



Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of Canada
Assn des Commerçants de Véhicules Récréatifs du Canada

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MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Jason Friesen of Voyager RV Centre in Winfield, BC
wins the prestigious 2023 Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award**

Richmond, BC – Jason Friesen of Voyager RV Centre in Winfield, British Columbia was presented with the prestigious 2023 Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award today at the RVDA of Canada’s Annual Meeting held at the RV Dealers Convention/Expo in Las Vegas, NV.

Mr. Friesen thanked his family and his dealership staff who share his philosophy of always putting the customer first. “This is a true honour, thank you all for this amazing recognition” stated Friesen as Melanie Taylor, from RV Lifestyle Magazine, presented him with the 34th annual Walter Paseska Memorial Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award.

Each year, the RVDA of Canada, in conjunction with RV Lifestyle Magazine and Dealer News, invites nominations from across Canada for the Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award. The award is dedicated to the memory of the late Walt Paseska, founder of Walt's Trailer Sales in Headingley, Manitoba, in recognition of his many years of commitment and dedication to the RV industry. Since established in 1989 by Camping Canada Magazine, this award has been presented to individuals who share Walt's enthusiasm and commitment, in recognition of their long-term contribution to the RV lifestyle, and commitment to the community as a whole.

The award is presented to a candidate who has:

- Demonstrated long-term dedication to the RV industry and promotion of the RV lifestyle by the acting dealer principal of a recognized full-service RV dealership
- Shown commitment and participation in the RVDA at the provincial or national level
- Been recognized by customers and peers as a person with the highest integrity and credibility in both work and personal life, and
- Made a contribution to their community.

Voyager RV Centre first opened in 1984, when Rodney Friesen, Jason's father, started the business with a few consignment trailers. Today, the dealership includes a two-story office building and parts store and more than 350 RVs on display on 12 total acres. The dealership also has three service and detail shops, featuring twenty-five RV service bays. And while Rod is still an owner, it is his son, Jason Friesen, who has taken over the reigns of the dealership's daily operations for the family business. Since 2004, Jason has worked at the dealership full-time to make sure their customers are taken care of and that the ever-important Voyager RV Culture is maintained.

As Vice president, Jason is still involved in many aspects of the dealership's daily operations. He is responsible for new RV inventory ordering, oversees the majority of the marketing, helps appraise trades, and works directly with the department managers to help them improve and grow. Jason is the driving force behind the dealerships' continued challenge to anticipate their consumer changing requirements. Jason ensures that all staff are committed to making sure their customers' experiences are second to none.

Jason and Voyager RV have always been supportive of the industry's associations. Voyager RV has had its General Managers sit on the Board of the RVDA of British Columbia for 23 years, working to help grow the RV industry in British Columbia. Their current General Manager also sat on the VSA (Vehicle Sales Authority of BC) as a director for several years and is now a director on the RVDA of Canada board. Jason himself is the RV Sector Chair for the Okanagan College Trades Training Complex development, helping spearhead fundraising to help with the

30-million-dollar expansion renovation of the Okanagan College in Kelowna, BC, which houses the long-standing RV Service Technician Training program in the province.

Under Jason's leadership in 2019, the dealership started a structured charitable donation program called VOYAGER CARES. This is a charitable donation initiative to truly thank their community for all their years of supporting the business. Employees actively participate by voting on their top seven local BC-based charitable organizations. These organizations are then designated as the "Voyager Cares Feature Charity" for specific months. At the end of the campaign, Voyager RV donates \$105 dollars for each RV sale. They donated over \$100,000 through the Voyager Cares initiative by the end of September 2020, and they have now embarked on phase two of the Voyager Cares initiative, with plans to contribute another \$100,000 to local charities in 2023.

In addition to at least 20 different community charities, the Friesen Family has also donated \$150,000 to the Okanagan College's 'Our Students, Your Health' campaign, as well as matching ALL Donations up to \$500,000 that came in during the Kelowna General Hospital's 'Every Moment Matters' campaign advancing Stroke care for BC Interior residents.

Along with our winner, the nominees for this year's Award were:

- a. Keith Barrick, Keith's Trailer Sales, Orton, ON
- b. Marco & Mylaine Boudreault, E Boudreault VR, Ancienne-Lorette, QC
- c. Chardell Brydon, Jerry's RV Trailer Sales, New Minas, NS
- d. Jeff & Kyle Redmond, Bucars RV Centre, Balzac, AB
- e. Murray Sullivan, SMP RV, Huston, BC

Congratulations to Jason and to all nominees, who have made outstanding contributions to the RV industry!