



"Jack-in-the-Box" Trailer Becomes

YOUR VACATION HOME

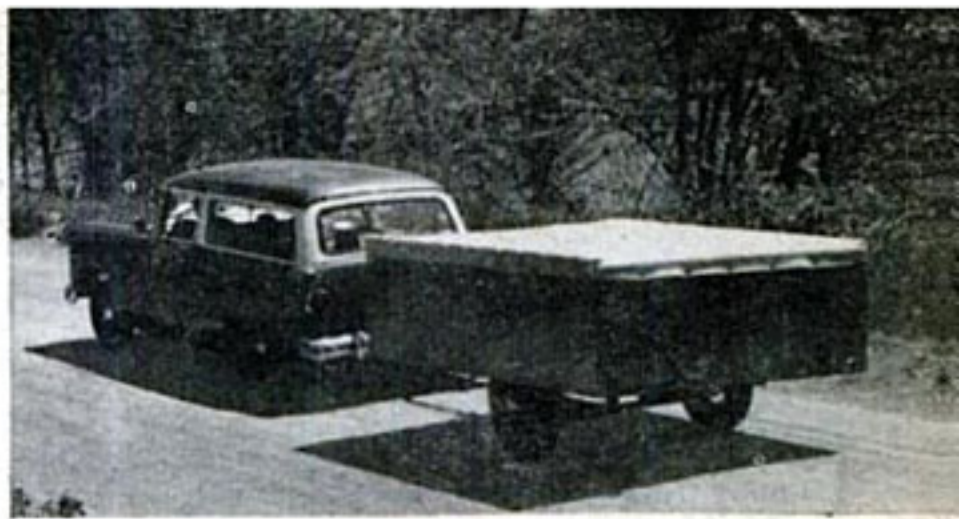
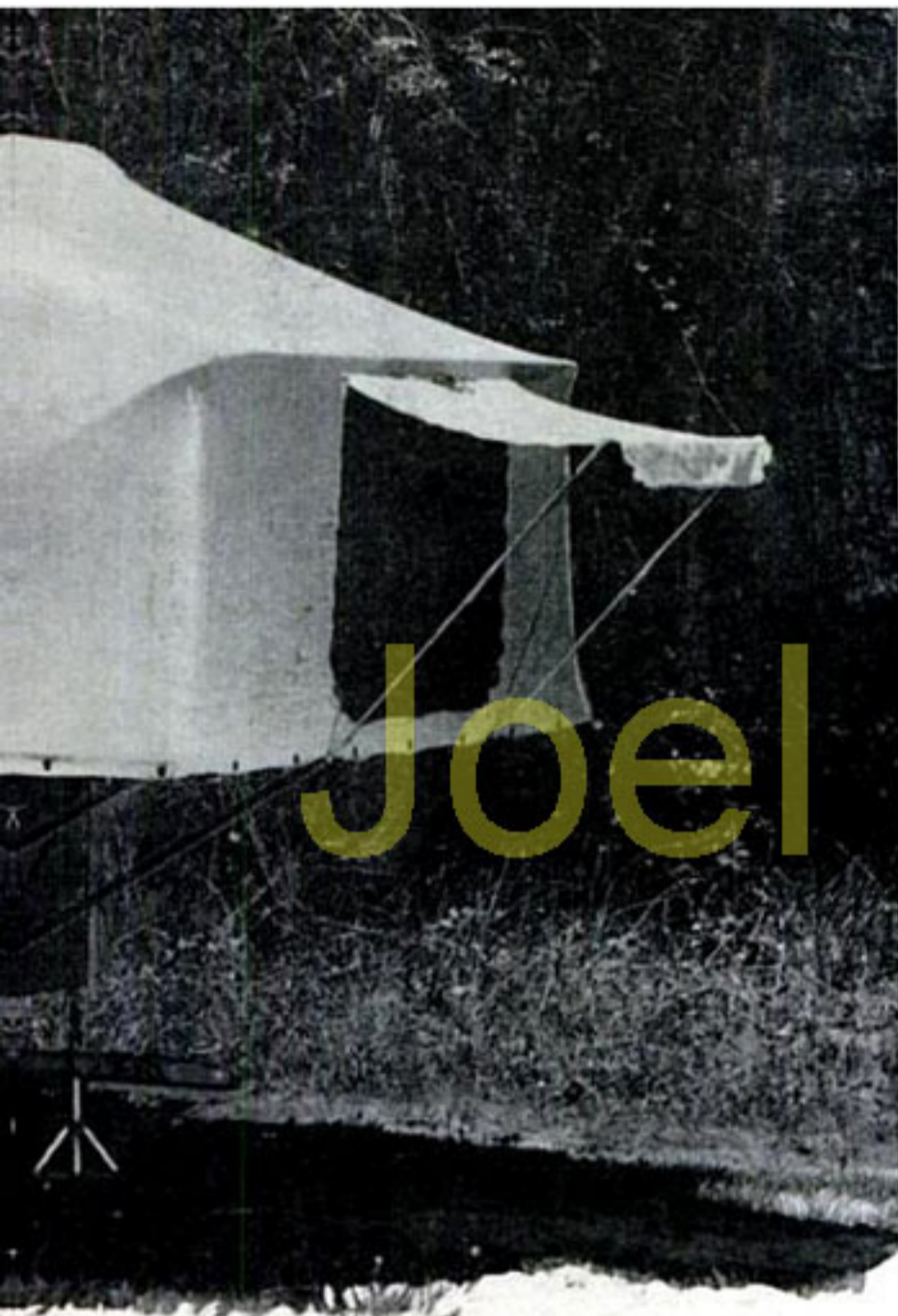
in a matter of minutes. "Umbrella" top tucked inside unfolds quickly to provide shelter and sleeping for four. Tows safely at high speeds and sets up in 20 min.

