



US005876051A

United States Patent [19]

[11] Patent Number: **5,876,051**

Sage, Sr.

[45] Date of Patent: **Mar. 2, 1999**

[54] **FOLDING STEP FOR A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE**

[76] Inventor: **Gary A. Sage, Sr.**, 3106-2 Lost Creek Rd., Anaconda, Mont. 59711

[21] Appl. No.: **578,461**

[22] Filed: **Dec. 26, 1995**

[51] Int. Cl.⁶ **B60R 3/00**

[52] U.S. Cl. **280/166; 296/156**

[58] Field of Search 280/163, 164.1, 280/166, 169; 296/156, 62; 182/91, 95, 97, 159, 127, 165

[56] **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

560,752	5/1896	Prator	280/166
2,296,789	9/1942	Johnson	280/763.1
3,462,170	8/1969	Smith et al.	280/166
3,463,509	8/1969	Schiffner	280/166
3,529,850	9/1970	Montalto	280/763.1
3,876,230	4/1975	Phillips	280/166

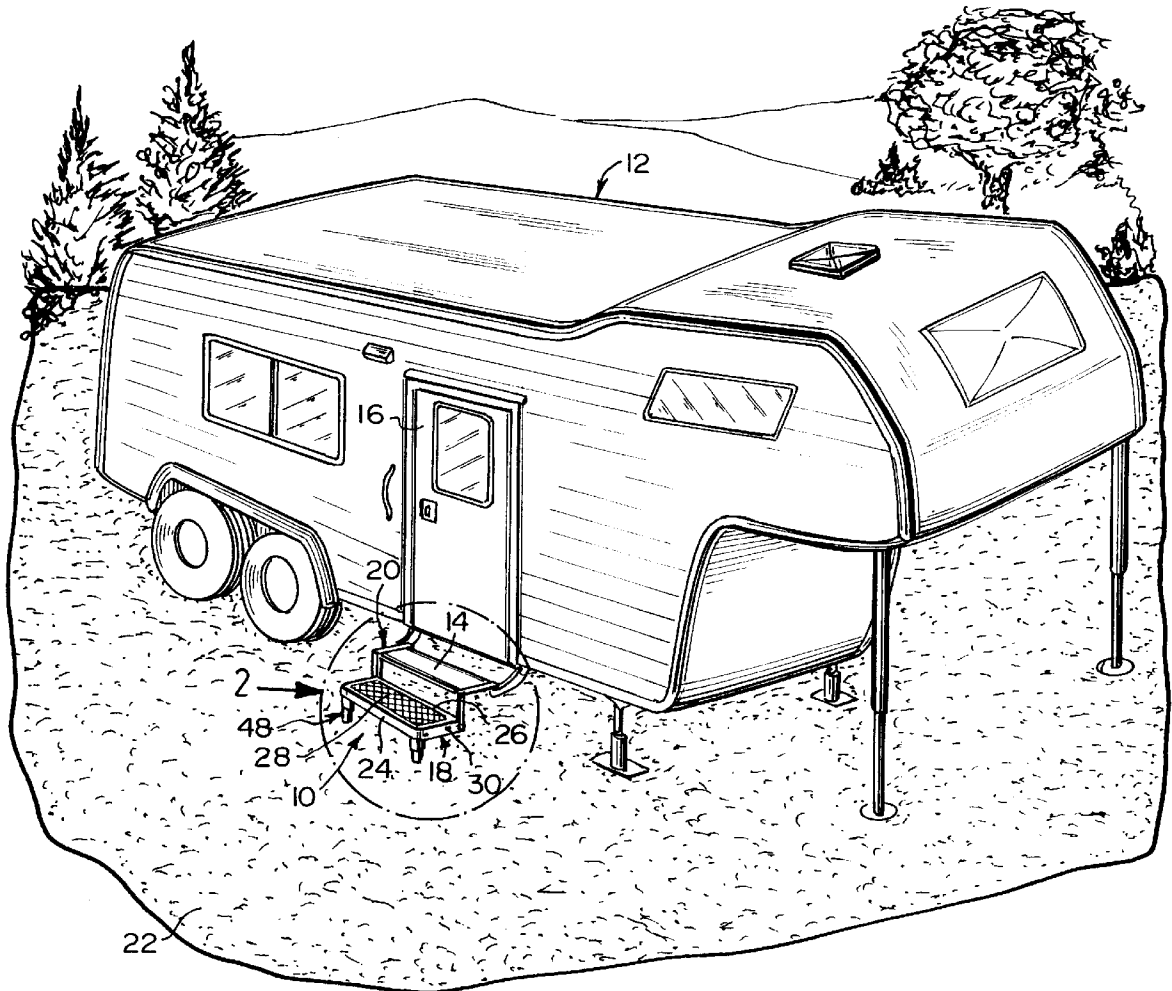
3,889,997	6/1975	Schoneck	280/166
4,021,071	5/1977	Norman	182/97
4,108,457	8/1978	Garrett	280/166
4,664,227	5/1987	Hansen	182/92
4,869,520	9/1989	Cole	280/164.1
4,911,264	3/1990	McCafferty	280/163
4,982,974	1/1991	Guidry	280/166
5,024,420	6/1991	Downing	296/156
5,660,405	8/1997	Campbell	280/166

