

SMART TRAVELER

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2024



Welcome to Charleston, SC home of the 41st SMART National Muster

(see article page 5-6)

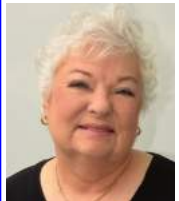
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Go to our website for more info www.SmartRVing.org



Message from your SMART President

2023 has come to an end I hope that y'all had a blessed Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. We finished off this year with another great Christmas Muster with the Alamo's in the Cowboy Capital, Bandera, TX. As we move forward to this next year, great strides are being made for a great 2024 National Muster in Ladson, SC. So start planning for a large attendance with the new recruits that you got and let's have a larger attendance of First Timers. The new alignment of the regions has caused some chapter assignment issues, but it is being corrected. Check with your chapter to see if you are still assigned to that chapter. This year's Regionals will need everybody's help since they have grown quite a bit. If you are not assigned to a chapter, please consider joining one for at least being able to get chapter, Regional, and HQ information to you. Don't be left out. **Richard Palmer –SMART President**



From the Desk of the 1st Vice President

Man, I love this club! When we first joined SMART in 2014, we were just new retirees who wanted to travel to Alaska in our RV. I scoured the internet, looking for a group to travel with. We had never been on a caravan before and knew nothing about them. Fantasy RV, Adventure Caravans, and other companies advertised trips but they were so expensive. Then I happened upon SMART. Here was a group of fellow veterans to travel with and at two-thirds the cost of the other guys. What a great find! We signed up and found ourselves 16th on the waiting list. The year passed and people dropped off the go-list and people entered from the wait-list. Soon, we were on! It proved to be the trip of a lifetime. We made lifelong friends on that caravan and discovered the joy of camping with fellow veterans. The following year in 2016, we went on the Canadian Maritimes caravan offered by SMART. Had a great adventure and made more lifelong friends. We also went on two caravans with Escapees to the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, California, and the Balloon Fiesta in Albuquerque, New Mexico. While we enjoyed those events, we did not make any lasting friendships. There just wasn't any connection with the other people on those caravans. In 2017, SMART's National Muster took place in Rayne, Louisiana. Since we had family in Rayne, we decided to go to it. Again, it was surprising how well we got along with everyone and thoroughly enjoyed the comradery. I accepted the nomination for secretary of the Nomads Chapter at that muster. Little did we know the path that participation would take us on. We connected with friends from the Alaska caravan and together, decided to lead a caravan to Utah in 2019. Our friends were going to be the Wagon Masters and we were going to

be the Tail Gunners. Half-way through the planning year, our friends got divorced. We stepped forward to accept the role of Wagon Masters. It was a little scary, having never led a caravan before. However, we had been traveling extensively and just applied what we did for ourselves to a larger group. The caravan went very well and we found the experience quite enjoyable. Soon, we found ourselves planning and leading more caravans. It was fun! Along with the caravans, we became more involved in the leadership of SMART. Today, I am the 1st National Vice President poised to accept the presidency of SMART this year. SMART is a unique organization. It is the best military travel club around. We have attended local musters, regional musters, and national musters. Each time, we have departed renewed and refreshed with new friendships in hand. Now, when we arrive in an area, we pull out our contact list and see who lives in the area that we can visit with. It is an incredibly fulfilling experience. We have more friends since we started our full-time adventure than we ever had at home. Added to our shared camping experience is the knowledge that we are helping local communities as well as other veterans. SMART members donate to many charities and veterans organizations. Of the five regions and 25 chapters, over \$4,000 in cash along with food, school supplies, and nursing home items were given to charitable organizations. We certainly make an impact on the world around us! If you want to take full advantage of what SMART has to offer, go to the musters. Join a caravan. Interact with your fellow veterans. Enjoy the campfires and potlucks. Then, go tell everyone about it. Let's share our experiences with other veterans. SMART has been around for 40 years. It's time to let the secret out. This is the best military travel club around. Let everybody know about it. **Melody C. Thomas, SMART National 1st Vice President**



From your First Lady: Mary Palmer

Richard and I have been SMART members for 17 years, and as his co-pilot, I've shared his membership number. I recently received my own membership card and number after realizing the many benefits.

1. I have the privilege of casting my own vote in elections.
2. I receive all notifications and newsletters directly to my own email.
3. I receive credit for my own recruiting efforts.
4. My member number is added to the drawings, raffles, auctions, etc.
5. My Pilot receives an "I Got One" pin for recruiting his/her current co-pilot.
6. I AM HELPING TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT THE SMART ORGANIZATION.

This last point is especially important and timely. If every co-pilot who is still sharing a membership number would join at a \$30 yearly rate, the extra income generated for SMART could be substantial. And it couldn't come at a better time. So, I'm asking you co-pilots, partners, significant others... if you don't already have your own membership, to consider the benefit for yourself and for SMART. Let's start off this New Year with an influx of new member numbers. Let your Pilot "recruit" you today! **Mary Palmer, First Lady**

Military Parks of the Year Awards

Small Park:

Whitaker Place Campground

Edinburg, IN

Medium Park:

Desert Breeze Travel Camp

Yuma, AZ

Large Park:

Farish Recreation Area

Colorado Springs, CO



Do you own a Grand Design Trailer or 5th wheel?

