

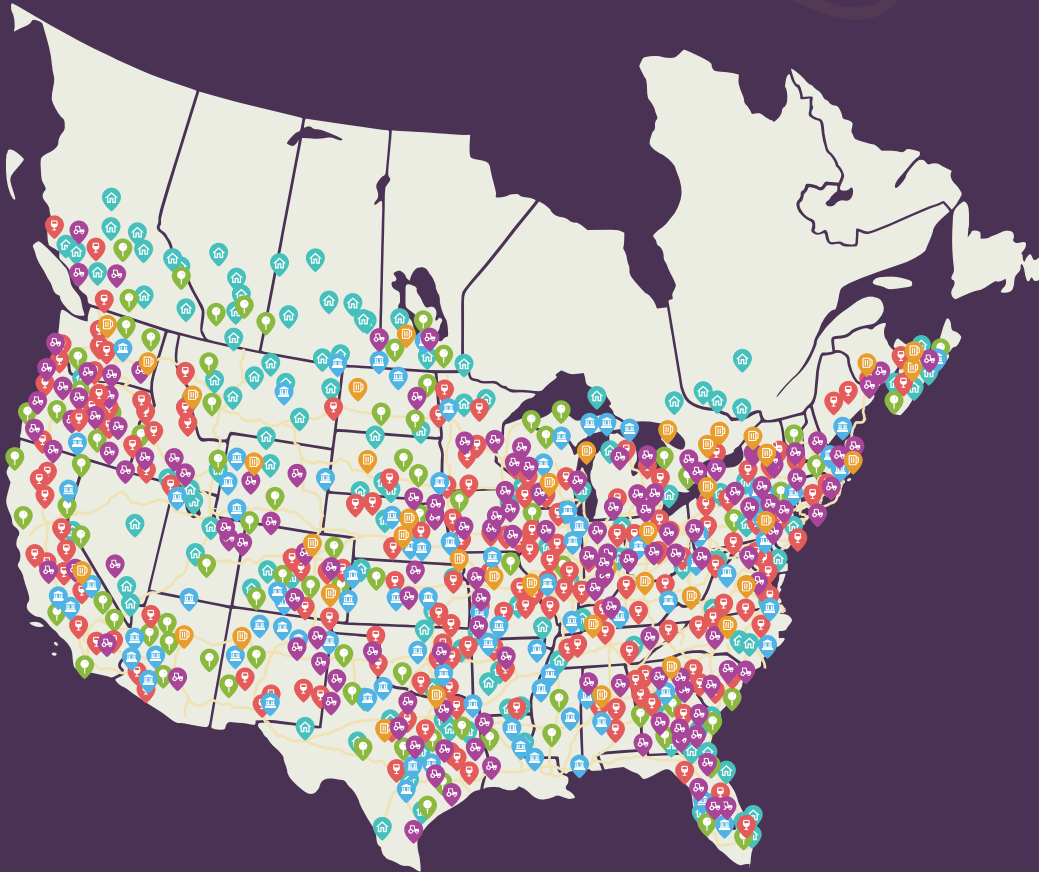
Sharing The RV Lifestyle • Fall 2026

ESCAPEES





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thoughts for the road

On an ordinary September morning in 2001, normalcy at New York's Trade Center vanished in smoke. A plane had crashed into one of the twin skyscrapers!

On the street and in nearby buildings, stunned and horrified people watched police and firefighters rush to their own death. The chaos multiplied when a second plane plunged into the South Tower, erasing any hope that this was a tragic accident. With eyes glued to TV screens, millions saw first one skyscraper and then the other collapse into a pile of twisted steel and debris. Two skyscrapers and more than a thousand people were gone. The world knew, America's invincibility was buried in the rubble.

After three weeks of recovering only a handful of survivors, the rescue crew found a broken and burned pear tree lying like a forgotten soldier in the ashes. Because it was the last living thing, and because it represented hope, they took it to the Arthur Ross nursery in the Bronx.

The following spring, when a dove built its nest on one of the branches where white buds were blossoming, it was a promise that life goes on even after the worst of times.

Over the next eight years while the pear tree recovered, New Yorkers watched the enormous task of clearing the wreckage and then building a new Trade Center and a memorial plaza in its place. They could not see the simultaneous and massive underground construction of a memorial museum.

Now open to the public, that 9/11 Memorial Museum lies beneath twin reflecting ponds with their peaceful waterfalls that are meant to console the living even while they commemorate the dead. Many thousands have already come to relive the tragedy and hear the stories of those who died at the hands of terrorists.

The pear tree has its own story. Originally planted in the 1970s, it was replanted at the Memorial Plaza on December 23, 2010. It survived again through Hurricane Irene. New Yorkers named it The Survivor Tree.

The same ability to survive is found in the history of RVing. When I became a full-time RVer in 1970, we were still fighting the "trailer-trash" image that persisted even though manufacturers were producing quality RVs for travelers. Because we demanded better accommodations, today's RV parks are a far cry from the run-down "trailer parks" of yesteryear.



Just as the pear tree needed help from nursery workers, RVers turned to Escapees for help when the politicians attempted to deprive full-timers of their right to vote. The next battle was for the right to park overnight outside of established campgrounds. RVers will continue to fight any challenges to the lifestyle they love.

As surely as a pear tree is a symbol of hope and a memorial is a sign of America's resilience, the RV lifestyle is a proclamation of endurance. Like that little pear tree that has grown to be over 30-feet tall, Escapees' growth is a testimony to our faith in the future. 🌳

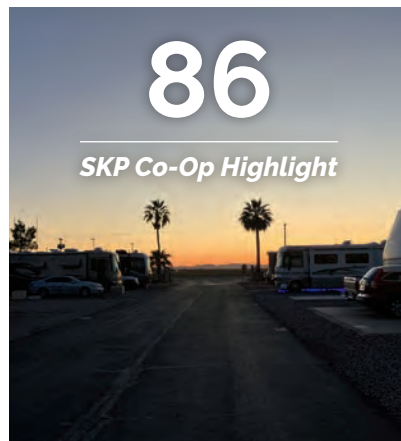
Kay Peterson
Co-founder **ESCAPEES RV Club**®

Kay Peterson's Editorial

Previously published in Escapees magazine

September/October 2014, www.escapees.com/aboutus

club happenings



ESCAPEES RV Club®

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On the Cover

Emily Fagan #99408

Emily shared this unique photo along with her article, "Route 66 Centennial Arizona Style." Her caption reads: "Have you slept in a Wigwam lately?" That question has been posed by the historic Wigwam Motel on Route 66 in Holbrook, Arizona, for generations. It was a delight to see an unusual Class C dressed up like a Volkswagen outside one of the wigwams!

