

SMART TRAVELER

Published Bi-Monthly for SPECIAL MILITARY ACTIVE RECREATIONAL TRAVELERS CLUB

MARCH 2025

TY-1



The SMART Life

"Veterans RVing Together"

"Come with us to Tyler, TX famous Rose Gardens"

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

SmartRVing.org



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A Message from your SMART President

I read an article that reported today's RVers have changed. They are younger and more wealthy. Their interests are different. They like to play pickle ball and ride their e-bikes. Many have children they have chosen to home school as they travel around the country.

The article made me think of all the ways our generation changed from our parents and how our children changed from us. Croquet, card games and lawn darts used to be popular activities. The roller-skating rinks and bowling alleys, once so popular among my generation, have closed. It's hard to find a drive-in theater anywhere today.

What does all this mean for us in SMART? It means we need to adjust and adapt as new members join our club. Card playing is ok but not what today's folks prefer to do. We need to update our games. Include corn hole, beanbag baseball, and trivia in chapter activities. Look for ways to include everyone in an event. No one should feel left out. Ensure games include everybody. Be sure to check in on each other. Follow up on new members to make sure they know when chapter musters are taking place. Offer to carpool. Be available to explain how chapter activities are conducted.

As chapters plan their calendar for the year, I ask you to think about new ways to recruit. How can we tell folks about this great club? One suggestion I heard was to join parades in your local town. On Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day, look to be included in the town parade. We already have ready-made floats – our RVs! Put a banner on the front of an RV or have a few members carry a banner in front of the RV, wear SMART paraphernalia (hats, visors, shirts, etc.), and hand out those informative SMART booklets and applications. If your chapter is near a military base, put up a table outside the PX or commissary once a month. Members take an hour or two to staff the table, hand out information and answer questions. When the campground where your chapter holds a muster provides excellent service (giving a meeting room for no cost, providing military discounts, etc.), present them with a certificate of appreciation. There are so many ways in which we can spread the word about SMART. Let's commit to making this the year to break all records. I'd like to see everyone lined up to get the I GOT ONE pin at national this year. Better yet, let's induct some new members into the STAR chapter.

Melody Thomas
SMART National President



As I write this article for the March Traveler I am reminded of when I first joined SMART and what I was expecting. When Jackie and I went to our First Chapter Muster we were greeted with open arms and immediately felt welcomed and part of "The Team".

Today over 25 years later when-ever we visit SMART Chapters we're still greeted the same way, SMART obviously has the friendliest people.

As you travel this year I urge you to check out various SMART Chapters, visit them, receive the "Open Arms" Welcome and join "The Team".

Additionally, now is the perfect time to review all the SMART Caravans to see if one interest you, 2026 Caravans are in the planning phase with new and exciting locations.

Travel safe and see you at a Chapter Muster and National Muster in Mineola Texas in September. Take care.

David Weis SMART 1st VP



From the 2nd Vice President; I am honored and grateful to serve you and will work for the good of the organization. As we prepare for another travel season let's make sure our rigs are ready for the road. I'm looking forward to getting back on the road again. Please support your local chapter; attend meetings and volunteer to fill an office. The more we serve in any capacity the more you get from your membership. I would like to challenge each Chapter President to contact delinquent members and remind them their membership is important and we need them to be involved at the local level.

Let's make 2025 a banner year for SMART; we must continue to concentrate on Recruitment and Retention. The "I Got One" campaign has been extended for a limited time. If we each recruit one new member we could double our membership. At the next National Muster it would be great to see each member wearing an "I Got One" pin. We welcome new ideas, if anyone has any suggestions for increasing membership please bring them to any officer. The Board of Directors will entertain any suggestion so don't be afraid to share your ideas. *LeRoy Armacost 2nd Vice President*



Behold the Power of an Email Address!

It is Blursday here in Northern Virginia: another snowstorm warning for the next couple of days (our 3rd this month). Our winter escape vehicle (RV Maria) is at the dealer getting some "spa attention", but presently useless in whisking us away to warmer parts of the country. This leaves us to dream about places that have temperatures above 50 degrees, hence,

Blursday....

I have been passing the time this winter in a digital marketing program, hoping that I might be able to take some pearls of wisdom and apply it to SMART. While some parts of the program are technically based on the structure of a website domain (and thanks to the tireless efforts of Jack Fritz, SMART's website ranks high in quality construction), other parts of my program are more marketing centric. Digital marketing puts significant emphasis on getting and managing email addresses. SMART has a variety of email addresses that break out into three categories: participating members, members who have left SMART, and potential members who have not yet (fully) joined. To survive SMART needs to message each category a little bit differently in order for us to both keep and grow our membership.