PART I

ROUGHING IT in the backwoods is almost like being at home when you hitch this box on wheels to your car. For, aside from lacking the conveniences of modern plumbing, it contains all the other comforts of home to make vacation camping a real family treat.

The Clifford De Leeuw family of Grand Rapids, Mich., builder of this unique camping trailer, found it so in exploring the primitive regions of northern Michigan. Free of the worry of finding a motel for the night, they found they could park in

undeveloped areas at no charge and be snug and as comfortable as bugs in a rug. Two full-size beds (5 x 7 ft.) supported on lids that open like the covers on a box, provide comfortable sleeping for four outside the actual living area. If necessary, two more persons can be bedded down on air mattresses placed on the floor. Dining inside is done on a folding table, with the built-in cabinets along the sides being used as seats. Headroom at the center measures 8 ft. 4 in. and the door, 6 ft., to make crouching and ducking unnecessary



Compact as a nut in a shell, all the paraphernalia you need to camp in style and comfort is tucked away in a plywood box on wheels measuring only 7 x 10 ft.

Joel Silvey



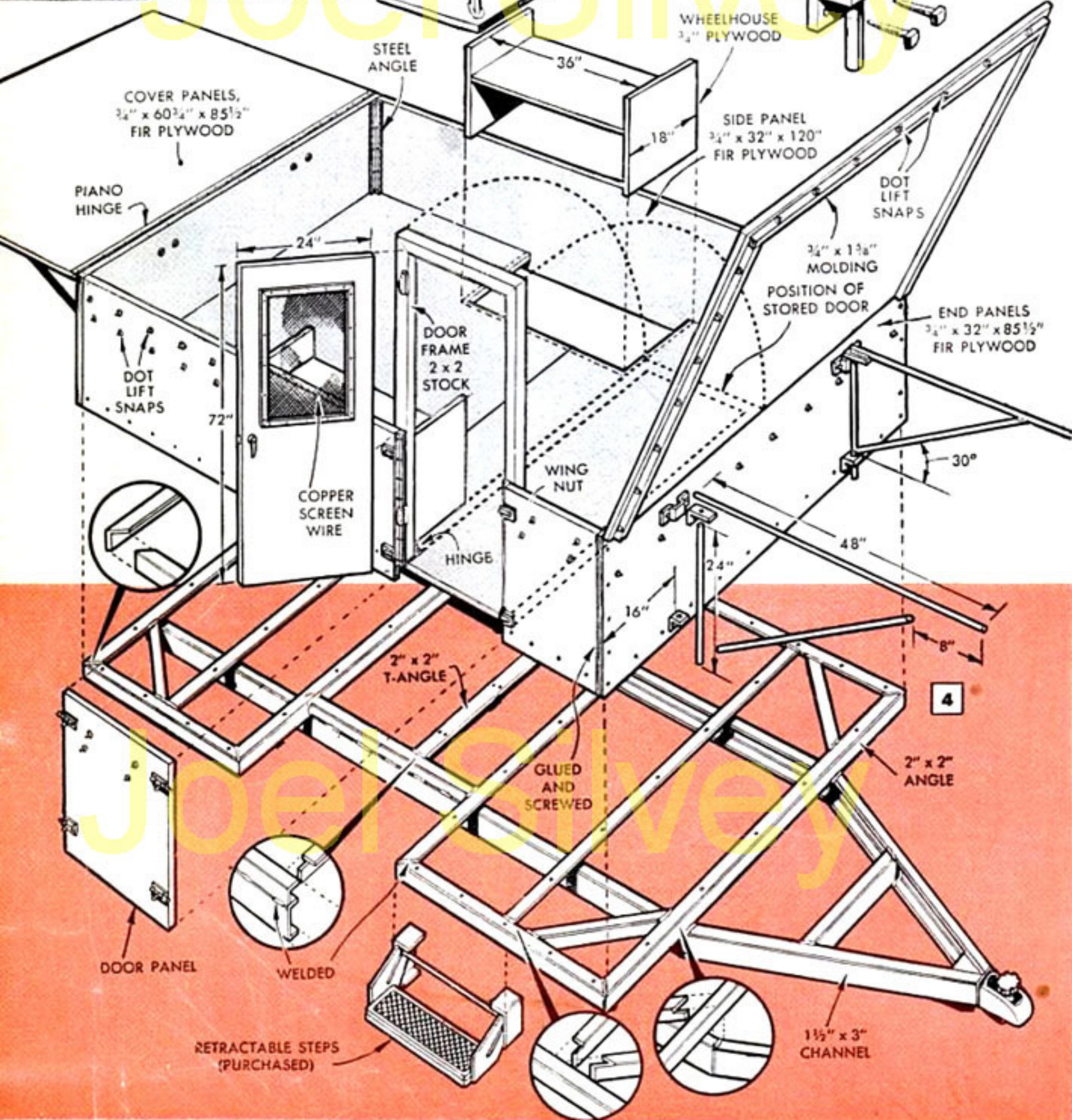
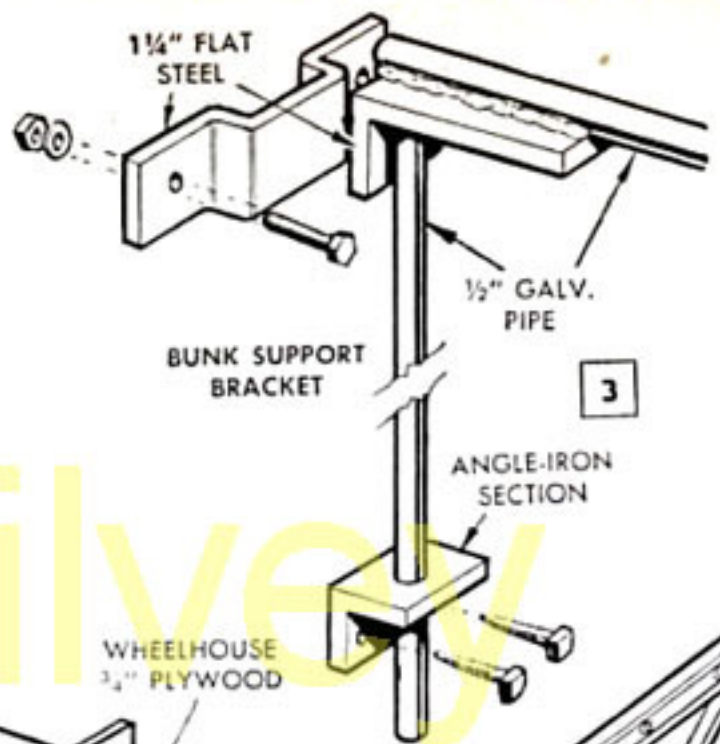
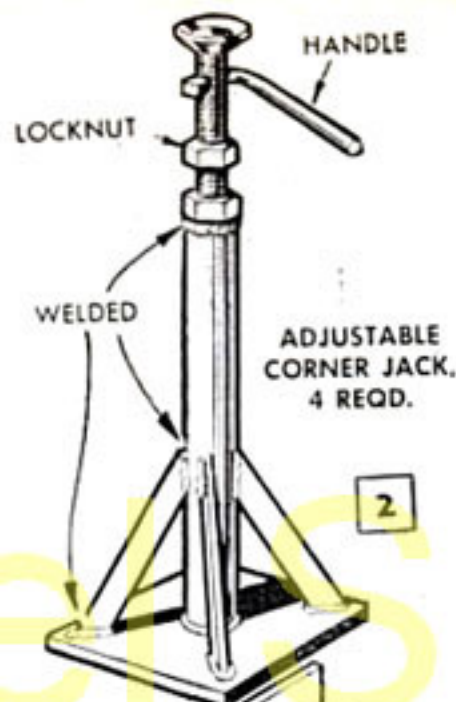
Photos by Joe Fletcher

