



A Note from Your Muster Master

We now are about six months away from the 2024 SMART National Muster. I'm pleased we already have 72 registrations and 142 individuals attending. Keep track of all the latest info by reading the Charleston Ragtimes Newsletter which is sent to all SMART members and is also available on the 2024 SMART page of the website.

Now is the time to look at all the tour options and plan to arrive early. We have an outstanding special guest speaker during opening ceremonies, some excellent catered meals, great vendors, and seminars planned. This year we are also have a golf tournament, the **President's Cup National Golf Tournament**, at Joint Base Charleston's championship Wrenwood Golf Course. There will be weigh stations for your camper, trucks and tows will be available during arrival and departure.

Our National Quilt Project is going well because of chapter support across SMART, so get ready for a high bidding auction.

If you've been a SMART member for awhile, you will get to see old friends and make new ones. If you are a new SMART member, this National will be an excellent opportunity to make lifelong friends.

Our motto, "Dancing to Charleston" will be continued during the muster with varied music genres, so don't forget your dancing shoes.

If you have already registered for the National and decide to change your arrival dates to facilitate tours and need to revise, no problem. Just go the SMART website, sign in and go to your reservation and make the change which will generate a new reservation with any payment due or refunds for site payments.

There are so many other activities scheduled, you won't want to miss out.

Our team has worked really hard putting together a great muster but we need every SMART member who plans to attend, register NOW!

See you in Charleston,

John Steinbauer



2024 SMART NATIONAL MUSTER INFORMATION

By Lonnie Alley Assistant Muster Master, Parking, and Facilities Coordinator

Let me provide some important information about Charleston South Carolina, Exchange Park and the 41st SMART NATIONAL Muster hosted by the Eastern Region. I would like to pass on a few tips, heads up and advice. This muster has the potential to be one of the best and the planning and execution committees are trying their very best to make it a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Starting with arrival where you will be greeted by the parking team who will assign spaces, assist with parking, pass out goodie bags, and items of interest. After parking and setup, you will be available for tours, meetings, social hours, etc. until Sunday. Welcome and Registration are Sunday and Monday 0900 – 1600 in the meeting room (Blue Room). See the muster schedule on the SMART website for details.

Charleston is a very interesting and historic city where several options for tours are available. The tour period is 12 to 15 September 2024. Wednesday 18 September is an open day for the tour scheduled by Charleston Convention & Group Services, Viator, or your personal plans. See the article on tickets and tours for details.

Driving around Charleston is a challenge on the best of days. The streets tend to be narrow and rough with parking non-existent or quite expensive. Because of this, we recommend you carefully consider the bus tours through Charleston Convention Group Services which provide guided tours with transportation from Exchange Park and return. For those who prefer other options, UBER and taxis are available at your cost. For reference, links to downtown Charleston parking are:

https://en.parkopedia.com/parking/downtown_charleston/?arriving=202401301300&leaving=202401301500

<https://www.charleston-sc.gov/1025/Parking-Information>

For those interested, I am providing a link to the golf cart vendor. Some of the campsites are some distance from the meeting hall and vehicle parking will be limited to the campground and the parking lot in front of the meeting hall. Limited shuttle service will be available, but not full-time. Arrangements have been made for discounts to members desiring to rent a cart for personal use. Please contact Garrett Williamson by email and mention you are with SMART. He is the sales manager and manages the SMART sales himself. The carts will be delivered to and picked up from the campground every day except Sunday.

[TruCarts | Golf Carts For Sale Near Me | Golf Cart Dealer | EZGO, Yamaha, Club Car, More](#)

Email: garrettw@trucarts.com Tel: 843.870.8085

Several vendors and services providers are expected to be on hand to provide various goods and services. Negotiations are ongoing and more information will be published when it is available/confirmed.

REMINDER: YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL YOU PAY ALL FEES ON THE REGISTRATION RECEIPT. IF YOU HAVEN'T REGISTERED YET, OR PAID, PLEASE DO SO SOON.



Arrival and Departure 2024 National Muster

Arrival: Exchange Park 9850 Highway 78, Ladson SC 29456 (**NOT EARLIER THAN 11 September 2024 at 1200 Noon**) Parking on Thurs 12 September and later 0900 -1600. Unavoidable late arrivals please call 910.709.9477 or 910.308.2882 for site assignment and parking assistance. All site assignments are “first come, first serve” with no pre-assignments.

