

SMART TRAVELER

Published Bi-Monthly for SPECIAL MMILITARY AACTIVE RRECREATIONAL TTRAVELERS CLUB

July 2025



We hope everyone has a nice and safe 4th of July

SMART is a not-for-profit 501(c)19 Veterans Organization

SmartRVing.org



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A Message from your SMART President

We are currently on the Planes, Trains, Automobiles & Ships caravan up in Indiana. The weather has been hot and humid and today we are under a tornado watch. But everyone has been having fun. We've learned so much about the Amish and their early beginnings as well as how the RV industry got its start. Over 85% of all RVs in America are manufactured in this area. Folks got a chance to tour the factories and see how their model RV was made. We even had one couple buy a new RV while here! It's a great start to what is going to be a great caravan.

As you get out and about this summer, remember to tell all your neighbors and fellow campers about SMART. Carry an application in your pocket at all times – you never know when you will have an opportunity to invite someone to join SMART. Hang out your banners and post stickers on your car and RV. Wear your military regalia (t-shirts, hats, etc.). Be sure to place those great looking SMART booklets and Traveler magazines in the laundry rooms, community rooms, rec rooms, and office. If you are at a group muster and the campground was really supportive of your chapter, award them a Certificate of Appreciation. It not only spreads good cheer but it also advertises SMART when they hang it on the wall. Be creative. Look for ways to tell everyone about SMART. It is the best military social and travel club around. There is a growing list of winners in the I GOT ONE campaign. I expect to pin a lot of folks at the National Muster in Mineola this year. Recruit five new members and win one year's dues.

Melody Thomas SMART National President



First Vice President: As I write this article I am on my way West to join the Alaska Caravan, and as you read this we are in Alaska enjoying the beautiful scenery, wild-life and comradery of fellow SMART members. SMART wagonmasters have put together some new, exciting and unique Caravans for 2026 and I hope many of you take advantage of them. They are really fun, relaxing and a great way to see and do things with fellow SMART members. Now that warmer weather is upon us, and you get out and travel more I ask that you continue your recruiting efforts, this is the best travel club and with your commitment we can continue to grow. Additionally we need to retain our experienced and loyal members. If you see they haven't been to a recent muster contact them let's keep everyone informed and on the "Team". Travel safe and hope to see everyone at Mineola Texas for this Year's National Muster in September.

David Weis 1st V P



From the desk of your 2nd VP :

Hello SMART members. I hope everyone is doing well and getting out in your recreational vehicles to see our wonderful and beautiful country. Our plan is to spend as much time as possible traveling in our motor home this summer.

The 2025 National Muster in Mineola, TX, is fast approaching, and will be here before we know it. Members can continue to sign up and join us up until the beginning of the Muster; however, we encourage everyone to complete the registration form as soon as you can. Numbers before the Muster are important because it is much easier to plan for number of rigs for parking, meals and so on. We also want to encourage everyone to sign up for our wonderful tours based on input from you, our members. We have an array of games planned, guest speakers to include the VA out of Dallas, vendors, and of course classes presented by our members. We are continuously looking for Wagon Masters and Tail Gunners for our caravans. SMART caravans are the biggest money maker for SMART along with membership. Many members have continued to lead musters, and it is not difficult. Please volunteer, we are here to assist you in the planning and implementation of the trip.

Speaking of membership, all of us must assist SMART to continue to expand our numbers. Presently, we lose more members than we gain each month, and we need to turn that around quickly. We want to continue to grow and remain the best club in the country. Please help us all. Remember, for those who recruit at least one new member this year, you will receive a pin from National at our upcoming Muster. If you recruit 5 new members you get a free year of membership.

I want to thank everyone for all that they do for SMART National. All of us on the Board of Directors appreciate you for volunteering and assisting, especially the new members.

Joe Noonan 2nd VP



"Two Step to TEXAS"



Mineola, TEXAS Civic Center RV Park



September 15th—19th, 2025

(Early arrival 10th Sept)

Come and join in all the

FUN! FOOD! & EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT!



Dale Cummings LIVE at our National Muster in Mineola, TX

Please go to our website for info on all the Fun!

SmartRVing.org

Don't miss out, Sign up Today!

Deadline for National shirt order is August 1st.

The 42nd National Muster in Mineola TEXAS TOURS!

Go to the website and sign up for these great Tours Now!

Deadline to signup for Tours is August 1st, 2025.

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

These Tours are the week before National Muster starts on 15th so plan ahead.

See Ya There!

Welcome!

