



SMART E-NEWS



“Seeing the Country We Defend”

SMART HEADQUARTERS

SMART BI -MONTHLY SUPPLEMENT

February 2024



The Great Atlantic Canadian Maritime Experience Caravan

June 15, 2024 to August 27, 2024

We have a few spots left!

(see page 7 for more info)

Register now for the
2024 National Muster

“Dancing to Charleston”

Those who sign up early and
pay, gets a chance to win
their registration monies
back!

So what ya waiting for!
Sign up Today!



www.SmartRVing.org

Grand Canyon and Beyond Caravan

Has one opening for someone special to join us
on this tour of several National Parks out west....

Grand Canyon, Arches, Brice Canyon,
Capital Reef, Canyonland, Zion & Monument
Valley, and end up in Las Vegas to see a few
great shows! www.smartrving.org/

[caravans/](http://www.smartrving.org/caravans/)





As this goes to print, your BOD had their first Zoom meeting to discuss 2024. Its already started out to be a good year with 22 new members so far for January. Keep up the good work. Communication from the top to the bottom is the main issue. The 2024 National is in great progress. Tours a plenty are planned, and great seminars and training sessions are planned too.

I would also add some help with Recruiting & Retention. And that is The 10 Tried and True Methods to Increase New-Member Retention. The first and foremost is the Welcome Letter from the RD's and the Chapter Presidents. The steps are as follows.

1. Have a 'welcoming plan'

- a. Recognize that new members are a specific individual or group. They need to be approached with specific strategies.
- b. Keep the new members engaged. Engaged members tend to get involved.

2. Say 'Hello' with a personal touch.

- a. First contact should come from an officer. Point out the value of them being a member of your chapter.
- b. Follow up with emails about upcoming events.

3. Reach out at three and six months.

- a. After the initial 'Welcome' wait the 3 months to check back with the member. Do not overdue contacts.
- b. After the 3 months, check back with the member and get their feedback on what they like or did not like about the group.
- c. At 6 months, again ask for feedback and maybe get them involved with the chapters business.
- d. Remember younger members have different ideas/priorities.

4. Do a first-year assessment.

- a. You need to find out what they need, what they appreciate about the chapter.
- b. Maybe a survey that will determine a Do Good, Do Better especially from the younger members.
- c. Their response will provide meaningful insight.
- d. There are 3-4 reasons why a person joins the group. Be sure to follow up on those.

5. Sell Your Chapter

- a. Have things to do at Musters.
- b. Keep the members involved during the musters.
- c. Make sure that the new member is involved with the other members.
- d. Show the chapter off.

6. Always Stress Benefits

- a. Show the member the benefits from being a member of SMART and your chapter.
- b. Show them how to navigate the website.
- c. What publications are available to them.

7. Keep it Local.

- a. It's important to stress the local chapter for the first year.
- b. People want to talk about their own people, what is going on in their own chapter.

8. Provide Programs

- a. You have to keep in mind that a chapter's membership is always changing. "Younger members have different priorities, and you have to address their priorities".
- b. Get the new members involved with your chapter's events, programs, functions.

9. Capture engagement data

- a. Volunteering, attendance at chapter events, response to emails from BOD, participation.
- b. The bottom line is that if a Region/Chapter is keeping track of who is accessing its website, attending musters, and taking advantage of the benefits offered them, it has another resource for accurately assessing needs and retention data.

10. Meet Them

- a. Introduce them to the membership, BOD, and at chapter functions introduce them to another chapter members

From the desk of 1st VP—Melody Thomas

My mother used to have a saying: "Where there's a will, there's a way." As the years went by, I came to understand what she was trying to say to me. If you really want something, you will find a way to make it happen. I got a special lesson in the where-there's-a-will mindset last month while attending the RV Supershow in Tampa, Florida.