Exit 203 Interstate 26 either east or west bound. Follow signs on highway 78 to Exchange Park. The campground entrance is through the main fairgrounds parking lots by the tree line on the north edge of the grounds. Look for signs for SMART at the turnoff. Parking assignments will be made upon arrival and a SMART parking team member will guide you to your site and assist in parking. NOTE: all spaces are back in only and are the same size, approximately 50 feet long and 20 feet wide.

Please stop at the gate to get your site assignment and welcome package. This is also the ideal time to disconnect towed vehicles. Due to limited maneuver room, please leave towed vehicles outside the camping area until you have parked your camper.

There are no designated handicap spaces. There are approximately 15 spaces on pavement near the meeting room building that I am setting aside for handicap, plus I will set aside several spaces in the campground as close to the building as possible. Recommend those with limited mobility issues mark your online registration Handicap box and note if you need close in parking. If you have already registered and failed to mark the box, go back to the registration form and mark the Handicap box. In addition, if you use any of the help devices, mark accordingly or reregister to enter the appropriate devices.

Groups and individuals wishing to park together must arrive together and place an 8X10” paper in the left front of each member’s windshield with your group name/ number in large letters/numerals, i.e. 1 of 5, 2 of 5 etc. Please have the group leader email Lonnie Alley, Parking Coordinator as soon as you plan to arrive in a group with the group name, number, and arrival date at lonniealley@earthlink.net or 910.709.9477

There is ample space available to gather in the fair parking lots prior to entering the campground. The only stipulation is that all campers must be in the campground overnight. No campers may dry camp or remain in the parking lot overnight. There are several campgrounds, both military and commercial, in the area where you can stay overnight prior to arrival at the National to await your group.

Park and Power: The main camping spaces are three long rows. Rows 2 and 3 will be back-to-back and have both 30-amp and 50-amp connections, all other spaces are 50 amp only. Recommend 30-amp campers arrive with a 50/30 adapter as you may be in a 50-amp spot. All hookups (power, sewer and water) are behind the camper. Be prepared with sufficient hoses and power cable to reach approximately 10 feet behind your camper. Water is city water, recommend pressure regulators. All campers must be self-contained. This is not a

“campground” in the traditional sense. There is no campground office. DO NOT call Exchange Park for any reason, contact Lonnie Alley, Parking and Facility Coordinator 910.709.9477 for all questions/issues. All reservations and normal campground operations and parking are handled through SMART National Muster Staff. THERE ARE NO DUMP STATIONS, SHOWERS or BATHROOMS in the camping area. The restrooms are in the main facility (Blue Room Atrium) open 24 hours a day.

While in the campground:

Limited WIFI is available (may not support streaming)

Broadcast TV only, no cable

No open fires including no fire rings.

Quiet hours 10PM to 6 AM (This is a residential neighborhood)

No garbage collection, take your garbage to the dumpster.

Departure: Due to heavy traffic on highway 78, all departures will be right turn only when exiting Exchange Park. This will lead you directly back to interchange 203 where you can go west (left turn) or east (right turn). Interstate 95 is west. Please leave the campground clean and orderly. Do not leave garbage on your site for others to cleanup.

Questions/concerns please contact Lonnie Alley, Parking Team Coordinator 910.709.9477 or lonniealley@earthlink.net.

2024 National Muster Tour/Sightseeing Options

Your National Muster Staff has been working diligently to identify the best tour and sightseeing options for the Charleston area for over six months. After negotiations with multiple companies, we believe you will find these options will meet your sightseeing and tour desires.

We are providing three options for your convenience. However, since Charleston provides such a wide range of tour and sightseeing options, you may decide there are other tour operators that may meet your personal situation both from an interest and financial standpoint.

