



# CHARLESTON RAGTIMES

News for the 2024 National Muster in Ladson/Charleston South Carolina

April 2024 (Issue #3)

## COME AND LEARN THE CHARLESTON



Grab your dancing shoes and  
join us to learn the basic steps  
of the Charleston.

Once you are comfortable with  
the basics stick around and  
incorporate your signature moves.

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This is a video led dance class  
just for fun.



## DANCING TO CHARLESTON

Let me provide some important information about Charleston South Carolina, Exchange Park and the 41<sup>st</sup> SMART National Muster hosted by the Eastern Region. I would like to pass on a few tips, heads up and advice. This muster has the potential to be one of the best and the planning and execution committees are trying their very best to make it a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

Starting with arrival where you will be greeted by the parking team who will assign spaces, assist with parking, pass out goodie bags, and items of interest. After parking and setup, you will be available for tours, meetings, social hours, etc. until Sunday. The Welcome Station will be open Sunday and Monday 0900 – 1600 in the meeting room (Blue Room). See the muster schedule on the SMART website for details.

Charleston is a very interesting and historic city where several options for tours are available. The tour period is 12 to 15 September 2024. Wednesday, 18 September is an open day for tours scheduled by Charleston Convention & Group Services, Viator, or your personal plans.

Driving around Charleston is a challenge on the best of days. The streets tend to be narrow and rough with parking non-existent or quite expensive. Because of this, we recommend you carefully consider the bus tours through Charleston Convention Group Services which provide guided tours with transportation from Exchange Park and return. For those who prefer other options, UBER and taxis are available at your cost. For reference, links to downtown Charleston parking are:

[https://en.parkopedia.com/parking/downtown\\_charleston/?arriving=202401301300&leaving=202401301500](https://en.parkopedia.com/parking/downtown_charleston/?arriving=202401301300&leaving=202401301500)

<https://www.charleston-sc.gov/1025/Parking-Information>

Several vendors and service providers are expected to be on hand to provide various goods and services. Negotiations are ongoing and more information will be published when it is available/confirmed.

**REMINDER: YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL YOU PAY ALL FEES ON THE REGISTRATION RECEIPT. IF YOU HAVEN'T REGISTERED YET, OR PAID, PLEASE DO SO**

Lonnie Alley Assistant Muster Master, Parking, and Facilities Coordinator  
Email: [lonniealley@earthlink.net](mailto:lonniealley@earthlink.net)

# Golf Cart Rental at SC National Muster

If you would like to RENT a Golf Cart for the National Muster in South Carolina, contact:

**Garrett Wilson @ (843) 870-8085**  
**Or email @ [garrettw@trucarts.com](mailto:garrettw@trucarts.com)**

He will be taking orders for the SMART National Muster and deliver the carts to the Exchange Park.



## MAIL FORWARDING

If you need to have mail sent to you at Exchange Park, you can use the following address. Make sure it has your name and SMART Muster on the envelope. They do not accept deliveries over the weekend.

**YOUR NAME**

**The Exchange Park/SMART Muster**

**9850 Hwy 78, Ladson, SC 29456**

## President's Cup National Golf Tournament

You will want to show up early and join in the fun 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. You need to come to the meeting on Sunday, September 15 at 1900 hours.



Please email [Jack Fritz](mailto:Jack Fritz) to sign up and include your handicap.

More information on the tournament can be found by clicking this [link](#). Practice rounds can be anytime, individually or with your golfing buddies, by scheduling with the course.

# Tours/Sightseeing Options

Your National Muster Staff has been working diligently to identify the best tour and sightseeing options for the Charleston area for over six months. After negotiations with multiple companies, we believe you will find these options will meet your sightseeing and tour desires.

We are providing three options for your convenience. However, since Charleston provides such a wide range of tour and sightseeing options, you may decide there are other tour operators that may meet your personal situation both from an interest and financial standpoint.

**First**, for those who prefer transportation from Exchange Park for a tour and return, we have partnered with Charleston Convention and Group Services, Inc. (CCGS). They have been providing tours since 1986 and specialize in supporting military reunions. CCGS has developed tours and a schedule to match the times specifically designated for tours during the National Muster schedule. Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, to Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, and Wednesday September 18<sup>th</sup>. To see the tours, prices, and terms and register go to: [Charleston Convention Group Services](#).

For those who rather drive on your own, carpool, or go by a taxi service like Uber, Lift, or a traditional taxi company, we suggest two options: Viator, or Information, Tickets, and Travel (ITT).

**Second**, Viator is a worldwide tour company who offers a wide selection, excellent prices, and terms. All you have to do is go to their website, [Viator Charleston Tour Options](#) and make your reservations.

**Third** is one military members are familiar with, ITT through military bases. While this option may be the most cost effective, the process only works if you purchase the voucher(s) in person and is somewhat complicated. ITT caters to military members who are in the local area since tickets must be purchased in person, and are non-refundable. In order to purchase the vouchers from ITT these are the recommended steps.

