



Cabin boys Wayne Fancher (left) and Dan Hickey have been together for 31 years.

Long Beach, Wash., is just across the border and a moderately short two-hour drive from Portland. A quick look around reveals your basic coastal resort containing the requisite kite and T-shirt shops, plenty of 35 mph zones and the great beaches that help make the Pacific Northwest famous.

On closer inspection, Long Beach also contains a pleasant and welcoming surprise. Located on the Pacific Highway and only a short walk from what is touted as the world's longest beach is Anthony's Home Court Cabins and RV Park. But this isn't like any RV park you ever have stayed in before.

Owners/hosts Dan Hickey and Wayne Fancher have produced a little bit of gay-friendly heaven in Long Beach through six years of hard work and easy style.

Anthony's Home Court consists of eight brightly outfitted cabins with kitchens and 25 full RV hookups. The cabins are quaint shingle-sided bungalows surrounded by relaxed, well-tended gardens. The entire place is as clean as a whistle.

A couple for 31 years, Hickey and Fancher met at, of all places, a funeral home in San Luis Obispo, Calif., where Hickey was putting himself through college. Fancher responded to an adver-

## HOME COURT ADVANTAGE

Anthony's Cabins is not your average RV park by Richard Bray

tisement for help in answering the door at night and picking up bodies for \$10 a "load." Even though Hickey had a girlfriend at the time, he knew immediately he was "really interested."

Other than the common junior high grope, both men were hardly aware they were gay. So, not having any rules or examples to follow, they made up their own.

"We didn't have a concept of being gay," Hickey says. "This was 1970, and we didn't have a set concept of how to do this."

They soon moved to the tourist town of Solvang, where Hickey grew up, and started their unstructured lives together. On the advice of someone he met at a nude beach, Fancher discovered a queer establishment in nearby Santa Barbara with a bartender willing to bring him up to speed on who they were and just exactly what was out there in the gay world.

Returning home one evening, he told Hickey: "Do you know what we are? We're lovers!"

Fancher adds: "The advantage for us was that we didn't have this model of what we were supposed to do or not supposed to do. We just did it; there was no pattern to it."

What evolved was an open but strong relationship based on few preconceived expectations or limits. "We would know when we overstepped our bounds or when one was getting hurt."

After more than three decades together, they agree it's been pretty smooth overall. They credit their longevity to "deeply loving each other" and a continuing healthy physical relationship.

After several years in Solvang working retail and turning real estate, they discovered Long Beach while vacationing in their own RV. They liked the casual feel of the community and, through a family member already in town, learned Anthony's Cabins was for sale.

At the time it consisted of nothing but a few old cabins built in the 1930s (including one that rented by the hour) and several old trailers hunkered down in the RV park out back. Because they both previously had discussed owning a small hotel or bed and breakfast, Anthony's Cabins seemed like a decent fit.

Fancher says, "It was so run-down, there was not a bed linen or

carpet that wasn't cigarette burned."

They have been upgrading Anthony's Cabins for six years now—and it shows. Fancher's penchant for antiques is evident both in their living room and throughout the property.

All of the cabins sprinkled around the parklike setting bear his stamp of knickknacks and cozy odds and ends collected from a number of sources. Each one is unique and includes posters from their travels and paintings from a relative.

Although the couple share most duties, Fancher favors outfitting the cabins and does most of the gardening. He's also the first to acknowledge Hickey's mechanical and construction skills. "He likes power tools."

Hickey performs most of the maintenance on the property, including remodeling their most recent cabin acquired only last year. It seems to be a functional division of labor.

"We complement each other a lot," Hickey says. "Where I'll give in to a new power tool, he'll give in to a custom-made picket fence bed."

Obviously, Hickey and Fancher both live at work and work at home. In fact, their office is home—the check-in desk leads seamlessly into their living room.

The phone rings frequently while we talk, and Fancher admits it hasn't been easy being on call all the time. "That was hard to get used to at first—that somebody was at the door almost constantly."

In order to keep things simple and profitable,

Hickey and Fancher have no employees. They're a two-man operation.

Anthony's Cabins is open year-round, making vacations difficult at best. The busy season predictably runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Summers are high season, and they work long hours.

Hickey, the computer guy, estimates 40 percent of their business is from gay customers. They're both quick to add they never have had any trouble or complaints from their straight guests. They often have barbecues on the deck behind their house where all their guests mingle comfortably.

When they're not running Anthony's Cabins, Hickey and Fancher are busy with a small but close-knit group of friends in Long Beach. The town has no "organized" gay community, although they fondly recall a group of friends who used have dinner together and called themselves the Helen Pearson Marching Chowder Society.

Nearby Astoria also plays host to occasional potlucks. Like most small communities, gay people seem to find each other there.

The only serious bump in their plans occurred the day before Hickey left for the solo drive north with all their gear. A call from his doctor confirmed his HIV-positive status. He remembers, "I had a thousand miles to drive in this huge van with only the two dogs and too much time to think."

It's easy to see how comfortable these two are in Long Beach. During lunch at a restaurant with a beautiful view of the water, we run into their friends Gordon and Roy, part of the local color and a couple for more than 40 years.

These two obviously have made a good home for themselves near this long stretch of sand.

They love what they do and where they live.

It shows in their attitude and is obvious as you look around Anthony's Cabins. My recommendation is that you consider making that two-hour drive—you might find some of that good attitude rubbing off on you as well. ☐

To contact ANTHONY'S CABINS call 888-787-2754, visit the Internet site [www.anthonyshomecourt.com](http://www.anthonyshomecourt.com) or write to P.O. Box 1532, Long Beach, WA 98631-1532.

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