



SMART E-NEWS

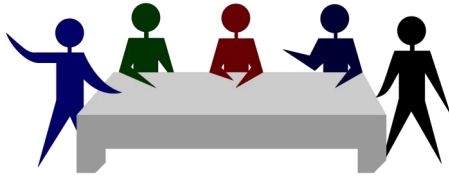


“Seeing the Country We Defend”

SMART HEADQUARTERS

SMART BI-MONTHLY SUPPLEMENT

APRIL 2025



There is still time to submit a
RESUME for

**SMART 2nd Vice President and
Regional Directors Positions
and RD Assistants.**



If you would like to be part of the SMART Board of Directors, please submit a
Resume to HQ by April 30th, 2025.

Please include the section 6.11 of the ByLaws where you understand this is not a paid position. You must be a veteran with good standing in the club to submit a 2nd VP Resume. Anyone that is a SMART member with good standing can be a Regional Director or an Assistance. Deadline for Resumes is April 30th, 2025. If you need help on wording a Resume let us know we can help you. If you have any questions on any of the positions please let me know. Thank you, HQ

**Our 2026 Caravans have been
released.**

2026 FALL COLORS

2026 HEART OF IT ALL

2026 YELLOWSTONE Plus

and 2026

Western Caribbean Cruise

See page 10 for info

Sign up Today! At SMARTRVING.ORG



The STAR Chapter

(SMART Tops at Recruiting)

is looking for a few good recruiters. Bring in five new members to SMART and you will be invited to join the STAR chapter. Inductees to the STAR chapter receive one free year dues to SMART.



A Message from your

SMART President, Melody Thomas

Regrettably, the SMART National 2nd Vice President, Leroy Armacost, has had to step down because of medical issues. Leroy loves SMART and has always had its best interests at heart. He volunteered for an important office when no one else would and I am indebted to him for that. Unfortunately, life sometimes goes off in another direction than where we like to think we are headed. Leroy has my deepest appreciation for his efforts on behalf of SMART, and we all wish him well in coping with his health issues.

In accordance with SOP 01 National Bylaws and SOP 02 Corporate Bylaws of the Club, Joe Noonan has been named to replace Leroy Armacost for the remainder of his term. In addition, since Joe Noonan was serving as the Director of the Midwest Region, Richard Palmer will replace Joe Noonan as Regional Director. I thank Joe and Richard for volunteering to serve in these important positions. The leadership team of SMART is dedicated and working hard to ensure the club thrives.

Everyone can help by volunteering when they see a need for help. When we all work together, we all succeed together. Let's go camping!!

Melody Thomas
National President



From the desk of the 1st Vice President

As the weather starts to get warmer and many of our members start to venture out I encourage you to check out the Traveler, E news or Website, visit a Chapter or sign up for one of the many Caravans being offered. Smart has the friendliest folks and we all have so much in common. Our National Muster is right around the corner so now is the time to send in your application, you don't want to miss out on all the fun, tours and planned activities. Additionally if your a **golfer** and wish to participate in the **SMART Golf Tournament** on September 15th please send me an e-mail so I can establish teams. We'll have a meeting of those playing on September 14th. Travel safe and see you in Mineola, Texas in September.

David Weis 1st VP (dweis74@hotmail.com)



Welcome to our new 2nd Vice President: Joe Noonan. Joe has been on the Board of Directors for over 4 years as a Region Director for the Midwest Region. He has been asked to move to 2nd VP position to take over for Leroy Armacost, who resigned due to health issues. Richard Palmer has been asked to move into Mid-West Region Director position, to fill Joe Noonan's place.

Welcome to EXCOM, looking forward to continue working with you both. *HQ*



Greetings Special Military Active Recreational Traveler (SMART) members. If you do not already know, I have been selected as SMART 2nd Vice. The Nominations Committee recommended approval, and the Executive Committee approved my nomination. I was sworn in as 2nd Vice the same day the Executive Committee approved my application. I appreciate the confidence and trust placed in me by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. I will fulfill my duties and obligations to the best of my abilities for SMART and especially our members. Thank you.

I requested and was approved by the executive board to remain as the Muster Chair for the 2025 National SMART rally. I am no longer the Midwest Regional Director. Richard Palmer is now the Midwest Regional Director, and he also remains as the Muster Master for our National Rally in September in Mineola, TX. We felt as though it was a little late to rearrange the committee at this late stage of planning.