Welcome and Congratulations to the following New Members and their Recruiters (May & June 2025)

	Region	(Recruiter)
15927 Aaron Ross (Judy)	Ocala, FL	P Faubion
15930 Judy Ross (Aaron)	Ocala, FL	P Faubion
15928 Doris Bell (Rick Robinson)	Paonia, CO	G Cuciz
15929 Rick Robinson (Doris Bell)	Paonia, CO	G Cuciz
15931 Vinetta Lundstrom	Tyler, TX	M Hagan
15932 Steve Knecht (Joan)	Grants Pass, OR	D Lewis
15933 Paula Grimsley-Zenzel (Ken)	Virginia Beach, VA	
15935 Robert Ramirez	Tombstone, AZ	
15936 Genie Lapkovitch Gonzales (Francisco)	Wrightwood, CA	
15937 Francisco Gonzales (Genie)	Wrightwood, CA	
15938 Edgar Miner	Chandler, AZ	
15939 Bob Chusmir (Judy)	Cromwell, CT	J Noonan
15940 Judy Chusmir (Bob)	Cromwell, CT	J Noonan
15941 Judith Rupe	Holton, KS	D Pepperell
15942 Jim Doering (Jeanne)	Thornton, CO	R Caruso
15943 Jeanne Doering (Jim)	Thornton, CO	R Caruso
15944 Lou Sepulveda (Deb)	Covington, LA	L Coates
15945 Deb Sepulveda (Lou)	Covington, LA	L Coates
15946 Lance Calvert (Lisa)	Box Elder, SD	
15947 Lisa Calvert (Lance)	Box Elder, SD	
15948 Benjamin Joy (Lynette)	Elkhart IN	M Wade
15949 Lynette Joy (Benjamin)	Elkhart, IN	M Wade
15950 Justin McCarthy (Maria)	Hollywood, FL	
15951 Maria McCarthy (Justin)	Hollywood, FL	
15952 William Julian (June)	Charlottesville, VA	
15953 Richie Bleecker (Kathy)	Pace, FL	
15954 Tim Free (Phyllis)	Lake Alfred, FL	D. Weis
15955 Phyllis Free (Tim)	Lake Alfred, FL	D. Weis

2026 SMART CARAVANS

2026 OHIO - "Heart of it All" Caravan

July 15, 2026 to August 14, 2026

Wagonmasters Tony & Gina Mason

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



The history of aviation and the largest collection of Presidential Airplanes is in WPAFB. The National Museum of the Great Lakes is calling. You'll explore Kelly's Island, Inscription Rock and Put-In-Bay with Admiral Perry's Victory and Peace Memorial.

Our next city offers the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the house from "A Christmas Story", an International

Foodie Tour in the market. The USS Cod Submarine Memorial. We'll tour Cuyahoga National Park via the scenic railroad. You'll visit one of the only First Ladies Libraries and the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Amish country offers fabulous food. Have you ever been to an Amish comedy show?

You'll be treated to elevated views of Pittsburgh aboard an aerial tram and tour the grounds of the famous Falling Waters home. Fort Ligonier is a world class museum from the French and Indian War that we will explore. We will end the caravan with a BOOM experiencing a reenactment of the D-Day Invasion! After the caravan we can caravan to the 2026 SMART National Muster in Elkhart Indiana.



2026 SPRINGTIME IN THE SMOKIES : Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge Area

May 1st to May 12th, 2026

Wagonmaster: Melissa Wade melissa@smartrving.org 850-478-1986



Enjoy a relaxing ride thru Cades Cove, seeing bear, deer and water falls. See the Mountain Lauerl in Bloom, Watch Pirates take over the ship while you're having dinner, We are going to tour Sevierville, TN home of Dolly Parton,



Tour a Moonshine distillery, walk thru the Famous Bush Beans Factory. Watch a Drama "Unto these Hills", Watch the North and the South ride gain, Go to a LumberJack show, and of course we're going to eat a lot! This caravan will take place in the area of Pigeon Forge ,TN and a bus ride to Cherokee North Carolina in the GREAT Smokey Mountains National Park.



So come along and sign up today!

Cost \$3800 per couple, single \$2500
Guess \$1500

Deadline to sign up August 20th



2026 Fall Colors

Start: October 01, 2026 End: October 26, 2026

Joins us in beautiful Niagara Falls, on October 1st as we start our exciting and picturesque Fall Colors Caravan. We'll have our Welcome Dinner, Tour Niagara Falls on the American & Canadian side and experience a ride on the "Maid of Mist" sightseeing tour boat. We will then travel to Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Mass and Connecticut to see the beautiful fall colors.



Wagon Master(s): David & Jackie Weis Email: dweis74@hotmail.com

Tailgunners: Melissa Wade & Phyllis Enfinger smart@smartrving.org

Est. Costs - Single Cost: \$3,925 Couple Cost: \$5,650 Guest Cost: \$1,950

Payments: \$300 upon application; 50% by April 05, 2026; and full payment by July 05, 2026.

There are only 3 openings left.