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By Emily Fagan

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By Allison Smith

Mishelle Shooks has been RVing since she was young, but after signing up her small business as a Host in 2020 and starting a job at Harvest Hosts in 2022, her business and RV trips have transformed.

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By Evanne Schmarder

There are meals that belong entirely to where they happen. You cannot order them online, recreate them at home or find them in January. Across the American South and Southwest, fall is when they come alive.

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Park Sierra Powered by Solar

By Betty Prange

On May 29, 2026, Park Sierra, the Escapee's SKP Co-Op Park in Coarsegold, California, celebrated the completion of its major solar field installation.

from the editor

It's the season many of us look forward to each year. Whether it's leaf-peeping along the back roads, strolling through the fall festivities or simply relaxing in the cool breezes, autumn is the time to enjoy adventures in the great outdoors.

As the time of this writing, I am in Memphis, Tennessee, enduring sweltering heat and humidity that I am typically accustomed to at home in Southeast Texas. For us Southerners, Fall is a welcoming reprieve, and we look forward to the cool fronts and grocery store shelves lined with everything pumpkin spice! Visions of frolicking through a pumpkin patch and setting up Halloween decorations dance in our head like children waiting for Christmas morning. At least, it feels that way to me.

For RVers, it's the perfect time for exploration. In this issue, you can find a few great fall destinations that also include a few excellent Harvest Hosts stopovers. If these locations are along your upcoming travel route, consider stopping by to see what these places have to offer.

For those of you who love history and nostalgia, check out Emily Fagan's article about the centennial of the famous Route 66. For the foodies who enjoy the adventure of dining, check out Evanne Schmarder's article, "Fire Road," for meals that, in her words, "belong entirely where they happen."

Of course, we cannot forget the Escapees events that keep us all connected to the community we love. While you're planning your itinerary, check out the "Events Calendar" on page 72 and the events on pages 70-71. Join fellow Escapees members for fun, food and friendship. Our staff is continually in the planning process with the goal of providing you with events that can enhance your RV experience and offer support that we all need out there on the open road.

This issue is just what you need to peruse as you lounge at your campsite, enjoying the comfortable weather autumn brings us. I hope you will find information throughout the pages to help you with your travels. And I encourage you to share your stories and photos with us. I always look forward to hearing from you. 🚐

Tammy Johnson #39557
Editor, Escapees Magazine



Article and cover photo submissions to *Escapees* Magazine, can be sent by e-mail to editor@escapees.com. High-resolution photos can also accompany article submissions.

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can life Q & As



If you CAN dream it, you CAN do it! **Can Life Q & As**

By David "Hutch" Hutchison and Shari Galiardi #161101

Send your RV-related questions via e-mail to shari.hutch@freedominacan.com

Tech Talk

Q. We had solar panels installed on our 5th wheel for our big national park summer road trip a couple of years ago and they worked great. But, when we made a similar trip to enjoy some fall colors last October, the panels didn't keep up with our power usage as well. Is there something wrong with them? How can I find out?

Jenny from Nebraska

A. Great question, Jenny! Traveling in autumn can be both beautiful and challenging for a solar-powered RV. Many things can affect the efficiency of your panels, especially during the autumn. There is likely nothing wrong with your panels, especially if you're still seeing some power coming in. The days are shorter and the sun angle is lower in the sky, and at the same time you might be running more appliances such as lights, heaters, etc., for longer periods of time. The bottom line is: you're spending more energy than you can produce.

However, you can compensate for this low sun angle in a variety of ways. Here are a few successful strategies that we've seen RVers use during the fall, winter and early spring!

can life Q & As



Angle is Key!

Most RVers install their solar panels in a flat orientation for obvious reasons, wind resistance and height restrictions come to mind. But, tilting the solar panels when parked out in the open during the colder months can increase your panel's power output by nearly 40%! That's certainly not chump change! Here are a couple of options:

- **Tilt Brackets:** Many RVers who intend to set up and stay in a location for a week or longer would benefit from using RV Tilt Mount Brackets for their installation. Options range from automatic to telescoping to just plain manual tilt brackets, providing RV roof-mounted rigid panels with the ideal angle through all seasons. Angled panels also assist with snow-load shedding in case some white stuff falls out of the sky while you are camping.

- **Portable Panels:** In addition to rooftop panels, you may consider adding a portable solar panel to your bag of tricks. These panels range from 100W–400W and come with built-in tilt stands from a variety of reputable brands. We use a 400-W portable panel on a 30-foot extension cord that allows us to get a good solar tilt and pull in more power during those autumn, winter and early spring days when we need it the most. Be sure that your charge controller input specs can handle the additional wattage or simply install a dedicated controller for your portable panel input (some panel options already have the controller included).

Portable panels offer a surprising benefit to summer-time travel as well! We often park our rig under the forest canopy to stay cooler during the daytime (no AC needed). With the panel set up in the best sunshine, we

receive all the energy that we need to run our life and our mobile business.

Another great option to boost your batteries without hauling around a gas generator: DC to DC chargers with MPPT for the win!

With an appropriate DC to DC charger with MPPT input, you can take advantage of not only a solar charge but also an effective engine charge. Since your home rolls, why not charge while driving instead of listening to a noisy generator while camping?

Many travel trailers, motorhomes and vans claim that the house batteries charge while operating the engine, but the small trickle (usually around 5A) isn't enough to do more than keep batteries topped off as you move from one shore power plug to the next. If you intend to live off grid (even for a few days), this option will not be enough to efficiently recharge a discharged battery bank.

A standard DC to DC charger acts as a pump to increase the charging current from your tow vehicle's alternator (via a starting battery connection) to effectively recharge your house battery bank while driving. A dual input DC to DC Charger (with MPPT) takes it one step further as it can accept a charge from either the engine and/or a solar array, eliminating the need for a dedicated solar charge controller. It's a 2-in-1, doing the job of both an MPPT solar charge controller *and* the DC to DC charger. It's an easy and relatively inexpensive addition to your solar-powered system, giving you more versatility and flexibility. MPPT offers nearly a 40% improvement in efficiency over older PWM charge controllers, which offers a lot more bang for your buck! ➔

can life Q & As



Lifestyle Corner

Q. What are your “go-to” weather apps while RVing?

Frank from Pennsylvania

A. Thanks for your timely question, Frank! Having access to the bigger weather picture along your route is crucial to making smart decisions. Like anything in life, it's always great to get several opinions, so we use a combination of three different apps to track the weather and plan our travels around it. With the change of season, stronger, more powerful weather often comes with it. Here are the apps that we always have at our fingertips.

