



Lisa Liegl Rees

Founder & General Manager

East to West

As the daughter of Forest River's founder, Pete Liegl, Lisa Liegl Rees grew up in an RV industry family. Now, she's creating an industry work family of her own.

"It's a tight-knit industry. Working with people you really care about becomes like a second family," says Rees. "I work with actual family and people who feel like family."

The founder of East to West, Rees tried her hand elsewhere before returning to the industry.

Rees moved to Chicago after graduating college, where she worked in the sports industry, in sales, and then in home fragrance. She purchased the assets of a company she worked for and started her own distributorship of European home fragrances.

"I imported brands from Europe. I could pick and buy what I wanted but I had no control over the manufacturing process. The brands didn't always fit the needs of the consumers," says Rees. "I started talking to my dad about leaving the business at that time and getting into manufacturing. I saw manufacturing as a way to bring my vision to a product and change things to meet a customer's needs."

Rees and her father started talking about her desire to be in the RV manufacturing field.

"I'm good at putting products together and giving customers what they want," says Rees. "I knew I could do it if I had the right team."

So, in 2018, Rees started the RV company East to West under her own private umbrella. After about six months, Rees sold the business to Forest River and became part of the Forest River team.

"It worked out nicely. We're now part of the Forest River family," she says.

Rees says she feels she's found her place in the industry.

"The RV industry can be challenging in different aspects, but it's a great place to work," she says. "I've been in other industries and worked hard jobs. I love being a part of the RV industry."

East to West first launched the Della Terra, a stick-and-tin trailer. The RV maker has since expanded its offerings to include a laminate trailer and a mid-profile

fifth wheel unit. It plans to launch a full-profile fifth wheel and a Class C brand this year.

"This tremendous growth is something I couldn't have accomplished without my team," says Rees. "It's been a lot of hard work. I'm proud of the growth we've achieved and the amazing partners we've gotten to work with as we've grown."

As a company founded by and led by a woman, Rees says she tries to empower women at the company with opportunities. The RV maker has several women entering the sales field.

"Being a woman, it's a great opportunity to learn from the bottom up. If you put your heart and soul into your work, do your best, and believe in yourself you can do a lot more than you ever thought," says Rees. "Women should also know they can have a family and be successful at work. If you self-manage there are a lot of opportunities for women in this industry to try it."



Rees is pictured above with her father, Forest River founder Pete Liegl, during an Open House event.