

Travel Travails Put to Rest

TIRED OF BACK PAIN ON PLANES AND TRAINS,
RETIREE INVENTS THE TRAVEL KOZY BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN

Here's a great product for baby boomers, for people with bad backs, and in general for people who travel a lot. I learned about the Travel Kozy in a newspaper article and set out to contact the inventor, Glenn McCain—because, well, I'm a baby boomer with a bad back who travels a lot!

Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): How did the Travel Kozy come about?

Glenn McCain (GM): I was an architect and project manager before I retired. I traveled a lot for my job, covering a territory from Maine to Florida and west to Ohio. During those late-night and early-morning trips, I could not get comfortable on planes or trains, even when pillows were available and distributed. So, I suffered through those long trips and thought there had to be a better way.

On one trip in particular, I started doing some sketching on how best to support the body while providing the right balance and comfort for the entire body. After several options, I settled on the design that is now the Travel Kozy.

I then used my wife as a model to arrive at what I perceived to be the best dimension for the average body, compared those dimensions to mine, and averaged them out. I then made up a prototype from memory foam and an inflatable version using Fix-a-Flat to seal up the seams of the inflatable version.

I then tried it out on my wife, who has some issues with her back, on long trips from Maryland to North Carolina. She enjoyed the support and comfort. I also tried it out and found I could sleep in a car while riding as a passenger and knew I was onto something. The prototypes were dormant in my closet for several years until I retired and set my sights on bringing it to market.

EGT: How is your product different? What are its special features?

GM: The Travel Kozy is completely different from other travel pillows in that it is self-inflated, the pressure can be regulated, it supports the entire body and has a contoured area for the head to prevent rollover while sleeping. It has an articulated lumbar area to provide the perfect back support.

The Travel Kozy is also versatile and can be used while traveling, or around the house while relaxing. Those who have purchased it also have found other uses, including using it in their office chairs or while completing their trip reports while in bed and on the road.

EGT: How many prototypes before you got it right?

GM: When I met with my manufacturer in Clearwater, Florida (CMS World Group), I had my sketches and mock-up for them to go by in preparing manufacturing drawings. So it took only two prototypes to get the product, design and material right.

EGT: Tell us about your patent process.

GM: Through friends of mine I play golf with, I was referred to a very competent patent attorney in Tampa. I had applied for a provisional patent myself, so I had much of the write-up and descriptions complete to share. The process was simple and straightforward and I am now waiting on the U.S. patent office to issue the patent any day now, as all descriptions and drawings were approved.

EGT: How did you come up with the name "Travel Kozy"?

GM: Initially I wanted to use the name "Travel Buddy," but in doing my research I found that name already taken. So I decided on the Kozy name.

EGT: Are you manufacturing in the United States or overseas?

GM: Manufacturing is currently being done in China.

EGT: You recently received your first shipment. How have your sales been so far?

The Travel Kozy is self-inflated, supports the entire body and has a contoured area for the head to prevent rollover while sleeping. It has an articulated lumbar area for back support.



"I could not get comfortable on planes or trains, even when pillows were available and distributed. So, I suffered through those long trips and thought there had to be a better way." —GLENN MCCAIN

GM: I had over a dozen sales even before the shipment arrived, and since then a story was done in the local Sun City Center Observer in October 2017. This generated a lot of buzz locally, and I received several calls at home from eager customers.

One was traveling to Hawaii the very next day, has a bad back and was dreading the flight. He saw the story on the front page and said to his wife that he had to have one, so I delivered it to his home. Since then the sales have been the best. I have also reached out to a national truck stop, as I can see this in every truck stop and airport nationally and worldwide. I have also had discussions with a company interested in maybe doing an exclusive with the Travel Kozy.

EGT: How are you selling? To retail? Or for now, just from your website?

GM: Currently I am selling on my website travelkozy.com, on Amazon, at the local UPS store and a specialty boutique store on Anna Maria Island, Florida. I have several products at the Tampa airport; however, the store is in a somewhat out-of-the-way location that does not see a lot of foot traffic.

EGT: What are you doing for PR?

GM: I am relying on social media for PR but will soon be featured on an ABC affiliate on their morning travel show segment in Utah.

EGT: What obstacles, if any, have you encountered?

GM: The Travel Kozy is a unique product that needs to be shown to the public on how the product is used—so



without that, people keep asking what it is for and how it is used. I have attended one craft fair to date to demonstrate the Travel Kozy, using an airplane seat so people will see the product in use. This, I feel, is the biggest obstacle I have to overcome. Hopefully with my videos on YouTube, this can be accomplished.

EGT: If you could share one lesson you've learned from product development, what would it be?

GM: Be persistent in your pursuit of development and do not become discouraged, as this is a long process with many small steps instead of strides. 📦

Details: travelkozy.com

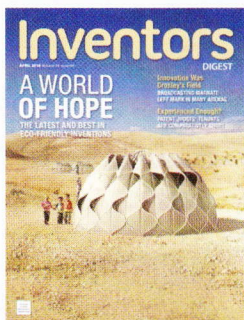
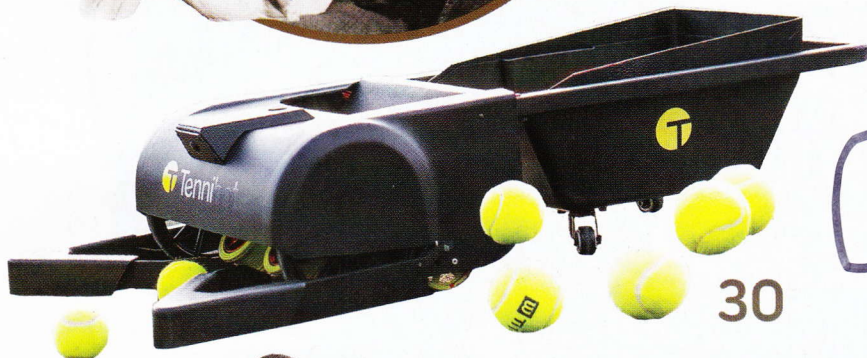
Books by **Edie Tolchin** (egt@edietolchin.com) include "Fanny on Fire" (fannyonfire.com) and "Secrets of Successful Inventing." She has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000. Edie has owned EGT Global Trading since 1997, assisting inventors with product safety issues and China manufacturing.





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