

MINEOLA MESSENGER

April 2025 (issue #1)

Voice of the 42nd S*M*A*R*T National Muster in Mineola, TX



THE NATIONAL MUSTER IS COMING!!

Early registration deadline is May 1st



2025 S*M*A*R*T National Muster

Mineola, TX

September 15-19, 2025



Greetings to all SMART members!

I am Joe Noonan, and as the Muster Chair for the 2025 SMART National Muster in Texas, I am proud and excited to invite all members to the Muster. In less than six months, our National Muster will be here. The planning committee is working diligently to present the best Muster we have ever had.

An action-packed Muster schedule is available on the SMART website. There are vendors, guest speakers, seminars, games, tours, a golf outing, and catered meals for all to enjoy. There will be opportunities to meet and greet your fellow SMART members, sharpen your game skills, and learn a new dance step. There will be RV safety seminars, presentations about the 2026 caravans and training offered for those interested in leading a future caravan. Someone will go home with a new handmade quilt, designed and constructed by SMART members. The schedule lists all the catered meals for the Muster. You can look forward to early morning breakfast, four dinners and two luncheons.

Watch for monthly publications of the Mineola Messenger. The messenger will post updates to the Muster schedule. If anyone has questions or concerns, please contact me or the Muster Master, Richard Palmer.

What will make this the best National Muster ever? Your participation!!!

I am looking forward to seeing all of you, and if you have not registered yet, please register and join us, and Two Step to Texas.

Joe Noonan, 2025 SMART National Muster Chair



PARKING

Campsites will be assigned by the Parking Committee



Mineola, Texas, is located in Northeast Texas, 15 miles north of Tyler, The Rose Capitol of the United States, and half way between Dallas, TX and Shreveport, LA. The town, with a current population of around 4,823 people, was incorporated as the railroads arrived in 1873. A railroad official, Ira H. Evans, combined the names of his daughter, Ola, and her friend, Minnie Patten, to create the city name Mineola. It still has an Amtrak Station serving Dallas/Ft Worth. It is near Canton, TX, renowned for the world's largest flea market. While rich in history, Mineola is a modern refurbished town with many antique stores. Temperatures will be in the 80's during the day and 60's at night with a slim chance of rain. Mineola Downtown Historic District is home to a collection of buildings that were constructed between 1885 and 1960. The district comprises 88 properties and covers almost 23 acres (9.3 ha). It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on April 16, 2013.

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.



The Chapter Fair will take place on Wednesday, September 17. Plan to have a table there and information to hand out to prospective members.



MAIL FORWARDING

The Mineola Civic Center will not accept mail for anyone attending the National Muster.

If you must have mail forwarded to you, use the General Delivery option at the nearby post office. They will hold your mail up to 30 days for pick up.

Call the post office to ensure the following address is acceptable:

630 E BROAD ST
MINEOLA, TX 75773-9998
903-569-2 054

CART RENTAL



Individual Golf Cart Rental for the National Muster in Mineola, TX:

- ♦ \$60.00 per day plus delivery and pickup fee. Tell Bear (Bear is the Point of Contact) you are with Special Military Active Recreational Travelers (SMART).
- ♦ Telephone number to Bear's Lake Ready is (214) 557-4762

VENDORS PARTICIPATING IN THE NATIONAL MUSTER

Tom Mordaunt, the **Kleen Tank** representative, will clean holding tanks at the Muster

Jeff Gaston of **My RV School** will perform weighing of RVs

SMART members will be able to sell their crafts during the National Muster

Other vendors are being lined up for an exciting offering of items and services

**HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT
ABOUT VOLUNTEERING TO
BE A CHAPTER PRESIDENT
OR REGION DIRECTOR BUT
WERE AFRAID 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 2025 National Muster will be held in Mineola, Texas, with Opening Ceremonies on Monday, September 15th, and Closing Ceremonies on Friday, September 19th.



Place: Mineola Civic Center, 1150 N. New-som St, Mineola, TX 75773, 903-569-6115

Registration Fee: Muster fee is \$250 per couple, \$140 per single, \$125 per guest. Cost includes catered meals, entertainment, and other muster activities.

Early Bird Prize: Register before May 1st and be eligible for the early bird prize drawing. Win the muster fee of \$250.

Camping: Camping fees are \$45 per night. Sites will be assigned by registration staff.

Bring water, sewer, & electrical extensions ... Most electrical boxes have ONLY 50a and 15a outlets; 30a rigs will need a 50a to 30a adapter.

- Some sites may require water and sewer hose extensions.

Earliest Allowable Arrival Date: Noon on September 10th. Muster departure date is no later than noon on September 20th.

[Click](#) here to register

BRING A PHOTO TO ENTER IN THE ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

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

Entry Fee is \$1 per photograph.