We continue to plug away with the committee's work and I believe it will be the best National Muster we have ever had. The members doing the work and arranging all the minute details for National have been relentless and they are appreciated for all they do for SMART. We have a contract for golf carts at a reasonable price. Members who desire to rent a golf cart can do so from the same location as SMART HQ. The information for golf cart rental will be in the Mineola Messenger. We will have vendors, classes of interest for the RV owners, and the VA will send a representative to update us on current and new issues projected for the future. The VA will also set up a table with information about the VA. We are continuing to contact vendors to participate in our muster. Will keep you posted via the Messenger.

I am also the Publicity and Membership Chairperson, and I will be happy to entertain ideas, especially to increase our membership. Please help SMART by recruiting at least one new member this year. Membership and caravans are our main sources of income. Thank you all for your support. *Joe Noonan 2nd VP*

NCS VEHICLE DONATIONS FOR NON PROFIT ORANGAIZATIONS

Do you, your friends, or relatives have a vehicle (Car Truck, RV, Boat, Motorcycle, Trailer etc.) that's no longer needed? Or just sitting around in your yard collecting weeds! If so, you don't have to deal with selling it! You can receive a 100% tax deduction as a Bonus!

The SMART BOD approved an agreement with the National NCS Vehicle Donations for Non-Profits for us to receive a percentage of the vehicle donated.

The easiest way to donate is from the SMART website www.SmartRVing.org and click the blue logo on the front page of the website.



“Two Step to TEXAS”

Mineola, TEXAS Civic Center RV Park

Join us for our 42nd National Muster

September 15th—19th, 2025

Come and join in all the

FUN! FOOD! & EXCITING

ENTERTAINMENT!

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

Sign up for National & Tours online at:

SmartRVing.org

See next page for all the TOURS!

Early Bird Registration is by May 1st for signing up of the

42nd National Muster in Mineola, TX.



The drawing will be at National and you could get

your registration FEE back \$140 s/\$250c



The 42nd National Muster in Mineola TEXAS

3 Great TOURS to sign up for!

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

(call or email HQ if you have already registered)

Tour #1 TEXAS Freshwater Fisheries Center

Thursday Sept 11, 8am-2pm

\$35 per person, Transportation Included

(lunch available at additional cost)



Tour # 2 East Texas Oil Museum

Friday Sept 12th, 9am-2pm

\$35 per person, Transportation Included,

(lunch available at additional cost)

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

Saturday Sept 13th 9am-4pm

\$60 per person, Lunch Included,
Transportation Included.

See more info at SmartRVing.org



Transportation is limited to 45 people per Tour per Day, so sign up Quickly!

See Ya There!

Early Bird Registration is by May 1st

LETS CELEBRATE

We have gone thru Ground Hog Day, Valentines Day and St. Patrick's Day. So now our eyes are on Easter. See all the candy in the stores, baskets, toys, bunnies etc. etc.

I do not see any bunnies at the cross.



This generation probably doesn't even know all the rules we had when we were kids.

Remember, do not wear white shoes before Easter or carry a white purse.

JC Penney's had lines out the front door, store had kids and parents screaming and crying .

We had foot measuring machines (taken off the market, bad for our feet), then they bring out all the shoes that size and the pressure is on, sell the shoes.

The kids always look for Easter bunnies and eggs. What kind of dinner did your family have after church? Ham, sweet potatoes, green beans, corn, and a four layer cake with white fluffy icing and jelly beans on top. Oh! I almost forgot lots of deviled eggs from the eggs all the kids gathered in the yard.

The egg coloring was a great fun day for us all. My "pops" always had new ideas for coloring. He would mix colors and use all kinds of stickers. Just made coloring eggs so much fun. I don't know about you but my last thought while coloring eggs was about Jesus, dying for me and rising from death. He is the only God that has risen from death to reign again.

Let us think about God through the season. Say prayers of thanksgiving! Let us remember those that are less fortunate than we. Volunteer at church for egg rolling, take color eggs to church for egg hunting event.

Look for a military group that needs help, work for the VA hospital that needs help. Plan some Easter events at your chapter muster. Invite prospective members, show them fun and fellowship. We need new members and we all need to bring in new members. Pray for our shut ins, those who have lost someone, and pray for our military on duty on Easter and missing home. It would be great to pray for our BOD, and caravans.