We asked the show organizers to let us have a table at the vendor's fair. They said no. We asked to put up a SMART banner on our RV which was parked on the fairgrounds. They said hell, no. We said we wanted to put out flyers on a table in front of our RV for people to take. They told us we would be thrown off the grounds if we did that. It was very frustrating. The Tampa RV show would have thousands of people coming in to look at RVs. Hundreds of them would be military. Our dilemma was how to reach them.

We came up with a brilliant idea. We could be walking billboards! CustomInk.com printed the design we made and put them on bright, yellow tee-shirts. They worked great! The front of the shirt has a picture of Uncle Sam with the words, "Are You a Veteran?" We put information about SMART on the back of the shirt. We had veterans come up and acknowledge that, yes, they were a veteran. We then asked if they liked to camp with other veterans. The conversation went on from there and we handed out many applications.

The lesson here is that we could have given up when we got all those "no's" but we didn't. We were bound and determined to recruit at that fair. We found



a way. You can, too. If you really want to recruit new members as well as retain current members in your chapter, look for a way to make it happen. Invite people in the campground to join you around the campfire. Make sure everyone at the muster interacts with one another. Share your potluck with fellow campers. Always carry an application in your pocket to hand to anyone who asks about SMART. This a great club. Share the good news.



David Weis 2nd VP

I would like to Welcome our newest members in SMART: Terry & Diane Nygaard, Don & Susan Magee, Gene & Debby Lenuso, Rick & Karen Stevenson, Rene Steinhauer, Randall & Linda Burdette, Mike & Deanna Scott, Ron & Peggy Carter, Donald & Robin Morrow, Anna Lee Polk, Angela & Abraham Avila, Lonnie Louviere and hope by now you have either joined a Chapter or visited one (that 's where all the fun is).

Additionally, I would like to invite all our Spouse's & Significant others to consider joining our SMART family and becoming a member. You'll have your own member number, be eligible for door prizes, and be able to vote and it will help support your club, and we need your support.

Smart members, It's no secret that our Club continues to fall short of our recruiting goals and our financial situation remains fragile. SMART Headquarters will continue to accept Regional, Chapter and individual monetary donations in an effort to remain financially solvent. Your donations will be greatly appreciated and welcomed. Thank you

Travel safe and see you in Ladson South Carolina at our National Muster this September. **David Weis. 2nd VP**



Tennessee Chapter Muster News

Calling all Tennessee Smart RV members and other friends to the first muster of the **Rocky Tops Chapter** restart. Our muster will start with check in on the 9th of May, 2024 and continue with check out on the 13th of May, 2024. There will be plenty to talk about and decide, including the election of officers, the approval of the Standing Rules and much more. We will have special guests joining us. One is them is Melody Thomas and her husband . Melody Thomas is the 1st Vice President for the National Smart HQ, she was a great asset in getting this chapter restarted. Wulf Corrington is presently looking to get another speaker for our first muster.

The cost of the Muster will be \$40.00 per rig and the site cost is \$45 minus 10%. There are sites reserved and you can start making reservations now. We will be providing breakfast and dinner on most days of the muster. We also will have games and plain fun for the 4 days we are together.

The restart of this chapter will only work if we all work together. There are over 20 TN couples that are part of Smart RV and I hope that we see all of you at the muster. There we can share ideas on how to make our chapter fun and successful. We are also looking at a possible 2nd muster in late September or early October.

The contact details for the RV park are 615-459-5818, ask for Donna. The address is 1130 Rocky Fork Rd, Smyrna, TN 37167

To register for the muster please send a check for \$40.00 to:

Reese Burke 3538 Gnat Hill Rd Manchester, TN 37355

Looking forward to seeing everyone and having a great time.

Midwest Region Muster under the new SMART National Regional Realignment. It will be a wonderful time to meet new Midwest Region neighbors. Do not miss this special event. The dates of the **Regional Muster** are March 11 - 15 at the Choctaw RV Park in Durant, OK.



The schedule and meals are in the planning stages. You can make your campsite reservation at this time. There are two ways to make your reservation at Choctaw RV Park.