Photo requirements are as follows:

8 x 10 MATTE finish photograph taken by you (***NO glossy photos***). *No limit on the number of photos you can submit*

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

The 5 categories are:

- ♦ Landscapes
- ♦ Flowers
- ♦ Wildlife
- ♦ SMART Caravans from the 2024 National Muster to this year's Muster
- ♦ SMART members having fun at a SMART activity



CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Don't miss the Chapter Fair on September 17 @ 1700!!

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 9/11-15, Meeting & Potluck 9/14
Post Muster 9/20-24

STAR—Luncheon and Annual Meeting on 9/19 @ 1200

WIMS—Luncheon and Annual Meeting on 9/18 @ 1200

FMCA—Annual Meeting September 16 @ 1500 PM

Chapter Meetings—September 16 @ 1500 PM

BROWN BAG AUCTION

September 16 and 18 @ 1900 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.

NOTE: Each bag will be assigned a number and the name of the person donating the bag will be annotated on a roster. In this manner, we will know who to thank. Winner and donor will be recognized

GAMES

The Games 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)
- ♦ **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 bill)
- ♦ **Bean Bag Baseball** (come try your luck and cheer on your team)
- ♦ **Pickleball** (come and learn how to play this popular game)



Activities in the Mineola area during National Muster

DOWNTOWN MINEOLA WALKING TOUR: In 2013, the US Department of Interior placed the Mineola Downtown Historic District on its list of National Register of Historic Places.

MINEOLA NATURE PRESERVE ON THE SABINE RIVER: Called the Birding Capitol of East Texas. With its diverse ecosystems and abundant birdlife, this hidden gem is a paradise for both seasoned birders and beginners looking to immerse themselves in the fascinating world of avian wonders.

IRON HORSE SQUARE is a five acre area in downtown Mineola that celebrates the railroad heritage of the area. Situated between Front and Commerce Streets and alongside the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, the park is a joint effort between the Mineola Landmark Commission, the Parks & Open Spaces Board and the City of Mineola. A 15 inch gauge replica of a Union Pacific train, built by Swanee River Railroad Company in Lufkin, Texas and funded by the Meredith Foundation, gives free rides on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month (September 13 and 27). The total distance is approximately one-quarter of a mile. The engine is diesel and each passenger car holds up to 12 patrons.



MINEOLA WISENER AIRPORT AND FLYING CIRCUS AVIATION MUSEUM: The Royal Flying Circus Aviation Museum includes an array of vintage aircraft, automobiles, photographs and artifacts associated with the Golden Age of aviation and with the daring barnstormers such as Henry and Bryce Wisener who formed the original Aerobatic Royal Flying Circus group in 1926. From a WWI Curtis "Jenny" JN-4D (a WWI trainer) to a WW2 Stearman biplane (a WW2 trainer), a WW2 Link trainer to a T-34 Link trainer (children of all ages allowed in it) and from a 1912 Ford Model T touring car (airport car) to a 1949 MG-TC sports car, they showcase the lives of colorful civilian and military flyers. Open by appointment. Contact them to arrange a personalized or group tour.

LAKE FORK: Located 15 minutes Northwest of Mineola, the lake is known as the "Bass Capital of Texas"

TOURS

SIGN UP EARLY TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE BEFORE ALL SEATS ARE GONE!!

TOUR #1: TEXAS FRESHWATER FISHERIES (September 11)

Built as a joint venture between TPWD, the [Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation](#) and the community of Athens, TFFC combines a Visitor Center, educational programming and a production freshwater hatchery. Developed on a 107-acre site, the facility includes 300,000 gallons of indoor and outdoor aquariums displaying dozens of species of native fish, waterfowl, alligators and amphibians in recreated habitats. A 14,000-sq.ft [conservation center](#), completed in 2007, provides space for meetings and special events.

TOUR #2: EAST TEXAS OIL MUSEUM (September 12)

The purpose of the East Texas Oil Museum is to pay tribute to the independent oil producers and wildcatters, to the men and women who dared to dream as they pursued the fruits of free enterprise beginning in the 1920s. They were subsequently successful in discovering and developing the great East Texas Oilfield in 1930 and beyond. Tours are designed to allow visitors to understand what it was like to live in this part of Texas at that time. The museum houses traditional exhibit styles and also has a life-sized recreation of a town booming in oil named Boomtown.

TOUR #3: CALDWELL ZOO/ROSE GARDEN (September 13)

(lunch included) More than 3,000 individual animals from over 200 species live at the Caldwell Zoo. Many of the species at the Zoo are endangered or threatened in the wild. It is an 85-acre zoo featuring animals from all over the world. At the Tyler Rose Garden, visit the world's largest public collection of roses. Explore the diverse rose collections, showcasing over 38,000 rose bushes representing approximately 600 cultivars. From classic hybrid teas to vibrant floribundas, each variety adds its unique charm