1. Review the tour options on the ITT website at [ITT Tour Options](#). Note: The ITT website does not provide any detailed info about the specific tours; therefore you have to check each tour operator's website by searching the internet or viewing tours listed on Viator or another tour sales operator.



2. Once you decide which tour(s) you want, plan your arrival date for the muster so you have time to go to the ITT office at Joint Base Charleston to purchase the voucher(s). It will then be your responsibility to contact the tour company and make the reservation(s). The benefit of completing your part sooner than later is to have a better chance of getting the tour you desire. ITT assures vouchers will be available for each tour option, however, only the tour operator can provide information on the availability of specific tours and dates.

**IMPORTANT:** Please know if you purchase an ITT voucher and then decide not to go, there are no refunds or exceptions. SMART only serves as a facilitator for purchasing tours via all options and does not receive any financial benefit. Each tour option (CCSG, Viator, and ITT) have their own tour purchase and refund terms and conditions and it is your responsibility to read and understand them. SMART staff will not attempt to negotiate or intervene if a dispute occurs either on your behalf or theirs. Members are free to arrange tours on their own without using these options.

**NOTE:** If you have already registered for the National and decide to change your arrival dates to facilitate tours and need to revise, no problem. Just go the SMART website, sign in and go to your reservation and make the change which will generate a new reservation with any payment due or refunds for site payments.

If you have any questions regarding these options, you can contact John





## **DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE PHOTO CONTEST!!**

Dust off your favorite 8x10 matte pictures (no glossy pics) taken during your travels around this great world we live in and enter them in the contest. Categories are landscapes, pets, wildlife, your favorite grandchild, and folks having fun at a SMART activity.

**ENTRY FEE IS \$1 PER PICTURE**

**Bring them to the information desk when you register.**

**The grand winner's picture will be featured on the front of SMART's  
*"The Traveler"* magazine.**



# VENDORS!! VENDORS!! VENDORS!!

While we are continuing to recruit vendors for the 2024 National Muster, we expect to have something for everybody. Currently we have 13 vendors pending registration with more expressing interest. Four vendors are members selling hand crafts.

Vendors showing their interest in the National Muster are:

**BLUE OX** sales and repairs.

**KLEENTANK** repairs and cleans out holding tanks.

**SCHMITZ SALES** sells flags and banners.

**SOUTHERNPINESRV** services aqua hot water heaters and general RV maintenance.

**RECWASHER** wash and wax RV.

**BARBARA TRENT BUSINESS** badges and engravings.

**AUTO SHIELD CHARLESTON RV** diamond shield removal and replacement.

**MYRVSCHOOL** seminars, driving lessons and RV scales.

**KAREN KERNER BUSINESS** sells small crafts.

**PLUMMOON CRAFTS** sells homemade goods.

**SHELENE ARMACOST** sells seasonal wreaths.

**PAT HAYNES** sells military hats, banners and memorabilia.

This is a great opportunity to get your annual **AQUAHOT** service, onsite repairs or coach cleaning and waxing. Several vendors are also offering free seminars on various topics during the muster.

Anyone interested in becoming a vendor or knows someone that may be interested, please contact Phil Millonzi at [kar154@aol.com](mailto:kar154@aol.com) Registration fee is \$75 non-member or \$25 S.M.A.R.T. member.

## **The Welcome Station will be open:**

- **Sunday, September 15 from 0900 to 1600**
- **Monday, September 16 from 0900 to 1200**

*When you arrive and after you are parked by our very able parking crew, come to the Welcome Station in the Blue Building to complete a locator card.*

- **Drop off at various stations:**

- ⇒ **Register for various games including the Hand & Foot Tournament**
- ⇒ **Photos for contest with entry fee (\$1 per picture)**
- ⇒ **Food Donations**
- ⇒ **School Supplies Donations**
- ⇒ **Nursing Home Donations**
- ⇒ **ONE Brown Bag per rig for Auction**
- ⇒ **Turn in individual and Chapter baskets, gift cards, etc. donations for Door Prizes (don't forget to include a post card for thank you)**
- ⇒ **Items for yard sale and book/DVD/CD sales**



**REGISTER BY MAY 1st TO BE INCLUDED  
IN THE EARLY BIRD DRAWING —  
WIN THE REGISTRATION FEE FOR  
THE NATIONAL MUSTER**

**\$100 per person**

- ⇒ **Nightly camping fee will be \$50 per night payable to SMART; sites will be assigned by registration staff**
- ⇒ **Earliest allowable arrival date is Wednesday, September 11th at 12:00 noon**
- ⇒ **Tours begin Thursday, September 12th**
- ⇒ **September 18th is reserved all day for tours only**
- ⇒ **National Muster begins September 16th**
- ⇒ **Muster departure date will be no later than noon on Saturday, September 21st**
- ⇒ **Those who want to park together must arrive together**