From Your National President

Summer 2019 is off to a good start! Two SMART Caravans are Seeing the Country We Defend and the rest of us are either planning or traveling. Next year’s Caravans are now being advertised and gaining participants. More are coming. Sign up early and join the fun.

Lila and I enjoyed a wonderful 5200-mile spring trip from home in Virginia to the south west to attend the SW Regional Muster in Tucson, the SMW Regional in Glen Rose, Texas, the Y’All Come, Cajun Muster in Louisiana and the SE Regional Muster in Dillard, Georgia. What an incredible six weeks! We say the fun begins in the chapters but chapters together at a Regional, quadruple the fun. All were extremely well organized and perfectly executed. If there is a shortage of crawfish in Louisiana, I’m partially responsible. I encourage everyone to support and participate in your regional musters. The March, April and May Regional muster period is a great time to get the rig back on the road and re-join your friends.

We visited the new SMART HQ facilities twice during our travels and can attest that all is well. Our transition from Pensacola to Molino was flawless and a great benefit for SMART.

In mid-May we made a short dry run to visit the campgrounds and places we plan to visit during our Virginia Is For History Lovers caravan in August. It makes us excited. At Appomattox, we listened to the lead Park Service Ranger describe the events leading up to the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia to such detail you wonder if he was there. At the D-Day Memorial, they are working fast and furious to get ready for the 75th Anniversary of the 6th of June 1944, when they expect tens of thousands...probably the last where any aged survivors can attend. They have two hours of over-flights of WW II aircraft planned. Wish I could be there in June.

We checked every reserved campsite at our campgrounds and fell in love with Pocahontas State park. What a contrast between commercial and state parks. Nearly every site is a pull-through in a forest of beautiful Virginia trees. We still have vacancies on this caravan.

After a few short weeks at home we will spend June and July in Minnesota before returning to Virginia for our Caravan and National and associated activities.

In April, for the first time in many months we gained more new members than we lost. We need to keep this trend going. SMART grows only by the personal individual efforts of its members. You get a free year’s dues for every 5 new members. As many have pointed out...if every member signed up just one new member, our membership would double.

See you in Virginia. “From the Mountains to the Sea!”

Doug Blaha
From the 1st VP

Summer is definitely pushing its way in to East Texas! We have had several mid-to high 80’s days in the past month, and we have had a number of intense rain storms. RV travel is on our minds as we consider our plans for the summer and beyond … visits to family, visits to friends, and SMART Musters.

Jean is still recovering from spinal surgery in her neck about 2 months ago. She is feeling better than she has in a couple of years … the constant pain is no longer constant … and is slowly regaining her stamina. The RV is a blessing for travel as no matter where we go, we have our own bed and pillows with us. If she needs to rest we can stay over a day along the way to wherever. Although we would love to be in cooler weather while Texas simmers through the summer (we spent a great summer in Wyoming, Idaho, & Washington several years ago), we don’t have a lot of travel plans for the summer months beyond a 50th high school class reunion in Kansas over Memorial Day Weekend with a class neither of us graduated with! (we both had pretty mobile childhoods involving a lot of schools …)

We look forward to returning to Virginia for the National Muster in September, very close to our final assignment in Hampton VA before retirement from the Air Force. In fact, the national muster is meeting at one of the RV Parks we visited in the first year we owned our RV! After our first muster with the SMART CATS on a three day weekend, we stopped at Bethpage for an overnight on our way back to Hampton when the campground where the CATS had met closed for the season and would not let us stay over another night! There is much to see and enjoy in the area there, and I hope you take the time to take in at least a part of the opportunities for adventure that are there.

As you travel our great country, as you visit RV Parks and RV stores, look around and notice other RVers that you might share information about SMART with. Carry a member application in your wallet (you can print the trifold from the website), or carry a business card with the SMART website url on it … have a brief conversation with other veterans and invite them to check SMART out. There are around 15 SMART musters around the country between now and the National Muster. Enjoy as many of them as you can … and invite someone to join you there!