Why did some members leave? A change in lifestyle? Personality clash? Simple oversight of not renewing? Perhaps someone is moving to another part of the country (think of our active-duty members). Permanent Change of Station orders are a fact of life, but it doesn't mean we have to lose them. Introductions could be made from an outgoing chapter to potential chapter(s) in the new location. If nothing is local, introductions to the non-geographical chapters could also be passed resulting in a win-win situation for both the member transitioning and SMART in general. I ask chapters to look at your email lists and look at your members: Are they active? Are they happy with us as an organization? If not, why not? Let's find out and see if we can keep them. Another category to consider is those who have not joined us yet. How many times have we heard from potential members "I have never heard of SMART". When we pass them one of our pamphlets or tri-folds (you DO have some SMART recruiting information in your rig, right?), ask them for their email address.

We pass our email addresses to all sorts of organizations for discounts, freebies, or further information, so people have been conditioned to give their email addresses, so it's not as creepy as asking for someone's cell phone number. Our test program messaging would be similar, as candidates haven't fully joined yet and need to be encouraged to do so. Stay safe out there!! *B2*



SMART is a Not-for-Profit 501(c)(19) Veterans' Organization, and gifts are tax deductible. Consider a lifetime gift for a tax deduction. Donate the RMD from your annuity to SMART and you won't have to pay any tax on it. You can also consider an after-death gift to SMART in your will or trust, or name SMART as a beneficiary of part of your estate.

Unlock
BLUEWATER **EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS**
ON YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE
WITH BLUE WATER!

MILITARY DISCOUNTS
Active and retired military save **10-20%** at over 55 Blue Water campgrounds.
Use promo code **25SMART** to book your next adventure today!

Plan Unforgettable Group Events

- ✔ 20% group discounts
- ✔ Dedicated group coordinator
- ✔ Waived site lock fees
- ✔ Conveniently grouped RV sites & rentals

Contact Eva Winther: ewinther@bwdc.com or call **(443) 856-4811** to reserve your group getaway!

Seasonal Sites for 2025
Enjoy hassle-free RV fun all season long at one of our amazing campgrounds.
Contact Lisa Mannon: lmannon@bwdc.com or call **(443) 664-3375** to reserve your spot today!

Front Cover: Tyler is well known for its Municipal Rose Garden. The Rose Garden Center was a 1938 Works Progress Administration park project, and was mostly completed in 1941; but due to World War II, the center did not open to the public until 1952. In 1956, the lawn at the Rose Garden Center started hosting the Queen's Tea event, a part of the annual Texas Rose Festival. In 1992, they rebuilt the associated building and expanded its size, in order to home the Tyler Rose Museum. It is a 14-acre rose garden with more than 38,000 bushes and at least 500 varieties, including 50 types of heritage roses. It is the largest public collection of roses in the United States. It is also an All-America Rose Selections (AARS) test garden.

It is one of the largest tourist attractions in Tyler, it is the location of the Tyler Rose Museum, and is part of the annual Texas Rose Festival in October. This will be one of the Tours at this year's National, so please join us for a day in Tyler.



Attention all Chapters, please check out the campground page on our website for specials at any Blue Water Property.

Groups Get a 20% discount, contact Lisa Mannon 443-664-3375 for a 20% discount on your Musters!



Help Us make this year the **Biggest National Muster Ever!**

Come to the 42nd

SMART National Muster



“Two Step to TEXAS”



Mineola, TEXAS Civic Center RV Park

September 15th—19th, 2025

Come and join in all the

FUN! FOOD! & EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT!

We have great Tours lined up, with transportation provided so you won't have to drive.

Sign up for the National & Tours online at:

SmartRVing.org

See next page for all the TOURS!

The 42nd National Muster in Mineola TEXAS

has announced their TOURS!

GO to the website and sign up for these great Tours Now!

