

# CHARLESTON RAGTIMES

May 2024 (issue #5)

Voice of the 41st S\*M\*A\*R\*T National Muster in Ladson, SC



During the Muster, this newsletter will be published daily during the early evening so it will be in the attendees' morning email each day with the day's activities. A few copies will be posted.



## DANCING TO CHARLESTON

2024 S\*M\*A\*R\*T

National Muster

Ladson, South Carolina

September 16-21, 2024



## FACTS ABOUT CHARLESTON



Charleston, South Carolina, is known as the Holy City because it has over 400 churches. What do you want? We are in the Bible Belt. This charming city has historic structures, monuments, and incredible museums, all boasting the history of Charleston. There are fancy restaurants, awesome shops, exciting tours, sandy beaches, and multiple landmarks to explore, including Fort Sumter where the Civil War began 163 years ago on April 12, 1861.

Charleston is the most populous city in South Carolina. It is the county seat of Charleston County and ranks 74th in the U.S. Population in 2020 was 150,277. The city was founded in 1670 and was named for King Charles of England. The French Quarter offers a 2-hour walking tour.

## SMART 41st NATIONAL MUSTER

*Monday, September 16 – September 21*

*The Exchange Park, 9850 Hwy 78, Ladson, SC 29456*

Come share and enjoy the military camaraderie that SMART provides. We are inviting early arrivals in order to enjoy the variety of tours available. There will be interesting seminars, games, crafts, and friendship experiences along with some great entertainment experiences.

We will have time for great food (7 meals), opportunities to meet with folks in our chapters, make new friends, and enjoy SMART and local area experiences. The high value seminars are pertinent to RVing, life, and our shared military backgrounds. Vendors at the muster will provide high quality RV and lifestyle items for sale.

Stay through Saturday morning to enjoy Friday night Closing Ceremony festivities, dinner, and the last night door prize baskets as well as the \$750 Grand Prize drawing toward a SMART caravan of your choice.

We set the schedule so that you can take advantage of the many tours that Charleston has to offer. You can arrive 5 days ahead of time at noon on September 11. Opening Ceremonies, the golf tournament, chapter meetings and the First Timers Session take place on the first day, September 16.

The POW/MIA Ceremony continues to be a moving experience. The Flag Retirement Ceremony will continue to be an exceptional tribute to our Nation's symbol.

Contact for any questions:

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**HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT VOLUNTEERING TO BE A CHAPTER PRESIDENT OR REGION DIRECTOR BUT WERE AFRAID TO BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS INVOLVED?**



Here is your chance to learn about the leadership roles in SMART. Come to the seminar at National where there will be a class on Chapter President and Region Director responsibilities. You will find it is easier than you think.



SMART needs fresh blood. Are you up to the task? Find out at National.

## **MUSTER SUMMARY**

Our 2024 National Muster will be held in Ladson, South Carolina, with Opening Ceremonies on Monday, September 16th, and Closing Ceremonies on Friday, September 20th.



**Place:** Exchange Park, 9850 Highway 78, Ladson, SC 29456. Ph: 843-572-3161

**Registration Fee:** Muster fee is \$100 per person for catered meals, entertainment, and other muster activities. A \$30 non-refundable administrative fee is included in each registration. Tour fees to be paid to the tour company.

**Camping:** Camping fees are \$50 per night. Sites will be assigned by registration staff with NO involvement by Exchange Park staff. All sites are back-in with full hookups (our parking crew will guide you to your site and will be glad to assist backing into your site). Big rig sites available. Long sewer and water hoses will be needed as connections are in the rear. Restrooms in the Exchange Hall will be available 24/7.

**Earliest Allowable Arrival Date:** Noon on September 11th. Muster departure date is no later than noon on September 21st.

[Click](#) here to register



## Average Weather in Ladson, SC in September

9/12 71°/83°

9/13 72°/84°

9/14 71°/84°

9/15 71°/84°

9/16 71°/83°



9/17 71°/82°

9/18 71°/83°

9/19 70°/82°

9/20 70°/82°

9/21 70°/82°

Be on the lookout for Occasional Rain



## **Message to all Chapters & Individuals**

*The Prize & Raffle Committee would be happy to accept donations for our National Muster from Chapters and individuals. Baskets that include items from your local area are fantastic. If you would prefer not to give a basket, gift cards are always appreciated.*

## 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 at 1900.

Please email [Jack Fritz](mailto:Jack.Fritz@jbcharlestongolf.com) 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. Go to [www.jbcharlestongolf.com](http://www.jbcharlestongolf.com) for golf course information.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