Enjoy the adventure, Paul
FROM YOUR 2nd VP

There has been a lot of discussion recently within the SMART leadership regarding membership. How do we increase our numbers while retaining current members? Our organization is not unique when it comes to membership issues. Many clubs and organizations like ours struggle with recruiting and retention issues. In the area of recruiting we have kicked around many ideas, and even tried a few, on how best to get our message out to the Veteran community to include banners, business cards, social media, etc. Some ideas such as advertising in RV and camping magazines, although great ideas, unfortunately are just too expensive considering our limited advertising budget. After all the discussions and the dust settles the best source of advertising and getting the word out is personal contact through word of mouth. Yes, banners often help start the conversation but our members are our best advertising. When it comes to retaining current members it is important to understand why people leave our organization. Many have said there is nothing we can do about people leaving because of health or age related issues. This is mostly true, but if you look at the statistics most people who leave SMART do not list a reason or are dropped because they didn’t pay their dues. I believe it is incumbent upon all of us as SMART members to reach out to other members who are considering leaving our organization or who are delinquent in paying their dues. If we uncover issues that cause people to leave that are preventable we need to make the leadership aware so that positive changes can be made. We all need get involved at the chapter, regional, and national level to make our organization one that veterans and their families want to be a part of.

One of the best recruiting and retention tools we have is our very cost effective caravans. My wife Gwen and I, with Jon and Nancy Katin as our Assistant Wagon Masters have once again teamed up to lead the 2020 Canadian Maritimes Caravan. This will be the third time that all of us have been on this caravan. It is an unbelievable 60 day trip through some of the most breath taking beautiful provinces in Canada. We just announced the caravan a couple of weeks ago and already have 11 rigs signed up. If you are interested you need to get your application in right away because this caravan fills up quickly. Please visit the SMART website for more information.

Happy trails, Carl Hopper
2019 SMART National Shirts

On Sale now at HQ. Call HQ to Pre-order

Men’s & Ladies $24.00 each (any size)

Your Choice RED, WHITE, or NAVY with 2019 Logo over Heart

Size Chart Mens

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Size Chart Ladies

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CHEST: Measure just under the arms, across the fullest part of the chest, around shoulder blades, holding measuring tape firm and level

Sizes: S-6XL Mens & Ladies S-3XL

Fabric:

4.4 oz., 100% polyester mesh piqué
Moisture-wicking
UV protection

Features:

Fully taped flat rib-knit collar
Half-moon patch
3-button placket with dyed-to-match buttons
Double-needle flat-lock stitching at shoulders

You can also order with SMART logo

2019 National Logo
2019 S*M*A*R*T NATIONAL MUSTER REGISTRATION FORM

“East by Northeast/From the Mountains to the Sea”
September 23 – 28 September 2019- Bethpage RV Resort and Campground
679 Brown’s Lane, Urbanna, VA 23175    Phone Number (804) 758-4349 (option 2)
Contacts: National Muster Chairman: Gene (Gene-O) Bennett genebennett101@gmail (757) 620-7044
National Muster Master: William (Bill) Gooding wggooding@aol.com (703) 878-6827
National Muster Treasurer: Virginia (Ginny) Louis tom.ginny@yahoo.com (301) 327-6522

Please PRINT the following information clearly

SMART # ___________________________  CO-PILOT SMART #______________________  1st National Muster [ ] YES

SMART Chapter(s) representing__________________________________________________________

Last Name___________________________________First____________________ Co-Pilot________________________
Address_________________________________________________ City_______________________State______ZIP_________
E-mail address_________________________Phone___________________________

Arrival Date__________________Handicap parking [ ] YES    Food allergies __________________________ Pets [ ] YES

Vehicle : [ ] Motor Home [ ] 5th Wheel [ ] Travel Trailer [ ] Pickup w/ Slide-in Camper  length___________  # of slides_____

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:
[ ] Past National President  [ ] Medal of Honor Recipient  [ ] Purple Heart Recipient  [ ] POW
Member: [ ] Canadian armed forces  [ ] NATO    [ ] SEATO    [ ] Guest (Sponsor SMART #______________________)

Please check any of the following activities you wish to participate in: [ ] Books, VHS/DVD/CD’s movies for book sale [ ] Crafts for sale
[ ] Donation for silent auction  [ ] Donation of door prizes  [ ] Indoor games  [ ] Outdoor games
[ ] Will volunteer to help at the Muster (Gofer, tram driver, prize runner, server, etc.)