Tour #1 TEXAS Freshwater Fisheries Center

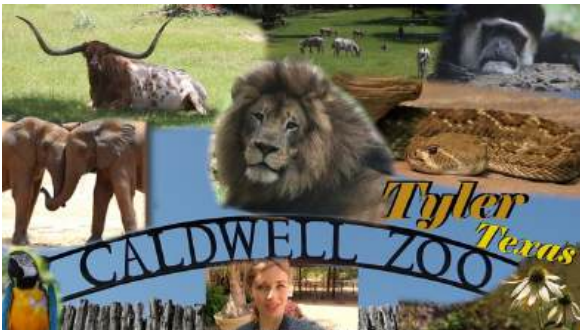
Thursday Sept 11, 8am-2pm
\$35 per person, Transportation Included
(lunch available at additional cost)



Tour # 2 East Texas Oil Museum

Friday Sept 12th, 9am-2pm
\$35 per person, Transportation Included,
(lunch available at additional cost)

Tour # 3 Caldwell Zoo and Tyler TX Rose Garden & Museum



Saturday Sept 13th
9am-4pm
\$60 per person,
Lunch Included,
Transportation
Included.



See more info at SmartRVing.org

Transportation is limited so sign up Quick!

See Ya There!

Early Bird Registration is by May 1st



2025 CENTRAL REGIONAL MUSTER

MAY 2025

Early arrival dates May 9th and 10th and 11th

Muster opens May 12th, with closing on May 16th

departing on May 17th .

For those of you that will be there on May 10th, we are looking at attending a small dinner theater in Carthage, Stone's Throw Dinner Theater (Dutch Treat). If you would like more information, please contact Nita Taylor.

Sunday, May 11th is Mother's Day and we will be having a potluck to celebrate! We will be furnishing the meat and we are asking the guys to cook the sides.

Come join us for the fun!

Games and tournaments will be provided by Joe Padberg, Diane Pepperell and Paul Thomas of the Nomads Chapter, and will include Card Bingo, L-R-C, Hand and Foot, Bean Bag Baseball, and U.S. Trivia. Be sure to sign up for Hand and Foot and Bean Bag Baseball at registration.

Please see the Central Region Web page for more information and the online registration form.

Make camping Reservations with Coachlight RV Park, Carthage, MO.

Call: 417-358-7444.

Nita Taylor, Region Director

SMART Central Regional

501-250-6585

philnita.taylor@gmail.com



2025 SMART Caravan Adventures



Venice of America Caravan

May 23– 29 2025

7 Day In Place Caravan

Arriving 23 and departing 30 May 2025,

Single \$825 Couple \$1250 Guest \$430

Wagon Masters: Kathy and John Steinbauer jfs9840@gmail.com will lead this “In Place” caravan in famous Ft Lauderdale. With over 3000 miles of canals, and rivers, you will learn the history and see the modern wonders of this historic and famous city. The city was founded in 1838 as a Seminole Indian trading post on the banks of the New River which is now the center of tourism. You will see the homes of the rich and famous and their mega yachts when you cruise the new river to the Atlantic Ocean on the Carrie B paddle wheeler. Sightseeing will include Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale where Squadron 19 was launched and lost over the Bermuda Triangle, now a WW II Museum. On the New River water taxi you will visit the river walk and dine and tour several attractions.

For adventure, you will take an airboat ride at Hollywood Park in the Everglades seeing wildlife and watching the Gator Boys wrestle alligators.

A day trip will go to Key Largo and the Everglades National Park to tour the only remaining cold war Nike 9 missile base.

There will be time to visit the world famous Seminole Hard Rock Casino, Margaritaville Beach Resort, National Dive Museum, and the famous Elbo Room on Ft Lauderdale Beach.

If interested, go deep sea fishing, snorkeling, scuba diving, and many more interesting and fun activities on your own. We will be camping at beautiful CB Smith County Park near Ft Lauderdale.

This caravan will be packed full of included tours and meals with time to venture on your own and will be limited to 16 registrants with cost to be determined.

Early arrival and departure may be available, contact Wagon Master John 210.386.9018 or email, if interested, ASAP since sites are limited. We have a few openings so join us!



2025 ALASKAN ADVENTURE

Wagon Masters David & Jackie Weis dweis74@hotmail.com

Assistant Wagon Masters Greg & Angela Vassallo

We're going to visit, the Walter Wright Pioneer Village, Ft Nelson heritage Museum, the Northern Lights Center, Yukon Transportation Museum, Train Ride, Boat Ride, Factory Tour, Musk OX Farm, and much more.



[Go sign up online and get on the go list...www.SmartRVing.org](http://www.SmartRVing.org)

\$10,750 Couple \$7,700 single Guest \$ 3600

Caravan is Full get on the Standby List!