Below, roominess and brightness of **trailer** interior stems from out-of-way bunks and windows on all four sides. Cabinet tops provide work surfaces, seats

Above, lids of box, when flung open and supported on removable pipe brackets, provide outboard bunks for two full-size mattresses which stow on **trailer** floor



Joel Silvey



in entering and standing inside.

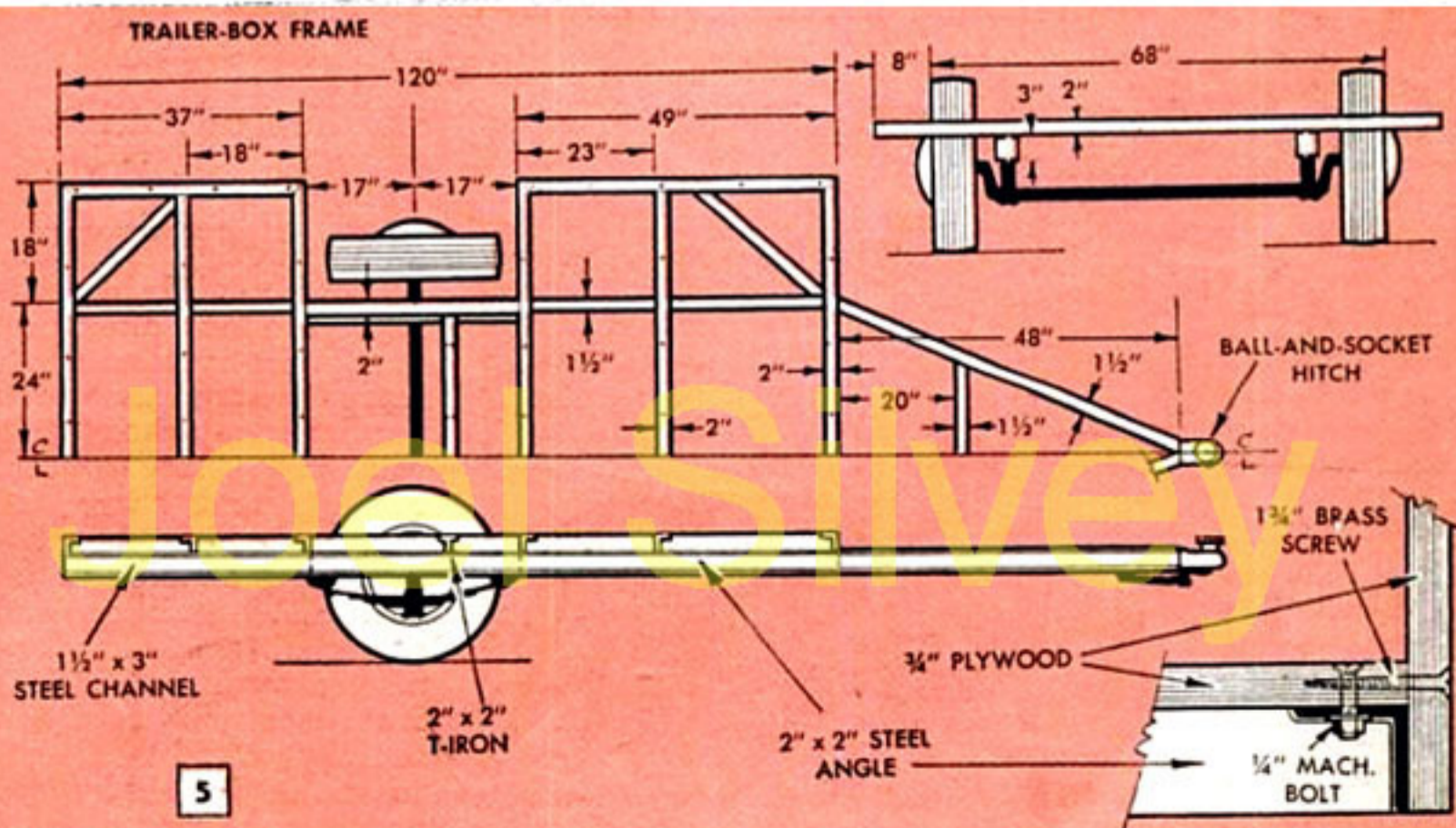
First study Figs. 4 and 5. The trailer is built on a commercial drop-type, front-axle assembly which you buy. Pick one that has wheels that match the size of those on your car so the spare tire can be used in an emergency. The bed on which the trailer body is built is welded together from lengths of steel angle and channel. This part, plus the tent top, you may have to have made for you. Outdoor fir plywood (marine grade) is used for the floor and body. The welded bed is floored first, cutting out the plywood over the wheel wells and fastening it to the bed with $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. machine bolts spaced 12 in. apart. The joint of the floor panels should center on the T-angle member of the bed. The sides and end panels of the body lap the floor and the bed, and the end panels lap the edges of the sides at the corners. Brass screws and waterproof glue are used to join the plywood, driving the ones around the bottom into the edges of the floor panels and spacing them 4 in. apart. Don't bother cutting the door opening until after the panels are in place. The four corners of the body are reinforced with steel angles placed on the inside. The swinging door is hinged to a frame which in turn is hinged to the floor so that both store flat as a unit on the trailer floor. Bolts passing through the frame and steel angles screwed to the edges of the door opening in the trailer body hold the frame upright. En route, the