Primary Examiner—Brian L. Johnson
Assistant Examiner—Jim McClellan
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Michael I. Kroll

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A folding step (10) for a recreational vehicle (12 having an existing step (14) at a side door (16). The folding step (10) comprises a tread (18) and a structure (20) for attaching the tread (18) to the existing step (14) with the tread (18) in front, between the existing step (14) and the ground (22). The transition from the ground (22) to the interior of the recreational vehicle (12) through the side door (16) is easier to negotiate by a person stepping up.

19 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



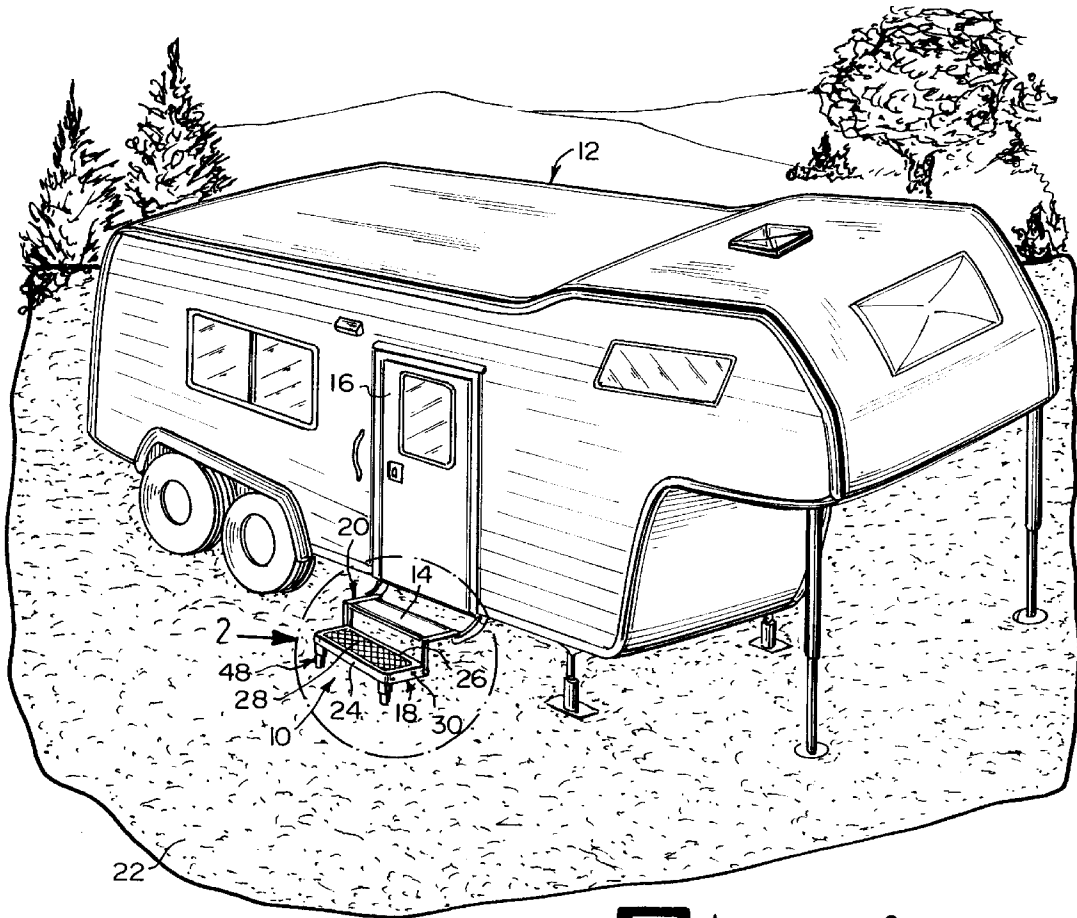


Fig. 1

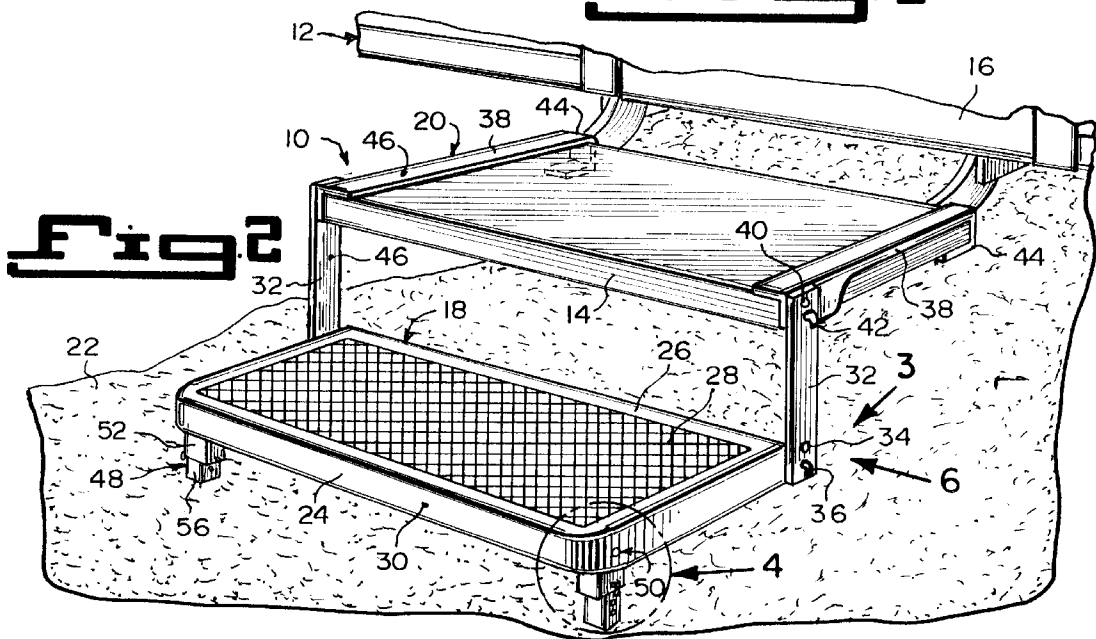


Fig. 2

Fig. 3

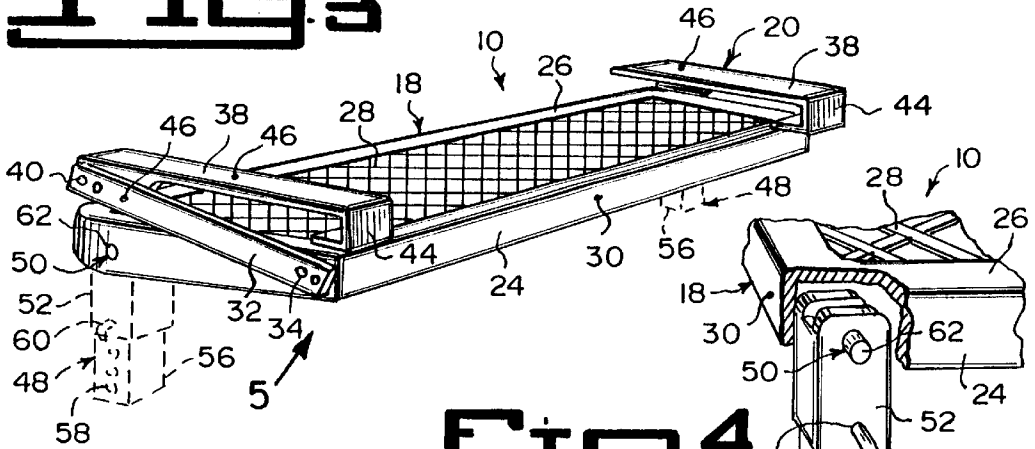


Fig. 4

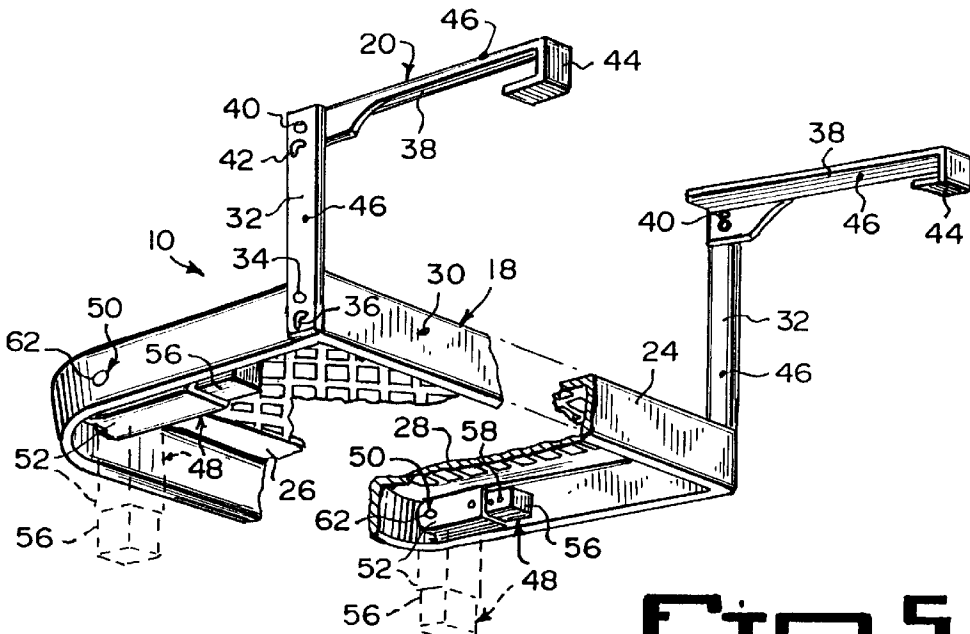
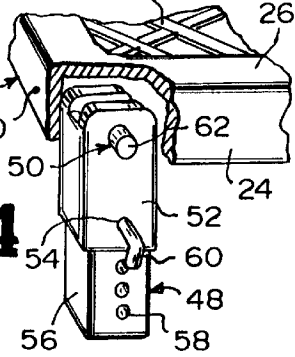