RESERVE ONLINE: Use this link to their booking website: <https://book.rguest.com/onecart/wbe/offers/1180/Durant-RVPark>.

Enter the offer name 'SMART MUSTER' into the offer code search just below the image of the office when you click the link. This will bring up the Muster dates, as well as a few dates prior if you want to go ahead of time. Monday through Thursday the rate is \$35.00 per night. If you arrive early or stay after the conclusion, the nightly rate increases to \$45.00 per night. Follow the online instructions.

RESERVE BY PHONE: Call their reservations department at 888-652-4628. At the first prompt select '1' for Durant. At the next prompt select '1' for hotel reservations. Tell them you are booking for the RV park, not the hotel. Then give them the offer code of 'SMART MUSTER'. Provide them with your arrival and departure dates.

For either reservation method, to guarantee your campsite, a deposit equal to at least your first nights stay will be charged to your credit card at the time you make your reservation. 48 hours cancellation notice is required by the RV park. Notify before 4 p.m. two days before your scheduled arrival and your deposit will be refunded by the RV park minus a ten (\$10) dollar cancellation fee. Cancellations made within 48 hours of arrival will result in a forfeiture of the full deposit.

Please register for the Muster on the SMART website under Musters. Looking forward to a wonderful time in Durant. Hope to see you there.

The East Region is hosting the
2024 National Muster in Ladson, SC
16-20 September

There are great tours of Charleston scheduled with plenty of time allotted to tour and enjoy the area. This will be a great National Muster that you won't want to miss. The **Muster Master** is PP John Steinbauer, PP David Weis as '**Master of Ceremonies**, and a special guest speaker.

Go to the SMARTRVING.org Website to register for this event.

We are looking for volunteers to fill vital staffing positions.

How to use the Mil RV Parks Evaluation Program



Step #1 – Log in to the SMART website

Step #2 – Sign in under Members Only

Step #3 – On the Members Only page there are three rows of blue ovals – the first row is light blue, the second and third rows are dark blue. The third dark blue oval in the third row is labeled “Military RV Parks.” By clicking on that oval, it takes you to the **US Military RV Parks**/RV Park of the Year Awards page.

Step #4 – Go to “Submit an RV Park Evaluation Form”

Step #5 – Select the State

Step #6 – Select the Military RV Park

Step #7 – Complete the Form, making especially sure that you answer Yes or No in line **Four**. If you do not, your evaluation cannot be used in voting for the Mil-Park-of-the-Year. (NOTE: You do not have to stay at the Mil-Park to evaluate it. Ask to see the park and do a drive-through. Write your evaluation from what you observe.)

NOTE: The **best** place to leave the Travelers and poster is in the laundry. More members go to the laundry than to the registration office.

Step #8 – Submit form.

Done! Please submit the Evaluation even if you are not impressed by the Mil Park. This information gives me an opportunity to contact the Mil Park to see if there is a way we can help them to improve.

Thank you. Gene-O Chairman Mil RV Parks Committee

“Dancing to Charleston”

Let’s get ready to head to the Charleston area of South Carolina! Our 41st National Muster will be held in Ladson, SC.

We have great Seminars, Entertainment, Tours and lots more coming your way as we arrive in the Charleston area.

Do you know how to do the Charleston? But don’t let that stop you . Charleston has horse and buggy tours and haunted trail walks, tours to plantations! OR Just sight seeing along the coast. There's lots to do! So bring a friend and enjoy the great food there!



Western Regional Muster -- March 25-28, 2024



Encore Fiesta Grande RV Resort

1511 E Florence Blvd Casa Grand, AZ 85122 520-426-7000

When you call to make your reservations, tell them you are with the SMART group. The

military rate is \$168.90 for the 3 nights including tax.

On the first night, March 25th they have set up an optional event. The RV Resort has a

music concert with a lasagna meal for \$30 per person. The concert is an Everly Brothers tribute band. Meal is at 5:45 pm and the concert starts at 7 pm. If you do not want the meal and just want to go to the music, it is \$25.