TOURS    (All tour requests should be submitted by 1 June, 2109 for bus planning requirements)
[ ] TOUR #1: Yorktown/Jamestown (23 Sept) $75.00 includes Admission Tickets to both venues + box lunch
[ ] TOUR #2: Colonial Williamsburg (23 Sept) $30.00.+ Admission tickets with military ID, ½ price ($25.00 +/-)
[ ] TOUR #3: Hampton Harbor Cruise (24 Sept) $60.00. Includes Admission Tickets
[ ] TOUR #4: Colonial Williamsburg (24 Sept) $30.00.+ Admission tickets with Military ID, ½ price ($25.00 +/-)
[ ] Golf Tournament: 23/24 Sept (Date TBD)

Mail this Registration form with check payable to SMART to cover your REGISTRATION and TOURS.
SEND TO: SMART, HQ   114 Duxbury Avenue, Molino, Florida 32577 (NEW ADDRESS) For all registrations post-marked before 1 September, 2019: $250 for 2-person rig; $125 for 1-person rig; $125 for each additional person, plus cost of tours you signed up for). Late entries add $25.00.
Please contact HQ SMART if your decision to attend is made after 1 September, 2019. fee will be $45.00 per night payable to Bethpage RV Resort (804) 758-4349 (Option 2)

ALL campsite reservations will be made with Bethpage RV Resort and will require a minimum one night deposit.

ALL ATTENDEES AND GUESTS 18 YEARS OR OLDER MUST SIGN BELOW IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE:
For services rendered to/received by those signed below, in their participation of any SMART activity named above, the undersigned hereby releases and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless 2019 National Muster staff and SMART Inc, all officers, directors, employees, agents and their successors and assigns from all liabilities, injuries, obligations, claims, demands, losses, damages, judgments, penalties, expenses and disbursements, including reasonable attorney’s fees of and kind and nature arising out of or in any way related to the activity listed above. SMART is NOT responsible for the actions of any participating company or agent with regards to their role in organizing, planning, or for any other service they provide for the benefit of the persons or activity named herein. All children under 18 must be accompanied by a SMART member and that member is responsible for the action/activities of which the minor participates.

Signature___________________________Date______Signature___________________________Date______
Upon receipt of your registration, SMART National HQ will send verification of registration along with a copy of the refund policy. Updates will be by e-mail, through the SMART Traveler, Smart E-News, and/or the SMART website, www.smartrving.org.

Travel directions: FROM THE NORTH

Northern Virginia/Washington DC
Traveling south on I-95. Exit on US 17 south at Fredericksburg. Follow US 17 for 70 miles, watching for signs to Bethpage. Turn left on Rt 602. Travel for approximately 5 miles. Look for Bethpage sign, turn left, go about ¼ mile, on left.
(Watch for the SMART signs)

Baltimore/Annapolis
Traveling south on US 301, cross the Potomac River Bridge (toll) into Virginia. Go 14 miles to Port Royal. Take US 17 south. Follow US 17 for 50 miles. Turn left on Rt 602, travel for approximately 5 miles. Look for Bethpage sign, turn left, go about ½ mile, on left.
(Watch for the SMART signs.)

Travel Directions: FROM THE SOUTH

Richmond/Petersburg
Traveling north on I-95 or I-295, exit on I-64 East. Follow I-64 to exit 220, West Point, Rt 33. Follow Rt 33 through West Point to US-17/Rt-33. Stay on Rt-33. Turn left Rt 227, go through Urbanna. Approximately 1 mile past city, entrance on right.
(Watch for the SMART signs.)

Norfolk/Newport News/Portsmouth/Hampton/Virginia Beach
Use I-64 to US 17 North. Follow US 17 North, across Coleman Bridge (toll), 35 miles through Gloucester. 1 mile north of Saluda, turn right on Rt-33. Turn left on Rt 227, go through Urbanna. Approximately 1 mile past city, entrance on right.
(Watch for the SMART signs)

GPS COORDINATES
Lat. 37.6489 37 deg. 38.9 min North
Long. 76.5854 76 deg. 35.1 min West

Recommend arriving 22 Sept. or earlier.