After Niagara Falls, we'll travel to Herkimer, NY to take a boat ride on the Erie Canal, and dig for Herkimer Diamonds, Then we will move onto Lake George to visit 1756 Fort William Henry, and take a Steamboat ride on Lake George. We'll visit Colchester, Vermont, Freedom New Hampshire, Freeport, Maine, Cape Cod Massachusetts and Mystic, Connecticut. Along with beautiful scenery we'll enjoy viewing covered bridges, ride the Conway Scenic Railway, ride the iconic Cog railway up Mt. Washington and visit the LL Bean Flagship store. We certainly won't visit Maine without a delicious lobster feast. We will go on Whale Watching Tour! Tour Cape Cod, Mass. Our final visit will be Mystic, Connecticut where we'll spend the day at the entertaining and interesting Mystic Seaport Museum and visit Groton Submarine Force Museum. Our final farewell dinner will be a seafood feast in Mystic Connecticut. These are just a few of the many activities being planned for the Fall Colors Caravan. We are limited to 18 RV's so now is the time to send in your Caravan application.



2026 Yellowstone Plus

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

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

COSTS - Single Cost: \$5,800 **Couple Cost:** \$7,700 **Guest Cost:** \$2,000

Payments: \$300 upon application; 50% by December 22, 2025; and full payment by March 22, 2026.

This caravan is full. You will be number 5 on the wait list.

Over approximately 45-days, we will visit bucket list places like Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse, Little Bighorn, Grand Tetons, Yellowstone, Badlands, Black Hills, Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Devil's Tower, Wall Drug, Custer State Park, and more.

Towns to be explored will include Jackson Hole, Medora, Sturgis, Deadwood, Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Helena, Butte, Billings, and Great Falls. We'll see a rodeo, experience a chuckwagon supper and show, visit the biggest open copper mine pit in the world, take a float trip down the Snake River, marvel at Prairie Dog Town, learn about Kevin Costner's Dances with Wolves film set and Tatanka Buffalo Museum, take an old time train ride, experience a pitchfork barbecue, tour a bear center, watch Old Faithful blow, and stand on the richest hill in the world. Get ready for the trip of a lifetime!

2026 Western Caribbean Cruise

Start: February 22, 2026 End: March 01, 2026

Join us in 2026 on our 2nd SMART Rally at Sea. We will sail aboard the Regal Princess. We will board in Galveston, TX. Cruise to Cozumel, Costa Maya, Roatan, and Honduras.



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

Prices include several FREE Perks including: Free Wi-Fi, Beverages Packages. SMART members, your family and friends are welcome to join you on this great cruise!

SMART Rally Fee \$125 per cabin must be paid directly to SMART. More information and registration form may be found at <http://1b59a9-6042.icpage.net/smartrv2026galvestonecruise>

We have 14 cabins booked, we have 72 cabins available.

Please go to our website to get a full description of each caravan

www.SmartRVing.org

These caravans will fill up fast so go to our website and sign up Today!

Register, and pay your \$300 deposit to hold your spot.

National Resume submitted for 2nd Vice for 2025-2026



DATE: 25 February 2025

TO: SMART Board of Directors

FROM: Joseph G Padberg #15164

SUBJ: Application for Position of 2nd Vice President

I do hereby apply for and accept the nomination for the office of 2nd Vice President. I agree to meet all required responsibilities if elected. By affixing my name below, I certify that I accept responsibility for the position if elected, that I possess the capability and willingness to serve in this position, and that I am aware of the provisions of section 6.11 of the Bylaws concerning compensation.

My military background includes 6 years of service in the Air National Guard. As a reservist, I built dual careers – one on the civilian side and another in the armed forces.

As a civilian, I held leadership positions in sales and Program management and Project management across several industries. Leading a variety of teams handling communications systems, wastewater management and the personnel elevator industries. Additionally, I was responsible for the reorganization of our department from a hierarchical structure to a smaller group/team structure.

As an airman, I was trained in the installation and repair of Ground Radio equipment. I utilized this training with my civilian skills to lead several teams in the relocation and setup of ground radio equipment, relocation of a reservist control tower and the installation of cable required to meet these moves.

I have a history of working with volunteer organizations. As a lay leader in my local church, I served on various committees including the development of an integrated outreach program. I assumed leadership in my model railroad club and directed the strong bond between our club and the local historical society that provided our home base.

My partner and I joined SMART in 2020. I have been the Secretary for the Nomads Chapter for two years and am currently serving as the chapter President. We actively search for local chapter musters as we travel across the country, joining several as we visit their musters. I am the Muster Master for both of my home state chapters, the Arizona Tumbleweeds and the Arizona Roadrunners. Along with my partner, we have completed 5 SMART caravans and are currently scheduled for two more this year. We continue to investigate opportunities to assist SMART, whether as volunteers at a National, Regional, or local muster or to assist with future caravans.

I believe I possess the capability and willingness to serve effectively. I have worked with volunteers and am a proven leader. I have done recruiting, managed budgets, written official documents, supervised personnel, engaged in planning, created training materials, and taught a variety of students in many business situations.

I believe strongly in SMART and wish to see it succeed. I will work hard with my fellow officers to build membership through active recruitment and educational activities. My goal as the 2nd VP would be to assist Regional Directors and Chapter Presidents in learning the requirements of their respective positions. I would like to host training sessions during the National Muster, with follow-up during the ensuing year.

Respectfully submitted, Joseph G Padberg



Venice of America Caravan: Wagon Masters Kathy and John Steinbauer led this in-place caravan in famous Ft Lauderdale, Key Largo, the Everglades and surrounding areas.