Some of us met up at the 40th Anniversary of SMART in the Amana Colonies, IA. We are exploring the possibility of a chapter similar to the SMART chapter in FMCA. Feel free to email Jan Schnoor at jschnoor2@tampabay.rr.com to express your interest. (Pictured: Jim & Lida Cook, Art & Jan Schnoor, Marian & Edgar Groom (not pictured Wulf & Stephanie Corrington))





2024 National Muster, Ladson, SC

(Charleston, area)



The Eastern Region chapters are serving as hosts. Camping with full hook-ups in Exchange Park with big rigs sites. Early arrivals for members starting on Wednesday September 11th at 12:00 noon

“Early Bird Registration” For those registering by 1 May there will be a drawing for a refund of registration fee. (\$200 cash)

Location: The Exchange Park, 9850 Hwy. 78, Ladson, SC 29456.

<https://www.exchangepark.org/>



Tours will begin on Thurs the 12th, then continue on

Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon until 12:00 noon. Wed the 18th will be a free day. You will want to plan for early arrival to take advantage of all that the Charleston area has to offer.

Charleston and the surrounding area provide unique opportunities to sightsee and dining, plus more.



Tour registrations will be online by a tour management company and will be available when 2024 tour fees are determined.

This will be an easy way for members to be able to schedule their time and tours in one online location to be able to take advantage of every moment during the National. In addition to the online tour registrations, members will be free to schedule sightseeing and tours on their own, if preferred. Check the online registration and schedule for National activities for additional details.



Opening Ceremonies will be on Monday, September 16th, Closing Ceremonies on Friday, September 20th, and departure on Saturday, September 21, 2024.



Our 2024 National Muster will be a great experience.

You don't want to miss a minute of it.

The History of Charleston dates back to 1670 as Charles Town, in honor of King Charles the II. It started on the banks of Albemarle Point on the west side of the Ashley River. It was relocated to its present site in 1680. Charleston was the seat of the 1775 provincial Congress that created the state of South Carolina. Charleston was one of the leading cities in the South from the colonial era to the Civil War in the 1860's. The city grew wealthy through the export of rice, and later sea island cotton.



In the early 1700's Charleston became more prosperous in the plantation era & dominated economy of the post Revolutionary years. The invention of the Cotton Gin in 1793 revolutionized this crop's production and it quickly became South Carolina's major export. **By the 1900's Charleston** was emerging as a cultural center. **In the 1920's Charleston** saw a boom in the arts, writers, architects, and historical preservations came together to improve the city.

Experience more than 300 years of history on this guided carriage tour of Charleston. See the many mansions, churches, and gardens as your horse-drawn carriage tour covers more than 2.5 miles and 30 blocks of historic Charleston. Belgian and Percheron draft horses will lead you through the streets while you learn about this "Holy City" and its role in the Civil War. Narrated horse-drawn carriage tour of Charleston Follow a scenic route through 30 blocks of the historic district See grand antebellum homes and hear about their former owners Great photo ops of gardens with beautiful wrought iron gates Belgian and Percheron draft horses lead your carriage through the streets Read more about Charleston's Old South Carriage Historic Horse & Carriage Tour - <https://www.viator.com/tours/Charleston/Charlestons-Old-South-Carriage-Historic-Tour/d4384-6656RIDE?mcid=56757>



Visit historic Fort Sumter in Charleston, the site of the battle which signified the start of the American Civil War. This tour is provided by the only operator within the city that includes both round trip ferry service in addition to entry into Fort Sumter. Enjoy a scenic 30-minute cruise each way along Charleston Harbor from two convenient departure locations, Liberty Square and Patriots Point. On the way, view top Charleston sites such as Rainbow Row and the Battery from your ferry. Upon arrival, you will be

greeted by National Park Rangers who will relay stories of America's deadliest war before your 1-hour self-guided tour of Fort Sumter





SMART Chaplain Lamar Enfinger

Prayer and how God answers our prayers

Since there was just a handful of people that showed up to the chapel service in Amana, Iowa in September. I decided to write this month's article on the outline of that message. The message was on the power of pray and how GOD answers our prayers. One day I was out walking with our dog Nick, and I met a woman and we started to talk about our dogs. She asked me if I believed it was OK to pray for her sick dog? I told her yes because God was interested in what concerned us. We are His children. He listens to our request. Our prayers do not have to be about just spiritual things always but about our needs. A few years back I rode a motorcycle everywhere I went by myself. If I went to church, work, or shopping.

