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Contact: Penny Sansevieri
penny@amarketingexpert.com
858 560-0121

Carol White
carol@roadtripdream.com
888 522 TRIP (8747)

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New Year's Resolution: Take a Long Vacation

Impossibly busy? Taking time off is not just good for you, but can reduce stress, and even change your outlook on life.

OREGON (PRWEB) December 19, 2005 -- "Every year, people go through the same old tired set of ideas –weight, diet, the relatives, our boss, the golf game, our spouse, even our kids – everyone gets a piece of our best intentions. But at some point don't you just want to scream, 'But what about making ME happier?'" laughs Carol White, co-author with her husband Phil of Live Your Road Trip Dream (RLI Press www.roadtripdream.com). Well, how about a serious vacation?

Phil goes on to say, "Most resolutions are 'defect' driven. Think about it – fix your weight, spend more time with the kids, start a workout program – all things that are 'wrong' with you. You are depressed before you start." It doesn't have to be that way.

Phil and Carol White have the perfect idea. Find a traveling companion and go see the United States. For a long time. Not just your annual vacation, they mean a real trip – a journey and a life-altering experience. Seem impossible? It's not. In fact technology makes these trips even more possible than ever.

The Whites know more than just a little bit about how to do this and how life-changing it can be. They ventured into all 48 of the contiguous states, saw all the National Parks and along the way had the experience of a lifetime. They now spend their days encouraging others to make their own dream happen. "Some people say 'Wow, I could never take a year off!'", says co-author Carol White, "but that's not really what this is about. Whether it is a road trip, a sailboat trip, or a trek for some extended period of time, the planning is the same and the rewards are often a changed outlook, less stress and some amazing memories that will last a lifetime."

Some people may be thinking, "Easy for them to say, they are retired, but I'm still slogging away making a living." That's even more reason to consider the possibilities. Along their way in their

nineteen-foot camping van, they saw many families and young couples and talked to them about mid-life journeys. The ways of actually hitting the road were as varied as the people themselves, but the bottom line was, they all wanted a new experience in their lives and were willing to be creative in making the changes necessary to allow it to happen.

The Whites have many tips and hints for would-be road trippers, but here are five to help travelers get their New Year's resolutions off on a more positive note this year.

- Decide how one might pay for such an adventure and start implementing the plan. It is possible to do it for the same cost as staying at home, but one just has to get rid of those expenses at home.
- Set a date to leave. Up until that time it is all just talk. Travelers will be amazed at how quickly things will start falling in place to make their dream a reality.
- Enlist the help of family and friends to make the trip more meaningful. Give them "assignments". Most families have obligations that must be managed while we are gone. Grown children, business and social friends, church and community groups are all sources of help and excitement in planning the adventure.
- Pick a theme or set of ideas to guide the trip. Make sure that everyone who is going has an idea of what they want to see during the journey. If there are school-age children, home-schooling them for the duration of the trip will be key; so plan "lessons" that will cover their needs – reading, history, spelling, math, science and more can all be woven into the everyday activities – and it will be a time of learning that they will never forget.
- Don't over plan the trip. When families or couples go on a two-week vacation, they tend to plan their every move to maximize time. When one goes on a long trip – say a month or more, it's not possible to plan every move, nor would one want to. The joy of exploration and the unfolding of adventures is the most important part of the experience.

Carol concludes, "So instead of those same tired old resolutions, why not plan for a real change in your life – even for a short while in the scope of things, and see if some of those other 'defects' don't just take care of themselves."

Now that's a resolution worth working on.