PHRED SEZ.....

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GPS TECHNOLOGY FOR TRAVELING

What follows is a recommendation for road-worthy technology from Bob Gregory, WBCCI # 1106:

How many times have we seen the weary copilot with a road atlas in hand and a furrowed brow looking for mile markers and other information that relate to their direction of travel and physical location?

Having become a widower in 1998, I was determined to continue the plans my wife and I made before we retired, which was to travel the length and breadth of this great America. Missing my navigator of many years caused me no small amount of grief as I traveled across the land. One particular missed turn added to my agony when I attempted to cure it on a short cut to get back to the planned route. Upon encountering an unusually low railroad overpass, I drained the air shocks and proceeded very slowly, only to scrape the satellite dome on the roof.

I was seriously considering selling my Airstream motorhome and just staying home, forgetting my urge to travel. But a great purchase caused me to resume my former plans with a passion – a Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite tracking unit costing less than $500 dollars. It mounts conveniently on the dash with a suction cup mount. Once I place the street address in the memory bank my troubles are over. It gives me verbal instructions along with a graphic display on the 3.5 inch color screen, which is located in such a position that I only have to glance at the screen occasionally. It even shows me what lane to be in if I am changing from one interstate to another. I-75 in Atlanta, Georgia, comes to mind when I think of lane changes. I have not been lost one single time since I started using this copilot called a GPS.

My friends, you can even argue with it and go the way you think is correct only to realize later that it was correct in the first place. It will instantly recalculate and get you right back on track. I have been wrong both times I doubted its accuracy.

Needless to say, I will never, ever, start a trip without having entered my destination address on my trusty GPS and punched "go". You owe it to your map-reader-navigator, to yourself, and to other travelers on the road to consider purchasing a GPS.

What peace of mind! What a tremendous boost in driver safety! A GPS in your vehicle also offers nearby fuel stops, eateries, detours around road blocks, and a host of other informative topics simply by touching the screen. It is a comfort to know all I have to do is listen to the GPS.

Phred Sez has been using his **Delorme Street Atlas** GPS for the last three or four years. It comes on a CD for about $100 but must be used on a laptop computer. I enjoy the large correct digital speed readout; the large screen; and the ability to print out the screen map when a printer is available. But I am beginning to see the advantages of the smaller unit **Garmin NUVI 350 GPS** receiver like Bob uses. It is compact, easy to conceal from theft, transferable easily from one vehicle to another and more user friendly. His model may not still be available, but an on-line search yielded a comparable model, the **Garmin StreetPilot** c330 GPS. Other comparable models may be seen at http://www.garmin.com/products/sp330/. At the time of this writing, **Circuit City** has this Garmin for $349 online, but the exact same model is available only online from the same supplier at $249 (refurbished).

If you're looking to make traveling in unfamiliar areas less stressful, you can't beat GPS technology. It can help you save fuel costs associated with being lost and keep you safely on track to your destination. What's more, it can free you to savor the joys of travel and to focus on what Airstreaming is all about!

The CD book, Phred Sez - the First Ten Years, has been well received and is in its third printing. It is available on computer CD (written in Microsoft Works and also Microsoft Word). Order by mail for yourself or for loved ones by sending a check for $15 each (Includes shipping) to the address below.

Help me with topics for the PHRED SEZ column. Send your creative experiences and ideas by US mail, E-Mail, Fax, or phone:

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