Tours #1, #2, and Opening Ceremony are on Monday 23 Sept.
Tours #3, #4 are on Tuesday 24 Sept
Golf is on 23/24 Sept. (Date TBD)

Golf updates and extra tours, if requested, will be posted on the SMART web.

No registration fee will be refunded after 1 September, 2019, unless a verifiable emergency.

ATTENTION*****TOUR INFORMATION*****ATTENTION
ALL TOUR REQUESTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY 1 JUNE, 2019

Tours planned on Monday 23 Sept.
TOUR #1- Yorktown (AM), Jamestown (PM) Leave Bethpage 0800 Return by 1600 (extensive walking)
TOUR #2- Colonial Williamsburg: Leave Bethpage 0800 Return by 1600 (extensive walking)

And Tuesday 24 Sept
TOUR #3- Hampton Harbor Cruise: Leave Bethpage 0800 Return by 1600 (tour is 3-4 hours/minimum walking
TOUR #4- Colonial Williamsburg: Leave Bethpage 0800 Return by 1600 (extensive walking)

Contacts: National Muster Chairman: Gene (Gene-O) Bennett genebennett101@gmail.com (757) 620-7044 National Muster Master: William (Bill) Gooding wggooding@aol.com (703) 878-6827 National Muster Treasurer: Virginia (Ginny) Louis Tom.ginny@yahoo.com (301) 327-6522

Muster & Site Reservations received prior to June 1, 2019 will be eligible for a drawing to receive FIVE FREE nights parking per 100 reservations (100=1 prize; 200=2 prizes; 300=3 prizes etc)

SO
COMPLETE YOUR MUSTER REGISTRATION AND SITE RESERVATIONS TODAY!
RESUME of Willie R Pollard Jr

Position: 2nd Vice President of SMART National

I, Willie R. Pollard Jr., SMART Member #11846, do hereby apply for the position of SMART National 2nd Vice President. If approved by the Election Committee, I agree to accept the nomination and responsibilities as outlined in the SMART SR 06-18 and understand there is no compensation for this position, as stated in SMART Bylaws 6.11. I agree to assist in other areas as needed. I will always uphold the dignity of SMART and all of its membership.

I have been a member of SMART since 2004. I served as Muster Master for Alamo SMART for a period of six years and I'm currently President of Alamo SMARTs Chapter. I was the Master of Ceremonies for the 2018 National Muster held in Mineola, Texas and will be the Muster Master for the National Muster in 2020 in Shawnee, OK. In order to meet members in other chapters I also belonged to the SMART Cajuns, SMART Texans and the Nomads. I am a member of the Star Chapter and a staunch recruiter for SMART and will continue efforts to bring in new members. I am a life member of the Disabled American Veterans and have served as Alamo Chapter 5 Legislative Officer in San Antonio, Texas. I spent over twenty six years on active duty in the United States Army in command and high level staff positions. For the last four years of my active duty career I was the Inspector General for the state of Indiana. Two weeks after retiring from the military in 1994 I transitioned into education with the Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas where I opened the doors to a class called Skills for Adolescents for the Middle Schools. I retired as a High School Principal in 2012.

I am applying for the position of 2nd Vice President of SMART because I believe in SMART and all it stands for. If elected as 2nd Vice President, just as I believe in SMART, I am going to work hard to make sure members of SMART believe in me.

Willie R Pollard JR
RESUME of Gene E Bennett

for 2nd Vice President, SMART

I, Gene E Bennett, SMART Member #12635, do hereby apply for the position of SMART National 2nd Vice President. If approved by the Election Committee, I agree to accept the nomination and responsibilities as outlined in SMART SR 06-18 and understand there is no compensation for this position, as stated in SMART By Laws 6.11. I agree to assist in any/all other areas as needed. I will do my best to uphold the dignity of SMART and all of its members, current and future.

I have been a member of SMART since 2005. I have held positions of Chapter President (CATS), North East Regional Director for the past 4 years, and currently Chair of the Military RV Parks Committee.

I feel the SMART Camping Club is the best in the US and Canada.

I’m applying for the position of 2nd Vice President because I feel I can create a positive influence in SMART.

