



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

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MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 18, 2021

**Andy Thomson of Can-Am RV Centre in London, Ontario
wins the prestigious 2021 Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award**

Richmond, BC – Andy Thomson Jr. of Can-Am RV Centre in London, Ontario was presented with the prestigious 2021 Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award today in a special virtual Awards presentation.

Mr. Thomson was clearly surprised as Melanie Taylor, from RV Lifestyle Magazine, announced the winner of the Walter Paseska Memorial Canadian RV Dealer of the Year Award. “Thank you so much, this is indeed an honour”, said Thomson. “I have fond memories of Walt Paseska, who was a colleague of my father’s and would often come to dinner when in town. This is a great industry and I have been fortunate to have made many great friends along the way. Thank you to my staff, my wife and family and I welcome all to stop by our dealership if you ever find yourself in London.”

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.

Andy Thomson Jr. started working at Can-Am RV Centre alongside his father, Andy Sr. from the day the dealership opened in 1970. He would work after school and on the weekends helping ensure the dealership's success. Can-Am RV Centre can trace its roots back to 1967 when Andy Thomson Sr. purchased a 1965 30' Airstream. Andy Sr. took his family camping in the Airstream and their travels included Airstream Rallies across the country. It was at these rallies that Andy Sr. realized that an Airstream store could be a solid business venture and a great way to use his mechanical prowess and creativity to help the many people who enjoyed RVing as he did. Thus Can-Am RV was born.

Can-Am RV has remained a family business. Andy Jr., his sister Nancy and brother Kirk all worked there throughout their high school years. Andy Jr. was excited to join the dealership full-time once he had graduated. Having spent many of his teenage years working alongside his father, Andy Jr. spent hours reviewing towing challenges and learning about trailer and hitch combinations for the best towing capabilities. Andy Jr. has become a well known hitch expert throughout the Canadian RV industry.

Today the Dealership still stands in its original location. They have expanded their RV lines beyond Airstream and now have 14 service bays, and one of the largest parts and accessories departments branded as RV Outfitters.

Throughout his 50+ years in the industry, Andy Jr. has served on several boards, committees, and volunteered with various charities. He spent 9 years as a director on the Ontario RVDA board, serving as its Present twice. He also served on the RVDA of Canada Board and became its representative on the Go RVing Canada Board for 5 years. He served as the Go RVing Canada Chair from 2001 to 2003. Andy Jr. has been a long time member of the CSA Z240 technical committee which reviews the Canadian RV standard.

Andy Jr.'s community involvement has always been remarkable. He is an active sponsor of One Run and of Bethany's Hope Foundation. He participates with the Kiwanis Club and helps with decorating the community at Christmas. He is an active sponsor of Rockin Wheel which helps raise money for neuro-traumatic injuries. During the pandemic, he made sure that front-line workers had access to free RV rentals for the purpose of self isolation.

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

- Chardell Brydon, Jerry's RV Trailer Sales, New Minas, NS
- Jason Friesen, Voyager RV Centre, Winfield, BC

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