Fig. 5

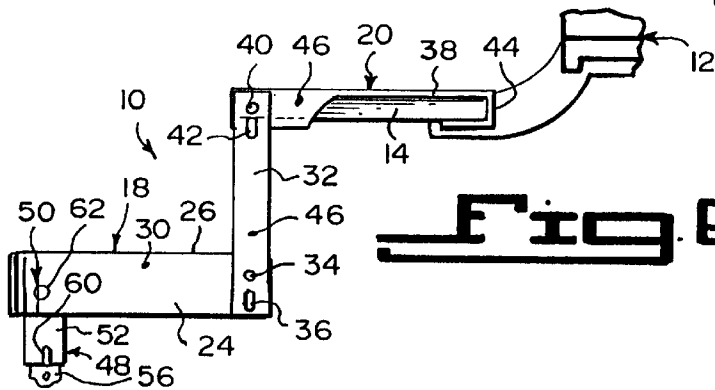


Fig. 6

FOLDING STEP FOR A RECREATIONAL VEHICLE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The instant invention relates generally to recreational vehicles and more specifically it relates to a folding step for a recreational vehicle.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Numerous recreational vehicles have been provided in prior art that are adapted to combine transportation and temporary living quarters for travel, recreation and camping. They are either motorized motor homes and van conversions or towable units, such as folding camping trailers, truck campers, travel trailers and park trailers. While these units may be suitable for the particular purpose to which they address, they would not be as suitable for the purposes of the present invention as heretofore described.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A primary object of the present invention is to provide a folding step for a recreational vehicle that will overcome the shortcomings of the prior art devices.

Another object is to provide a folding step for a recreational vehicle that is designed to supplement an existing step on the recreational vehicle, so the transition from ground level to the interior of the recreational vehicle through a side door is easier to negotiate by a person stepping up.

An additional object is to provide a folding step for a recreational vehicle which will help people of all ages to enter and exit the recreational vehicle easier, whereby anyone who has experienced the difficulty of using just the single step on the recreational vehicle, will appreciate the clear advantage of using the present invention.

A further object is to provide a folding step for a recreational vehicle that is simple and easy to use.

A still further object is to provide a folding step for a recreational vehicle that is economical in cost to manufacture.

Further objects of the invention will appear as the description proceeds.

To the accomplishment of the above and related objects, this invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that changes may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

Various other objects, features and attendant advantages of the present invention will become more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein;

FIG. 1 is a top perspective view of a recreational vehicle with the instant invention installed to the existing step.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged top perspective view of the area indicated by arrow 2 in FIG. 1, showing the instant invention in greater detail.

FIG. 3 is a top perspective view of the instant invention per se taken in the direction of arrow 3 in FIG. 2, in a collapsed position.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged top perspective view of the area indicated by arrow 4 in FIG. 2 with parts broken away and in section, showing one of the adjustable support legs in greater detail.

FIG. 5 is a bottom perspective view taken in the direction of arrow 5 in FIG. 3, with parts broken away and in section, showing the riser side rails and bracket arms in the extended position.

FIG. 6 is a side view taken in the direction of arrow 6 in FIG. 2, with parts broken away.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Turning now descriptively to the drawings, in which similar reference characters denote similar elements throughout the several views, FIGS. 1 through 6 illustrate a folding step 10 for a recreational vehicle 12 having an existing step 14 at a side door 16. The folding step 10 comprises a tread 18 and a structure 20 for attaching the tread 18 to the existing step 14 with the tread 18 in front, between the existing step 14 and the ground 22. The transition from the ground 22 to the interior of the recreational vehicle 12 through the side door 16 is easier to negotiate by a person stepping up.

The tread 18 includes a rigid skirt border 24 that serves as a frame for a central horizontal section 26. The tread 18 contains a non-skid surface 28 on the central horizontal section 26. The tread 18 is fabricated out of a lightweight sturdy material 30. The lightweight sturdy material is aluminum.

The attaching structure 20 consists of a pair of riser side rails 32, with a pair of first pivot pins 34. Each first pivot pin 34 pivotally connects a first end of one riser side rail 32 to a rear corner of the tread 18. A pair of first lock pins 36 are provided. Each first lock pin 36 can be inserted through the first end of one riser side rail 32 and into the tread 18 to keep the riser side rail 32 in a stationary vertical position with respect to the tread 18.