With over 3000 miles of canals, and rivers, we learned the history and saw the modern wonders of this historic and famous city. We saw the

homes of the rich and famous and their mega yachts when we cruised the New River to the Intracoastal on the Carrie B Venice of America paddle wheeler.



We also visited Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum where Squadron 19 was launched and lost over the Bermuda Triangle. President H.W. Bush received pilot training during WW II at the base and a room with memorabilia is dedicated to him.



For adventure, We also took an airboat ride in the Everglades seeing alligators, and

other wildlife. We went to Key Largo and John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park for The Coral Reef Glass Bottom Boat adventure. We drove down to Everglades National Park to tour the only remaining cold war Nike 9 missile base, a National Historic Site.



We took a trip through time at the beautiful historic Bonnet House Museum and gardens. We were magically transported to the beginning of the 20th Century and the days of gracious living when Florida was one of the nation's last frontier outposts. We dined at restaurants in Fort Lauderdale on the New River, Key Largo and enjoyed seafood and other local favorites. The best part was seeing old friends and making new ones during this fun and educational caravan. For additional information and photos of this amazing caravan go to the

[SMART Venice of America Facebook Group.](#)



Recruiting and Retention

We recently returned from a quick trip to central Maine to witness a wedding of a close friend's daughter. On our way home we stopped at my brother-in-law's house for a quick 2 day recovery. With 4 boys of his own, all have growing families, so his house is filled with grandkids no matter when you visit.

As I watched them play, I saw the look of happy surprise on their faces when a toy operated the way it was supposed to. I thought the feeling was the same when we actually recruit a new member. Part of that surprise I suspect is that we found someone who is both a veteran AND has an RV (each category being a minority group in itself).

If we break down where our likely candidates could be hiding, we should be aware of touch points we share with them. Those of us who have access to military campgrounds and FamCamps are in an ideal place to search for potential members.

While others might not be as fortunate to stay at those places, we should look at the next likely place we could find potential members. Each base has some sort of Morale Welfare and Recreation office. Many put out monthly or quarterly newsletters touting upcoming events and include local establishments that support the military family community. Asking if they would include an ad from SMART costs nothing, and could conceivably introduce a wider audience to our organization. Younger generations have excellent tech skills, so just a few words about SMART AND the QR code is likely all you need.

Extending out to a wider audience are service member organizations. Many of us belong to at least one (and likely more), and often support activities that benefit both active duty and veterans. Have a conversation with the Chapter's secretary and see if you can leverage some of their events to allow SMART to advertise participation in our social media threads. Please review the SMART SOP for Recruiting and Retention from time to time: great ideas often happen at the least expected times, then feel free to share them with us!

Finally: Pictures! Pictures! Pictures! SMART has several social media sites. We are also in the middle of several Caravans in motion. Please send your pictures to the SMART Facebook site. We can copy and paste those on our other sites.

I look forward to seeing you all in Texas at Nationals 2025!

Cheers!

B2 (Brian Bolger)



TAPS



Past President Jeff Stephens
#9112

spouse of Nancy Stephens
#12378, Tampa, FL

Livinia Espinosa
#15925

spouse of Larry Espinosa
#15801, Pueblo, CO

*Rest in Peace Dear Friends, Our thoughts and Prayers
are with their Families*



We have plenty of free SMART TRAVELERS, Pamphlets & Applications for you to use in your recruiting. Call HQ to have yours mailed to you today!

MILITARY-TO-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

Crumb Catcher: mouth

Five-Sided Puzzle Palace: The Pentagon

Flight Suit Insert: pilot

Football Bat: an odd way of doing something

Fruit Salad: ribbons and medals worn on a uniform

Galloping Dandruff: lice

Geardo: a soldier who obsesses about gear

Go-Fasters: sneakers

Ink stick: pen

Jesus Sippers: military issued shower footwear

Left-Handed Monkey Wrench: a nonexistent item
recruits are tricked into looking for

Oxygen Thief: someone who talks too much

Soup Sandwich: a situation that has gone terribly wrong

Voluntold: forcibly volunteered for an assignment



SMART Merchandise

Thermal Wine Mugs w/SMART logo \$12

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

SMART T SHIRTS \$20.

Navy Blue SMART Men's Cap \$12

Car Tags \$5

NEW "ARE You a VETERAN" Stickers \$2

New Canvas Bags are back \$15.00

40th Anniversary Caps \$5.00

40th Anniversary Coffee Mugs \$3.00 ea

SMART Cookbooks \$5.00

Order online at SmartRVing.org



Unlock
BLUEWATER **EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS**
ON YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE WITH BLUE WATER!

MILITARY DISCOUNTS
Active and retired military save **10-20%** at over 55 Blue Water campgrounds.
Use promo code **25SMART** to book your next adventure today!

