulling out of a rest area/ fuel station is comparable to diesel pickup



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