

A New Life for a 1973 – 23' GMC Glacier Motorhome

Hunter House Burgers

BY **KAREN E. BREEN** | 1978 ROYALE | FERNDALE, MICHIGAN

I have owned a GMC Motorhome for a mere three years; however, I have wanted one for most of my life. I was an adolescent when they were first produced. I have shared with other GMCers in my circle the brief story that my parents dreamed of retiring and traveling the USA in one. Sightings were rare, and we knew the value of them was out of our reach as a family, but we were besotted each and every time we saw one. GMCs were the future of travel and they still carry that caché for me to this day; their design is unparalleled. Design has always taken a stronghold into my life: graphic design, automobile design, and interior design. The GMC combined all those elements!

I have been fascinated by the many latter-day uses of GMC Motorhomes and have sought out some of the owners. I plan on writing additional articles for the magazine featuring these unique uses. This first article focuses on the Hunter House Hamburgers, established in 1952, located in Birmingham, Michigan along historic Woodward Avenue in Metro Detroit. I had an opportunity to meet with Susan Cobb, the owner of Hunter House, and asked her some questions about their food truck choice.

Q Why the GMC Motorhome?

A Our restaurant is a vintage, throwback burger diner built in 1952 on the oldest paved road in America. We wanted a food truck that fit our unique, retro feel and embodied the car culture of Detroit. We also wanted a truck with a compact footprint, as we specialize in residential private parties.

Q Whose idea and vision was it to use the GMC Motorhome?

A It was my husband's idea, Tony DeGennaro. He searched high and low for a unique idea for a food truck for over a year. He stumbled across the GMC platform and thought it was perfect.

Q When was it purchased?

A Seven plus years ago.

Q Which year and model?

A 1973, 23' GMC Glacier. We could not use the 26' because the door was in the center, which restricted the inside kitchen layout.

Q How long did it take to transform the coach?

A It took two years to find a well-maintained rust-free coach. We were looking for a 23' model, which are rare. The design process took a year, which preceded the actual purchase of the coach. Once we owned the coach, we took meticulous measurements to figure exact placement and layout of the kitchen.

Q What was the cost to transform your GMC into a food truck?

A Not including the cost of the coach, it was \$110,000. It was very difficult to find a company who would do the custom work.



For more information go to: hunterhousehamburgers.com





Photos courtesy of prestigefoodtrucks.com



For youtube video go to:
<https://youtu.be/BfjSYCqkl20>

Q Who did the mechanical, interior, and exterior transformations?

A Prestige Food Trucks in Orlando, Florida.

Q How long did the transformation take?

A It took 11 months total.

Q Who was it purchased from?

A An elderly couple a few hours away from our location in Michigan.

Q When and where does it travel?

A We serve at private parties and public events May through October around Metro Detroit within 20 miles from our restaurant in Birmingham, Michigan.

Q How is it stored?

A It is winterized and stored at the restaurant, Hunter House Hamburgers.

Q How many miles traveled each year?

A Approximately 2,000 miles per year.

Q Is the GMC VIN number registered with the GMC Registry?

A Yes, it is.

Q How many associates travel on the road and how are they selected?

A Only trained employees at our restaurant are allowed to work on the food truck. Usually two to four at a time.

Q Any funny or unusual stories?

A Something funny happens every day. We are constantly honked at while driving – often from people asking if we will serve while on the road. Once, when returning in the coach after an event, we were flagged down by a radio personality who loved the truck and asked us to appear on her radio show. More than once, people we were serving have told us they used to work in the plants that designed and built these vehicles. They love coming on board and reliving their memories looking at the truck.

Q Have you been featured on TV or print ads? If so, by whom and when?

A Our restaurant is nationally well-known, therefore our food truck is a very familiar sight. When we drive down the road, people honk their horns and take videos of us on our way to an event.

Q Is there anything you want the vintage GMC Community to know?

A We love our GMC Motorcoach, love being part of the Community that owns and cares for these vintage vehicles, and are proud to be able to present it to thousands of our fans.



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