Plan Unforgettable Group Events

- ✓ 20% group discounts
- ✓ Dedicated group coordinator
- ✓ Waived site lock fees
- ✓ Conveniently grouped RV sites & rentals

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

Seasonal Sites for 2025
Enjoy hassle-free RV fun all season long at one of our amazing campgrounds.
Contact Lisa Mannon: lmannon@bwdc.com or call (443) 664-3375 to reserve your spot today!

Attention all Chapters, please check out the campground page on our website for specials at any Blue Water Property's

DBA: SUN OUTDOORS

Groups Get a 20% discount , contact Lisa Mannon

443-664-3375

for a 20% discount on your Group Musters!

Members also get 10% - 20% off using code 25SMART

See campground page for more details...

CHAPTER AND REGION NEWS



AT-LARGE REGION Jackie Weis Region Director
NOMADS, SMART FRVA , STAR, WIMS



NOMADS, stand up and be counted in the list of volunteers for the upcoming National in Mineola, TX. Many hands can make light work and it is such for hosting this event. Volunteers will gain additional atta-boys for their involvement with supporting the National. And while you are at it, think about your plans for August of 2026 and join us in Elkhart, Indiana for the 26 Nationals.

When you complete your travel plans be sure to register on the SMART web for the Pre-National and Post-National Nomads musters. Keep traveling safely and looking forward to seeing y'all, down the road.

Joe Padberg



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.



EASTERN REGION: Lonnie Alley Region Director,
William Hastings Assistant Director
New Jersey, Delaware, Maine, DC, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Panhandle of Florida New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania



I would like to extend a hearty welcome to all new members in the **Eastern Region** and sad farewell to those who have left. I encourage all members who are not in a chapter to join one. You will find the comradery and friendship rewarding. Sign up for the chapter of your choice on the website.

The location for the 2026 Regional Muster is the Coastal Georgia RV Resort in Brunswick, GA, at I-95 exit 29. The dates are 15 to 19 April 2026. Earliest arrival on the 13, departure on the 20th (NOTE: original date changed.) Watch the Eastern Region web page for updates. Register on the website for the muster and with the campground for a campsite. Registration is not complete until payment is received IAW instructions on the registration page.

With summer here, travel will be picking up and many will be on the road for longer periods. Please travel safely and I hope to see you at a muster.

Lonnie Alley, Eastern Region Director



The Sunshine Chapter just finished a wonderful muster at Manatee Hammock RV Park in Titusville, FL. It was a NO HOST muster that really turned out to be a great experience. We had individual members that volunteered to provide most of the meals. It is an interesting thought to possibly occasionally replace the forever-hard-to-get—someone-to-host-a-muster to a No Host format with individuals volunteering to do meals or pot lucks. It is certainly worthy of thought for sure.

Our muster in June included a presentation to our club about the Vietnam Airlift at the end of the war. It was presented by a C141 pilot who participated in the operation- Very Enlightening. We also spent one day going to Lone Cabbage Fish Camp on the St Johns River and took an Airboat Ride followed by an Outstanding lunch. Come join us on our next muster at Red Oak RV Park in Bushnell, Florida in October. **Steve Colt Chapter President**



TRI –STATE TRAVELERS: Welcome to summer! We had a good muster in March with the usual great meals, comradery and games. The highlight was the corned beef dinner (with all the extras) for St Patrick's Day. We learned a new game – Nickles. It's lots of enjoyment and a little tricky at first, but we all had a fun time playing. Our next muster is in July (21-25) at Utts Campground in Fancy Gap VA (this is off I-77 just north of the NC border). It should be cooler up there in the foothills of the Appalachians. We're hoping old and new friends and members enjoy the mountain air and the beginning of summer, since it's already HOT.

The National Muster in Mineola TX is September 15-19, leaving on the morning of the 20th. It's a great time to catch up with friends we see only once a year. Explore the website for detailed information. Any member or prospective member is welcome to join. Can't wait to meet new campers and old friends.

Planning for the 2026 East Regional Muster is well on its way, with lots of great things to do and see. A murder mystery, with "the 50s" for the theme, is planned by the FL Buccaneers. Registration is open. Please consider joining us at the Coastal Georgia RV Resort (just east of I-95) in Brunswick GA on 15-19 April 2026.

Gail Alley, Newsletter Editor



SMART is a Not-for-Profit 501(c)(19) Veterans' Organization, and gifts are tax deductible. Consider a lifetime gift for a tax deduction. Donate the RMD from your annuity to SMART and you won't have to pay any tax on it. 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 estate.

Donations to SMART are always Appreciated!



EAST REGION MUSTER 2026

Rockin' the 50's

Join us for the 2026 East Region Muster at Coastal GA RV Resort in beautiful Brunswick, Georgia.

April 15th – 20th, 2026

Travel back to the 50's for the entire week. Pull out those saddle oxfords, poodle skirts, and don't forget those bobby socks for our Sock Hop. In fact, YOU CAN DRESS 1950's ALL WEEK if you like. There will be a costume contest at the sock hop.

Come early and enjoy our pre-muster themed activities.

Scan for more information:



East Region



Muster Newsletter



*Murder Mystery
Preview Video*

See the next page for some of our activities.

