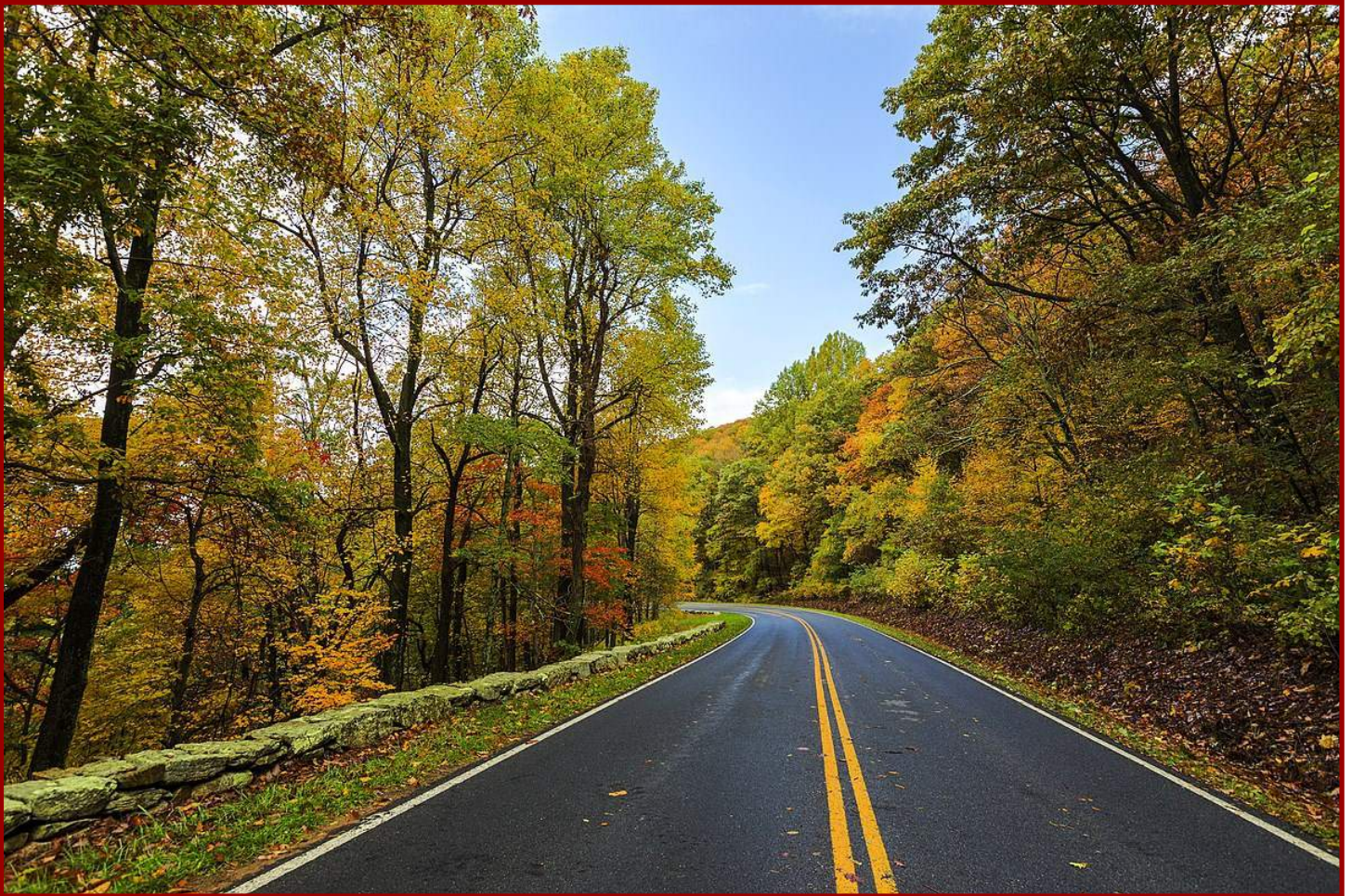


# SMART TRAVELER

Published Bi-Monthly for **S**P**E**C**I**A**L** **M**I**L**I**T**A**R**y **A**C**T**I**V**E **R**E**C**R**E**A**T**I**O**N**A**L **T**R**A**V**E**L**E**R**S** CLUB

MAY 2023



**Where will your Travels take you this year! How about a SMART Caravan to the Appalachian Mountains.....Join John and Kathy Stienbauer on a journey of a lifetime! 33 days of Beautiful fall colors in October. (see page 9)**

**Also take a look at  
2024 Maritime Caravan, 2024 Whiskey and Water Falls Caravan,  
2024 Branson for Christmas, 2025 SMART Cruise  
(more details in this issue on page 10-12)**

**SMART is a not-for-profit 501(c)19 Veterans Organization**



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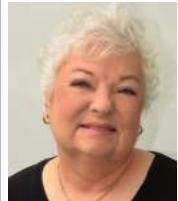
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**VACANT**

Go to our website for more info [www.SmartRVing.org](http://www.SmartRVing.org)



*From the desk of the SMART President:*

## How and Why, You Should Eat LESS Sodium

Sodium, an essential component of salt, plays many vital roles in the body. This mineral helps regulate blood volume, transmit nerve impulses, and contract muscle fibers, among other things. But we only need 500 mg of sodium a day to survive – the average American consumes nearly seven times that much.

Health experts have been urging Americans to cut back on sodium for years. More than two decades ago, the landmark Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) – Sodium trial provided strong evidence that reducing sodium in the diet can lower blood pressure. Also, too much sodium can have other detrimental effects.