*South Carolina is home to some of the best golf courses in the world today, but did you know that it has always been at the center of golf in America? The first known shipment of golf clubs came into Charleston in 1739. The first golf club in the US, the South Carolina Golf Club, was also founded in Charleston in 1786. They played on the first golf course in America, Harleston Green, which was roughly between Calhoun and Beaufain streets near the Ashley River.*

*South Carolina isn't just known for traditional golf, though. Myrtle Beach is considered the mini golf capital of the world, with more than 50 mini golf courses and home of the US Pro Mini Golf Association Master's National Championship course.*

# IS YOUR HOSE LONG ENOUGH?



*The main camping spaces are three long rows. Rows 2 and 3 will be back-to-back and have both 30-amp and 50-amp connections, all other spaces are 50 amp only. Recommend 30-amp campers arrive with a 50/30 adapter as you may be in a 50-amp spot. All hookups (power, sewer and water) are behind the camper. Be prepared with sufficient hoses and power cable to reach approximately 10 feet behind your camper. Water is city water, recommend pressure regulators. All campers must be self-contained.*



## 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**



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



**Garrett Wilson  
(843) 870-8085  
or email Garrett at  
[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.

## BRING A PHOTO TO SUBMIT TO THE ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

Bring your photo with you when you check in at the Welcome Station.



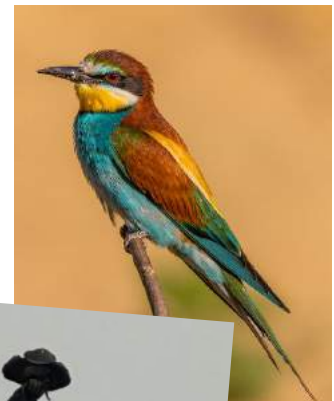
Photo requirements are as follows:

8 x 10 matte finish photograph taken by you  
(no glossy photos)

Photo may be from anywhere in the world that you have traveled

The 5 categories are:

- ◆ Landscapes
- ◆ Pets
- ◆ Wildlife
- ◆ Your grandchild
- ◆ SMART members having fun at a SMART activity



# CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

**Don't miss the Chapter Fair on September 17 @ 1300!!**

Chapters will have tables with folks available to answer any questions you might have about the chapter. If you don't belong to a chapter, or want to belong to more than one, this will be your chance to find out about those in your area or elsewhere. Don't want to be tied to a geographic location? Sign up for one of the At-Large chapters. They are formed on interests rather than geography. Many members join several chapters and attend musters as they travel around the U.S.

## **Planned Chapter Activities During National Muster:**

**NOMADS**—Pre Muster 9/12-15, Potluck 9/13, Meeting 9/15  
Post Muster 9/21-25

**DUFFERS**—Annual Meeting on 9/15 @ 1900,  
President's Cup Golf Tournament on 9/16 @ 0800-1400

**STAR**—Luncheon and Annual Meeting on 9/15 @ 11:00 a.m.

**WIMS**—Luncheon and Annual Meeting on 9/20 @ 12 noon

**FMCA**—Annual Meeting TBA



# BROWN BAG AUCTION

September 17 & 19 @ 2000 hours



Bring your Brown Bag for the **AUCTION** to the Welcome Center on Sunday or Monday. You will receive a ticket for your donation for the drawing to be held at the end of the Auction. Contents of the Brown Bag must be **WORTH** no less than \$20 in the bag. Only **ONE** bag will be accepted from each rig. Tape the bags closed. **DO NOT** staple. Do not put any identifying information on the outside of the bag.

## GAMES

The Game Coordinator is planning to hold several tournaments during our upcoming gathering. Sharpen your skills and be prepared to compete with your friends for the prizes.



This includes the following:

- President's Cup, National Golf Tournament (there is a planning session for the tournament on Sunday evening)
- Pegs & Jokers (there will be a training session to learn this game if interested)
- Hand and Foot (there will be a training session to sharpen your skills)
- Card Bingo (no training needed, just bring 5 quarters and one dollar)
- Bean Bag Baseball (come try your luck and cheer on your team)



# ATTENTION NOMADS!!!!



As usual, the NOMADS will be holding their Pre-National Muster immediately prior to the National gathering. This event begins on September 12, 2024, and runs until Sunday, September 15, 2024. It will be held at the same campground as the National Muster. Contact the chapter if you wish to be parked with the Nomads. See the Muster Information Sheet on the SMART website for specifics about parking as a group.