Central Regional Muster – November 10-15, 2024

The Cajuns are hosting the Central Regional Muster at Sundowners
New Orleans in Robert, LA.

Karen & Bo deBlieux will be cooking a jambalaya and Wayne Lam will be doing a shrimp boil. There is possibility of a pontoon boat ride down the Tangipahoa River.



Ms Kitty's Place

My farm is located in West Milton, Ohio about 10 miles from I70/I75. I have hookups for electric & water.

Cost is free except generally RVers are required to take a dozen eggs. The property is fenced for pets but chickens & ducks free range. Folks who would like to stay need to text Kitty at 952-250-9772. Please try to give 24 hour notice.



LOOKING FOR RV DESTINATIONS INSPIRATION?

LOOK NO FURTHER THAN...

RV **Destinations**
AN RV TRAVEL MAGAZINE 
be inspired.



▶ **PRINT**
▶ **DIGITAL**
▶ **BOTH**

YOU CHOOSE
RV DESTINATIONS MAGAZINE

YOUR WAY

Special Introductory Offer

YOUR SPECIAL PRICE **\$39.99**

COVER PRICE ~~\$49.00~~

SUBSCRIBE

NOW



 **SCAN ME**

Take advantage of this offer by scanning the QR code or visit www.rvdestinationsmagazine.com to learn more.



ATTENTION:

Since postage keeps going up, we have started emailing your SMART membership card to you when you renew your membership. Also, instead of mailing post card reminders when your dues are due, we will be emailing reminders to you.

Please make sure your contact information (email address, mailing address, & phone number) on your profile on the website is all correct.

You should have received your January printed Traveler by now. If you did not receive yours, please email or call HQs and we can mail one to you.

If you would like some Travelers and/or pamphlets to give out to let others know about SMART, contact HQs.



Grand Canyon and Beyond....

April 11th of 2024

We'll kick off the Grand Canyon and Beyond Caravan in Williams Arizona. We'll tour the bottom of the Grand Canyon by 4 wd Vans, ride a Tram to view the Canyon Rim, enjoy a calm water float trip to Horseshoe Bend, We'll take a Jeep Safari tour of Monument Valley National Park with a real Navajo code talker as our tour guide. We'll take a Jet Boat Cruise and enjoy a light show and Dinner in Moab Utah. We'll take a Jeep tour to Arches NP. We will go on a boat ride at Canyonland NP. We'll take a tour of Capital Reef by Jeep, tour Bryce Canyon National Park by shuttle, and Zion National Park before we head to Las Vegas, Nevada.

In Las Vegas we'll enjoy a few shows and dinners. This and so much more is what you'll be enjoying from April 11th to May 5th 2024.

Now is the time to get your application and deposit of \$280.00 into SMART Headquarters as we are limited to 20 RV participants.

David & Jackie Weis will be your Wagonmasters dweis74@hotmail.com

Prices: Couple \$6495 Single \$4500 Guest \$3495

(We have a 1 spot available)



The Great Atlantic Canada Maritime Experience

June 15, 2024 to August 27, 2024



This caravan promises to provide memories that will last a lifetime!

Spend 74 days traveling throughout the four Canadian maritime provinces. Some of the activities scheduled:

In **New Brunswick** you will see majestic brown-sugar beaches, culturally rich Acadian villages, quaint coastal islands and vast tracks of forests brimming with wildlife. It is also home to the world's highest tides at Hopewell Rocks. During low tide we'll walk among the "flowerpot" formations. We'll visit the beautiful Kingsbrae Gardens – a multi-award winning, horticultural masterpiece. Those brave of heart will have the opportunity to traverse the ocean bed to Ministers Island during low tide.

Newfoundland, which is impossible to adequately describe briefly, is where you will have 33 days to explore some of the most unique geology, breathtaking vistas, wildlife galore, icebergs, whales, and puffins. You will immerse yourself in the region's extraordinary history while touring the ancient Viking settlement of L'Anse aux Meadows. And shhh ... we'll visit a Secret World War II Officers Club and a World War II Bunker.