**EXAMPLE** – *If you eat a salty meal, your body responds by holding on to water to dilute the extra sodium. As a result, the amount of fluid within your blood vessels increases. That raises the pressure within your blood vessels. High sodium can also stimulate hormones that cause the blood vessels to tighten, which also increases blood pressure. Over time, high blood pressure strains the heart, causing its main pumping chamber (the left ventricle) to thicken, raising the risk of heart failure.*

*Very high sodium levels can also damage the innermost layer of the blood vessels, which sets the stage for a buildup of fatty plaque (atherosclerosis). Excess sodium can lead to aberrations in the body's hormonal and inflammatory responses, which can alter your immune response, fat metabolism, and kidney function. The potential long-term consequences include damage to not the heart but also kidneys and brain.*

Many studies reinforce the benefits of cutting back on salt, including a recent one that looked at cardiovascular biomarkers (substances that reflect heart health) in stored blood samples from the original DASH trial. Researchers found that the diet progressively lowered biomarkers for heart injury and heart strain over the course of the three-month study. Another study, which followed almost 177,000 people for nearly 12 years, found that people who reported that they rarely or never added salt to their food had a lower risk of heart disease than those who usually salted their food. **Gene-O Bennett**



### *SMART 1st Vice President*

Mary and I just finished attending the Alamo SMART SMW Regional in Santo, TX. with the Texans and Alamos. Discussion was about the location of the 2025 National which the SMW Region is to host. There was a trip planned to a firing range and to a new Vietnam Veteran Museum, very moving. As y'all we're getting the kinks and leaks fixed in your rigs as spring is here. Lots of SMART information was passed out to the park attendees explaining to them about SMART and asking them to join us and explain about SMART and the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Muster in Amana, IA that y'all are going to attend. Make sure that you get your registrations and fees in early. Great times are being planned.

Richard D. Palmer  
SMART 1st Vice President



## Message from your 2nd VP

**It's time to go camping!** The flowers are budding, the sun is shining, balmy winds are blowing, and Mother Nature is calling. Your RV is stirring and wondering when you plan to get back on the road. Pull out the maps and travel brochures. Start planning your next trip. The country is beckoning to you! There are so many exciting places to go, things to do, people to meet. Get out and start enjoying them.

Chapters are planning the following musters. If something interests you, go online and register for it. You'll have a great time. Especially at the National Muster. It takes place in Amana, Iowa, September 18 to 22. There's plenty of room for you. **Come join us and help celebrate SMART's 40th anniversary.**

**5/4-8** Alamo SMARTS muster in the Coffee Creek RV Resort in Santo, TX.

**5/6-8** MS Magnolias muster at Anchors Aweigh RV Resort in Foley, AL. This muster will lead right into the SC Regional Muster.

**5/9-13** SC Regional Muster. Planned activities include a men's and women's luncheon, golf game, breakfasts, catered meals, a potluck meal (yum!), games, drawings, auctions, and more. There are ONLY 50 sites available. Reserve your spot before they're all gone.

**5/15-19** Tri-State Travelers muster at Walkabout Camp & RV Park in Woodbine, GA. Three breakfasts are planned along with lots of socializing.

**5/17-21** FL Buccaneers and FL Roadrunners are hosting a combined muster at Manatee Cove RV Park on Patrick Space Force Base in Florida. Area attractions include NASA, Warbird Museum, and Brevard Veterans Memorial Center. Non-ID card holders will be sponsored by the muster.

**6/7-11** The NE Regional Muster, sponsored by the Capital Campers and the SMART Cats, will be held at Chestnut Lake RV & Camping Resort in Port Republic, NJ. Three tours include a winery, a brewery, and a dolphin watching cruise. There will be meals, potlucks, and lots of fun. Sign up now to be sure to reserve your place at this event.

**6/7-11** FL Sunshine Chapter will have a muster at Paradise Oaks in Bushnell, FL.

**6/11-17** The Golden Gate Chapter will get together at the Gold Ranch Casino & RV Park in Verdi, Nevada.

**7/17-21** Tri-State Travelers muster at Palmetto Cove Campground in Cleveland, SC. They are planning for meals, games, social hours, and fun, fun, fun.

**Melody Thomas 2nd VP**



## SMART COOKBOOKS ON SALE

A collection of SMART members recipes for Camping. Appetizers, Beverages Deserts, Hors d' oeuvres, Pot-lucks, and more....

On Sale for \$12.00



### ***A Message from our National Chaplain***

On March the 8th I had back surgery. I was in a lot of sciatic pain before the surgery. As soon as I woke up from the surgery, I could tell the sciatic pain was gone. But it was replaced with the pain of the surgery, such as cutting through the flesh and muscle. The doctor had to do this in order to get to the backbone to cut away the damaged vertebrae and relieve the pressure on the nerve. Now I am going to rehab to get strength back in the muscles that were cut. There have been a few restless nights, taking pain pills. Even with the pain pills I would wake in the night with my brain in a fog sometimes not really knowing where I was. I would reach out and touch my wife, Dian, and that would give me new assurance of where I was.