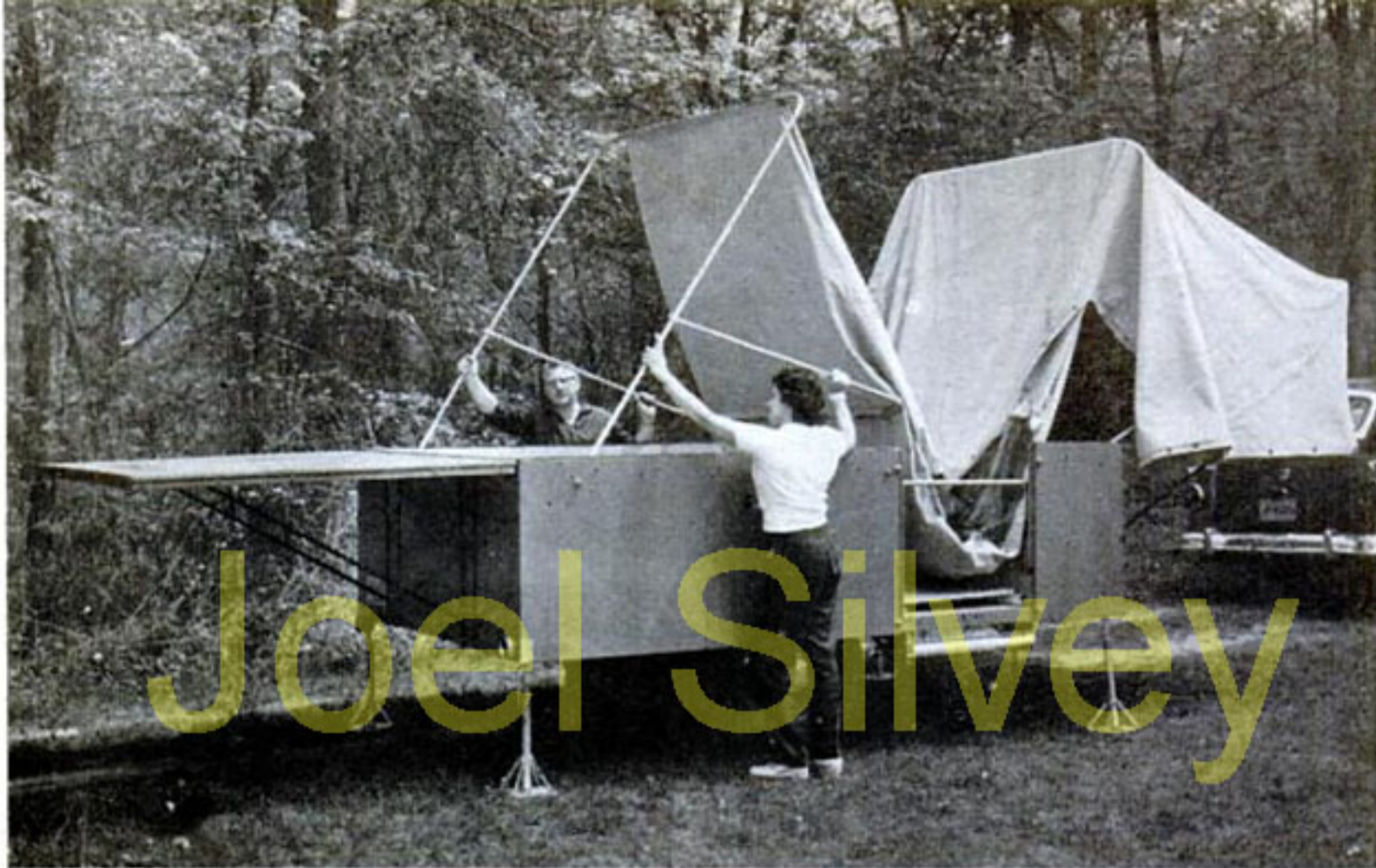


Separate removable panel closes regular door opening in side of trailer body when en route. Notice retractable commercial trailer step below opening. Step can be box and stowed inside

door opening in the body is fitted with a separate panel which is held in place with four slide bolts. The bunk lids are hinged with piano hinges and are supported by removable pipe brackets, Fig. 3, that slip into fixtures permanently attached to the ends of the trailer body. The brackets store on top of the lids in wells created by strips of molding applied around three edges, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in. Dot lift-type snaps are later screwed to this molding for buttoning the canvas top. Adjustable leveling jacks, Figs. 1 and 2, are placed at the four corners of the trailer box to prevent rocking. The jacks are carried in the car to be available first hand.