The Navy sent me to another city to be an adviser to a contractor on installing fuel cells in an H-3 helicopter. I was there for several days. After work on the last day, I decided to stop by and visit a friend before heading back home. Back in those days most gas stations did not stay open all night. As I turned into my friend's housing area, I saw a gas station and said to myself I will top off my tank there when I leave. Well, I stayed longer than I had planned, and the station was closed when I left his place. I rode by several stations, and all were closed. So, as I was going west on I-10 I prayed that The Lord would make my bike get better fuel economy than it had ever gotten before. As I rode on the bike started to miss fire, so I switched to my reserved tank, and prayed more and said you didn't make it get better fuel mileage, so I am leaving it in your hands to take care of this problem and I rode on. Soon the engine became silent, the only sound I could hear was my tires rolling on the pavement and the chain rotating on the sprockets. Up ahead I saw two trucks sitting beside the road. A pickup and a flatbed. I coasted between them and told them my problem. One of the men said they had problems of their own. The flatbed, which had a strand transmission, had a good battery but the starter was broken, and the pickup, which had an automatic transmission, had a good starter but the battery was dead, but they had no tools to change out the batteries. Riding a motorcycle, I always had tools, so we changed out the batteries and got both trucks running. Then loaded my bike onto the pickup and rode off down the road. A few miles down the road there was a truck stop that was open. Much farther than I would have wanted to push my bike. Even though God did not answer my prayer the way I asked him to He did answer the way it needed to be answered. And He answered it exactly at the right time. If I had run out of fuel sooner, I would've had to push my bike. If I had run out of fuel later, I would have run past the two trucks. But instead, I ran out exactly at the right place.

Dian and I were on the road headed to Texas where we needed diesel. I prayed we would make it to a Flying J in Mississippi, because it usually had less expensive fuel than anywhere else. But we were going into a head wind, and we were not getting the fuel mileage we normally got. While passing Mobile, AL. I saw a sign advertising diesel, so I got off at that exit and filled up. God didn't answer my prayer on where I wanted to get fuel, but he did answer my prayer on getting less expensive fuel. You see this fuel was less than the fuel at Flying J.

After I retired from the military, I drove an 18-wheeler over the road. Each time it came to stop I would pray for a spot to park. God never failed to provide a spot to park. On one occasion I watched a truck try to park in a spot, but because of his load he could not get in it, so he gave up. With God's help I was able to get into that spot and spent the night. Like I said I would always pray for a parking spot. One night I pulled into a rest area after praying beforehand, and the rest area was almost empty. I could almost hear the devil mocking me saying see you didn't have to pray for a parking spot there are plenty of spots here. I answered the devil, you are right there plenty of spots to park, but I knew there would be at least one spot for me.

There were members of our Church that prayed for their wayward son for some twenty years. Dot and Fred both went on to be with the Lord without seeing an answer to their prayers, but our pastor recently received a letter from that wayward son telling the pastor that he had gotten his life right with the Lord. While Fred and Dot never saw an answer to their prayers down here on earth. Their prayers were answered. Although our prayers aren't answered the way we want them to be answered. They are answered when God's timing is right.

Chaplain Lamar Enfinger

New items in SMART Store

40th Anniversary Coffee Mugs \$5

40th Anniversary Mens Caps \$10

Thermal Mugs w/SMART logo \$12

SMART Logo Canvas Tote Bag \$12

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

Navy Blue Mens Cap \$12

Car Tags \$5



SMART COOKBOOKS ON SALE

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

On Sale \$7.50

Call or email HQ today and get yours for your next muster!

800-354-7681 or email

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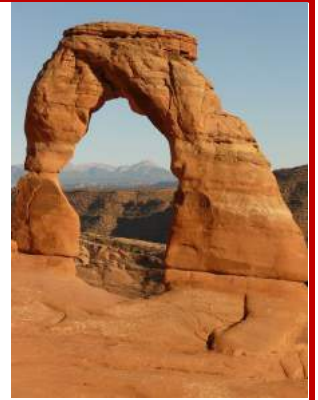


2024 CARAVAN'S

Grand Canyon and Beyond...

April 11– May 5th of 2024

David & Jackie Weis will be your Wagonmasters
dweis74@hotmail.com for this wonderful trip.
Assistant Wagonmasters: Melissa Wade
and Phyllis Enfinger smart@smartrving.org



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, and enjoy a calm water float trip to Horseshoe Bend, We'll take a Jeep Safari tour of Monument Valley 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 National Parks. 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 like "O" show and a murder mystery dinner show. 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.

Sign up online at

www.SmartRVing.org

**Prices: Couple \$6495 Single \$4500
Guest \$3495**

Full get on the
standby list

The Great Atlantic Canada Maritime Experience 2024

Start: June 15, 2024 End: 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:

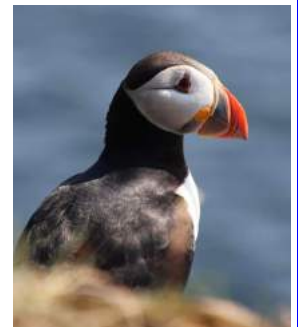
In **New Brunswick** you will see majestic brown-sugar beaches, culturally rich Acadian villages, quaint coastal islands and vast tracks of forests brimming with wildlife.