The scripture comes to mind, Psalm 23, *“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.”*

It has been several weeks since the surgery and I am getting my strength back. Looking forward to getting back on the road. ***Lamar Enfinger***

### **Welcome and Congratulations to the following New Members and their Recruiters (March & April 2023)**

		(Recruiter)
15606 Eric Alberty (Sung Cha)	Kennewick, WA	J Katin
15607 Sung Cha Alberty (Eric)	Kennewick, WA	J Katin
15608 Wulf Corrington (Stephanie)	Estill Springs, TN	K Heeren
15609 Stephanie Corrington (Wulf)	Estill Springs, TN	K Heeren
15610 Jim Valentine (Pat)	Wantage, NJ	T Mason
15611 Pat Valentine (Jim)	Wantage, NJ	T Mason
15612 Richard Nieves (Colleen)	Punta Gorda, FL	B Samuels
15613 Colleen Nieves (Richard)	Punta Gorda, FL	B Samuels
15614 Robert McKee (Ann)	Mt Laurel, NJ	
15615 Ann McKee (Robert)	Mt Laurel, NJ	
15616 Brenton Higdem	Sherwood, AR	R Engel
15617 Daniel Sabatino (Gale)	Navarre, FL	M Northup
15618 Gale Sabatino (Daniel)	Navarre, FL	M Northup
15619 Cedric Council (Evie)	Stafford Courthouse, VA	
15620 Evie Council (Cedric)	Stafford Courthouse, VA	
15621 Jeff Hunton (Barbara)	Sun City Center, FL	
15622 Barbara Hunton (Jeff)	Sun City Center, FL	
15623 Myra Tiedemann	Canton, GA	R Tiedemann

We are still looking for applicants for **2nd VP** and for our **Northern Region Directors**. If you wish to run for 2nd VP or a Northern Director please submit a resume to HQ. Please follow the SR 06.04. Please read all the ByLaws and Standing Rules so you are familiar with our rules and regulations.

**We are also looking for a chairperson for the Family Assistance committee.**

### **AC-19 GUNSHIP REUNION:**

We are looking for former members associated with the **AC-19 gunships** used from 1967-1972 in Southeast Asia. We'd like to find aircrew, ground crew, support personnel, Friends & Families and anyone whose bacon we saved. Shadows & Stingers, Air Crew, Ground Crew Support Crew, 71<sup>st</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> SOS, Also AC-47 Puff the Magic Dragon folks.

Location: Hilton Crystal City, Washington, DC

**Wednesday, November 8 to November 12, 2023**

**54 Years Remembrance of AC-119 Gunships**

Reunion coordinator Armed Forces Reunions

Contact: Kelly Bridgeman, [kelly@afri.com](mailto:kelly@afri.com) 757-625-6401

Additional details are on our Association's website:

<https://www.ac119gunships.com/reunion/upcoming-reunion/>

GO to <https://ac119gunships.com/membership-contactinformation/alpha-roaster>

and add any missing names or contacts you have –

we can still reach many IF we know who you are!

**Jim Dunn AC-119 Association Life Member**

**SMART # 7308**

## The Risk of Too Much (or any) Alcohol

It is well documented that heavy drinking and abusing alcohol can take a serious toll on a person's health. But new research is suggesting that **no** amount of alcohol consumption is safe for overall physical health.

These findings are especially troubling for military and veteran communities, which have a significantly higher representation than their civilian counterparts. Many gravitate toward alcohol to deal with stress, boredom, and loneliness. Even more problematic is its ritualism with military and veteran communities.

A 2013-2017 review of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that US servicemembers spend more days a year drinking alcohol than people in any other industry. These are habits that follow veterans into post-service life.

In fact, a study examining data collected as part of the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that veterans, compared to their non-veteran counterparts, were more likely to use alcohol (56.6% vs. 50.8%) and also reported heavier alcohol use (7.5% vs 6.5%) in one month.

Binge-drinking outcomes are twice as likely to lead to negative consequences, including interpersonal, legal and professional issues. The study also found that higher levels of combat exposure correlate with an increased risk of troubling alcohol consumption. Alcohol use can damage the body in several ways:

### **Brain**

Alcohol disrupts brain communication pathways. These interferences can alter our mood and behaviors, making cognition and coordination difficult.

### **Heart**

Prolonged drinking or high consumption on a single occasion can harm the heart, which can cause chronic heart disease, arrhythmias, stroke, and hypertension.

### **Liver**

Heavy alcohol use stresses the liver, leading to inflammation and issues such as steatosis (fatty liver), alcoholic hepatitis, cirrhosis, and fibrosis.

### **Pancreas**

Alcohol causes the pancreas to release toxic substances that can lead to pancreatitis, which can be life threatening. Pancreatitis is severe inflammation and swelling of the blood vessels in the pancreas, impeding normal digestion.

### **Immune system**

A weakened immune system can result in the body becoming easier prey for disease. Chronic drinking attracts diseases like pneumonia and tuberculosis, and harms the ability to fight infections. Alcohol can also disrupt sleep, which suppresses your body's ability to recover.

### **Cancer**

According to the National Cancer Institute, there is a strong scientific consensus that alcohol consumption can cause several types of cancer. Even those who average no more than one drink per day have a modestly increased risk of some cancers. For more information about alcohol and cancer, go to **cancer.gov**. If you have questions or concerns about your alcohol consumption, seek guidance from your doctor, other medical professionals, or an organization like Alcoholics Anonymous.

*Army Veteran Jennifer Campbell*

# 2023 SMART CARAVANS

## NORTH TO ALASKA 2023 CARAVAN

Start: June 14, 2023 End: August 26, 2023

Prepare for the trip of a lifetime! There is just no other destination with the same combination of wildlife, scenery, outdoor activities, history, and facilities. Known as the Land of the Midnight Sun, Alaska truly is the Last Frontier. The caravan starts in Shelby, MT and ends in Oroville, WA.