- **MyRadar:** Quickly get an overall at-a-glance of potential weather headed your way. Provides HD radar, as well as NOAA weather alerts, temperatures, forecasts, fires, air quality and a detailed hurricane tracker (if you upgrade to “premium”). This is our go-to app for “big picture weather” while traveling, whether driving down the road, hiking up a trail or paddling on the water.

- **Windy:** While we first started using this app for outdoor fun on the water, we immediately saw its usefulness while driving. Easy to read graphics show you the anticipated wind direction and wind speed over the course of several days. With a high-sided vehicle, strong winds can turn a day of RV travel into a scary experience. If the wind is blowing more than 25 mph, which often means damaging gusts over 40 to 50, we tend to stay parked and get some work done. We have seen too many wind-related accidents, so driving in high winds simply isn't worth it!

“Here are the apps that we always have at our fingertips.”

- **AccuWeather:** Easy to read, simple graphics, detailed weather forecasts, daily sun/moon rise/set information, weather radar and more is available on this helpful app. This is our go-to app for weather when we are staying put, as well as for planning several days out in a back-country location.

Shari Galiardi & David “Hutch” Hutchison

In 2012, Shari and Hutch left behind careers and a home in North Carolina to travel with a vintage camper trailer they lovingly restored and outfitted with solar and named “Hamlet.” What began as a short break from careers and responsibility quickly turned into a love affair with road life. They have parlayed their higher education backgrounds, desire for life-long learning and thirst for adventure travel into writing, photography, video production and public speaking gigs from coast to coast. Known to their friends as simply Shari & Hutch, you can learn about their full-time, solar-powered adventures at freedominacan.com. Or follow them on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube as “Freedom in a Can.”



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Cold Weather Creature Comforts to Extend Your RV Season in Style

By David "Hutch" Hutchison and Shari Galiardi #161101

As summer fades into Autumn, many RVers tuck their rigs in for a long winter nap—possibly missing out on some of the best camping of the year! Chilly nights, no bugs, and autumn colors are perfect for snuggling up around a roaring campfire. We recently added two key gadgets to our RV tool box to make cold-weather camping not only tolerable, but truly enjoyable! And we've saved a ton of money on propane to boot.





AirSkirts • airskirts.com

AirSkirts are ingenious, custom fit, air-filled tubes that insulate the space between the bottom of your rig and the ground, trapping air in between. They help prevent heat loss through your floor, and potential freezing of external pipes under your rig. Made from durable, PVC material similar to inflatable Zodiac boats, they quickly inflate for use, and deflate for storage. Our setup takes less than 20 minutes.

We've tested our AirSkirts in severely cold environments, including northern Michigan during February with temperatures in the teens. AirSkirts have a significant impact on heat retention (50% longer) in our vintage camper (which has very little insulation). This means less propane usage, and not waking up to ice cold floors—although we always keep our down booties handy!



Wanna see AirSkirts in action?
Scan the QR code.

Heated Mattress Pad

A mattress-pad heater is an easy, inexpensive upgrade that eliminates the torture of getting into a frozen bed at night, and reduces the need to run your noisy propane heater all night. Dual-zone controls allow you and your partner to dial in the “ideal” temperature. Choose a quick warm-up with preheat, or all-night warmth with the automatic timer setting.

With an appropriately-sized, off-grid RV solar system, this low-wattage appliance brings big comfort, without draining your off-grid batteries (it uses less than 10% of our 200Ah LiFePO₄ battery bank overnight).

Warning: It definitely makes it harder to get outta bed! 🛏️



camping chair chat

RVers' Sharing Tips, Opinions and Advice from the Road

Submissions sent by e-mail can be directed to editor@escapees.com.

Same Park, Same Fee— Completely Different Power

What a five-month monitoring study reveals about shore power that your surge protector isn't telling you

Two stays at the same large membership campground in southeast Texas. Same park, same nightly fee and same membership card. Site 1 scored 30 out of 100 on a shore power quality assessment—the lowest score in a five-month, 26-park study. Site 2, at the same property, scored 91. The difference between them was which pedestal we plugged into. “Same park. Same fee. One pedestal scored 30. The other scored 91. Our surge protector showed green at both.”

That result is the most striking finding from a continuous power monitoring study we've been running from our coach since January 2026.

The system measures both legs of our 50-amp shore power supply every 60 seconds, tracking something most RVers never see: the voltage differential between the two legs. In a healthy pedestal with a good neutral connection, both legs run close together. When the neutral connection is worn, oxidized, or loosely terminated, the legs drift apart and the air conditioners on the lower leg start working harder than they should.

At site 1, the legs drifted more than eight volts apart under full air conditioning load. That means one leg was running around 112 volts while the other ran near 120. Our compressors on the low leg ran hotter, drew more current and cycled more frequently for 21 days. Nothing tripped.

The surge protector stayed green the entire time. There's no log entry for “bad neutral, elevated compressor temperatures, three weeks.” There's just wear that accumulates silently and shows up as a repair bill years later.

Across 26 stays in eight states: Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Missouri, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois, we found that 76% of pedestals scored green. Most parks deliver acceptable power most of the time. But the 16% that scored red, and the 8% that scored YELLOW, did so invisibly. No alarm. No warning. Just sustained low-grade stress on whatever equipment happened to be on the wrong leg.

A few things every 50-amp owner can act on:

- Before settling in, plug your EPO into the pedestal without the coach connected, energize and check for faults. This catches the worst problems. It won't catch a marginal neutral that only shows itself under load but it's still worth doing.
- Watch your leg voltages under load if your EPO or monitoring device shows them. A sustained difference of more than three to four volts between the two legs is worth noting. More than five volts is worth a conversation with the office.
- Intra-park variability is real. If you have a choice of sites and a way to compare, it's worth checking before a long stay. The electrical quality of two pedestals at the same park can be as different as two parks in different states.

Jeffrey Thomas, P.E.

Jeffrey Thomas is a licensed Professional Engineer (Electrical) and full-time RVer. The full study, methodology, and dataset are published at DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18805474](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18805474).



Opinions contained in “Camping Chair Chat” are not necessarily those of the Escapees RV Club, its officers or the membership in general. This column is for *Escapees* magazine readers to share thoughts, ideas and helpful hints. Escapees RV Club accepts no responsibility for what is expressed here by any person, group or company. If accepted, submissions will be edited for magazine style and formatting. Submissions that are sent by e-mail can be directed to editor@escapees.com.

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CARE: Continuing Kay Peterson's Dream One Volunteer at a Time

by Dave Condit, Executive Director Escapees CARE, Inc.