During this muster, along with our daily Social Hour, we are planning a potluck dinner on Friday evening, a Carriage ride through Charleston on Saturday and our general meeting on Sunday afternoon. Please register your attendance through the link on the SMART website.

Additionally, the NOMADS have scheduled their POST Nationals muster at Lakewood Resort in Myrtle Beach, SC. This muster runs from Saturday September 21st to Tuesday September 24th. Come for one or all of the days to relax by the Atlantic Ocean. You will need to register for this muster on the SMART website and contact the CAMPGROUND to arrange for your parking spot. We plan to greet the rising sun from the beach each morning, hold our general meeting on the arrival Saturday, and also host daily Social hours and a potluck supper as well as visit several of the local attractions.

## Activities in the Charleston area during National Muster

**September 13, 2024**—Dancing on the Cooper, Mt. Pleasant Pier

Local bands perform a variety of live music

Tickets: \$10 pp at [www.CharlestonCountyParks.com](http://www.CharlestonCountyParks.com)



**January 20-September 15**—Quilt Exhibit from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



“*The Art of Abstraction: Modernism in Quilting*”

The Charleston Museum, 360 Museum Street

843-722-2996

**September 21, 2024**—Cars & Coffee, Fairfield's Village,

165 Village Green Dr, Kiawah Island, SC

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Unique antiques & other cool cars



**September 14, 2024**—Cha-Cha Charleston! 2 shows: 5 p.m. & 8 pm (90 min)



Jazz Orchestra & Gino Castillo—\$10 to \$64 pp

Charleston Music Hall, 37 John Street

[222.charlestonjazz.com](http://222.charlestonjazz.com) 843-853-2252

**September 8-18, 2024**—Restaurant week is an annual event where different restaurants participate while offering special *Prix Fixé* lunch and dinner menus. Experience Lowcountry cuisine like never before.



# TOURS

Your National Muster Staff has been working diligently to identify the best tour and sightseeing options for the Charleston area for many 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, 12 Sep, to Sunday 15 Sep, and Wednesday 18 Sep. To see the tours, prices, 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 at: [Viator Charleston Tour Options](#)

All you have to do is go to their website and make your reservations.

**Third** is one military members are familiar, 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 <https://www.jbcharlestonorc.com/tickets>  
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 Jt 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 info on the availability of specific tours and dates.

**IMPORTANT:** Please know if you purchase a 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 to 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, you can contact John Steinbauer, Muster Master/Tour Coordinator at [jfs9840@gmail.com](mailto:jfs9840@gmail.com).



## FACTS ABOUT SOUTH CAROLINA ONLY A SOUTH CAROLINIAN WOULD KNOW (NOW YOU KNOW)



1. The state tree, seen on the iconic South Carolina flag, is a cabbage palmetto. Did you know that cannonballs bounce off of palmetto trees? Fort Moultrie, on Sullivan's Island, was built out of palmetto tree trunks on top of sand walls. The palmettos' incredible spongy consistency repelled the British cannonballs and helped the Patriots win the first major naval battle of the Revolutionary War.

2. The palmetto tree isn't technically a tree at all. It doesn't have a solid wood trunk.

3. South Carolina is home to the US's first commercial tea farm, and is the birthplace of that most delicious of icy, refreshing drinks: sweet tea.

4. The poinsettia is named after South Carolinian Joel Roberts Poinsett, the US's first ambassador to Mexico. He introduced the plant to the US when he sent specimens of the lovely red and green plant to his greenhouse in South Carolina in 1825.

5. The fantastic, amazing Angel Oak tree on John's Island is the oldest living thing east of the Mississippi River.

6. And Angel Oak isn't the only amazing tree in South Carolina. Congaree National Park is home to more than two dozen "champion trees," trees which are the largest specimen of their kind. Congaree has the highest concentration of champion trees of anyplace in America and one of the highest concentrations in the world. If you like trees, Congaree is your place.

7. The first European settlement on the North American continent was in South Carolina. San Miguel de Guadalupe was founded in 1526 by Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón, probably near present-day Georgetown. The colony only survived three months.

8. While sweet tea was born in South Carolina and is known as the state's hospitality beverage (Come sit on the porch and have some tea, y'all!) it's not the official state drink. That honor belongs to milk. And with so many beautiful dairies and creameries to visit here in the Palmetto State, one can see why. Stop by Happy Cow Creamery outside Greenville for a true taste of milk bottled right on the farm from, you guessed it, happy cows.