A pair of bracket arms 38 with a pair of second pivot pins 40 are provided. Each second pivot pin 40 pivotally connects a second end of one riser side rail 32 to a first end of one bracket arm 38. A pair of second lock pins 42 are provided, whereby each second lock pin 42 can be inserted through the second end of one riser side rail 32 and into one bracket arm 38, to keep the bracket arm 38 in a stationary horizontal position with respect to and away from the tread 18. A pair of hook ends 44 are also provided. Each hook end 44 is integral with a second end of one bracket arm 38. The bracket arms 38 can lie on top of the existing step 14 of the recreational vehicle 12, with the hook ends 44 engaging a rearward facing side of the existing step 14.

The riser side rails 32, are fabricated out of a durable metal material 46. The durable metal material 46 is corrosion-resistant steel. The bracket arms 38 and the hook ends 44 are also fabricated out of the durable metal material 46.

The folding step 10 for the recreational vehicle 12 further contains a pair of adjustable support legs 48. A component 50 is for pivotally connecting upper ends of each adjustable support leg 48 to an inner front corner of the tread 18. The adjustable support legs 48 can pivot up into a horizontal position for storage and can also pivot down into a vertical position, to contact the ground 22 and help stabilize the tread 18 above the ground 22.

Each adjustable support leg **48** includes a hollow upper segment **52** having an aperture **54** therethrough. The hollow upper segment **52** is affixed to the pivotally connecting component **50**. A lower segment **56** has a plurality of spaced apart adjustment holes **58** therethrough. The lower segment **56** slide fits into the hollow upper segment **52**. A lock pin **60** is inserted through the aperture **54** in the hollow upper segment **52** and into one of the adjustment holes **58** in the lower segment **56**, to keep the lower segment **56** in a stationary position with respect to the hollow upper segment **52**.

The pivotally connecting components **50** are a pair of shafts **62**. Each shaft **62** extends through an upper end of one adjustable support leg **48** and the inner front corner of the tread **18**. Each adjustable support leg **48** is fabricated out of the durable metal material **46**, which is corrosion-resistant steel.

LIST OF REFERENCE NUMBERS

10	folding step	
12	recreational vehicle	20
14	existing step	
16	side door	
18	tread of 10	
20	attaching structure of 10	25
22	ground	
24	rigid skirt border of 18	
26	central horizontal section of 18	
28	non-skid surface on 26	
30	lightweight sturdy material (aluminum) for 18	30
32	riser side rail of 20	
34	first pivot pin of 20	
36	first lock pin of 20	
38	bracket arm of 20	
40	second pivot pin of 20	35
42	second lock pin of 20	
44	hook end of 20	
46	durable metal material (corrosion-resistant steel) for 32 , 38 , 44 and 48	
48	adjustable support leg of 10	40
50	pivotally connecting component for 48	
52	hollow upper segment of 48	
54	aperture in 52	
56	lower segment of 48	
58	adjustment hole in 56	45
60	lock pin of 48	
62	shaft for 50	

It will be understood that each of the elements described above, or two or more together may also find a useful application in other types of methods differing from the type described above.

While certain novel features of this invention have been shown and described are pointed out in the annexed claims, it is not intended to be limited to the details above, since it will be understood that various omissions, modifications, substitutions and changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and in its operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing in any way from the spirit of the present invention.

Without further analysis, the foregoing will so fully reveal the gist of the present invention that others can, by applying current knowledge, readily adapt it for various applications without omitting features that, from the standpoint of prior art, fairly constitute essential characteristics of the generic or specific aspects of this invention.