Just some of our planned activities

Click [here](#) for our newsletter and information about early arrival activities.

Click [here](#) for the East Region website to register.

FEATURED ENTERTAINMENT

**BRAXTON
SYKES**

*TRIBUTE ARTIST
AS
ELVIS*



SOCK HOP & DANCE MARATHON



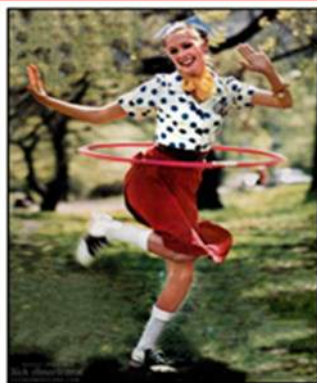
Join us for this costumed event !
(Costumes are not required)
Break out those bobby socks and
prepare to bust a move.
Be There or Be Square

COMPETITIVE GAMES



- Golf Tournament
- Pool Tournament
- Bean Bag Baseball
- Hand and Foot

There will be classes to learn
Hand and Foot and other games



**Hula Hoop
101**



Bike Rodeo

**CHECK OUR SCHEDULE
FOR INFORMATIVE
CLASSES AND SEMINARS**



**Radio Show
Music Trivia**



Greetings from the South Florida Gold Coasters! Chapter membership is shrinking, campgrounds are getting harder to procure during peak muster season, and it's getting tougher to fill officer vacancies. These are the main issues that face the South Florida Gold Coasters, and probably many other Chapters. But there is good news! It's called Joint Musters. It's not perfect and it doesn't solve all the issues, but it's a start. It's also the best alternative to merging Chapters, which I will also touch on in this article.

First, a little background. Back in January 2023 the late (and deeply missed) Jeff Stephens drafted the groundwork for conducting Joint Musters. At that time, the discussion revolved around the Florida Buccaneers and the Florida Roadrunners. Due to greatly reduced attendance at musters and increased difficulty obtaining campgrounds during prime winter months in Florida, conducting Joint Musters would be a viable solution. It would increase attendance and reduce the number of times per year the two Chapters needed to compete to secure campgrounds (from 8 times to 4 times per year). This solution was also more palatable to members of both Chapters than merging Chapters.

Joint Musters would reduce the load on each chapter to meet the requirements, each chapter maintains its unique identity, and larger participation creates more enthusiasm which fosters a healthier club. Unfortunately, scheduling issues prevented the Florida Buccaneers and the Florida Roadrunners Joint Muster from happening and this past December the Florida Roadrunners merged with the Florida Sunshine Chapter.

Over the past couple of years, the South Florida Gold Coasters and the Florida Buccaneers have tossed around the idea of Joint Musters and even merging Chapters, neither of which gained any traction with the membership. So using Jeff's framework, the Gold Coasters and the Buccaneers made a command decision and decided to conduct all of our musters as "Buccaneers/Gold Coasters Joint Musters". The process is simple:

- One Chapter will host two of the musters and the other Chapter will host the other two.
- All procedures, costs, and host functions would be the responsibility of the host chapter.
- At each Joint Muster both Chapters will conduct their own business meeting. From a financial standpoint, the only change is that the annual income from the 50/50 Raffles is cut in half since only the hosting Chapter receives the proceeds, as well as the muster fees to host the muster. Chapter dues remain separate and there is no impact on the Chapter members or Chapter policies of either Chapter.

Our first official Joint Muster is coming up at the end of June 2025. The alternative to Joint Musters is merging Chapters. Many members think merging Chapters means a loss of identity for the Chapter being absorbed by the succeeding Chapter. While that may be true, SOP-09 does require that the succeeding Chapter integrate all archival records from the dissolving chapter to preserve their history. Merging Chapters does offer more benefits, however. In addition to the benefits provided by the Joint Muster, you may also be able to fill some vacant officer positions, or at least now have a larger pool of members that may be willing to fill those vacancies. Aside from the obvious benefit of increasing Chapter membership, the succeeding Chapter also receives all funds from the dissolving Chapter, putting it in a more stable financial position to support the Headquarters and local donations to spread goodwill in our communities.

It's definitely a more finite decision compared to conducting Joint Musters but may be something worth considering under certain circumstances. The South Florida Gold Coasters and the Florida Buccaneers chose Joint Musters over merging Chapters and will now be joined at the hip, like battle buddies, for all of our musters. We consider Joint Musters an acceptable path forward in these times of dwindling resources and credit Jeff Stephens for providing the framework. Let me know your thoughts about Joint Musters and Merging Chapters.