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 (con't)



We will conclude our trip back in Trenton (con't)

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>

Follow this link to register for this caravan: <https://smartrving.org/Caravans/carApplication.php?carID=19&action=onlineApplication>

Wagon Master(s): Tony & Gina Mason Email: fresno63@hotmail.com
Tail Gunner(s): Joe & Pam Faubion Email: painthrse@hotmail.com
Costs - Single Cost: \$7,100 **Couple Cost:** \$10,550 **Guest Cost:** \$3,484

Payments: \$280 upon application; 50% by December 15, 2023; and full payment by March 15, 2024.* 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. **We have 4 openings available**



2024 Branson Caravan

Veterans Week & Christmas In Branson, MO

November 6th to November 15th 2024 we will start the Veterans Unite in Branson Caravan at America's Best RV Park in Branson Missouri. We'll get things started with our Welcome catered dinner on site. Throughout the week we will enjoy various shows, ride the Showboat Branson Belle (paddle wheel) with a dinner and show, attend Branson Murder Mystery dinner and show, a few museums, March in the Veterans Day Parade and enjoy a few country buffets. Sign up now with your application and deposit of \$280.00

Couple cost \$2,040 Single cost \$1,405
Guest cost \$805



Get on the wait list....



2025 Caravan Adventures

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 Prices range from \$1384 – \$2929 pp dbl occ

\$450 per person deposit is 100% refundable until Final Payment on 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 3 cabins left to choose from, we have 47 booked already



Civil War Chasing John Wilkes Booth (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 DC, 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: TBD Price:TBD Safe Travels, Joe Faubion



CHAPTER AND REGION NEWS



EAST REGION: Leroy Armacost Region Director,
Assistant: Lonnie Alley

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 Buccaneers Happy New Year! Bucs gathered at the Palm View Garden Resort in Zephyrhills, Florida for our 2023 Veterans Day muster. We chose Zephyrhills as their military museum sponsors a World War II reenactment and the city has a nice parade. We welcomed guests to this muster - Donald and Marsha Wiesehan as well as Taylor and Tom, grandchildren of Sean and Margie Haire. Returning members in attendance were Tom and Lynn Barrett.



We assembled our Veterans Day Parade float - Jack Fritz provided the trailer and networked the loan of an Iwo Jima memorial display - flag included. Bill and Joanne Hastings donated service flags to the chapter which made their debut at



this event. Tom Barrett presented a fascinating talk on his experiences as a high-altitude reconnaissance pilot for our chapter and the campground.

We're already planning for Veterans Day 2024 and will return to Palm View Gardens next November. The campground will provide an area to serve as our "assembly hangar." You might wonder, why do we need an assembly hangar? We are partnering with a Zephyrhills mobility scooter company (veteran owned) regarding our parade entry for 2024 and concept drawings are in the Bucs newsletter. We're still in the early stages of planning so watch for our newsletters and attend our next muster to find out more.

Now is the time to sign up for the fifth annual murder mystery muster - Murder among the Matey's - Apr 22 – 26, 2024. We are preparing character assignments and would love to have you join us! The story line for this year's mystery is as follows: After a voyage filled with pillaging and plundering, the Jaded Jewel - a pirate ship captained by Red Beard, an old, but dangerous pirate - is docked in a cove near Port Royal. Life is never dull in this quaint seaside town and when a ship full of pirates, with pockets full of gold, arrive to celebrate their homecoming, a night of turmoil and trouble is sure to transpire. One guest will meet a tragic demise and end up in Davy Jones' Locker, leaving the rest of the party goes to bring the guilty to the gallows. Is the culprit a profiteering pirate organizing a mutiny, or, a saucy sea mistress, who wanted more than a casual commitment, or a treasure seeker unwilling to share the bounty? Join us to help solve the mystery.



This year's pirate themed event is sure to be one you won't want to miss! All are welcome, so join us for a celebration at The Salty Sea Dog, arriving Apr 22, and departing Apr 26, 2024. To sign up for Murder Among the Mateys go to <https://www.smartving.org/bucs>. Not sure what to expect at one of our murder mysteries? You can go to <https://youtu.be/1rIE07osyke>

for a brief YouTube video compilation of photos from our 2023 mystery muster – Murder at the Deadwood Saloon. **Safe Travels, Joe Faubion, VP Florida Buccaneers**



The Chattahoochee Drifters held their last meeting this December 13-17 at the Jenny Ridge Campground in Folkston, GA, however it is not over because we have now merged together with the FL. Sunshine Chapter. We had some delicious meals prepared by our host Carol and Bruce Gardener and in the evening many played cards. This was a good time to make new friends and keep some old ones.



Chattahoochee Drifters

As we camp in 2024 check out the schedule and if you are in the area come by and see us!