Staff and Board members L to R: Judy Burchfield, Crystal Saulters, Jessica Andreas, Judy Blain
Back: Lee Moren (Board), Buddy Buie (Board), Dave Condit, Vera McLean (Board), Bea Ellis (Board), Laura Henderson

In 1993, Kay Peterson founded CARE with a simple but powerful vision. As co-founder of the Escapees RV Club, she recognized that while many members enjoyed the freedom of full-time RV travel, there may come a time when some would need a little extra support.

Kay's dream was to create a place where Escapees members could continue living among friends when traveling was no longer practical. She also envisioned a temporary home where members could recover from surgeries, illness or medical procedures before returning to the road. More than 30 years later, Escapees CARE continues to fulfill that mission.

Located in Livingston, Texas, CARE is home to approximately 60 residents. Some have chosen CARE as their permanent community, while others stay temporarily as they recover and regain their strength from medical procedures. Regardless of their length of stay, every resident benefits from the compassionate atmosphere that has become the hallmark of CARE.

What truly makes CARE special is not simply the services we provide, but the people who make those services possible. Who are those people? Our volunteers!

For decades, CARE has depended on volunteers from the Escapees RV Club. Their dedication and willingness to serve, help to provide transportation, wellness checks, meal assistance, activities, office support and countless other services that enrich residents' lives. Quite simply, CARE would not exist without volunteers.

Every day, volunteers transport residents to medical appointments, check in on their well-being, assist with activities and help with small projects around residents' RVs. Yet often, the greatest gift a volunteer can offer is companionship. A friendly visit, a shared story, or a few minutes spent listening can brighten someone's entire day. Those personal connections transform CARE from a facility into a true community.

Today, we are seeking individuals who would like to spend a month volunteering at CARE. A month-long commitment allows volunteers to become a part of the community, build those meaningful relationships and experience the rewards of serving others.

No specialized training or medical experience is required. We simply need people with a positive attitude, a willingness to help and a heart for service. Whether your talents are in administration, transportation, hospitality or simply being a good neighbor, there is a place for you at CARE.

As more people seek supportive environments during recovery or as they transition from full-time travel into



a more permanent living arrangement, the demand for CARE's services continues to grow. Volunteer support is essential to maintaining the quality care and personal attention our residents need.

- **Every ride to a medical appointment matters.**
- **Every wellness check matters.**
- **Every meal served matters.**
- **Every conversation matters.**
- **Every volunteer matters.**

When Kay Peterson founded CARE, she created more than a community—she established a culture of caring that continues to thrive because people choose to invest their time, compassion and energy into helping others.

While CARE has long been supported by Escapees RV Club members, we would also like to extend an invitation to Harvest Hosts members. Many share the same spirit of adventure, community and service that has defined the Escapees culture for decades.

Volunteering at CARE is about more than completing tasks. It is about becoming part of a community built on kindness, friendship and mutual support. Many volunteers arrive expecting to help others but leave feeling they have received just as much in return. The friendships formed here often last long after the volunteer assignment ends.

L to R: Elsie Gilnack, #12009 Shirley Sinclair, Nina Dobyns #17877 and CB Williams #237096 Photo by Glenda Alexander #92538

If you are planning your travels and looking for a meaningful way to give back, we invite you to spend a month with us in Livingston. Volunteers receive an RV site with full hookups and three meals a day while making a lasting difference in the lives of our residents.

Kay Peterson believed that Escapees take care of one another. That belief remains the foundation of CARE today. Together, we can continue her dream and ensure that CARE remains a place where friendship, dignity, and community come together to support those who need it. We would be honored to welcome you to our CARE family. 

Escapees CARE Needs Volunteers and Donations!

Volunteers receive a free site, three meals per day, free WiFi in our center and more. Volunteers give 24/32 hours per week for four weeks, driving residents and taking phone calls. Donations, via www.escapeescare.org/donate or through a bequest in your will, all help support Escapees CARE. For further details, call: **936-327-4256**, e-mail: carefd@escapeescare.org, or visit www.escapeescare.org.

Escapees CARE Inc., 155 Care Center Dr., Livingston, TX 77351

weight and safety

PAVEMENT EDGE DROPOFFS

By Jim Koca #86367



Pavement or shoulder-edge drop-offs are when there is a vertical difference between the roadway and the shoulder. It can also exist between two lanes of travel when the road is being repaved. When this drop-off is significant, it can be a hazard to all vehicles on the road. This is especially true for truck trailer combinations or a motorhome pulling a vehicle.

When the right-hand tires drop off the pavement, a driver's instinct is to immediately get the tires back onto the pavement. The driver may overcompensate by turning the steering wheel sharply which may cause a loss of control. The vehicle could turn into the opposing traffic lane, or it could overturn.

If you encounter this problem, do not panic. You need to continue looking down the road for other obstacles that you might come upon, such as a vehicle parked on the paved shoulder. You may feel the need to slam on

the brakes, but this is a bad idea. Ease off the gas to slow down and maintain control.

At this time, you can check for traffic behind you and when it is safe to do so you can ease back upon the lane of travel. Now it is time to accelerate and enjoy the rest of your trip. 🚚



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Weighing is also available at Escapade, Boot Camps and Homebound Bushnell RV Park, Bushnell, Florida. To make a reservation in Bushnell, e-mail Smartweigh3@escapees.com.

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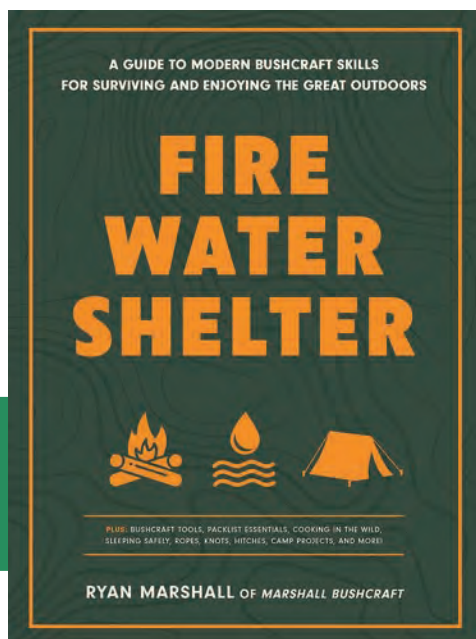
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from the bookshelf

Books for RVers

By Marcella Gauthier #12371

"Both of these books are designed especially for outdoor adventurers, but are also of interest to RVers."