Wagon Master(s): Melody & Paul Thomas Email: [thomas4smart@gmail.com](mailto:thomas4smart@gmail.com)

Tail Gunner(s): Johnny & Linda Leggett Email: [johnny\\_leggett@hotmail.com](mailto:johnny_leggett@hotmail.com)

**Costs - Single Cost: \$7500.00 Couple Cost: \$11,500.00 Guest Cost: \$4200.00**

Payments: \$280 upon application; 50% by December 14, 2022;  
and full payment by March 14, 2023.

The North to Alaska Caravan will take place over 74 days. The group will overnight in 32 campgrounds, share 18 meals and 8 potlucks, and participate in 26 planned activities. Total mileage will be 5,800 miles/1,768 km. In addition, folks will have free days to explore on their own as well as additional excursions offered to those who wish to experience more adventure. There will be plenty of opportunities to fish, hike, bike, and explore the phenomenal scenery.



Some of the planned activities include panning for gold, cruises to watch sea life and glaciers, learning about Alaskan history, touching the Alaskan pipeline, holding husky puppies at a famous dog kennel, enjoying salmon bakes, touring cities, riding through Denali National Park, taking a train ride through the White Pass, riding a sternwheeler down the Yukon River, visiting wildlife centers, and watching bears feast on spawning salmon.



Members of the caravan will receive a jacket, a tote bag, a swinger, a travel guidebook, the MilePost, a video presentation, lots of comradery, a memory book filled with pictures and stories of your personal adventures on the Alaska Frontier shared with fellow veterans, and the chance to make life-long friendships.



Go to <https://youtu.be/5JAPf6MwDiA> to see a preview of the caravan.

Then prepare for the trip of a lifetime!



## Autumn in the Appalachians Caravan

28 Sep – 30 Oct 2023

**Wagon Masters: Kathy and John Steinbauer, 210-386-9018 (John Cell) 210-386-9024 (Kathy Cell) Assistant Wagon Masters Gina and Tony Mason, 813-480-9170 (Tony Cell) 813-480-9185 (Gina Cell)** Estimated Cost for Double: \$4200, Single \$2950, \$1300 Guests to be determined Deposits & Payments: \$280 upon application; 50% by six months prior to start; Full Payment: three months prior to start. We will be leading the 33 day, 575 mile adventure in seven RV parks which will run right after the SMART National in Amana, IA with a departure date of 28 SEPT which is about 850 miles to our first campground. Traveling along routes close to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Appalachian Trail, we will be viewing the beautiful scenery and highlights of the Blue Ridge Parkway, Smoky Mountains, Appalachian Trail, Skyline Parkway, and the Shenandoah National Park.



Along the way, we will experience the grandeur of mountain vistas, waterfalls, and valleys. We will also visit fall festivals, wineries, and travel the “The Crooked Road, Virginia’s Heritage Music Trail” which winds through the mountains of Southwest Virginia where Bluegrass, Old Time, and Traditional Country music.



Number of Days: 33 days; Caravan Limit: 20 member RVs plus the WM and TG; 575 mile caravan in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. We will start the caravan in Helen, GA; then to Cherokee, NC; Asheville, NC; Bristol, TN; Galax, VA; Waynesboro VA near Staunton, VA; and end in Luray, VA. We will be sight-seeing at several locations where there will be considerable walking to enjoy the venue. The first will be in Asheville, NC at the Biltmore.

This link provides info on the tour of the Biltmore for individuals with mobility issues <https://www.biltmore.com/help-center/accessibility/> The next will be in the Staunton, VA area where we will go to Charlottesville, VA where we will visit Thomas Jefferson’s home, Monticello.

This link provides info on the tour of Monticello <https://www.monticello.org/visit/tips-for-visiting/accessibility-2/> The last place is at our last stop in Luray at Luray Caverns <https://luraycaverns.com/news/luray-caverns-is-step-free-at-last/>

Additional Info: All participants will receive an Autumn in the Appalachians Caravan jacket, tote bag, and binder with trip itinerary and activities. For more details on the caravan contact John at [jfs09840@gmail.com](mailto:jfs09840@gmail.com) or call 210-386-9018 or go to the SMART website <https://www.smartring.org/Caravans/>

# 2024 CARAVAN

## 2024 The Great Atlantic Canada Maritime Experience

Welcome to the 2024 Atlantic Canada Maritime Experience! It's the trip of a lifetime. How is traveling on a SMART Caravan different? We cross the borders together. Attendees will travel in small groups from location to location providing safety in numbers. The Assistant Wagon Master will always travel last.



Your wagon Masters have booked **24** Campgrounds, and 2 ferry crossings allowing you to explore the Canadian Maritimes. **Thirty** meals include restaurant local cuisine featuring seafood, meals at Canadian Legions, pot lucks and breakfasts. Enjoy **3** chartered bus tours of St John, Halifax to include the Titanic graveyard and St Johns. Stroll through **4** historic settlements - Louisbourg, Grande Pre, Annapolis Royal, and the Viking Village. See **6** Forts and **1** bunker- Fort Anne, The Citadel, Fortress of Louisburg, Signal Hill, and Fort Knox. **Seven** Entertainment venues- International Royal Tattoo, Highland Games, Anne of Green Gables play, Men of the Deep, Twillingate Dinner Show, Anchors Aweigh, Celtic Ceilidhs (pronounced Kaylees). **Nine** Geologic Sites/National Parks - Ovens, GrosMorne, TerraNova, Reversing Tides, Tidal Bore, Trombolite Beach, Hopewell Rocks, Cape Bretton Highlands, Prince Edward Island NP, Fundy NP. You'll sail **1** tall masted ship and **2** boats searching for whales, icebergs and puffins. **9** Museums feature Aviation, boat and ship building, fishing, lighthouses, potato farming, Alexander Graham Bell, distilleries and historic homes and an old courthouse that will teach you how barrister/courthouse terms came to be. **2** unique garden tours include Kingsbrae Gardens and Halifax public Gardens.



