

SAILING - TAKES ME AWAY

BY Steve Masterson SKP#95338

Imagine if you will. You are just south of Savannah and it is your last travel day before getting home where you will store the RV for the winter. You get up early, thoroughly enjoy that first cup of coffee and check the weather. It is going to be a clear day with no wind and high in the 80s. Then you go outside to drain the holding tanks and get ready to leave. All goes well. You get on Interstate 95 and traffic is light. You get up to speed and set the cruise control. You are on the road for only a few miles when the 18' by 7' patio awning opens up. Fortunately, you are in the right lane and there are no obstructions. Now you feel like you are in a land yacht and one of the sails opened without warning. You check the mirrors and look for a clear space to pull over. Ok, is everyone safe? Yes!!! Now you what???? You go outside and check the awning. Incredibly the canvas is still intact and the awning arms are ok. You push the button to retract the awning and the motor in the roller tube just spins in place. Nothing! Zero! Zip! So you get the ladder out to see if you can manually roll the awning up while trucks go by shaking the motorhome side to side. Nope. It does not move. You call the motorhome manufacturer and they tell you there is no override and you have to manually roll it up. You call your hometown rv service center and they tell you the same thing. You look for a very sharp knife as you think about just cutting the awning off but first, you look to see if there is a Mobile RV Repair service in the area. At first look, you begin to get worried when the review ratings are 1.7 out of 5, 3.2 and 3.9. At this point certain words start to make their way to your lips. Then you sort the list so that the top rated ones are listed first. Top of the list, 4.9 with 43 reviews, a women led business and some very positive statements. You call and a women named Amanda answers the phone. You tell her what is happening and she transfers you to Chris who is on the road. We talk for a few minutes then he said, "Do you have an iPhone?" I said "Yes" and Chris says, "Let me FaceTime you." Really. He wants to FaceTime me. We connect and Chris asks to show him different parts of the awning. Then he says, "Yep. That awning does not have a manual override." I ask when can you be here? Chris said he was in SC and had 4 appointments and couldn't get to us until 2:00 or 3:00pm. Again, those bad words are moving closer to my lips. Then Chris proceeds to tell me exactly what to do to relieve the tension on the roller bar to make it easier to manually roll it up. He said, "On the front facing awning arm, about half way down, you need to pull down on the awning arm to get the awning to kneel." I said thank you and then we proceeded with his instructions. I pull down on the awning arm and when it kneels, the canvas releases the tension. A huge wave of relief comes over us. Then I ask Kathy, who weighs 100 pounds wet, to pull down on the awning arm and her feet leave the ground. Yes, we started to laugh. So I went back to pull the awning arm down as Kathy held on to the strap, and I pushed the button to retract the awning hoping the motor would catch and we could roll it up. AND . . . it rolled up. YEA. Next we zip tied both awning arms and got back on the road. While driving I started to think about awnings on past RVs. All our RVs prior to 2002 had manual awnings and a clamp or strap that secured the arms while traveling. DUH!!! Next stop, Home Depot.

I write this article to hopefully make you smile and laugh a little, then to hear you say, “That could happen to me!” Amanda and Chris were awesome and never gave up until they could show us how to fix the problem and get back on the road. If you are ever in the Savannah area and need repairs, please call Amanda and Chris. Here is their contact information.

Certified RV Mobile Service
Wentworth, GA
912-572-2902
Tell them we said “Hi”.

SKP Air Hugs
Steve Masterson



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