Fire, Water, Shelter

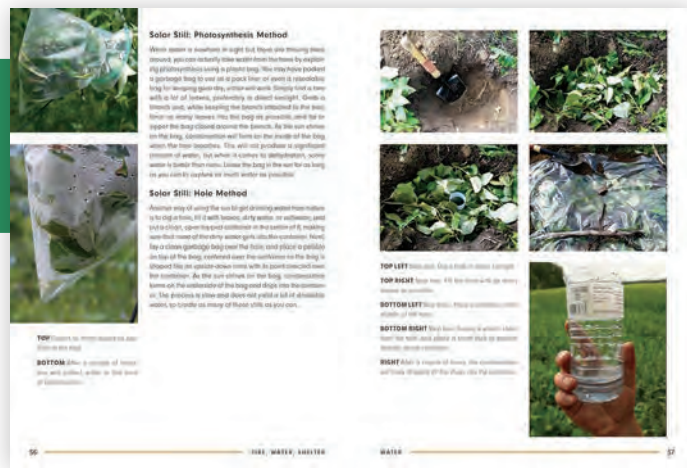
**A Guide to Modern Bushcraft Skills for
Surviving and Enjoying the Great Outdoors**

Ryan Marshall • Cool Spring Press 2026
ISBN: 9781577155898 • Paperback: \$22.91

This book was written by Ryan Marshall of Canada's Wild TV network. The colorful illustrations are absolutely beautiful. You may not be trekking into the back country when you find yourself experiencing a sudden emergency situation, but this book can still be helpful. From signaling for help to how to stay warm and safe by building a shelter, there is an amazing amount of information in this book.

Although we don't expect to suddenly need survival skills, it might be prudent to read this book containing tips such as how to build and maintain a fire even in the rain. Using many natural fire-starting materials with such diverse uses including steel wool are included and

illustrated. Collecting native materials such as edible wild food, fresh potable water or treating an injury with what you find. While the book covers modern survival devices, there is valuable information employing simple home-grown tools. Some of the supplies that Ryan suggests for packing are also very useful in an RV's junk drawer. I found this book to be informative and fun to read. It is available on Amazon with a large online sample.



The Outfitters Camp Cookbook

An Expert's Guide to Cooking in the Great Outdoors

Mia Sheppard • Harvard Common Press 2026 ISBN:
9798317901332 • Hardcover: \$28 • Kindle: \$26.60

Mia Sheppard is an award-winning guide, wilderness outfitter and instructor. She has created this 200-page book outlining what to carry on an expedition, preparations that can be made at home before setting out and how to set up and prepare meals in the outdoors. She also includes 60 incredible recipes especially developed for outdoor cooking in a Dutch oven whether you are camping at a remote location or just cooking in your backyard fire pit. There is a comprehensive description

from the bookshelf

Wild Mushroom and Capocollo Pesto Pinwheels

I love making pesto, because most store-bought brands are cut with seed oils, such as sunflower. Fresh pesto is made with olive oil, and the flavor is rich and peppery if you use an extra-virgin olive oil. I use six ingredients, that's all you need. Pesto can be made ahead of time and refrigerated for about 2 weeks, or you can freeze it for 6 months. These pesto pinwheels are a simple and delicious appetizer to show off to friends. For a vegan option, remove the capocollo and replace the Gruyère cheese with nondairy cheese.

12-INCH (30 CM) DUTCH OVEN

Heat 25 briquettes (8 under, 16 on lid)
Cooking time 10 to 15 minutes
Feeds 10

1 1/2 5-ounce (525 g) box puff pastry (2 sheets), thawed
6 to 7 ounces (180 to 210 g) pesto, homemade (recipe follows) or store-bought, divided
4 ounces (120 g) packaged capocollo, divided
1 cup (70 g) diced wild chanterelle or cremini mushrooms, divided
1/4 cup (60 g) shredded Gruyère cheese, divided
1 cup (30 g) chopped spinach, divided

Start the briquettes.

Line the Dutch with nonstick aluminum foil.

Unfold one puff pastry sheet onto parchment paper. With a spatula, spread half the pesto over the pastry, leaving a 1/4-inch (6 mm) plain along one long end. In this order, top the pesto with half the capocollo, half the mushrooms, half the cheese, and half the spinach.

CONTINUED

90 The Outfitter's Camp Cookbook



of the history of the Dutch oven and even includes little known fact of notables such as Paul Revere who had a part in the Dutch oven development. That part of the book is fascinating to anyone who loves cooking history or loves Dutch ovens.

Alongside awe-inspiring photography, explore recipes for: Hearty breakfasts like Wilderness River Outfitter Frittata and Upside-Down Caramelized Apple-Cinnamon Pancake. Snackable apps, including Hot Spinach, Artichoke, Parmesan Dip and Zucchini Chanterelle Tart. Elegant dinners such as Lemon-Dill Poached Salmon with Green Beans and Leeks, and Baked Chicken with Orzo, Spinach and Mushrooms. Tasty sides like Creamy Mac and Cheese, Salmon River Wild Rice and South Fork



Cornbread. Delectable desserts, including Strawberry Rhubarb Cobbler, Orange-Cardamom Olive Oil Cake and S'mores Fondue

Part instructional manual, part visual celebration, this cookbook invites you to slow down, savor the outdoors and rediscover the pleasure of cooking over a flame or using charcoal briquettes. It offers both the know-how and the inspiration to create memorable meals under the open sky. 🚚

You may have noticed that I often mention that a book I am reviewing has sample pages available for viewing on Amazon. I highly recommend viewing these free pre-views as it will show you the depth and breadth of the content and the author's writing style. In *The Outfitters Camp Cookbook* preview, you may be so entranced you immediately order your own copy of the complete book.

Falling for the Open Road

Four Harvest Hosts Gems Worth a Detour This Autumn

There's a reason so many Escapees plan their fall routes around foliage maps and farm stands. As days shorten and color peaks, four Harvest Hosts locations turn a travel day into the best part of the trip — from a California pumpkin patch to a Vermont sugarbush.

Wherever your wheels carry you this autumn, these four Harvest Hosts locations are ready to welcome you with pumpkins, cider, maple syrup and orchard pie. Harvest Hosts membership is required to stay at these locations. Visit harvesthosts.com to learn more.

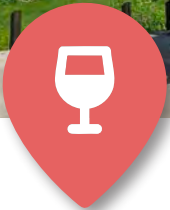


Hunter Farms Pumpkin Patch | Atwater, California

This family-run property in California's Central Valley turns a fall stopover into a full day out. The pumpkin patch alone stocks more than 75 varieties, framed by working almond orchards and, of all things, a homegrown baseball diamond that gives the place a distinct hometown feel. Guests consistently mention the ample, well-organized parking and helpful staff who direct rigs in on arrival, making for an easy check-in even during the busiest weekends of the season.