Will you have time to explore on your own? Sure! We will even give you the opportunity to take a day trip to Labrador! You can explore the many seacoast villages we pass through.

There will be time to relax, socialize, play games and enjoy occasional campfires. Are you excited yet? Come join us and make memories and friendships that will last a lifetime. We can't wait to meet you! Tony and Gina Mason, Wagon Masters.



Trip cost is **\$10,550 + 1 round trip ferry cost to/from Newfoundland**. Additional costs for two Ferry crossings are based on the combined length of your individual rig and tow connected together. Estimated \$US costs: 40-50' is ~\$1250, 50-60' is ~\$1420, 60'+ is ~\$1600.

Tony & Gina Mason Wagonmasters **We have several spots available**

## 2024 Veterans Unite in Branson

Nov 6th –15th 2024

November in **Branson turns into America's Christmas Tree City! Tinsel, Lights, and Ornaments** cover the entire town, but this isn't all they have to offer, we are also privileged to learn from **Honor** and reconnect with fellow Veterans from around the Country at this event. **Branson's Veterans Homecoming week** is America's largest Veterans Day celebration and we'll be there to participate from November 6,2024



until November 15, 2024. Although events do change from year to year, there's always a handful of activities to keep the focus on Veterans. Throughout the entire week of celebration, we'll enjoy various planned activities and shows. We're in the early stages of planning this exciting and fun filled week and now's the time to make your plans to attend. **Wagon Masters: David & Jackie Weis**



Couple cost: TBD Single cost : TBD Guest cost :TBD

# 2024 Whiskey and Water Caravan

**Start:** May 13, 2024, **End:** June 12, 2024

This caravan will visit several select distilleries and hike to select water falls along this 31-day 365-mile trip across middle America. Additionally, we will visit key museums, sites and activities along the way. Hiking to see waterfalls is also included as well as time to visit Ft. Knox for their Memorial Day activities and the General George Patton Leadership Museum.

**Wagon Master(s):** Joe Padberg & Diane Pepperell email: [Padberg4Smart@gmail.com](mailto:Padberg4Smart@gmail.com)

**Tail Gunner(s):** Melody & Paul Thomas email: [Thomas4Smart@gmail.com](mailto:Thomas4Smart@gmail.com)

**Cost:** Single cost: TBD Couple cost: TBD Guest cost: TBD

**Payments:** \$280 upon application, 50% by November 13, 2023, and full payment by February 13, 2024

**Sign up today, We have several spots available!**

The caravan starts just south of Nashville, where we will visit the oldest registered distillery in the US, Jack Daniels. Here we will also visit the home of country music, the Grand Ole Opry, along with Ryman Auditorium. Other visits include George Dickel distillery and Belle Meade Estate & Winery. The next stop is near Bowling Green, Kentucky where we will visit the National Corvette Museum, their Aviation Park and their Historic



Rail Park, along with Dueling Grounds

Distillery. Time will be allowed to visit Mammoth Cave on your own.

We next move to Bardstown, KY, a major hub in the Bourbon industry. From this base we will have breakfast and tour at Churchill Downs in Louisville, the Louisville Slugger facility, and a trip on the Belle of Louisville, steamboat. Back in Bardstown we will visit the Oscar Getz Whiskey Museum, and Jim Beam distillery and Forest Giants trail. Also, day trips to Ft. Knox for their Memorial Day ceremonies and a visit to the Gen.

George Patton Museum. Free days will be provided for participants to visit distilleries of their choice and other sites. Take a hike to Tioga Falls, if you are up for a steep trail.

Our next stop will be near Frankfort and Lexington, KY. Here we will visit the KY State Capitol building, Four Roses and Buffalo Trace distilleries and take the Thoroughbred Heritage Tour. Time is allowed for personal visits to sites of your choice.

The last stop will be inside the Daniel Boone National Forest. Here we will have time to hike and visit several waterfalls within the forest, including Yahoo falls, Dog Slaughter falls and Cumberland falls, the 'Niagara' of the south. Free time is allowed to explore the area on your own, including the original Kentucky Fried Chicken.



## 2025 SMART Caribbean Cruise Caravan



## SMART Caribbean Cruise

Feb 8-17, 2025

9 nights

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 when you book before April 8th, 2024

\$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 38 cabins to choice from, we have 12 booked already

## 2023 SMART NATIONAL MUSTER

COME CELEBRATE OUR 40th (RUBY) ANNIVERSARY

With us in AMANA COLONIES, IOWA

Sept 18-22, 2023

*(get you FREE 40th Anniversary  
Commemorative Pin when you  
arrive)*



## 2024 National Muster

will be in Ladsen, NC September 11-15 2024

## 2025 National Muster

will be in Mineola, TX Sept week of the 9th, 2025

# CHAPTER AND REGION NEWS



AT-LARGE REGION (Jackie Weis Region Director)  
Duffers, Nomads, SMART FMCA, STAR, WIMS

**The At-Large Region will be Hosting the 40th Anniversary of  
SMART—In Amana Colonies!**

*Early Bird Registration going on now till June 1st!*

*Sign up early to get a chance to win your registration money back!*

*You can register online NOW! [www.SmartRVing.org](http://www.SmartRVing.org)*



**SMART FMCA Chapter ...** members had a great time at the FMCA 106<sup>th</sup> International Convention and RV Expo, March 15 – 18, 2023, in Perry, GA. We held a pre-muster at Fair Harbor RV Resort. For two days we ate delicious catered meals and socialized then, as a group, we moved to the Georgia National fairgrounds for the FMCA Inter-

national Convention and RV Expo. We enjoyed seminars, activities, block parties, and RV vendors - one entire building was full of vendors to the point of overflowing. What a great opportunity to buy a new rig, service your current one or ask questions of leading product experts.