First, for those who prefer transportation from Exchange Park for a tour and return, we have partnered with Charleston Convention and Group Services, Inc. (CCGS). They have been providing tours since 1986 and specialize in supporting military reunions. CCGS has developed tours and a schedule to match the times specifically designated for tours during the National Muster schedule. Thursday, 12 Sep, to Sunday 15 Sep, and Wednesday 18 Sep. To see the tours, prices, and terms and register go to: [Charleston Convention Group Services](#)

For those who rather drive on your own, carpool, or go by a taxi service like Uber, Lift, or a traditional taxi company, we suggest two options: Viator or Information, Tickets, and Travel (ITT).

Second, Viator is a worldwide tour company who offers a wide selection, excellent prices, and terms at: [Viator Charleston Tour Options](#)

All you have to do is go to their website and make your reservations.

Third is one military members are familiar, ITT through military bases. While this option may be the most cost effective, the process only works if you purchase the voucher(s) in person and is somewhat complicated. ITT caters to military members who are in the local area since tickets must be purchased in person, and are non-refundable. In order to purchase the vouchers from ITT these are the recommended steps.

1. Review the tour options on the ITT website at <https://www.ibcharlestonorc.com/tickets> Note: The ITT website does not provide any detailed info about the specific tours; therefore you have to check each tour operator's website by searching the internet or viewing tours listed on Viator or another tour sales operator.

2. Once you decide which tour(s) you want, plan your arrival date for the muster so you have time to go to the ITT office at Jt Base Charleston to purchase the voucher(s). It will then be your responsibility to contact the tour company and make the reservation(s). The benefit of completing your part sooner than later is to have a better chance of getting the tour you desire. ITT assures vouchers will be available for each tour option, however, only the tour operator can provide info on the availability of specific tours and dates.

IMPORTANT: Please know if you purchase a ITT voucher and then decide not to go there are no refunds or exceptions. SMART only serves as a facilitator for purchasing tours via all options and does not receive any financial benefit. Each tour option (CCSG, Viator, and ITT) have their own tour purchase and refund terms and conditions and it is your responsibility to read and understand them. SMART staff will not attempt to negotiate or intervene if a dispute occurs either on your behalf or theirs. Members are free to arrange tours on their own without using these options.

Note: If you have already registered for the National and decide to change your arrival dates to facilitate tours and need to revise, no problem. Just go the SMART website, sign in and go to your reservation and make the change which will generate a new reservation with any payment due or refunds for site payments.

If you have any questions, you can contact John Steinbauer, Muster Master/Tour Coordinator at jfs9840@gmail.com.

Brown Bag Auction and Raffle



The traditional Brown Bag Auction and Raffle has been a great tradition at our National Musters and it will be even better in Charleston. We have decided to make some rules adjustments based on feedback from our members. It's an excellent way to have a good time, gain some interesting items, and have an opportunity to win some money.

Each "Rig" **MUST** only bring **one** bag and be worth at least \$20. All bags will be given a number when dropped off at registration and the name of the donor registered for future reference. At the end, the bag with the highest auction amount will be recognized with the donor and winner with photos taken to celebrate and recognize these outstanding members.

The bag must be TAPED closed so there is NO peeking.

NO STAPLES IN THE BAGS They can cause injuries if left in the bag and will not be accepted for the auction.

Items can be a new nice item or a gag. If the item is a gag, at least \$20 cash or a gift card must be included. If a gift card, it must be used anywhere.

You may bring any item you want but it must follow the these rules

- If it's an electronic item, it must work and be safe
- It can be new or used, funny, or a gag item, expensive or inexpensive, nice, ugly, or whatever, or even just a gift card.
- If it's a gift card, make sure it can be used anywhere, not just the local area
- If it's a gag gift of NO value, \$20 cash or a gift card of at least \$20 MUST be included

BROWN BAG RAFFLE TICKETS You will be given one raffle ticket when you turn in your bag. You will also be given one raffle ticket for each bag you win in the raffle. Each bag will contain one raffle ticket which must be removed and retained. To participate in the auction, you must bring a bag or win a bag or both.

BROWN BAG AUCTION Each bag will be auctioned to the highest bidder. The minimum bid will be announced prior to the start of the auction. The person winning the bag will remove the ticket, open the bag and show what was won.

BROWN BAG RAFFLE At the end of the auction, the money received will be counted and divided into several prizes. The number and amounts of the prizes will be determined after the auction and before the raffle. They will be announced to all present, winning tickets will be drawn and the cash prizes will be awarded.