Planes, Trains, and Automobiles, and Ships Caravan

June 16th thru July 31st Price

Single \$4,450 Couple \$5,950 Guest \$1,700

Come explore the impact of various transportation modes on American culture.

Wagonmasters Melody & Paul Thomas

thomas4smart@gmail.com

Tail Gunners Johnny & Linda Leggett

johnny_leggett@hotmail.com

Caravan is full get on the standby list!



2025 Louisiana Caravan Laissez Le Bon Temps Rouler!

(Pronounced LAY ZAY LE BONE TUM RULE EH)

Dates March 25th to April 25, 2025

(Let the good times roll!) Louisiana Food and Music Caravan

Wagon Masters: Johnny and Linda Leggett (318) 243-4084

johnny_leggett@hotmail.com

Assistant Wagonmasters: Paul and Melody Thomas (631) 258-6087

thomas4smart@gmail.com

Couple \$4,600 Single \$3,500 Guest \$1,500

Caravan is Full, Get on the Standby List!



Please go to our website to get a full description of each caravan

www.SmartRVing.org

2026 Caravans

Be on the lookout for the 2026 SMART Caravans.

Our Wagon masters are hard at work putting together some great caravans for you! The first one, **“The Heart of it All”** (Tony & Gina Mason Wagonmasters)

You asked for something new and different! This caravan of “firsts” has just been created. You can be the first to experience **“The Heart of it All”**. You will be treated to a leisurely riverboat cruise on the Ohio River, complete with a meal. There will be signs, signs, everywhere a sign - in a museum! (Did you sing that phrase?) There are ancient Indian mounds near our first stop. You will get the chance to explore the history of aviation and the largest collection of Presidential Airplanes. If you’ve ever wanted to fly, there are simulators for you, and IF you choose an opportunity to fly in a biplane later in the caravan! If you like hiking, the Cuyahoga National Park is here. The National Museum of the Great Lakes is calling our name. You’ll travel via ferry boat to Kelly’s Island and find Inscription rock. Put-In-Bay offers Admiral Perry’s Victory and Peace Memorial. Did you know the longest stretch of unguarded international border is here? Our next city offers the Rock and Roll Hall of fame, the house from A Christmas Story and the USS Cod Submarine Memorial National Landmark. You’ll visit one of the only First Ladies Libraries and the Football Hall of Fame. You’ll be treated to awesome views aboard an aerial tram and tour a famous Architect’s home. Our caravan will end with a boom! We will experience a reenactment of the D-Day invasion!



This caravan will end a day’s drive from the **SMART National in Goshen, IN.**

The caravan will occur **mid-July to mid-August 2026.**



“Yellowstone National Park & The Dakotas”

Wagon Masters: Melody & Paul Thomas

Assistant Wagon Masters: Joe Padberg & Diane Pepperell

Dates: June 22 to August 6, 2026 (estimated)

Prepare to experience an epic trip to some of the most iconic destinations in North America! Beginning in Wyoming, the caravan will travel through Montana, North Dakota and end in

South Dakota. Over approximately 45-days, we will visit bucket

list places like Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Little Bighorn Battlefield, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, Badlands National Park, Black Hills National Forest, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Devil’s Tower, Wall Drug, Custer State Park, and more. Towns to be explored will include Jackson Hole, Medora, Sturgis, Deadwood, Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Helena, Butte, Billings, and Great Falls. We’ll see a rodeo, experience a chuckwagon supper and show,



visit the biggest open copper mine pit in the world, take a float trip down the Snake River, marvel at Prairie Dog Town, learn about Kevin Costner’s Dances with Wolves film set and Tatanka Buffalo Museum, take an old time train ride, experience a pitchfork barbecue, tour a bear center, watch Old Faithful blow, stand on the richest hill in the world, and so much more.

Get ready for the trip of a lifetime!

Also we are working on a “**FALL COLORS Caravan**”

in the North East US. David & Jackie Weis Wagonmasters

Have you ever been to Niagara Falls? U. S. side and Canadian side? Ever tour Fort Ticonderoga , taken a Gondola ride , Ride on the COG Railway in Mt Washington New Hampshire ,ride the Scenic Railway, visited the Mystic Seaport in Connecticut or viewed the beautiful fall Colors our North East has to offer. You will when you sign up for the SMART 2026 Fall Colors Caravan. Be on the look out for more information as we're still in the planning phase . *David Weis*



These caravans will fill up fast so watch for them to be on the website soon to register, and pay your \$300 deposit to hold your spot. These will fill up fast so stay tune for more info to follow....