Florida Sunshine Chapter



Tri-State Travelers ...Welcome 2024! It's hard to believe that this century is almost one-quarter finished. Hopefully everyone had a wonderful Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and new year. Now is the time to look forward to new horizons with new campgrounds and venues to explore and new members to get to know. Spring is just around the corner with better weather to enjoy. The open road awaits. We're anticipating a good turnout for our March 2024 muster (18-22) at Fair Harbor RV Park in Perry GA to start off the year. We had a fun time at the November muster in Myrtle Beach SC. We were at a first-time campground only a few minutes from the Atlantic Ocean, with lots of places to explore. We plan on returning next November as well. We played mini-golf, had a silent auction and exchanged Christmas presents under a beach-themed tree with monkeys attached. Great food, as always, and we ate out at a seafood restaurant. The 2024 National Muster will be held at the Exchange Park Expo Center in Ladson, near Charleston SC, in September (11-21). The Eastern Region is hosting and we have many fun things planned, along with tours of the Charleston area attractions. The tours will take place the week prior to the muster, which starts on Monday, 16 September. You can register on the SMART home page. It's a great time to meet new people and make new friends. We welcome any member or prospective member of SMART to attend any of our musters, which are listed on the SMART website under Tri-State Travelers. Our chapter encompasses NC, SC and GA and occasionally we travel to VA and FL. Weather permitting, we have games and/or sightseeing during the day and a firepit during cooler times, where we can sit around the fire and enjoy the camaraderie of being together again. We also play indoor games in the evening, dominoes, hand and foot cards, occasionally poker and card bingo. One night we have a potluck dinner with great recipes, with more food than we can handle. Please sign up on the SMART website to attend. We look forward to seeing new faces. Hope to see you all in March! **Gail Alley, Sec/Treasurer**



Florida Roadrunners we hold our musters in South Georgia and North Florida. Our musters include dining out at restaurants, potluck, and host prepared meals. We usually meet January, March, and November. September National will be held in Ladson, SC. Every good muster has a happy hour/attitude adjustment. Our January muster will be held at Jenney Ridge in Folkston GA. Come join us for a good time, good food and a lot of fun. Don't forget your game face to play cards, and maybe win the 50/50. **Evelyn Stewart President**



South Florida Gold Coasters

We often get asked what we do that attracts so many Veterans to join our SMART Chapter. The benefits of joining fellow Veteran travelers are many. First and foremost are our

members. They are a proud, enthusiastic, fun-loving, like-minded group of people striving to provide a variety of activities during our musters. When you join the Gold Coasters, you'll find yourself enjoying bike rides, learning to play Pickleball, the latest craze, and playing team games such as beanbag baseball and corn hole. We get together in the afternoons via social hours. At afternoon muster social hours, we seek out and invite veterans who are staying in the same park and invite them to join us and learn about our travel club. Very few know anything about our SMART organization. This is one way we can get the word out about our adventures and our parent organization. After evening meals, we enjoy a variety of card and board games and even evenings of dancing. There is free time in our musters to explore your surroundings or take a relaxing nap. An evening meal may be on your own, a fabulous potluck dinner or dining as a group at a restaurant. Those we meet become friends and many become members of the Gold Coasters family after a very short time getting acquainted! Each muster attempts to support members to be prepared for traveling in RV's by scheduling various RV safety or "how to information" seminars. Additionally, a briefing on specific veteran topics such as survivor benefits may be given. The Gold Coasters proudly support a veteran charity called the Honor Flight Network. Our musters are held in February, April, October and December, with Valentines/Romance themes in February, and Oktoberfest or fall themed muster in October. April and December seem to lend themselves to rolling musters or holiday musters. One of our rolling musters started in Ft Lauderdale and ended in Key West! The Gold Coasters consistently meets/exceeds its goals which is evident by earning the SMART Outstanding Chapter Award numerous times. You can Join SMART and the Gold Coasters chapter on the SMART website at <https://www.smartrving.org/fgc/> You can view upcoming chapter events on our Facebook Group here,

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/360505854055082>

Four of our Gold Coasters members are leading the Canadian Maritimes Caravan in 2024. We have 4 open spots! An additional benefit of joining SMART is the caravans offered, <https://smartrving.org/Caravans/>. Some are short and some are long. The benefits of traveling on SMART caravans include the costs being considerably less than commercial companies. We secure discounted rates at campgrounds, activities, and meals since we are a veteran's group. We travel in groups for safety. If you break down, other people will be there to assist you until help can arrive. Caravan leaders take care of all the tedious planning for you from reserving campgrounds to providing travel directions and securing activities ranging from meals to tours to cultural events. We would love for you to join us! What are you waiting for?

Tony Mason, Chapter President





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

Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, NW Florida Panhandle



The Mississippi Magnolias have had a very busy year in 2023. We met for four musters this year as well as hosted the Regional muster for what was then the South Central region before it merged with the North Central Region to become the Central Region. The South Central Regional Muster

had 26 rigs registered and several guests who dropped in to our muster at Anchors Aweigh in Foley, AL during May. There was food, crafts, golf, games, auctions and so much laughter! For many in our Chapter it was a first time experience and was pronounced by all a great success.

Several new members joined SMART as a result of their "drop in" visit with us at Regional and some joined our Chapter also.