The conference kicked off with a parade and Phil and Nita Taylor brought service flags that were well received with clapping, cheering and salutes along the one-mile parade route. A few veterans jumped into the procession with our group and walked with us. During this week we introduced veterans to SMART - many



who had never heard of us before. Club members worked hard to get information out to as many as possible.

The entertainment was in one word - phenomenal. Members enjoyed the music of Kazual Mania, the comedy and group participation of The Andrews Brothers - Dueling Pianos, the country stylings of Singer/Songwriter/Navy veteran Kenny Ray Horton and took a step back in time with a Tribute to John Denver by Tom Becker.

We laughed, we danced, we sang - WE MUSTERED! If you already belong to SMART and FMCA, it will cost you nothing to join the SMART FMCA Chapter. We are an At Large group and meet at the SMART National Muster and both FMCA International Conferences. (<https://smartrving.org/fmca/>)



Hope to see you all at the FMCA 107th International Conference and RV Expo on Aug 23-26, 2023, at the CAM-PLEX Multi-Event Facilities in Gillette WY. (<https://www.fmca.com/index.php/fmca-event-registration.html>) Until then safe travels!



**Chattahoochee Drifters** are saddened by the loss of one of our members John L. Meyers who died on April 1, 2023. He was 86 born August 18, 1936- April 1, 2023. He was buried in Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Fl. There were a few of the Smart family to attend his funeral to say our goodbyes to a proud Marine and good friend. Onward to a better note. SE Regional in Cedar Key, FL "By the Sea at Cedar Key" was on Monday April 17-21. We had a great time!. Don't forget to book 2023 National Muster in Amana, IA

**Dates:** Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup> and Closing Ceremonies on Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Place:** Amana RV Park & Event Center, 3850 C Street, Amana, IA **Registration Fee:** - \$455 for two-person rig, \$350 for single person rig, and \$150 for each additional person. (*Registration fee includes 5 Nights camping*). Tour fees are to be paid with the Registration Fee. **Earliest arrival date:** September 14, 2023

Drifters will then shadow the Sunshine chapter for October and December.



### SOUTH CENTRAL REGION (Nita Taylor Region Director)

Alabama, Arkansas, Florida Panhandle, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee

## 2023 South Central Regional Muster

May 9-13

Anchors Aweigh RV Park in Foley,

AL

See website for more inf: [www.SmartRVing.org](http://www.SmartRVing.org)





**Spring has come to the Bayou State.** Birds are singing, trees are budding out, and the **SMART Cajuns** have been active. Our Cajun Spring Fling muster was a great success! We met March 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> at Sun Roamers RV Park in Picayune, MS. A Western Theme provided a happy atmosphere. The Ladies enjoyed Crafts by Kathy and Kathy. They made custom garden flags. The flags are beautiful souvenirs to remind us of good times. The guys grilled rib eye steaks for steak night. A good time was had by all.

The **CAJUNS** are headed back to the swamp as I write this article. Every year about this time, we all go to Poche's Fish Camp for our Y'all Come muster. The **Y'all Come** muster is always a favorite. This year's muster will feature all you can eat boiled crawfish and fried catfish as always, but will also feature swamp tours, Evangeline tours, and more. If you haven't attended a **Y'all Come** you have missed it for this year, but you need to put it on your calendar for next year. It will be held again in mid April 2024.



**SOUTH EAST REGION (Leroy Armacost Region Director)**  
**North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida**



## SOUTH MID WEST REGION (Joe Noonan Region Director) Texas, Oklahoma



Springtime in the **North Texas countryside** is a beautiful time of the year, especially for our annual Regional Muster held this month in Santo, Tx. Coordinated by the SMW Regional Director, Joe Noonan and hosted by the Smart Texans chapter, twenty-three Smart members enjoyed perfect weather surrounded by a bounty of Texas wildflowers. A highlight of this Muster was a group visit to the National Vietnam War Museum/ Vietnam Memorial Wall located in the town of Mineral Wells. If you are in this area, it's must-see. Volunteers have spent the past two years putting together an impressive display of artifacts, artwork, and library to complete Phase 1, and there are more stages being added.



We met some Veterans while there who expressed interest in our organization, and we were able to leave some recruiting/informational packets at the Museum desk. Lots of wonderful meals, fun games, and camaraderie made this Regional Muster a great success, and left our members anxious to get together again soon. Our next Alamo Chapter muster will be held mid-summer in the Hill Country area, followed by the National Muster in Amana Colonies, our annual Fredericksburg Fish Fry in October, and ending the year with our Christmas Muster in the cowboy capital of Bandera. The Alamo Chapter loves hosting visitors, and making new Smart friends, so plan a trip to Texas and enjoy all that our great state has to offer.