Gene E Bennett

Great Recruiting Booth...Al Haynes, last years recruiter of the year, set up a SMART table to introduce SMART to the Military Retirees at the Retirement Ceremony at Moody AFB. Way to go AL!

(We need to set up tables all over the US at these bases having retirement ceremonies so more people can learn about SMART.)
SMART CARAVAN APPLICATION

Make Checks Payable to: SMART or contact HQ SMART to pay by credit card
Mail To: SMART, INC 114 Duxbury Ave, Molino, FL 32577

A minimum of $280.00 will be submitted with this application. $80.00 of which is a nonrefundable, non-transferable Administrative Fee (unless cancelled by SMART). The remaining $200.00 will be credited as a deposit on the cost of the caravan. 100% deposit refunds will not be made unless a replacement is found, funds for the caravan have not been expended, or the service provider returns funds expended. Trip Cancellation Insurance is at the discretion of the participant. You may wish to contact your regular insurance provider to ascertain if they provide this service.

Please Print Clearly

Caravan Name________________________________________________ Start Date ____________________________
Mbr# _________Last_________________________First_______________   Spouse/S.O. _________________________
Street Address _________________________________City _______________________________ State ____________
Zip code _______________ How do you prefer to receive correspondence? E-Mail ______ USPS __________
Phone (Home) __________________________ (Cell 1)______________________ (Cell 2) _________________________
Email (His) ___________________________ (Hers) __________________________
Name of Guest traveling in your rig ____________________________________________

JACKET SIZE (if available): His - (S) (M) (L) (XL) (XXL) (XXXL) Hers - (S) (M) (L) (XL) (XXL) (XXXL)
Guest - (S) (M) (L) (XL) (XXL) (XXXL) (Wagon Master may provide additional size charts info later)

Is this your 1st SMART caravan? (Y) (N)   Type RV: Class A/C _____5th Wheel _____ Trailer _____ # Slide Out(s) ________
Length ____ft. Coupled (with tow vehicle) ____ft. License Plate #’s: RV ________________Vehicle_________________
Do you want 50 AMP at an extra cost (if available - NO GUARANTEE) - (Y) (N) pay at campground.
Do you or your traveling companion use any of the following, cane, walker, wheel chair (electric), scooter, C-PAP? Yes/No If YES, please indicate which one(S)

________________________ (His) Special Diet Needs: ____________________________ (Hers)

Do you have Senior, Annual, or Access National Park Pass (Y) (N) Do you have pets (Y) (N) How many ________ Type/
Breed __________________________________________________________________________
Birthday:  (Month/Day only)  His ________________     Hers____________ Anniversary Date: ______________

ALL SMART Members & Non-SMART members must sign, in order to participate – Please Read:
For services rendered to/received by those signed below, in their participation of the SMART activity named above, the undersigned hereby releases, and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless SMART Inc, all officers, directors, employees, agents and their successors and assigns from all liabilities, injuries, obligations, claims, demands, losses, damages, judgments, penalties, expenses and disbursements, including reasonable attorney’s fee of any kind and nature arising out of, or in any way related to the activity listed above. SMART is NOT responsible for the actions of any participating company, or agent, with regard to their role in organizing, planning, or for any other service they may provide for the benefit of the named person or activity. All persons must be 18 years or older, and must sign the required application. Name & Signature of Guests in your Rig “REQUIRED.”

Signature: __________________ Date:____________ Signature: __________________ Date:____________
Signature: __________________ Date:____________ Signature: __________________ Date:____________

ALL CARAVAN MEMBERS MUST HAVE A SMART NAME BADGE.
Contact National HQ to order: Cost is $7.50 (this includes S & H)
2020 SMART Caravans

2020 Maritime Caravan  June 21– Aug 20
with your Wagonmasters Carl & Gwen Hopper

2020 Grand Frontier  July 13th-Sept 2nd
with Wagonmasters Doug & Lila Blaha

Watch for more info in our next Traveler. Call HQ now to get on these great Caravans they will fill up fast!

2019 Virginia Caravan
has space for a few more so,
now is your chance to go.
2 person rig $2500. 1 person $1800.
Contact: Wagonmasters Doug & Lila Blaha