What is claimed is new and desired to be protected by Letters Patent is set forth in the appended claims:

1. A folding step for a recreational vehicle having an existing step at a side door, said folding step comprising:

- a) a tread; and
- b) means for attaching said tread to the existing step with said tread in front, between the existing step and the ground, so that the transition from the ground to the interior of the recreational vehicle through the side door is easier to negotiate by a person stepping up; said attaching means including:
 - i) a pair of riser side rails;
 - ii) a pair of first pivot pins, whereby each said first pivot pin pivotally connects a first end of one said riser side rail to a rear corner of said tread;
 - iii) a pair of first lock pins, whereby each said first lock pin can be inserted through the first end of one said riser side rail and into said tread to keep said riser side rail in a stationary vertical position with respect to said tread;
 - iv) a pair of bracket arms;
 - v) a pair of second pivot pins, whereby each said second pivot pin pivotally connects a second end of one said riser rail to a first end of one said bracket arm;
 - vi) a pair of second lock pins, whereby each said second lock pin can be inserted through the second end of one said riser side rail and into one said bracket arm to keep said bracket arm in a stationary horizontal position with respect to and away from, said tread; and
 - vii) a pair of hook ends, whereby each said hook end is integral with a second end of one said bracket arm so that said bracket arms can lie on top of the exiting step of the recreational vehicle, with said hook ends engaging a rearward facing side of existing step;
- c) a pair of adjustable support legs; and
- d) means for pivotally connecting ends of each said adjustable support leg to an inner front corner of said tread, so that said adjustable support legs can pivot up into a horizontal position for storage and can also pivot down into a vertical position, to contact the ground and help stabilize said tread above the ground, wherein said pivotally connecting means includes a pair of shafts, in which each said shaft extends through an upper end of one sad adjustable support leg and the inner front corner of said tread.

2. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **1**, wherein said tread includes a rigid skirt border that serves as a frame for a central horizontal section.

3. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **2**, wherein said tread includes a non-skid surface on said central horizontal section.

4. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **1**, wherein said tread is fabricated out of a lightweight sturdy material.

5. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **4**, wherein said lightweight sturdy material is aluminum.

6. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **1**, wherein said riser side rails are fabricated out of a durable metal material.

7. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **6**, wherein said durable metal material is corrosion-resistant steel.

8. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **1**, wherein said bracket arms and said hook ends are fabricated out of a durable metal material.

9. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim **8**, wherein said durable metal material is corrosion-resistant steel.

5

10. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 1, wherein each said adjustable support leg includes:

- a) a hollow upper segment having an aperture therethrough, whereby said hollow upper segment is affixed to said pivotally connecting means;
- b) a lower segment having a plurality of spaced apart adjustment holes therethrough, whereby said lower segment slide fits into said hollow upper segment; and
- c) a lock pin that is inserted through said aperture in said hollow upper segment and into one of said adjustment holes in said lower segment to keep said lower segment in a stationary position with respect to said hollow upper segment.

11. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 1, wherein each said adjustable support leg is fabricated out of a durable metal material.

12. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 11, wherein said durable metal material is corrosion-resistant steel.

13. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 3, wherein said tread is fabricated out of a lightweight sturdy material.

14. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 13, wherein said lightweight sturdy material is aluminum.

6

15. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 7, wherein said bracket arms and said hook ends are fabricated out of a durable metal material.

16. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 15, wherein said durable metal material is corrosion-resistant steel.

17. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 16, wherein each said adjustable support leg includes:

- a) a hollow upper segment having an aperture therethrough, whereby said hollow upper segment is affixed to said pivotally connecting means;
- b) a lower segment having a plurality of spaced apart adjustment holes therethrough, whereby said lower segment slide fits into said hollow upper segment; and
- c) a lock pin that is inserted through said aperture in said hollow upper segment and into one of said adjustment holes in said lower segment to keep said lower segment in a stationary position with respect to said hollow upper segment.

18. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 17, wherein each said adjustable support leg is fabricated out of a durable metal material.

19. A folding step for a recreational vehicle as recited in claim 18, wherein said durable metal material is corrosion-resistant steel.

* * * * *