Each of our musters have included an opportunity to raise money for our identified charity, Fisher House of Biloxi, MS. which provides housing for veteran families while the veteran is receiving treatment in a VA or military hospital. There is always an activity at each of our musters which provides a way to donate to this organization whether it is 50/25/25 raffles, White Elephant Sales, Book Sales, Silent Auctions, etc. In February we were able to present a check to Fisher House for \$900. In addition to our charitable activities our busy year also included winning our 9th Outstanding Chapter Award since its inception.

As we just wrapped up our Chapter's Christmas Muster at Sun Roamers RV Resort in Picayune, MS, we are already looking forward to 5 musters for 2024: February 25-1 March at Sun Roamers RV Resort, April 8-13 at Hollywood Casino in Bay Saint Louis, MS, May 3-8 a joint muster with White Sands Panhandlers Chapter at Anchors Aweigh RV Park in Foley, AL, October 20-25 (Our 20th Anniversary and Halloween celebration) at Parkers Landing in Gulfport, MS and December 8-12 (Christmas Celebration) at Sun Roamers in Picayune, MS.

We invite guests and visitors to join us as we celebrate fellowship and friendship and the joy of belonging to SMART.

Our chapter grows each year and we are all the better for that. We have several long time members who no longer RV but join us when we can book a muster site that provides cabins or is located near affordable accommodations. We look forward to meeting new friends each time we muster. **Jan Lemaire Chapter President**

Dirty Santa Game at our Muster





The Ohio Valley Chapter of SMART was founded in September 1988 at Fort Campbell, KY. Thirteen initial members ranging from Tennessee to Michigan gathered to further SMART and camping among military veterans. Today at 35 years old, the chapter still has members from Tennessee to Michigan and enjoys sharing the benefits of camping with other vets from all services in the Ohio River Valley. In 2024 we are planning to muster at Fort Knox Famcamp (Camp Carlson) in late April which is right the middle of the 2 week Kentucky Derby Festival. We are trying to set up another muster in southwest Kentucky later in the summer and then working with the Rocky Tops of Tennessee to do a muster just before leaving for the 2024 National in Ladson, SC near Charleston in September. Most of our musters are within 150 miles of the Ohio River and last for 4 days. We do venture outside that range to do joint musters with adjacent chapters like the Rocky Tops. But anyone in SMART or who is interested in SMART is welcome to come to our musters at any time. We love when members from other parts of the country can join us and share stories and ideas. So keep your eyes on the Central Region and Ohio Valley Websites for more details and come spend some time with us. **Ed Pate Ohio Valley President/Treasurer**



North Country Voyageurs We trust everybody had a good and safe HOLIDAY SEASON!

During the winter those of us that are not down south for the winter tend to relax and work on programs that take a back seat

when we are traveling.

Six couples make up the chapter, two of which are here in MN. The other four are in VA, LA and FL. Our chapter has attended the past National and is planning to attend the National in (Ladson) Charleston, SC. The president is the Assistant Central Region Director for SMART. Any comments, attaboys or complaints are welcomed. It takes all of us to make **SMART, the BEST VETERANS RV CLUB IN THE WORLD.**

Terry Johnson

Terry & Mary Johnson
 Member # 13807 & #14143
 Assistant Central Region Director
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The Northern Gulf Coast is a great place for enjoying the pristine waters of the Gulf of Mexico, the sugar sand beaches and a wide variety of entertainment. **The White Sands Panhandlers Chapter** offers our members all the beauty of this southern area. Our camping season runs from August through May. In the off months, we gather for social luncheons (Chow Calls) at locations in Alabama and Florida. The months of June and July, when schools are in summer recess, is reserved for family vacations and gatherings. We enjoy a Holiday Muster in early December and our annual Chapter Anniversary Muster in May of each year. With a wide variety of activities and locations, The Emerald Coast on the Northern Gulf is welcome destination to anyone who travels in an RV. Come and visit us. We invite all SMART members, their guests and any military veterans, retirees or active-duty members from the RVing community to our musters and Chow Calls. We welcome them as friends and acquaintances and let them experience what our chapter has to offer. Our membership is primarily centered in the Pensacola, Florida area, but our members come from across the South and those who travel to the South throughout the year. Ready to learn more about us, Our Chapter President, Paul Moniz can be contacted at 850 723-0241, monizp1@bellsouth.net.



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



Hello - My name is Mike Foley and I have the honor of being your newly appointed Director of the Western Region. We have 7 states in our region and we're looking to gain some chapters in those states. If you live in OR, WA, ID, UT we would love to establish chapters in your states. You can contact me and I will send you all the information you need. If you went to National hopefully you had a great time. We have muster's coming up and you can go to the SMART web site and click on CA and AZ. We would love to have you drop by and say hello or better yet sign up for the muster and attend. I'm sure you will enjoy the fellowship and great food. We need to recruit and recruit and retain and retain. We would like to have more new members and retain those who are members. Safe travels to all so get out there and kick the tires and light the fires and roll on down the highway. **Mike Foley Director Western Region**



Arizona Roadrunners Chapter

—a reflection on some fun SMART happenings this past year.