In **Nova Scotia** we'll attend a variety of unique offerings to include; attendance at the Royal International Tattoo, enjoy a Ghost Tour of Annapolis Royal National Historical Park, and, whether you are a believer or not, Oak Island. We'll take a memorable underground mine tour and attend the Men of the Deeps Concert.

You'll have time to explore Cape Breton, rated one of the world's most beautiful road trips with 22 stops for unique crafts or sightseeing. There will be whale watching tours, city bus tours, and a harbor cruise on a tall ship. We'll attend the 159th Antigonish Highland Games to watch competitions of traditional Scottish Heavy Events plus Pipe and Drum, and Highland dance. **Prince Edward Island** is the home of Anne of Green Gables. We will attend the Musical and tour the places that inspired the legend. Spend an afternoon at the stunning Cavandish National Park. You can enjoy their Lighthouses, museums and some of the finest seafood in the Maritime.

We will conclude our trip back in Trenton where Tina's Great Maine Lumberjack Show has extended their season for us. On our last night we will enjoy a lobster dinner and distribute your memory book to share with friends and family back home. Join us on this caravan and make memories that will last a lifetime! Follow this link for a video preview of the caravan: https://youtu.be/_hGZRFgx6-Q

Wagon Master(s): Tony & Gina Mason Email: fresno63@hotmail.com
Costs - Single Cost: \$7,100 Couple Cost: \$10,550 Guest Cost: \$3,484

We have a 4 spots left!

- ◇ NOTE: For the long ferry there will be a few rooms available that will allow pets or separate kennels for pets only – as the date draws near, we will advise on availability and pricing.

2024 Veterans in Branson

Nov 6th –15th 2024

Branson's Veterans Homecoming week is America's largest Veteran's Day celebration and we'll be there to participate from November 6th until November 15th. Throughout the entire week of celebration we'll enjoy various shows to include; Branson Murder Mystery/ dinner show, Christmas Story dinner show, Miracle of Christmas Show, Yakov and Dolly Parton's Stampede and dinner show. Additionally we'll visit the Veteran's Museum, Aquarium, Christmas Trail of lights (tram ride), Ralph Foster Museum and the Showboat Branson Belle (paddle wheel) where we'll not only enjoy a scrumptious meal and lively show but a beautiful view of Table Rock Lake. You won't want to miss this fun and exciting Caravan, now is the time to send in your application and deposit of \$280.00 to SMART Headquarters . David & Jackie Weis wagonmasters.



Couple cost: \$2040, Single cost: \$1405,
Guest cost: \$805

[Get on the standby list](#)

2025 SMART Caribbean Cruise Caravan



SMART Caribbean Cruise
Feb 8-17, 2025 9 Nights

Join Tony & Gina Mason on this FUN adventure
On Board the Celebrity Eclipse
Save \$200 per person when you book by 5/2/23

SMART Caribbean Cruise

Feb 8-17, 2025

Join your fellow SMART members and step on board the beautiful Celebrity Eclipse. Celebrity is known for its fine dining, service, and spacious public areas. There are also nightly shows and entertainment throughout the ship.

Prices include 4 FREE Perks: FREE Wi-Fi, FREE Gratuities and FREE Classic Beverage Package PLUS \$200 Per Cabin On Board Credit for Balcony and Above and \$100 Per Cabin for Inside Cabins Prices range from \$1384 – \$2929 pp dbl occ

**\$450 per person deposit is 100% refundable until
Final Payment of November 10th, 2024.**

SMART Rally Fee is \$125.00 Per Cabin and must be paid directly to [SMART](#) separately. More information may be found at <https://1b59a9-6042.icpage.net/smart-caribbean-cruise-feb-2025> **We have 2 cabins to choose from, we have 48 booked already**



Civil War Chasing John Wilkes Booth Caravan

Posting soon to the 2025 caravan list

We have an interesting historical twist for this Civil War focused caravan. While the first shots of the Civil War were fired at Fort Sumter, the war began much earlier for John Wilkes Booth.