**Mary M Palmer, Alamo SMART Secretary**



The **SMW Regional Muster** was held in Santo, TX. Arrival date was April 12, and everyone departed on April 16, 2023. The RV Park was Coffee Creek. The facilities at the park were excellent. Attendees included 1st Vice President Richard Palmer and his wife Mary. Our immediate past president Willie Pollard and his wife Joyce were present. Our President was unable to attend due to an accident. We also had other members who could not attend because of health reasons. We wish Gene O and all other members a speedy recovery. The opening ceremony was conducted prior to the meal on Wednesday. All flags were posted and this year we played the National Anthem, and everyone sang along with the recording. We also played the recording of the Service Songs and the only service not represented at the Muster was the Coast Guard. All military members rose for their song and sang along with the recording once again. We had a total of 12 rigs and 25 members at the Muster. Each day we had a different event to participate in and I thought the games selected by Willie were a blast. One of the highlights of the Muster was visiting the Vietnam Veterans Museum in Mineral Wells. The games people participated in included Bean Bag Toss, Card Bingo, Horse Races, and Bean Bag Baseball. Everyone enjoyed the games and the last thing each evening was games and gab. The food prepared and presented by the TEXANS was excellent. The food was varied and as usual, way too much food. On Saturday evening the food was catered for the Muster by Natty Flats Smokehouse. We ate at that location on Tuesday evening and the food was delicious. Each Chapter conducted their meetings on Thursday morning. The big topic of discussion was the 2025 National Muster hosted by the Alamos and Texans. Two locations that were mentioned were Shawnee, OK, and Mineola, TX. Our immediate past president Willie Pollard has the notes and information he collected planning the Muster in 2021 to be held in Shawnee. I have sent an Email to contacts at each location to determine the availability for late September or early October 2025. The Regional Muster was hosted by the Texans, and they did an excellent job. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard in planning and implementing the plan. The 2025 Regional Muster will be hosted by the Alamos. We are looking at early April next year for the next Regional Muster.





## SMW Regional Muster, April 12 – 16, Santo, TX

SMW Region Chapters, SMART Texans and the Alamos, gathered at the Coffee Creek RV Park and Resort for their annual Regional Muster. The Texans served as Host for this muster.

Twelve rigs were in attendance from as far as San Antonio to the South, Tyler to the East, and Altus, OK to the North. Wednesday, attendees turned in their items for the Silent Auction and the first of two 50/50 sale opportunities began. The Muster, opened with Regional Director,



Joe Noonan, making a presentation in honor of the Missing Man Table followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. A dinner of grilled burgers, sides, and desserts were consumed. Playing cards and socializing was on the agenda for the evening. Each



morning attendees were treated to breakfast, prepared by attendees, as well as most evening dinners prepared by attendees. Muster attendees played card games, bean bag toss, bean bag baseball, card bingo, and the famous Horse Races called by SMART Past President, Willie Pollard. Chapter Meetings were held on

Thursday morning after breakfast. On Friday, a sandwich lunch was hosted by SkyMed, Stan Schwenke, Region 7 Director. A Fiesta dinner of tacos, fajitas, and traditional sides were prepared by attendees, with attendees wearing their Fiesta finest. After dinner, Stan Schwenke from SkyMed shared memories of his family's life in Show Biz as professional acrobats. He shared vintage footage of his family (the Bumpy Family) appearing on The Ed Sullivan Show, with Bob Hope, Victor Borge and at the Hollywood Palace. The family also ap-



peared in many countries around the world as famous acrobats. His brothers and sisters were always seen chewing gum as they were being tossed by their father, Vernon. His presentation was a great unexpected treat for chapter members. On Friday morning after another great breakfast, the group carpooled to Mineral Wells, TX to visit the Vietnam Veteran Museum. The National Veterans Memorial Wall half-scale is a replica of the wall in Washington, DC. The Camp Holloway Memorial Wall, A Meditation Garden, and a Huey Helicopter mounted high above the Memorial Garden are also there. The vast majority of the helicopter pilots who flew in Vietnam were trained at Fort Wolters in Mineral Wells.

Saturday morning started again with a home cooked breakfast, 50/50 tickets sold, and Silent Auction winners picking up their winnings. The evening started with the Closing Ceremony for the Regional Muster, followed by a catered BBQ dinner from a local BBQ including brisket, turkey and traditional sides. Proceeds from both 50/50's held during



the Regional, raised a total of \$180 for the Veterans at Watkins Logan veterans Home in Tyler, TX. A check covering 50% of Net Income and \$10 per Rig totaling \$376.62 from the Regional Muster will be sent to SMART Headquarters. Everyone had great fun, great food, and great camaraderie throughout the entire Regional Muster. **Jan Schnoor**





**WESTERN REGION (Carl Hopper (Region Director))**

**Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington**



**Greetings from the Golden Gate Chapter.** We have had a lot of rain and snow this winter and our lakes and reservoirs are filling up after a 3 year period of very little rain and snow. Several of our members ventured into Mexico and other than a day or two of chilly weather with strong winds and the surf pounding close to the beachfront rigs, they had a great time. After Mexico several attended the Arizona Roadrunners and Arizona Tumbleweeds Western Regional outing, and all had a good time.

Now that it is spring it is time to bring those rigs out and dust off the cobwebs and hit the road. My rig is back in the shop, but that's another story.