The Arizona Roadrunners and Arizona Tumbleweeds Chapters hold joint musters because the chapters support and assist each other. The Arizona chapters try to design their musters so that participants can do fun activities on their own when no official activity is scheduled. Even when one might think a locale may not have much to offer, it is often amazing the fun things that really are available, if one does a little research. As we have always done, there was a joint muster in late January 2023 in Quartzsite, Arizona. Of course, most of us went to the big tent of commercial vendors of RV-related stuff. We had several afternoons and evenings chatting around the campfire watching the beautiful desert sunsets.



In late February we held a muster in Clifton, Arizona. The beautiful campground is right next to the San Francisco River. One morning we woke up to a light dusting of snow, but the real show-stopper was the appearance of a herd of bighorn sheep slowly cruising through our campsites! We had so much fun gathering to watch them as they climbed the hills next to the campground. We also got a private tour of the historical museum and later we went to the overlook of the Morenci open pit copper mine.

In late March we held a small regional muster in Gila Bend, Arizona and were joined by several SMART members from other states. Several of us visited a fascinating museum of classic cars made by a local gentleman out of old refrigerators and other old stuff. The hit of that muster was a rousing game of baseball corn hole! This year we attended the National Muster at the Amana Colonies in Iowa in September. Several Arizona members went and it was great to have a reunion with our friends from past caravans who live all over the country. There were several notable events like the brown bag auction, a fun rock concert where a bunch of us wore ourselves out dancing and singing, and a somber American flag retirement ceremony. We even got some new recruits for our chapters there. Of course, if you like German food, the Amana Colonies have several restaurants, which we went to all of them.

One of this year's SMART (and personal) highlights was the "Autumn in the Appalachians" caravan. It started about a week after the Nationals ended so we had a mini caravan to get to Georgia from Iowa. That was such a fun mini caravan through Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee and we stayed in a couple of gorgeous campgrounds and had fun exploring historic murals on the floodwalls of Paducah, Kentucky. The (con't)

scenery on the Appalachian caravan was “knock-your-socks-off” gorgeous. Everyone was friends at the end of the trip after many campfires and meals together. Even our dogs got along!

We always welcome visiting SMART members from other parts of the country, so if you’re going to be in Arizona outside of the summertime, check out our future musters on the SMART website. We’d love to have you join us! **Contributed by Jeannie Greven, #14660**



We are the **Arizona Tumbleweeds Chapter of S*M*A*R*T**. Our Chapter was awarded the Outstanding Chapter for 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Most of our chapter members are based in and around Central Arizona and always do combined musters with the Southern Arizona chapter, called the Arizona Roadrunners, which are based in the Tucson area. That way we get to see most of Arizona during our muster season, which is mid-October to mid-April. As many of us are sunbirds who escape the Arizona summers, as opposed to snowbirds who escape northern winters for sunny and warmer Arizona. Most of our musters are three to four days in length. Generally, we share heavy hors d’oeuvres our first night and have a potluck dinner or go to a local restaurant one night. Potluck breakfast is on the morning of our chapter meeting. Members will research the state to find something of interest in the local area for us to explore. So far this year (2024), we have musters planned for January in Ehrenberg starting the 3rd and departing on the 6th. This is a fairly new RV Park, so we are looking forward to camping on the river. On February 4-7th, the Roadrunners will be hosting the muster in Tucson. It will be at Casino Del Sol RV Park. We only have 3 chapters in the Western Region, one in California and two in Arizona. Please click on the S*M*A*R*T website, smartrving.org and look for the Arizona Tumbleweeds Chapter Events calendar. We’d love to see you at our next camping adventure. Wishing you all a very Happy New Year! **Rich Caruso, President of Arizona Tumbleweeds Chapter**



Greetings from the Golden Gate Chapter

Golden Gate had their Holiday Muster at Angels Camp this year. Angels Camp is the home of the annual Mark Twain Frog Jumping contest. We had 9 rigs and had a great time. The staff was outstanding and provided help when needed. We had the pleasure of welcoming two new members that joined before the Muster, and we had 2 guests that came with a friend, and they decided to join.



The Golden Gate Chapter supports the Veterans Home in Yountville, CA. We had many gift cards that were delivered for Christmas. The veterans always appreciate the cards. As side trips, several people went to the town of Columbia which is an old gold mining town looking just like it did in the late 1800’s. Others went to the town of Murphy. There are two pictures. The one on the left chapter members playing a card game. The one on the right shows our Holiday meal. All in all, Angels Camp is a great place to hold a muster or just to get out of town for a while. Be alert and be safe on the roads. **Mike Foley, President Golden Gate Chapter**



**MIDWEST REGION: Joe Noonan Region Director,
Montana, North Dakato, Wyoming, South Dakato,
Nebraska, Coloardo, Kansas, New Mexico,
Oklohoma, Texas**



The year 2023 ended with a fun-filled Christmas muster, hosted by Willie and Joyce Pollard. They cooked some great food and made sure we stayed busy with fun activities. Christmas caroling, a delicious catered Holiday meal, and exchanging some wonderful gifts among members kept our celebration lively.