Happy EASTER and GOD BLESS AMERICA.



Shelene Armacost, National Chaplain

Seeing the Country We Defend Travel Program Survey



Are you looking for a way to enrich your travel experience at an unbelievably low price? The SMART Travel Program has helped our members save hundreds traveling throughout North America, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. Our SMART leadership team works hard to bring our members the very best experience participating in the SMART Travel Program, and we need your help.

An online Travel Program Survey was developed to allow all our members the opportunity to easily provide input.

Previously, it was sent to all SMART members via Vertical Response.

If you haven't submitted your input yet, just click <https://www.smartving.org/Caravans/CaravanSurvey.php> which will take you to the SMART website to sign-in and access the survey. If you submit a response and decide to change your input, no problem, just submit another and the new submission is saved and the previous one is deleted. If you decide NOT to take the survey, it's assumed you are NOT interested in any caravans or cruises.

There is one important issue to be aware of;

Only members can take the survey because one has to go to the website and sign-in. If spouses or traveling companions who do not have a member number use the Pilot's membership number and take it after the Pilot submitted one, the last one submitted is retained and the first one is deleted. If both have a member number, they are encouraged to submit separate survey responses.

The survey is anonymous unless you indicate you want to serve as a Wagon Master or Assistant.

Additional info on the SMART Travel Program can be found on the SMART website at <https://www.smartving.org/Caravans/>

You may contact Hq SMART with questions or concerns at smart@smartving.org or call 1-800-354-7681.



WOMEN IN MILITARY SERVICE (WIMS) CHAPTER NEWS

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

Up Coming Musters for APRIL

- 4/3–4/6 **Texans SPRING MUSTER - Caldwell, TX**
Contact : Jan Schnoor 913-909-1589 jshnoor13@gmail.com
- 4/6–4/11 **MS Magnolias Spring Muster - Vidalia, LA**
Contact: Nancy Acre 985-290-8219 nancyarce33@gmail.com
- 4/10 **White Sands Panhandlers Chow Call—Milton, FL**
Contact: Chuck Kuzma 850-803-8761 ckuzma116@gmail.com
- 4/21–4/25 **Y'all Come Muster— Breaux Bridge, LA**
Contact: see website smartrving.org
- 4/23-4/27 **Ohio Valley Spring Muster—Georgetown, KY**
Ed Pate 270-307-9617 callitik@hotmail.com
- 4/23-4/27 **Sunshine Muster—Perry, FL**
Contact: Margo Whitaker 727-551-1183 new2rv2014@gmail.com
- 4/2/-5/2 **FL Buccaneers Spring Muster - Ocala, FL**
Joe Fabion 817-575-7596 painthrse@hotmail.com



Come on over to the **2025 SPRING FLING**

(Central Regional Muster)

In Carthage, MO

Join us for a Fun Filled Party!

May 9th—17th

At CoachLight RV Park in Cathage, MO





Join the **I-GOT-ONE** campaign!

Anyone who recruits one new person to SMART membership will receive this special pin. These will be awarded during the ceremonies at SMART National Muster. Let's see a long line of awardees at Mineola, Texas! (new members under the test program do not count until they pay their \$65)

RECRUIT 5 NEW MEMBERS and GET A YEAR FREE MEMBERSHIP

SMART is a Not-for-Profit 501(c)(19) Veterans' Organization,

and gifts are tax deductible. Consider a lifetime gift for a tax deduction or make a gift directly from your IRA to SMART without having to pay tax on that portion of your IRA distributed to SMART. You can also consider an after-death gift to SMART in your will or trust, or name SMART as a beneficiary of part of your IRA.



2025 SMART CARAVANS

2025 ALASKA CARVAN

SMART ALASKA CARAVAN.

It's not just the wildlife that makes this trip unforgettable, it's the small colorful towns and villages with friendly folks. If you have never been

to Denali National Park here is your chance! We will be panning for Gold and Dog Sledding, taking a train ride, and much more! so come on along ,

Cost Couple : \$10,750. Single \$7700

This caravan is Full, get on the standby list!



Planes, Trains, and Automobiles, and Ships Caravan

June 16th thru July 31st Price

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

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

Wagonmasters Melody & Paul Thomas thomas4smart@gmail.com

Tail Gunners Johnny & Linda Leggett johnny_leggett@hotmail.com

Caravan is full, get on the standby list!