(Continued next month)





The folded top is raised from its resting place above cabinets and secured in place in a matter of minutes

YOUR VACATION

LAST MONTH in the first installment on building this unusual canvas-top camping trailer, we gave instructions and details for completing the trailer frame and body. Now you are ready to construct the interior storage cabinets and counters. Before doing this, however, it is a good idea to lay tile or linoleum over the entire floor area. Covering the floor at this stage avoids having to cut around cabinets after the interior arrangement is built in.

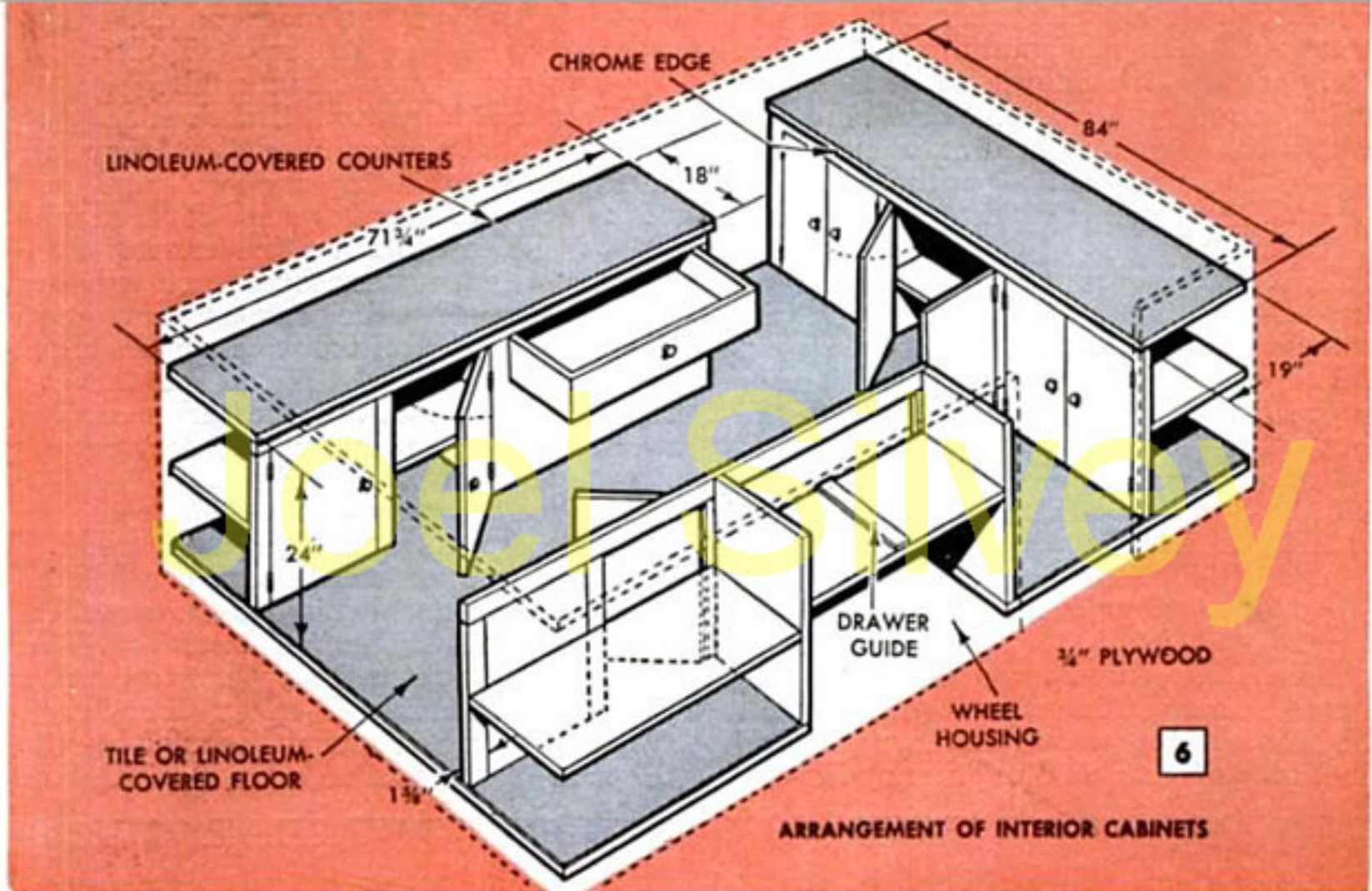
Supporting arms for the bunk panels, which are stored on top of the folded panels, are installed first. The arms fit into brackets attached permanently to the ends of the trailer



