

# HomeLifeStyle

## Trading Spaces

Two retirees swap Old Town Alexandria digs for an RV

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

A retired couple is feeling liberated after selling their Old Town Alexandria home and buying a Winnebago. Cathy and Mick Hanratty, who'd been living in their Winnebago at Fort Belvoir, left town earlier this week to see the country.

"We have three greyhounds so we had to have our dogs with us when we travel," said Cathy, a retired nurse. "With the RV, we can go anywhere we want to go and take our dogs with us. ... We don't have to worry about finding a hotel when we travel that accepts animals."

The couple lived in Old Town for 16 years. While they enjoyed the community, they found the winter weather too brutal for their liking. "When winter came, I hated it," said Cathy. "Now we'll be in Florida in winter."

The Hanrattys say the transition wasn't as difficult for them as it might be for some because of their backgrounds. "We are both Army brats so we've been doing this all our lives," said Mick, a retired Army colonel. "It's not like someone who lived in the same place all our lives to all of a sudden move to an RV. We're used to a transient manner."

The Hanrattys say their Winnebago is comfortable. It boasts a living room with a large-screen television, recessed lighting and an electric fireplace. The kitchen is equipped with a convection-microwave oven, an apartment-sized refrigerator in stainless steel and a propane stove. There is a king-size bed in the bedroom and woodwork in a cherry finish.

"One thing that impressed us was all the storage," said Mick. "There's even a lot of overhead storage."

Porcelain flooring throughout "makes it much easier to clean," said Cathy.

The Hanrattys, who have been married for 42 years, say their new lifestyle offers



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCEARNEY ASSOCIATES

Cathy and Mick Hanratty sold their Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, home and bought a Winnebago.

them flexibility. "It's much more relaxing," said Cathy. "If we go someplace we don't like, we can pick up and go somewhere else. When you own a house in Old Town, you can't just leave if you decide you don't like it."

Their Old Town Alexandria home, which was located in Old Town Village, actually sold before it went on the market. "It's a

really popular area," said Lisa Groover, of McEneaney Associates, the couple's real estate agent. "People are always looking for homes there."

"I was thrilled to have an opportunity to work with friends and neighbors," said Groover. "They were open to ideas and suggestions about marketing."

Although the couple have yet to de-

cide on their final destination, they're optimistic.

"We're anxious to travel around the country and to find a place where we feel comfortable enough to settle down," said Mick. "We have to find a place that affords us a home base where we can park our RV. We're thinking about a house with an RV garage, probably in Georgia, Florida or South Carolina."



The living room of Cathy and Mick Hanratty's Winnebago has an electric fireplace and large-screen television.



Cathy and Mick Hanratty's Winnebago has a king-sized bed and an abundance of storage.