Venice of America Caravan

May 23– 29 2025

7 Day In Place Caravan

Arriving 23 and departing 30 May 2025,
Single \$825. Couple\$1250. Guest\$430.

Wagon Masters: Kathy and John Steinbauer jfs9840@gmail.com 210-386-9018 will lead this “**In Place**” caravan in famous Ft Lauderdale. With over 3000 miles of canals, and rivers, you will learn the history and see the modern wonders of this historic and famous city. The city was founded in **1838 as a Seminole Indian trading post** on the banks of the New River which is now the center of tourism.

You will see the homes of the rich and famous and their mega yachts when you **cruise the new river to the Atlantic Ocean on the Carrie B paddle wheeler**. Sightseeing will include Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale where Squadron 19 was launched and lost over the Bermuda Triangle, now a WW II Museum. On the New River water taxi you will visit the river walk and dine and tour several attractions.

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

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

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

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

This caravan will be packed full of included tours and meals with time to venture on your own and will be limited to 15 registrants .

We have openings for this caravan



2026 SMART CARAVANS

2026 Yellowstone Plus

Start: June 22, 2026 **End:** August 06, 2026

Cost approximately \$6500 per couple. Prepare to experience an epic trip to some of the most iconic destinations in North America! Beginning in Wyoming, the caravan will travel through Montana, North Dakota and end in South Dakota.

Wagon Master(s): Melody & Paul Thomas Email: thomas4smart@gmail.com

Tail Gunner(s): Joe Padberg & Diane Pepperell Email: Padberg4smart@gmail.com

Estimated Costs - **Single Cost:** \$5800. **Couple Cost:** \$7,700 **Guest Cost:** \$2,000.

GO to our website to Join this Exciting Caravan SMARTRVing.org

2026 Heart of it All

Start: July 15, 2026 **End:** August 14, 2026

The history of aviation and the largest collection of Presidential Airplanes! The national Museum of the Great Lakes, Rock in Roll Hall of Fame, USS COD Submarine, Cuyahoga National Park, Scenic Railway Ride, Fabulous Food, Amish country and a Reenactment of D Day.

Wagon Master(s): Tony & Gina Mason Email: fresno63@hotmail.com

Tail Gunner(s): Joe & Pam Faubion Email: painthrse@hotmail.com

Estimated Costs - **Single Cost:** \$3,999 **Couple Cost:** \$4,999 **Guest Cost:** \$1,599

Payments: \$300 upon application; 50% by January 15, 2026; and full payment by April 15, 2026.

Go to our website to Join this Fun Caravan SmartRVing.org

2026 FALL COLORS CARAVAN

October 5th thru October 30th 2026

Price to TBA Join us on this beautiful scenic drive from Niagara Falls thru the Adirondack's, Vermont, Maine, CT, and New Hampshire. Seeing beautiful fall maple leaves and covered bridges, see how maple syrup is made, take a Scenic Train ride thru the mountain side, Lobster Dinner and more...

Wagon Masters David & Jackie Weis dweis74@hotmail.com

Tail Gunners Melissa Wade /Phyllis Enfinger smart@smartrving.org

GO to our website and sign up for this Great Caravan Smartrving.org

2026 Western Caribbean Cruise Rally at Sea

Feb 22nd—March 1, 2026

7 Nights on the Regal Princess

Leaving Galveston, TX click on link below to register

<https://1b59a9-6042.icpage.net/smartrv2026galvestoncruise>

Non SMART Members may also sign up now.

The BEST way to TRAVEL

is with your SMART Friends on a Caravan...

2020 Fleetwood Discovery 38K. 26,600 miles. All-electric coach (no propane), 360 hp Cummins diesel. 3 slides (1 full wall slide) bath and a half, king bed and over cab bed, 3 A/C units, washer and dryer, residential refrigerator, fireplace, dishwasher, 4 TVs, side/rear cameras, satellite antenna (automatic) with 'Wally' receiver, WiFi ranger in coach, auto hydraulic levelers. External macerator for waste water –2" hose can pump waste up to 40 ft; Tryon tire-safety bands and other extras. Must sell due to age and health. **\$169,000**

Contact: **Jeff Stephens 813.731.0101**, Located in Tampa.

jstephens6124@gmail.com





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

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please check out the
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APRIL SMART E-NEWS

A Bi-monthly addition to the **TRAVELER**

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