The attractions are included with entry and geared toward keeping every age entertained for hours. Expect a hayride, a zip line, a large play structure, a bounce pillow, a towering slide, a corn maze, a mini train and gem mining for an extra fee, plus a newer dinosaur-themed section with animated features that's become a hit with younger visitors. There's on-site dining and photo opportunities abound, so there's rarely a reason to leave before sundown.

Reviewers describe the property as clean, quiet, and safe for overnight guests, with courteous staff and beautiful sunset views that cap off a busy day. It's close enough to local restaurants and shopping to be convenient, yet peaceful enough to feel like a real retreat, whether you're pulling in during peak pumpkin season or just passing through for a quiet night under clear valley skies.



Laurel Spring Cidery | Spring Mills, Pennsylvania

Set within a beautifully restored historic property in the rolling countryside of central Pennsylvania, this cidery is the kind of place that invites you to slow down the moment you park. An orchard of heritage apple varieties spreads across the grounds, with sweeping farmland views that turn especially striking once autumn color takes hold. Guests often spend the evening simply walking around the property, watching the stars come out, and taking in a landscape that feels like a world away from the highway.

The cidery itself specializes in distinctive apple cider wines made using heritage techniques and native flavors, a departure from the hard ciders most travelers expect. The tasting room is warm and welcoming, offering a full lineup alongside artisanal cheeses and cured meats, and private tastings are available for guests who want a bit more flexibility with their schedule. Staff are known for sharing the history behind the cider-making process, turning a simple tasting into a genuine education.

Hospitality is a recurring theme in guest reviews, with hosts frequently praised for going out of their way to make visitors feel comfortable. The property offers level parking near the tasting room with electric hookups, a free water fill station, and clean facilities, striking a nice balance between seclusion and easy access to nearby attractions, an ideal home base for exploring the region while enjoying a genuinely restful overnight.



Helene's Hilltop Orchard | Merrill, Wisconsin

This multi-generational Wisconsin property has agricultural roots going back further than most: founded as a dairy farm in 1919 and transformed into an apple orchard in 1979, it reflects generations of care for the land. Guests consistently praise the beautifully maintained grounds and peaceful walking paths that wind through the orchard, along with the welcoming atmosphere the current owners have carried forward.

The bakery and shop are the heart of the visit. Fresh-baked pies, apple dumplings, turnovers, cider donuts, breads and cookies come out of the kitchen daily, often still warm, and the historic Barn Cellar stocks a curated selection of local craft wines, beers, and spirits alongside preserved and canned goods and prepared meals, plenty to send you off with a full pantry.

The experience shifts with the calendar. Peak season, late August through October, brings the orchard to life with seasonal activities, a farmers' market, and abundant fresh produce, while the quieter months from May through August offer a more tranquil visit—think stargazing, deer sightings and berry picking right outside the camper door. Either way, guests note the spacious parking that easily accommodates large rigs and hosts who are, by every account, remarkably gracious.



Gagne Maple | Highgate, Vermont

It doesn't get more Vermont than spending a night parked on a hillside overlooking a family-owned, organic maple sugaring operation in the northern part of the state. The level gravel parking spot sits above the property with a quiet, scenic view over the farm, and comes equipped with both 30- and 50-amp power along with water, a comfortable setup for a stay surrounded by sugar maples turning gold and crimson each fall.

What sets this stop apart is the access it offers to real maple production. Hosts generously walk guests through the sugarbush, the network of tubing and lines strung throughout the forest that collects the sap, and the sugarhouse where it's boiled down, a genuinely educational look at a family's generation-long stewardship of the land, not just a roadside attraction.

The on-site store rounds out the visit with an impressive selection of authentic maple products: syrup in every grade, maple candy and sugar, and specialty items like maple-infused popcorn and pancake mix, many priced well below what you'd find elsewhere. On weekends, don't skip the maple creemee, a maple soft-serve guests rave about, and take time for a walk on the peaceful trails through the maple trees and pastures, dog in tow if you've got one. Nearby, two regional rail trails and easy access to Lake Champlain and Jay Peak make this a scenic anchor for a northern Vermont swing.

viewfinder: beautiful balloons

Hot air balloons fill the skies during the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta for nine days every October.
Judy Rinehimer #89390



This was taken near Lake Havasu, Arizona.
Mark Fagan #99408



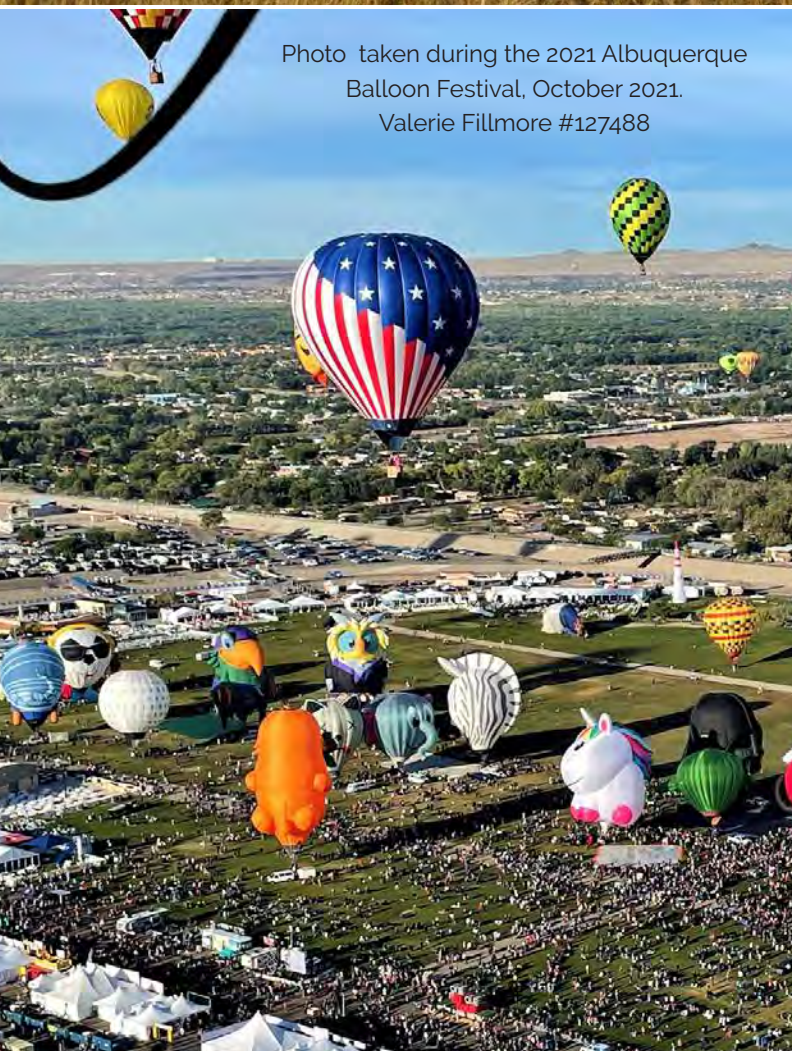
Kenya-Masai Mara.
Cathy Benton #64041



The 50th Albuquerque International
Balloon Fiesta October 2022.
Tina Caparella #152563



