



S★M★A★R★T

E-NEWS



“Seeing the Country We Defend”

SMART HEADQUARTERS

SMART BI -MONTHLY SUPPLEMENT

DECEMBER 2023



The Eastern Region is working hard on our

**2024 National Muster
in Ladson, SC**

(close to Charleston)

**Sept 16th -20th, 2024
You can come in as early as
Sept 11th,**

Tours start Thursday the 12th for Charleston

[Sign up online at www.smartving.org /NM2024/](http://www.smartving.org/NM2024/)

Join us for all the Fun for the 2024 National Muster

The Exchange Park in Ladson, SC



SMART President: Richard Palmer



E-News. What is E-News for? It is for BOD's and Committees to put articles in for your enjoyment and information. So as the Recruiting & Retention Coordinator I want to again let you know that there is an abundance of recruiting material available to you for the asking. Just let HQ know what you want. Now is the time to get your pole (Traveler) and bait (application) and go to your favorite fishing hole (recruiting area) and bring in the big ones. No limit. No throw backs. Just land them and bring them to the table (muster)

As the President of the STAR Chapter I want to let the First Timers to the National Muster know, there is going to be a First Timers Session, Monday, Sept 18th, at 1530-1630. All BOD's, RD's, Chapter Presidents, STAR Chapter members and guests are invited.

As the Advertising & Publicity Chairman I want to let y'all know that we have great posters available both large and small areas a Great place for the small ones, are the boards in the laundry rooms of the RV parks and in dealerships.

See y'all at our 41st Anniversary National Muster. Great one-time events are being planned. Get your reservations in now to see what is going to happen.

Richard Palmer SMART President & Recruiting & Retention Coordinator



From the desk of Melody Thomas 1st VP



We have finished the Autumn in the Appalachians caravan. It was a great time shared with both old and new friends. The Steinbauers and Masons did a wonderful job making sure we all enjoyed the trip. Since there wasn't much rain this year, Mother Nature held back a little on the fall colors. Regardless, the views were still magnificent. We love the mountains.

As we start to make our way slowly south, I find myself looking forward to the Super RV Show in Tampa, Florida, in January. There will be so many RVs to look at. We are in the market for a new RV so it will be an exciting visit for us.

As I think about the RV show, I also think about the number of veterans who will be in the crowd. The RV Industrial Association (RVIA) recently released the most interesting report. A survey found that 14.8% of all campers are active duty or veterans. Veterans make up 6.4% of the U.S. population and active duty personnel less than 1%. Servicemembers (past and present) are very well represented among the camping world and camp more often than the average person.

Another survey showed an even more surprising statistic – 13.4% of campground owners are past or present servicemembers, too. In addition, veterans are avid campers. Folks who took the survey stated they camped 22.8% more nights than the survey average. And those persons with a military history are more likely to use RVs as their primary type of camping. That is 33% more than the average. What does this mean for you? It means you can find pro-

spective SMART members in every campground you go to, not just military campgrounds. Carry an application on you at all times. Talk to the folks camped around you. Put up your banner when you set up in the campground. Odds are really good you will have someone ask you about SMART. When you check into the campground, talk to the owner. Most of them are military friendly. Ask to put a poster up in the laundry or community room. See if they will let you put out SMART recruiting flyers and applications. SMART is the best military travel club out there! Let's tell people about it.

Not every interaction will result in an instant sign-up, but keep putting the information out there and soon enough you will find yourself invited to become a member of the STAR Chapter, a league of top recruiters. We'd like to see you join the group.

Melody C. Thomas SMART 1st Vice President



David Weis
2nd Vice President



As the Holidays rapidly approach, Jackie and I would like to wish our SMART family a Merry Christmas and hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We all have so much to be thankful for and are truly blessed. I would also like to remind folks that our current SMART membership numbers need some improvement and I ask that you continue to scout out potential new members and encourage them to join our Great organization. For the current SMART members I ask that you continue to grow with us and remain as valuable and loyal members, we need your dedication and leadership to keep us moving into our 41st year and beyond. Travel safe and see you at SMART National in September 2024.

David Weis. 2nd VP

The East Region is looking forward to hosting the **2024 SMART National Muster**, we will be in Ladson, SC and this is shaping up to be a great muster. This is a beautiful area with some great tours of Charleston, historic downtown and harbor tour. Then there is also the Charleston AFB nearby. This seems to be a great site. We have the final contract in hand and Muster Master John Steinbauer will be looking for volunteers to fill key positions. Please let John or myself know if interested in filling a key position.



Wishing all a very Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season, and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Safe Travels, **LeRoy Armacost**
East Region Director



RECIPES FROM THE SMART COOKBOOK

Pot Luck Dishes



Ambrosia Salad

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 cans pineapple chunks, drained | 1 can coconut flakes |
| 2 cans mandarin oranges, drained | 1/2 bag mini marshmallows |
| 2 jars maraschino cherries, drained | 4 oz. sour cream |
| 16 oz. Cool Whip | |

Combine Cool Whip and sour cream. Fold in all other ingredients. Cover and chill for at least two hours.

Beer Ham

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 2 cans beer | 1 cup orange juice |
| 3 T. Dijon mustard | bone-in ham |
| 2/3 cup brown sugar | |

Mix beer, Dijon mustard, brown sugar, and orange juice. Bring to boil. Pour over ham and bake 10 minutes per pound in low oven. Serve and enjoy.

Kielbasa Dinner

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 8 c. shredded cabbage | 1/2 tsp. pepper |
| 3 medium potatoes, cubed | 2 lbs. kielbasa, cut into pieces |
| 1 med onion, chopped | 1 14oz. can chicken broth |
| 1 1/2 tsp salt | |

Combine cabbage, potatoes, onion, salt, and pepper in a slow cooker. Pour broth over vegetables. Top with kielbasa. Cover and cook on low for 8-9 hours, or until cabbage and potatoes are cooked. Enjoy.

Seafood Chowder

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 1/2 lbs. fresh fish fillets | 2 potatoes, pared and cubed |
| 3 slices bacon, diced | 1 1/2 cup water |
| 1 med onion, chopped | 1 tsp. salt |
| 3/4 cup chopped green onion | 1/4 tsp. pepper |
| 1 13oz can evaporated milk | |

Cut fish into bite-sized pieces. Saute bacon and onion, drain and put into slow cooker with fish. Add all remaining ingredients except evaporated milk. Cover, cook on (Low for 6-9 hrs) or (High for 2-4 hrs) or until potatoes are tender. Add evaporated milk during last hour. Serves 4.

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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 left!)

2024 Whiskey and Water Falls

May 13, 2024 to 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

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

Cost: Single cost: \$3600 Couple cost: \$5200 Guest cost: \$1700

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

Sign up today, We have spots 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

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 4 cabins to choose from, we have 46 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





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

(1) Printed TRAVELER Magazine (free),

(2) our 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.

Merry Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR

DECEMBER SMART E-NEWS 2023

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