One of our SMART members, Bo deBlieux and his wife Karen volunteered at the **Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta** and loved it. They will not be able to volunteer this year, but they wanted to share the information with others who may be interested in volunteering.



The Navigator application opened on Saturday, February 1st. Anyone interested in volunteering can apply by going to the volunteer webpage,

<https://balloonfiesta.com/Volunteers-AIBF>

For more information, you can call Jenn Schurman at 505-821-1000 x 117 or email her at jschurman@balloonfiesta.com .

You can also call Bo deBlieux at 318-557-2737 or email him at bodeblieux@gmail.com about his experience.



Join the I-GOT-ONE campaign! Anyone who recruits one new person to SMART membership will receive this special pin.

These are awarded during the ceremonies at **SMART National Musters**. Let's see a long line of awardees in Mineola, Texas!

Welcome!

and Congratulations to the following New Members and their Recruiters

(Dec 24, Jan 25)

New Members	City, State	Recruiter
15881 William Beecham (Andrea)	Delray Beach, FL	L Chayt
15882 Joe Eller (Denise)	St. Petersburg, FL	R Hitt
15883 Nancy Miller (Greg)	The Villages, FL	G Miller
15884 Mae Bryant (Donald Husky)	Bethlehem, GA	D Husky
15885 Denis Hornbuckle	Ladson, SC	
15886 Michael Brennan	Tampa, FL	J Fritz
15888 Richard Whitfield (Laurie)	Concord, GA	
15889 Laurie Whitfield (Richard)	Concord, GA	
15890 Brian Blattel	Cape Girardeau, MO	J Young
15891 Mike Heilmann (Annette Squillaci)	Naperville, IL	
15892 Annette Squillaci (Mike Heilmann)	Naperville, IL	
15893 Martin White (Jackie)	Terre Haute, IN	
15894 Jackie White (Martin)	Terre Haute, IN	
15895 Bob Thomas (Gail)	Olympia, WA	
15896 Gail Thomas (Bob)	Olympia, WA	
15899 John Abel	Fayetteville, TN	M Caldwell
15900 Thomas Mordaunt	Ellijay, GA	P Millonzi
15901 Chris Dixon (Rhon-Ivone)	Green Cove Springs, FL	R Cornelius
15902 Rhon-Ivone Dixon (Chris)	Green Cove Spring, FL	R Cornelius
15903 Buck Buchanan (Linda)	Mechanicsville, VA	D Fisher
15904 Linda Buchanan (Buck)	Mechanicsville, VA	D Fisher

TAPS

Jim Daugherty #14559, Sherwood, AR

Mary Dove, spouse of Don Dove #15381, Bryant, AR

Kaye Meyer, spouse of Roger Meyer #11297, Altus, OK

John (Rick) Stevenson #15738, spouse of Karen #15739, Pearl River, LA

Dewey Burke #14887, spouse of Kathleen LeBlanc #14888, Lafayette, LA

William (Bill) Loy #13484, copilot of Wilma Lewis #13474, Altoona, FL

Sara Esterly, spouse of Bill Esterly #9006, Biloxi, MS

Jean Rider #13346, spouse of Paul Rider #11553, Whitehouse, TX



Rest in Peace Dear Friends

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE 1%'ers:

A staggering 99% of people born between 1930 and 1946 (GLOBALLY) are now dead.

If you were born in this time span, your ages range between 77 and 93 years old (a 16-year age span) and you are one of the rare surviving one-percenters.

You are the smallest group of children born since the early 1900's.

You are the last generation, climbing out of the depression, who can remember the winds of war and the impact of a world at war that rattled the structure of our daily lives for years.

You are the last to remember ration books for everything from tea to gasoline to sugar to shoes.

You can remember milk being delivered to your house early in the morning and placed in the "milk box" at the front door.

Discipline was strictly enforced by parents and teachers.

You are the last generation who spent childhood without television and instead, you "imagined" what you heard on the radio.

With no TV, you spent your childhood "playing outside". There was no city playground for kids.

The lack of television in your early years meant that you had little real understanding of what the world was like.

We got "black-and-white" TV in the late 50s that had 3 stations and no remote.

Telephones (if you had one) were one to a house and hung on the wall in the kitchen (who cares about privacy).

Computers were called calculators; they were hand-cranked.