Photo taken during the 2021 Albuquerque
Balloon Festival, October 2021.
Valerie Fillmore #127488



Share Your View—A New Theme Every Issue

With each submission, include your name, Escapees membership number, a description of the photo and the name of the photographer, even if you took the photo. Only a few photos will be selected for each issue. Submissions do not qualify for payment. To submit photos for "Viewfinder," send high-resolution, unaltered digital images as e-mail attachments to viewfinder@escapees.com.

Winter 2026 (Due Sept 25, 2026) **City Lights**

Spring 2027 (Due Dec 18, 2026) **Springtime in Bloom**

Summer 2027 (Due March 25, 2027) **Boondocking Spot**

Fall 2027 (Due June 25, 2027) **Beauty of Nature**

Winter 2027 (Due Sept 25, 2027) **Cold Camping**

Spring 2028 (Due Dec 18 2027) **Blast from the Past**

Day's End: Free and Low-Cost Parking Finds

Compiled by Marlene Syverson #84737 and Tom Blount

Download the entire online directory at www.daysenddirectory.com.

The Day's End Directory is a valuable tool to help you save money and find safe overnight parking recommendations from fellow Escapees RVing members.



View from inside the Amboy Crater.

Kentucky

HODGENVILLE: 80'X80'; gravel municipal pkg lot. No facilities. Free. 24-hr limit. I-65 x91, go SE on SR 61 (follow signs to Lincoln Museum), take the traffic circle to E Main St. Pkg area is 300' beyond the circle, on R. Or, I-65 x81, go E to town. N3734.407 W85 44.3591. Level, unshaded. Town is birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. Museum in walking distance of pkg lot.

Mark and Sue Bryer #86611

California

AMBOY: Amboy Crater Natl Natural Landmark (BLM), pkg areas. Modern pit toilets. Tables/shelters. Go one mi W of town on Old US 66 toward Ludlow/Barstow (past the rd that goes S to 29 Palms, but there is also a lg open pkg area at this jct.), TL (S) at entry sign, go 0.5 mi on paved rd. 34.5571 -115.7807. No pkg allowed along rd in to the lot. First pkg area is unmarked but room for several rigs or as a turnaround. At the end of paved rd is a turnaround and is marked off in the ctr with five level, wide RV pkg spots. Interpretive signs (most vandalized), rough hike out to crater. Peaceful area, great valley view. Frequent trains in valley below but sound is minimal. Military bombing range to S has frequent noise, mostly daytime. Verizon: one bar. Interesting/peaceful drive along Old US 66 between Ludlow and Essex.

Gus Bandemer #165493

BAKER: Two large pkg areas, one with trees. ~8 mi N of Baker on SR 127. N35.39 W116.123. Room for ~10 RVs. S-most one littered. Also nearby Graded pull-off west side 4.5 mi north of Baker. Good Vz n35.3386 w116.0827.

Gus B #165493

CAJON JUNCTION: Numerous BD spots. Several isolated sections of old unused rd accessible for pkg, and some picnic and pullout areas. No prohibitive signs. Off I-15 N of I-15/I-215 split, from x124 (Kenwood Ave) to x129 (Cleghorn Rd), Cajon Blvd (Old US 66) follows Cajon Creek and the RR around the hill for 5 mi on W side of I-15, looping back to I-15. Area among grove in narrow canyon OK for several lg rigs (N34 16.008 W117 27.5417). Scenic. Sounds from hwy and RR.

Chas Wilder #88717

LUDLOW: Lg paved pkg lots. I-40 x50 at Historic US 66. Both sides, N side is more level. Favor far corners, away from idling diesels. S side mostly empty but very unlevel. Do not park near the construction equipment as many workers start arriving at 6:00 a.m. Also, several lg pkg lots in the village of Ludlow, S side of I-40.

Gus Bandemer #165493

NEEDLES: To Barstow: Pullouts along I-40 WB, some lg enough for several rigs. Many cross rds with lg corner lots to park. Also, restored sections of old US 66 run parallel to I-40 with many places to park off rd in desert. O/N+ time limit. Any size rig.

Guy Gipson #84383

day's end

YERMO: Peggy Sue's Nifty Fifties Diner. Huge "truck stop size" mostly level pkg areas. Free. O/N +? limit. From I-15 x191, go S then immediate L (E) on Yermo Rd. Diner is on L. Least crowded/quietest on E side of Diner. 34.9025 -116.8825. Regular diner fare plus authentic pizza, ice cream, gift shop. Walls lined with 50's memorabilia. Life-size human figures typical of era. "Dinosaur Park" in rear with dinosaur sculptures, tables and restrooms. I-15 noise. (Harvest Hosts location.)

Mabelle Lernoud #83879

Arizona

ASH FORK: BD (NF). No facilities. Free. 14-day limit. E of town to I-40 x151 (Welch Rd), go N a few hundred yards. N35 13.21 W112 22.621. If going EB, cross under Interstate to get to N side; the overpass is signed 14' above E side lane; W side is visibly lower (on return you may need to stay in E side lane). Otherwise easy access, near interstate but fairly quiet. Hard packed gravel/dirt. Open level area, scattered short juniper trees (park adjacent for partial shade), high desert. Space for 10 to 20 RVs any size. Near a piece of old Rt 66. Good solar/satellite. Superb view. 6200' elev. Good Verizon. Johnson Crater, Johnson Canyon & Railway Tunnel a few mi out on FR 6.

Larry Dill #120007

HOLBROOK: Crystal Forest Museum and Gift Shop (sometimes closed but camping area still accessible). Four level pullthru spaces with covered tables and three pull-thrus with tables, and ~11 pull-thrus with concrete patios (no tables) in rear. Free, even if shop closed. Four-day limit. 19 mi E of Holbrook at jct US 180 and rd going N into Petrified Forest NP, on NE corner. 34.79173 -109.89193. Lg rig-OK. No generators 7p-7a (owner lives on property). Pets must be on leash. Verizon voice OK, data sketchy without booster.