Our charitable contributions to the local food bank was much appreciated by the town of Bandera. And while it's fun to look back on the busy year our Chapter had, we're even more excited to talk about what's in store for 2024. Our annual Super Bowl muster will be held February 8-12 at Braunig Lake RV Resort in Elmendorf, TX, located just south of San Antonio. This is a muster that we all look forward to...you can't beat the winning combination of Football, Food, and Friends! The upcoming Regional Muster hosted by our Alamo Chapter, will be March 11-15 at the Choctaw RV Park and Casino in Durant, Oklahoma. If you are centrally located anywhere near our region, consider joining us for what is sure to be a fantastic time gambling, taking in a show or two, and spending time with SMART friends. We wish our SMART family the best that this New Year has to offer you and your families...good health, safe travels, and extra time to love on those who are most special to you. **Mary Palmer, Alamo Chapter secretary/newsletter editor**



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



NOMADS Chapter Nomad (noun) wanderer in search of food. The Nomads are an At-Large chapter, open to all SMART members. We are a social group of fun (and food) lovers rather than a geographically defined or common interest chapter. Nomads get together at a pre-muster; just before the annual National Muster and at a post-muster after the National Muster. We are famous for our 4 pm Attitude adjustment during these get-togethers. Between our National-associated get-togethers, we look up other members during our travels. These mini musters, range from lunch to spending time together in a campground. Some are more formal gatherings of as many as are in the area! Nomads keep in touch by a quarterly newsletter, a website, email, and other e means. Our dues are a big \$5 per year.



SMART Duffers

President's Message:

The SMART Duffers are all warming up and getting ready for our President's Cup Golf Tournament being held September 16, 2024, at the Smart National Muster. We gather every year at our National Muster to play a round, have fun and enjoy the comradery of fellow Smart golfing members. We continue to seek new members to help us enjoy the game of golf and invite you to attend our Chapter meeting at the 2024 National Muster. More information will be available as we get closer to the 2024 National Muster. You may also contact Duffers Chapter President, David Weis at dweis74@hotmail.com. *David Weis*

Update: The 2024 National Muster staff are working hard to make this year's National Muster the best ever. We will be having a golf tournament and we have given our national muster golf tournament a new name, "The President's Cup." We will conduct the tournament at Joint Base Charleston's championship Wrenwood Golf Course. We will be using a handicap scramble format so players of all skill levels can compete. The green fees are very reasonable, and the entry fee will be \$10 to cover prizes.

Note: Let's work together to make the SMART Duffers one of the best chapters in SMART and earn the coveted "Chapter of the Year Award" next year. Check with your friends at each muster or rally you attend to see if they are a golfer/duffer and ask them to join the SMART Duffers. It's all about fun with the Duffers. Anyone, of any ability, can join in with us. SMART members just need to go to <https://www.smartrving.org/chapterCore/join.php?cha=duffers> to join.

HELP! We need one member to step up and take on the Secretary/Treasurer position. SMART HQ is holding funds that we have remaining and will transfer those funds when we get someone to fill the position. Please consider taking on this role. You may reply to Jack.Fritz99@gmail.com and/or dweis74@hotmail.com



SMART FMCA Chapter WELCOME 2024!

Now is the time to plan and prepare for your 2024 travel. We are scheduled to attend the Lakeland, FL, and Tucson, AZ, FMCA rallies and of course the SMART National. We would love to have you join us: "**Pirates Find Yer Treasure at Lakeland**" Southeast Area (SEA) rally is scheduled February 7-10, 2024. The rally will be at the Sun 'n Fun Aerospace Center located in Lakeland, Florida. Registration and information is available at fmca.com, seafmca.org and the FMCA family RV magazine. There will be numerous educational seminars scheduled that will focus on first timers, as well as RV technical subjects. There will be lots of food, fun, entertainment – pirate costume contests for people and pets - and shopping opportunities. **Tucson Arizona, for the 108th International Convention & RV Expo.** We will be at the Pima County Fairgrounds on March 20 - 23rd for the Fiesta Del Sol. **109th International Convention & RV Expo** is planned for Redmond Oregon August 14th - 17th (the theme is yet to be announced.) **SMART National Muster,**



opening ceremony 16 September, departing 21 September. Tours are available prior to the opening ceremony. See SMART website for registration and updated information. During previous FMCA chapter fairs we were overwhelmed by the number of veterans in attendance and the interest expressed in SMART and our caravan opportunities. From previous experience it has been all SMART hands-on deck. If you plan on attending, please consider stopping by our table and join us during our happy hours. Check out our newsletter on the SMART FMCA chapter site for additional information and go to FMCA website for a more inclusive list FMCA rallies.



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 -----



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Contact phone #: () —	Contact email:		
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*******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

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