Typewriters were driven by pounding fingers, throwing the carriage, and changing the ribbon.

INTERNET and GOOGLE were words that did not exist.

Newspapers and magazines were written for adults, and your dad would give you the comic pages after he read the news.

The news was broadcast on your radio in the evening. The radio network gradually expanded from 3 stations to thousands.

New highways would bring jobs and mobility. Most highways were 2 lanes and there were no Motorways.

You went to the city to shop. You walked to school and back.

Your parents were suddenly free from the confines of the depression and the war, and they threw themselves into working hard to make a living for their families.

You weren't neglected, but you weren't today's all-consuming family focus. (con't)

They were glad you played things like Fiddle Sticks, Cigarette Cards, Grab, Monopoly, Marbles, and Jacks by yourselves.

You entered a world of overflowing plenty and opportunity; a world where you were welcomed, enjoyed yourselves.

You felt secure in your future, although the depression and poverty were deeply remembered.

Polio was still a crippler. Everyone knew someone who had it.

You are the last generation to experience an interlude when there were no threats to our country.

World War 2 was over and the cold war, terrorism, global warming, and perpetual economic insecurity had yet to haunt life.

Only your generation can remember a time after WW2 when our world was secure and full of bright promise and plenty.

You grew up at the best possible time, a time when the world was getting better.

More than 99% of you are retired now, and you should feel privileged to have "lived in the best of times!"

If you have already reached the age of 77 years old, you have outlived 99% of all the other people on this planet. You are a 1%er

Doug Barksdale

SMART Merchandise

Thermal Wine Mugs w/SMART logo \$12

SMART Decals 9" \$4, 6" \$2, 3" \$1

Navy Blue SMART Mens Cap \$12

Car Tags \$5

NEW "ARE You a VETERAN" Stickers \$2

Order online at SmartRVing.org



CHAPTER AND REGION NEWS



AT-LARGE REGION Jackie Weis Region Director
NOMADS,
SMART FMCA , STAR, WIMS



NOMADS News

Hello all NOMADS, starting with the Western Regional in Bakersfield, CA and continuing for future Regional Musters, the NOMADS will host a gathering during happy hour on the Friday or Saturday prior to the official start of the muster. We are working to have at least one of the NOMADS officers present for these sponsored events. So even if you cannot make it to the National gathering, you can meet with fellow NOMADS at the Regional Musters.

If you are in the Carthage, MO area, we will be hosting such an event for the Central Regional in May of this year. As these sponsored event grow, we will consider other activities prior to the Regional gatherings

Finally, we will host our three day muster prior to the National in Mineola, TX with the Post National Muster tentatively scheduled for Barksdale AFB FamCamp in Louisiana.

We look forward to seeing all of our NOMADS as we continue to expand our activities across SMART. *Joe Padberg – NOMADS President*



WOMEN IN THE MILITARY (WIMS) CHAPTER NEWS The WIMS Chapter is composed of women who served in the military. We gather once a year during the national muster where we share a potluck, hold a meeting, and enjoy each other's company. This year, we are looking to increase the number of times WIMS members can meet. The chapter will be meeting during the Central Region Muster in May. The muster takes place in Carthage, MO. If you are interested in joining us, go online and register for the muster. Let's have some fun in May!



The STAR Chapter (*SMART Tops at Recruiting*) is looking for a few good recruiters. Bring in five new members to SMART and you will be invited to join the STAR chapter. Inductees to the STAR chapter receive one free year dues to SMART.



EAST REGION: Lonnie Alley Region Director,
Assistant RD: Bill Hastings

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Massachusetts,
Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware,
DC, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South
Carolina, Georgia, Florida





Florida Sunshine Chapter

We recently held a muster at Pastimes Okefenokee Park attended by twenty -seven folks. This is obviously the result of the blending/consolidation of the three chapters-Drifters, Road-runners, and Sunshine into one. The muster turned out to be success -A great time was had by all. We ate, played games, and really enjoyed the fellowship. We also had a member who taught the ladies how to make a card holder using two CD disks. Our next muster will be held at KOA Perry, FL 23 to 27 April. Come and check us out. The more the merrier! *Steve Colt , President*



Florida Buccaneers

Greetings SMART members, Buccaneers had a wonderful time on the recent nine-night

SMART 2025 Rally at Sea Caribbean Cruise – thank you, Tony and Gina Mason and Skymed for planning this fantastic vacation. Sixteen Buccaneers gathered the night before in Ft Lauderdale to enjoy the camaraderie and ensure our timely arrival at the port. Together, over 70 SMART mem-



bers enjoyed nine beautiful days of sunshine, great food, drink, entertainment, incredible scenery, and we're already looking forward to the next one.