Steve Bourque President, South Florida Gold Coasters steve.bourque@hotmail.com



CENTRAL REGION: Nita Taylor Region Director,

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



We started 2025 with a no-host muster at Hollywood Casino, Biloxi, MS. Mother Nature did her best to ruin our fun but we endured anyway! We braved the unusual winds and stormy weather and gathered for home cooked meals, drinks and camaraderie. Our Spring muster in April was at Riverview RV Park in Vidalia, LA. Here, we met up with another SMART RV group and enjoyed home-cooked Jambalaya and other fresh cooked delights. Tours, games, cards, and happy hour were an everyday occurrence. Fifteen states from the North and South-Central Regions merged into one Central Region and held its Central Region Muster in Carthage, MO, during the month of May. The Magnolias held their summer luncheons in June, July and August at Sedra's Bistro, Slidell, because it was simply too hot to camp. The SMART National Muster will be held in Mineola, TX, from September 15-19. The Magnolias finish out the year with their Halloween Muster in October at Poches in Breaux Bridge, LA, and their Christmas Muster in December at Sun Roamers in Picayune, MS. We welcome visitors so please check the website and attend our musters if you're in the area. We relax, play cards, games, go touring and eat delicious meals. We are family and love to have fun. Guaranteed!

Bob Comeaux Chapter President MS Magnolias





Florida Buccaneers

Are you coming to Florida this winter?

The **Florida Buccaneers** and **Florida Gold Coasters** invite you to our 2025 Veterans Day joint muster in beautiful Vero Beach, Florida

We will be working with Indian River **Habitat for Humanity**, Vero Beach, FL. We worked with them in 2021 and everyone enjoyed it.

Arrival: 10th November Departure: 14th November, 2025

Campground: Encore Sunshine Travel RV Resort, 9455 108th Ave, Vero Beach, FL.



The rally rate is \$69/night available for a total of seven days – so, two days before and one day after, or, one day before and two days after.

We are planning a pre-muster and will be posting information to our website as soon as it becomes available. Register online at the Bucs website – space is limited. **We will make your campground reservation**, no need to contact the campground until you arrive. You pay for your campground when you arrive. It is very important that you keep us informed of any changes you make to your travel schedule.

On Veterans Day we will attend a local parade. We'll volunteer with Habitat for Humanity for two days – 12-13 November. We won't know exactly what project we will

be assisting with but anticipate there will be two types of volunteer opportunities: 1) some type of construction - for those interested, 2) opportunities for indoor work in their beautiful Restore. In 2021, we started with a bare, concrete slab and piles of 2x4 lumber. We worked from 0730 to 1200 hrs – half days – for two days working side-by-side with the future homeowner, and the very patient Habitat construction supervisors. When we finished, all four walls were up and covered – quite an accomplishment! **Don't miss this opportunity! For more information and to register please visit the Buccaneer website: <https://smartrving.org/bucs/> or scan here:**

Safe Travels, Joe Faubion

Vice President, Florida Buccaneers Chapter





**MIDWEST REGION: PP Richard Palmer Region Director,
Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska,
Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas**



The SMART Texans gathered to celebrate their 35 th Anniversary on May 15-18 th at the American RV Park in Corsicana, TX. Opening night started with their typical attitude adjustment followed by a Spaghetti dinner, salad, garlic bread, and pineapple upside down cake for dessert. Friday morning kicked off the day with a hearty breakfast of sausage and bacon breakfast casseroles and fresh fruit. After breakfast, members carpoled to Pioneer Village, an historic representation of log buildings that made up towns in Texas at the turn of the century. The Lefty Frizzell Museum, dedicated to the 1950's singer who was one of the most successful and influential country artists, also sits on the property of Pioneer Village. For lunch the group traveled downtown to Across the Street Diner and Soda Fountain, one of the oldest operating soda fountains in Texas. After lunch, we visited the Planetarium at Navarro College to watch some phenomenal photos of our solar system and a short film about the Milky Way. Our evening dinner featured pulled pork and pizza catered from Italian Village in Corsicana. The rest of the evening was spent playing games and socializing. Biscuits and Gravy were served for breakfast on Saturday morning followed by the Texans muster meeting. Attendees carpoled to the Brick Street Brewery for lunch. Their special micro brews and food were very good. Everyone traveled back to the RV Park for a much-needed nap after lunch and before the Anniversary dinner of Pot Roast, potatoes, carrots, Waldorf salad and the 35 th Anniversary Cake for dessert. The 50/50 drawing was held after dinner with \$83 going toward the annual donation to the Watkins Logan Veterans Home in Tyler, TX. The evening was full of games, great comradery and goodbyes until next time. **Jan Schnoor, SMART Texans President.**





Hope that everyone is enjoying Summertime! I love seeing your muster photos of all the fun; seems the heat doesn't slow us older people down much. Smart has really great Caravans this year, hosted by experienced leaders who know how to make it a special adventure like no other. Join their Facebook groups to see all the pics and follow along.

The Alamo Chapter is busy preparing for the SMART National Muster in September. Our committees are planning fun activities, informative seminars, a variety of locations to tour, and some delicious meals. We are looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones. If you haven't already registered, it's not too late, so please consider doing so. Read the current issue of the Mineola Messenger for the latest info and get all your questions answered in this very informative newsletter. When you see what's planned, you'll definitely want to be a part of this event.

The Alamo's will gather for a mid-summer luncheon social in July. Many of us prefer the air-conditioned restaurants to the hot road this time of year.