Fig. 6 suggests a cabinet arrangement, but this is optional, and the cabinets may be built and arranged to suit individual requirements. In the original arrangement, two-shelf cabinets built along both sides and the front end of the trailer were found to provide sufficient storage space. This arrangement leaves ample room to install a small refrigerator, water tank, or a sink unit. Because of sanitary conditions, however, a large insulated jug with spigot was preferred for a water supply.

When constructing the side cabinets do not let them extend past the wheel wells. Otherwise they will interfere with the door and its frame when folding it down to rest on the floor. Keep the cabinet tops flush with the ends, particularly at the door opening in the trailer box. Also be sure to allow at least a 6-in. clearance between the upper surfaces of the cabinets and the top of the trailer box. The canvas top folds into this space when traveling. If of uniform height, the cabinet tops may be used as seats when dining or entertaining.

Before building in the cabinets, study your needs carefully. Then build them accordingly. You may find you will need more drawer



HOME

By Clifford J. DeLeeuw
PART II

After completing the trailer body with cabinets, and making the folding canvas top, you are ready to hit the road for the "shakedown cruise"

space than pictured, for example. Or, it may be necessary to space the shelves differently in each cabinet. Plywood of $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. thickness is ideal for construction of the cabinets. It will serve for the doors, too, and will provide tops strong enough to be used as seats. Chrome edging will protect the edges of the tops.

The door is next. The frame is made of 2 x 2-in. stock and is mounted as previously stated. See detail C of Fig. 7. Made of $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. outdoor plywood, the door is 2 x 6 ft. in size, and is hung to the frame by means of three butt hinges. The screened opening in the door may be any size desired. Save the cutout. It is used as a storm panel, which is inserted in the opening from the inside, and is held in place by turnbuttons or storm-sash spring clips. The opening is screened from the outside, screening being tacked in place and the tack heads covered with molding.

Having completed the trailer and body unit, you now are ready for the folding canvas top. This is detailed in Fig. 7. The

After erecting the canvas top, the door-and-frame unit is swung up into place and secured, after which the canvas top over the doorway is snapped to frame



ends of the tubing to support the flaps awning style. Make the tubing pieces slightly shorter than the widths of the flaps. This will prevent interference when the tubing is left in the hems.

When traveling, the folded trailer is covered with a canvas tarp of the same material as the top. The tarp is fastened to the lift snaps on the trailer body. For sake of appearance, the tarp should be tailored to the body. Here, as with the window flaps, the tarp may be made to serve a dual purpose. It may be used as a canopy over the door and large window by using supporting rods and a zipper to attach it to the canvas top.

If desired, retractable trailer steps may be purchased for entering the door. Or a step unit may be built of wood and stored inside the trailer when traveling. A tongue jack is desirable for use when the trailer is unhitched. The jack should be of the folding type and should be attached permanently to the tongue. ★ ★ ★



When setting up the trailer, place the stabilizing jacks at each corner first. Next remove the tarp, install the supporting arms for the bunk panels and swing the latter into place. Then erect the folding top, secure it to the snaps, and finally erect the door-and-frame unit and snap the canvas top to it