Spring is in the air in Central and South Florida! If you're up north and tired of the cold weather, or still in the south and not ready to go north, we would enjoy having you join us for our Spring Muster – **arriving Apr 28 and departing May 2, 2025**, at the beautiful Champions Run Luxury RV Resort in Ocala FL. Activities planned include a potluck, heavy hors d'oeuvres, local dining out, and game nights. Ocala is the “horse capital of the world” and one of only four epicenters of Thoroughbred breeding and training in the world. There are several highly recommended tours available.

You can find more information and register at the Buccaneer website -

<https://www.smartrving.org/bucs/>. Also, our muster fee has been waived for this muster!

Safe Travels, Joe Faubion, Vice President, Florida Buccaneers



**CENTRAL REGION: Nita Taylor Region Director,
Assistant: Terry Johnson**

**Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana,
Ohio, Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisi-
ana, Mississippi, Alabama, NW Florida Panhandle**



2025 Central Region Muster

Come celebrate Mother's Day with us!

Where: Coachlight RV Park, Carthage, MO.

Make your reservations with the campground at 417-358-7444.

Early arrivals will arrive on May 9, 2025 and we will celebrate Mother's Day on Sunday May 11th with a potluck dinner. The meat will be provided by the Region, and we are challenging the guys to fix the sides!

Come join the fun!

Opening ceremonies will be on Monday, May 12th with closing on Friday, May 16th. Departure will be Saturday, May 17th .

We are looking for volunteers to help us with the organization details, please contact Nita Taylor, Central Region Director, if you can donate your special talents.

Email is philnita.taylor@gmail.com,

or cell number 501-250-6585.

**Registration details are on the SMART web-
site and watch for updates
for all the happenings!!**

SmartRVing.org





Arkansas SMART Hogs, The Arkansas SMART Hogs 2024 year was an eventful year. We started the year with dinner and a show at Murray's Dinner Playhouse. That was later followed up with an Solar Eclipse Watch Party. Everyone was gifted with a thumb drive of excellent photos of the eclipse by Phil and Nita Taylor.

Our summertime musters started with a trip to Bo Brook Family Farms. They offered nice level camp sites, Vendor fairs, live music and places to eat. We had an opportunity to visit the on-site wine shop and tasting events. We enjoyed our 4th of July celebration and our annual game day. We traveled to the National Muster at Ladson, South Carolina where we had loads of fun. Arriving back home we all met at the Woolly Hollow State Park in Arkansas in October. The weather was great, and we had several visitors. Paul and Melody Thomas joined us for the week. We had a pumpkin carving contest. There were many talented carvers providing us some truly amazing pumpkins. Our regional muster was in Louisiana. While exploring some of the local areas we tried some of the local cuisine. We all agreed on local seafood and the place we picked looked a little alarming on the outside but there was fantastic food. We closed out our year with our Christmas party and Dirty Santa game. We are looking forward to an exciting year for 2025. Our activity schedule is on SMARTRVING.com under ARKANSAS SMART HOGS. We are adding more events and activity and would love to have you join us.

Lisa Duckworth, Chapter President



Greetings from the Cajuns!

Ah! Spring is in the air! Time to get in the RV and go! March and April are full of SMART events. Look at the "All Club Events" tab on the SMART website to see lots of activities taking place across the country. This is an excellent opportunity to have fun and connect with others. The Louisiana Caravan begins March 25th and runs through April 25th. Folks on this caravan will enjoy about 76 caravan activities and 82 optional activities. They will be busy seeing many things that exist only in Louisiana. This caravan is full with a waiting list. The Caravan will intersect with the Mississippi Magnolias and the Louisiana Cajuns at two of their musters. The first Muster/Caravan Event will take place at River View RV Park in Vidalia with the Magnolias. The second will be at the Cajun's Ya'll Come muster. Each of these events will have large turnouts of 75 or more people. They will be lots of fun with lots of activities. The Y'all Come will be bigger and better than ever. There will be plenty of food including crawfish. And there will be lots of activities. You may have come to other Y'all Come musters and think you have done it all but think again. We will have the usual swamp tours, etc. but there will also be new things like a tour of an accordion shop and a sewing shop where you can make your own Mardi Gras mask. There are a few camping spots left. The International Festival de Louisiane is the largest international music festival in the country and will be held April 23-27. Google it. The Y'all come dates are April 21-25. There are sites at Poche's for both as I write this, but they will fill up fast as the word gets out. As of now, you can sign up for the Y'all Come and stay for the Festival. You need to make your reservations for both the Magnolias and Cajun events on the SMART Website. I recommend you do so as soon as possible as both these events will fill up fast. You will not regret it.