As always, if you find yourself traveling through our neck of the woods, please contact myself or Richard. We'd love to show you our beautiful section of Texas. **Mary Palmer, secretary and newsletter editor**
Alamo SMART Chapter

The ALAMO Chapter hosts 4 - 6 Musters annually, including the Regional and National Musters. Many of our members will be at National in September. Our next ALAMO Muster is in Johnson City, TX, for our annual fish fry muster. We always attend the fish fry picnic in Stonewall, TX, to support their local fire department. The fish is wonderful, and the remainder of the meal is always great. The food is also plentiful; you never leave there hungry.

Our annual Christmas Muster is in Bandera, TX, once again. The RV Park always welcomes us with open arms. The annual Super Bowl Muster is in February each year, obviously during the Super Bowl. Also, our annual elections are held at that Muster. We are always looking for new people to volunteer.

If you are in the area during our Musters, please come by and say hi. We welcome all SMART members, prospective members, and guests to our Musters. All the information for our Musters can be found on the SMART website. **Joe Noonan**



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



The 2025 summer muster of SMART Golden Gate chapter

was another success. Held at the Gold Ranch RV Park in Verdi, NV (just west of Reno) we had 27 Smart-ies in attendance. Attendees enjoyed a tropical themed potluck dinner as well as a "finger food only, no utensils allowed except for serving" potluck, plus several group breakfasts. On the final night we enjoyed a group dinner at a favorite Mexican restaurant. Several



veteran RVers in the park were given applications to join SMART as well. Some hit the casinos, others visited beautiful Lake Tahoe or the nearby Donner Pass State Park. There was much laughter, food, fun and games. We have 15 sites reserved for the June 7-12, 2026 muster. Make plans now to join us in beautiful Verdi!

FAMCAMP Updates June 2025

This is an active list of Famcamps located outside security check points and available to any veteran with a VA ID card as well as Retired Military DOD cards. It's highly recommended that reservations and payment confirmation are completed prior to arrival.

Humarock, MA – Fourth Cliff Seaside Recreation Area is operated by Hanscom AFB and located on the south shore of Massachusetts coastline. Very nice renovated cabins, tent sites, and RV pads with full hookups are available.

Avon Park, FL – An Air Force Outdoor Recreation area that operates only October till April. Primitive boondock camp sites (no hookups) used mostly during Florida Hunting and Fishing Season in the winter months. Stays are limited to 10 days and registration is required online <https://avon.isportsman.net>.

Key West, FL – The Naval Air Station Famcamp has two areas, Sigsby Island and Trumbo Point. Trumbo is in a secured zone adjacent to the Coast Guard Station. Sigsby Island is near the main roadway into Key West with easy access without check points. The exchange, commissary, and gas station are located on Sigsby Island.

Pacific Beach, WA – This Navy Recreation area is directly on the Pacific Ocean. It has RV sites with full hookups and cabins for rent. Beautiful but windy area.

Oxnard, CA – US Coast Station Channel Island is a small 20 site RV Park with only water and electric sites but has a dump station. Used mostly by active duty but sites do open for short stays. Located in a residential area with waterfront across the street. Adjacent to Port Hueneme Navy Support Base which does have checkpoints.

Coronado, CA – Naval Air Station, also known as Fiddlers Cove Marina and RV Famcamp. Home to Top-Gun, expensive but great views and full hookups.

Flagstaff, AZ – Fort Tuthill at Luke AFB Recreation area. All rv sites with hookups. Tent areas and cabins are available too.

El Paso, TX – Fort Bliss Famcamp is adjacent to family housing areas and the BX Mini Mart gas station. Full hookups but sites near the road are noisy. Commissary and post exchange on base.

Great Falls, MT – Malstrom AFB has 2 famcamps, Gateway Campground is near the main gate off base with a laundry room and bathhouse. RV sites have water and power and a central dump station. The Annex Famcamp is on base with full hookups at all sites. Both are convenient to I-15.

Louisville, KY – Ft. Knox, 2 famcamps with Camp Carlson off base. Full hookups and nice campsites and new cabins are available. On base rv park is new and across from the Post Exchange.

Concord, MA – Hanscom AFB Famcamp is near the runway off base and entered from a residential area. Full hookups. Some boondock areas.

Cartersville, GA – Navy Recreation Lake Allatoona. Located off I-75, 30mins north of Atlanta. All sites with water/electric and a central dump station.

Hinesville, GA – Ft Stewart has Holbroke Pond and Recreation Famcamp in a remote area of the base with public access. Across the street from Base Equestrian Center. Full hookups.

Wilmington (Kure Beach), NC – Blakeslee AF Recreation Park is operated by Con't)

Seymour Johnson AFB. Nice cabins and full hookup at all RV sites. Walking distance to the beach.

Access to these locations is subject to change based on security conditions at each facility. Always call ahead and have reservation information handy when you arrive. Don't forget to fill out a review and vote for Fam-camp of the Year. Mike Caldwell #9178

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:
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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