Through guided tours and experienced docents, we will explore how Booth and his network of conspirators attempted to decapitate the Union government and throw it into a state of panic and confusion.

Our caravan will begin at Fort Sumter and end in Washington, DC, where five days after the Civil War ended, the assassin murdered President Lincoln.

We will visit some of the most significant sites where over three million men fought in America's brother-against-brother conflict that claimed more than 600,000 lives. While the war settled the question of Union versus States' Rights and ended slavery, not everyone accepted the outcome.



Sites we plan to visit include Ft Sumter National Monument; Manassas National Battlefield Park; Richmond, VA; Antietam National Battlefield; Gettysburg National Military Park; Appomattox Court House National Historical Park; Battle of Bentonville; and Historic Oakwood Cemetery.



In addition to battlefield sites, we have chartered a private John Wilkes Booth Escape Route Tour! Our guide is a Lincoln Assassination historian and expert on all of Booth and Herold's haunts along their flight path. Our journey will begin at Ford's Theatre and continue as we visit Surratt's Tavern and discover where Booth hid his weapons. We will also visit Dr. Mudd's Home for a guided tour of the farmhouse. This experiential

tour is a must for Lincoln assassination buffs or those with an interest in Civil War history. We will also include a variety of local activities and entertainment opportunities unique to the locations we will be visiting.

We will end our caravan with an evening dinner cruise. We will enjoy delicious cuisine and live entertainment on a dinner cruise along the Potomac River and view the famous sites of the nation's capital — like the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial

Join us and experience the full story,

Dates TBA Safe Travels,
Joe Faubion Tailgunner



Recipes from the SMART Cookbook

POTLUCK with Beans

Baked Beans with Sausage

3 32oz cans baked beans	2 T. prepared mustard
2 lbs Hot Sausage	¼ cup brown sugar
½ med onion, chopped	3 T. molasses
2 tsp. dry mustard	¼ cup ketchup

Fry hot sausage with the chopped onion. Drain. Crumble and stir into beans. Add all other ingredients and cover. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. Served 20.

Chuck Wagon BBQ Beans

1 lb ground beef	2 T. vinegar
1 cup chopped onion	2 1lb cans baked beans
1 cup ketchup	2 1lb cans kidney beans
2 T. mustard	Salt & Pepper to taste

Brown the ground with onions. Season to taste. Place everything in a baking dish and heat at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Meaty Crock Pot Beans

1 lb ground meat	1 cup ketchup
¾ lb bacon – fried and chopped	¼ cup brown sugar
1 onion chopped	1 T liquid smoke
2 15oz cans pork & beans	3 T vinegar
1 15oz can pinto beans	1 T Worcestershire sauce

Salt & Pepper to taste

Brown meat with onion. Pour off the fat. Place everything in crock pot for 3-4 hours. Add some Corn Bread and enjoy.

Challenge

Can anyone speak aloud for 60 seconds without saying any word without an “a” in it ??

For the answer, contact genebennett101@gmail.com.

Thank you. Gene-O



Everyone, please remember we have **Recruiting Material** at HQ to pass out to help in your recruiting potential new members.

- (1) Printed TRAVELER Magazine (free),
 - (2) New SMART Booklet with lots of info about SMART (free),
 - (3) Tri Fold with your member# printed on them (free)
 - (4) SMART Banners (\$20)
 - (5) Uncle Sam Posters (free)
- and We just ask you help with the postage.

February SMART E-NEWS 2024

S*M*A*R*T - SPECIAL MILITARY ACTIVE RECREATIONAL TRAVELERS RV CLUB

114 Duxbury Ave. Molino, Florida 32577

(850) 478-1986 • (800) 354-7681

www.SmartRVing.org