Johnny Leggett



**MIDWEST REGION: Joe Noonan Region Director,
Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska,
Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas**



ALAMO SMARTs

Spring is just around the corner in South Texas, and the Alamo's are ready to get back on the road. Our first muster of the New Year will be held in Niederwald, Tx just outside of Austin. The surrounding area is known for its tasty BBQ, and so many other venues of interest.

I've been going through the many years of photos and memorabilia of our Alamo Chapter, and feeling grateful to the charter members who got this region in Texas started. I remember how welcomed Richard and I felt when we joined, and I know that this has remained a crucial point in current times, as well. Most of the starting members are no longer able to travel with us, but we stay in touch with social luncheons. The friendships and travel memories made in SMART are a significant part of our lives.

Be sure that you include your new members or visitors in the activities and checking to see that they feel welcomed. We all understand the value of first impressions.

As always, if you're in our area, please join us for a muster or a social outing. We really like to show off San Antonio and the Hill Country to visitors. This month's photo is a trip down memory lane, from 2015.

Mary Palmer, Alamo Chapter Secretary, Newsletter Editor





WESTERN REGION : Mike Foley, Region Director,
Assistant: Greg Vassallo
Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho,
California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona,



Hello one and all. I hope this finds you in good health and great spirits and ready to hit the road RVing (unless you are already on the road RVing)

We're still trying to get a Northern Western Chapter together. This would include Oregon and Washington. If you're interested in joining this new Chapter please email me and I will forward your info on to those who are working hard to get this rolling.

We're also looking to get Utah and Idaho on board to start a new Chapter. If you live in one of these states, please email me and let me know if you can help get this chapter rolling.

Golden Gate is holding the Western Regional in Bakersfield CA starting April 2nd and leaving April 6th. The muster will be at Orange Grove RV Park in Bakersfield.

Please look at the Golden Gate Web page for further information and point of contact.

The Arizona Roadrunners/Tumble Weeds are holding a muster in April which is TBA. Check their web site for further info and point of contact.

Would like to also get a Chapter going up in Alaska. I lived in Alaska for 5 years. Alaska is a very beautiful state and friendly people. Our USAF Squadron called us God's frozen Chosen. If anyone in Alaska is interested in forming a new chapter, please contact me.

Spring is just around the corner so soon the cold weather will give way to nice sunny and warm days. Time to get your RV's in order and start traveling.

Before I go, please remember to recruit and recruit and recruit some more. We need new members so if you know people who may be interested in joining get them to join you on a muster to show them how much fun they are. *Mike Foley*



Hello from Golden Gate Chapter - Hope everyone is well rested and ready to roll out on the highway and get back to RVing. Not a lot happening here with the Golden Gate Chapter. We have a Western Regional Muster coming up the 2nd of April and ending on the 6th of April. Muster will be held at Orange Grove RV Park in Bakersfield. More info is on the SMART web site. Just read the news and some ski resorts up in the Sierra's recorded 4 feet or more of snow. We had very wet and windy storm pass thru here a couple of days ago. Our city got about 2.5 inches of rain and our Dam at Lake Berryessa in Napa County well the water once again went over the glory hole. Summer is shaping up to be a great summer with plenty of water. Several members of our Chapter are currently on the SMART cruise and I expect their having a wonderful time. If you're in the area during our Muster please stop by and say hello. Better yet, RSVP and come and join us the week. Just check the SMART web page for the contact info. Have safe and wonderful month.

Mike Foley
President Golden Gate Chapter



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

Member	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)			\$80.00

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
Total Enclosed	118.50

"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 -----



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

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

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We are a non-profit veteran RV Travel Club. We have chapters across the US. Active, Retired & Honorably Discharged Veterans & Spouses can join. We have Caravans to awesome places in the US, Mexico, Canada and even Cruises at great prices.
So, Join today and join in on our FUN!



"Seeing the Country We Defend"

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