Our next Golden Gate Muster is quickly approaching, and if you happen to be in the area of Verdi, NV just outside of Reno and close to the California/Nevada border. Please stop by and say howdy; we would love to have you. The muster starts June 11th and ends on June 16th. Take care everyone and please be safe on the road. Kick those tires and light those fires and get busy RVing. *Mike Foley, President Golden Gate Chapter*



**NORTH EAST REGION (Ginny Louis Region Director)**

**Connecticut, DC, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, West Virginia, Vermont**

**2023 North East Regional Muster**

**June 7-11**

**Chestnut Lake RV Resort, Port Republic, NJ**



**NORTH MID WEST REGION (VACANT)**

**Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming**



**NORTH CENTRAL REGION (Wayne Ballard Region Director)**

**Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin**

## Some Wonder About SMART Age Demographics

Percentage of U.S. population who are veterans in 2021, by age and gender

Characteristic	Male	Female
18 to 34 years	2.95	0.68
35 to 54 years	7.89	1.53
55 to 64 years	12.75	1.85
65 to 74 years	24.15	1.37

While we don't know the age demographics of our SMART membership, recently a post on the SMART Facebook Group stated:

"Hi everyone! I'm a Marine Corps veteran who lives in a bus. I'm curious what is everyone's ages? This seems like a 40+ audience which is totally rad! I'm curious because I'd like to help promote more orgs on my travel community for certain age ranges. I see more 20-30 year olds in certain groups. This one seems to cater to an older crowd which I think is awesome. I could totally be wrong. Safe travels everyone!" This post generated many positive comments. Among those was "Many of our members join when they are young and remain until health declines and then join as Social members still enjoying the camaraderie. Veterans join to camp with fellow veterans and continue their membership because of lifelong friendships. We offer free memberships to active duty members who remain until they retire or separate...then many join as veterans. We have a long history of helping veterans whether they are members or not. Among the benefits are low cost caravans compared with commercial companies. They are fun, well organized, and led by experienced Wagon Masters. Our chapters are working hard to welcome long time members, and those on the other end of the age spectrum ..their common bond makes it work. Sounds like you would love to be a SMART member...please consider it. You may also want to tell your veteran friends about joining SMART. It's easy, Lead them to the SMART website to join online. Ask them to check out our history and they will see why SMART continues to be the best military camping and social club in the U.S.

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/396975660679124/permalink/1512861292423883/?mibextid=Nif5oz> “

It's a good message we need to share with all current and potential members.  
Safe Travels,  
John Steinbauer, Past National President

**TAPS: (Call or email HQ for mailing address to send a condolence card)**

**Terry Hill #15259, spouse of Linda #15260, Prescott, AZ**

**Dwight Berner #11907, Preston, MS**

**John Meyers #10536, co-pilot of Barbara Martin #14591, High Springs, FL**



# S M A R T

## Application for Membership



### Applicant Information

LAST name:	First:	Initial:	Spouse/Companion:
Mailing address:	City:	State:	Zip:
Home phone: (    ) —	Cell phone: (    ) —	Email address:	

SMART is a 501(c)(19) Not- for-profit Veterans Organization and required to have the following information on each member

Branch of service:	Year entered service:	Year service ended:
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### Name Badge Info

**Instructions:** On the first line, enter your preferred first & last name. The second line is optional and may contain what you want others to know about you, e.g., city, state or branch of service or chapter names you belong too.

**Note:** A member badge comes with the New Member Packet, and your co-member's badge may be purchased for \$8.50.

Member first & last:	Spouse/Companion first & last:
Member second line:	Spouse/Companion second line:

### Membership Fees

<b>Member</b>	Who referred you?	His/her name:	His/her SMART #:
Veteran: Active, retired, or honorably discharged from US Military Service, or as a commissioned officer of NOAA or USPHS; or military service of Canada, NATO/SEATO member nation.			
Circle all that apply to the member:    Active    Retired    Reserve/Guard    Honorably Discharged Veteran Recipient of Medal of Honor    Canadian Veteran    NOAA    USPHS    NATO/SEATO			
Annual dues: \$65 (plus one time \$15 new member packet)			<b>\$80.00</b>

### Spouse/Companion

With privileges of membership for spouse \$30: (Spouse/Companion)

If Spouse is also a Veteran, please fill in information about Spouse below:

(Must include required 501(c)(19) not-for-profit information below)

Branch of Service:                      Year entered service:                      Year service ended:

Your Spouse or Companion will want to join with you to have National voting rights, the ability to hold the position up to Regional director, and became eligible to win door prize drawings.	Spouse/Comp \$30	30.00
	His/her badge \$8.50	8.50
	<b>Total Enclosed</b>	<b>118.50</b>

**"I certify with honor that the information I have provided is true and correct."**

Applicant signature:	Date:
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----- Cut here: Retain for your records -----



<b>Fees Payable to: SMART</b>		<b>Mail to: SMART, 114 Duxbury Ave, Molino, FL 32577</b>	
Phone: 800-354-7681		Email: smart@smartvring.org    Web: www.smartvring.org	
Application mailed on:	Check #:	Amount:	
My SMART contact:		From:	
Contact phone #: (    ) —	Contact email:		
Approved: 4 APR 2016: Previous versions are obsolete and should be discarded			

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**Bob Zeller, Jackie & David Weis, Evelyn Stewart**

Video



website



**"Thank you all for your Service"**

**\*\*\*\*\*Thank you for reading our TRAVELER, please pass it on to a Veteran you know.\*\*\*\*\***

**S.M.A.R.T. is a Veteran RV Social/Travel Club Incorporated in 1983. We have chapters throughout the 48 contiguous states of the U.S. We are a not-for-profit RV Social Club for Veterans. We have Caravans to great places in the US, Canada, & Mexico. We are open to all Active Duty, Retired, Honorably Discharged Veterans. If you own a Camper and enjoy the Camaraderie and traveling with others, then the SMART RV Travel Club is for you! Join us online at [www.SmartRVing.org](http://www.SmartRVing.org)**

***"Seeing the Country We Defend"***

**SMART** SPECIAL MILITARY ACTIVE RECREATIONAL TRAVELERS CLUB

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