Greg Taylor #52926

New Mexico

ALBUQUERQUE: Huge gravel storage area. No facilities. Free. No signs. I-40 x149, SW quad. Between I-40 and frontage rd, across from Hi Desert RV Park. 35.06233 -106.7914. Often full of gravel but can park around edge. Some traffic noise.

Tom Blount #155120

GALLUP: Red Rock Park (CP, prior SP). Scenic shaded sites. Restrooms/showers (key issued when pay). BD \$10, 30/50-A E/W \$22. D \$5. Reservation system online can reserve a site, only need to check in at office. I-40 x26, go N to frontage rd, TR (E), go 3.5 mi, TL (N) on SR 566, go 0.6 mi, TL on Red Rock Park Dr, then R into CG. Reserve: 505-722-3839. May be closed in winter (was open Apr 13). Dusty, some weeds and ants, no grass. PO in CG. Rodeos June and July, balloon rally Dec. Also BD area, continue 0.2 mi straight on Red Rock Park Dr, on R, 35.54068 -108.61225, and on L. Wifi from CG. Ground covered with goatheads. Damage from severe rains, some pedestals unreachable with sand across rds.

Rick Schafer #81691

TUCUMCARI: Blacktop BD spots, I-40 x332, N side. Behind McDonalds, Pizza Hut and others (st goes behind with direct access to lots). Noisy, trucks run engines all nite. Also many out-of-business motels and gas sta thruout town. A couple Rt 66 RV parks have E/W/S \$15. D at Cactus RV Park \$4. Two good museums.

Jill Iteen #94918

Texas

AMARILLO: Texas Travel Info Ctr. Lg pkg lot for cars/RVs separate from trucks, also can use truck lot. Picnic shelters. Restrooms accessible at night. OK to O/N. Free. I-40 x76. N35.1913 W101.72552. Eight long RV spaces. 500' from Interstate.

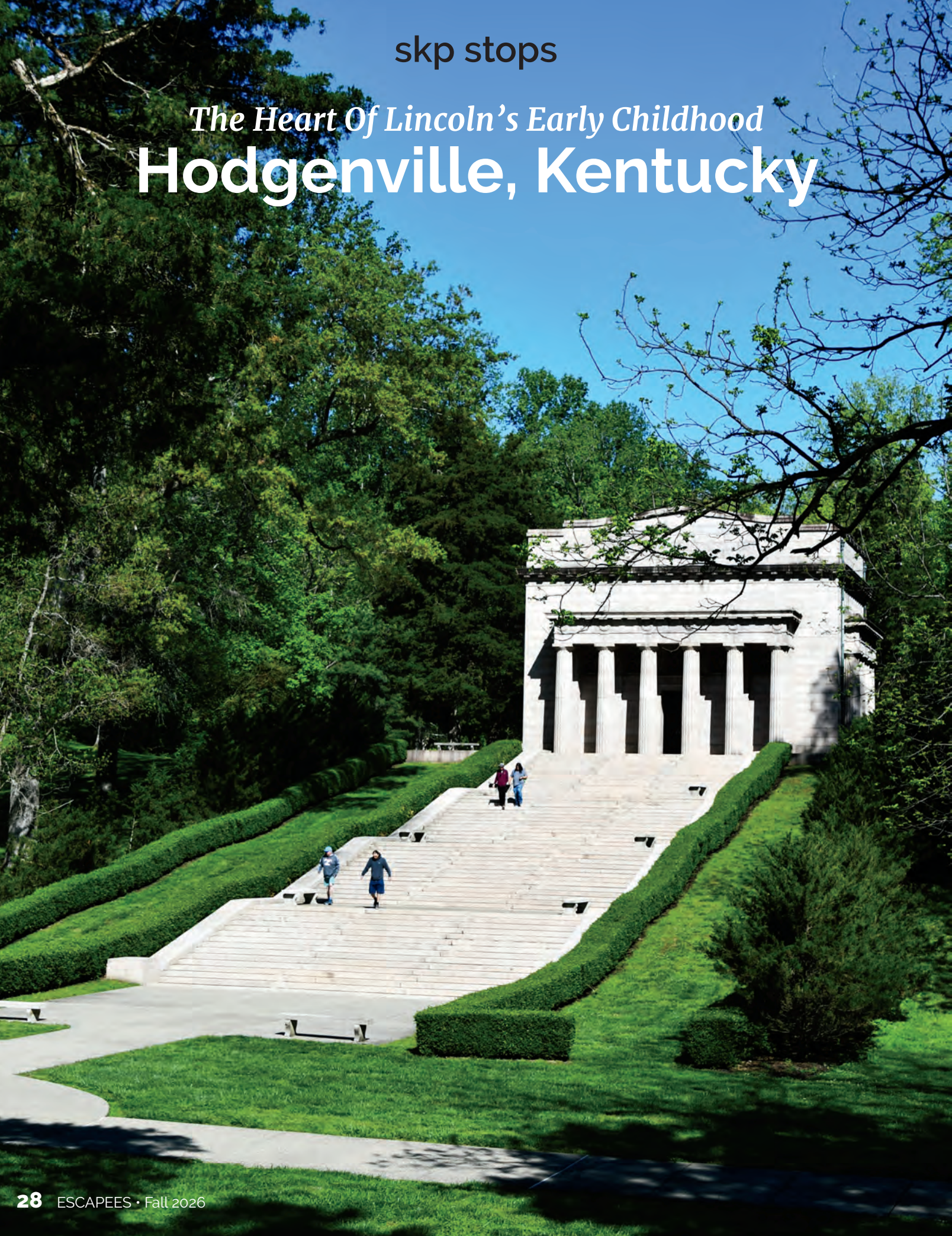
John and Bonnie Archer #113438

GALVESTON: Beach access. Free. No stay limit posted. From Galveston Is, go SW and cross San Luis Pass toll bridge (\$2) onto San Luis Is. Go R (just before Brite Lite store) and then immed R toward San Luis Pass County Park. Do not take L to county park but continue straight 0.25 mi toward where boat ramp used to be (no O/N pkg), TR just before that on beach access rd toward bridge (rather poor condition, loose sand spot, 4WD recommended). Check ahead on how close high tide gets to the dunes before taking lg rig in. Several other beach BD sites between San Luis Pass and Surfside. Mar 1. The Seawall Blvd has public parking, the shore side of the road has periodic spots signed and free public parking. It is OK to stay O/N here. 2. The beach road west past Galveston has numerous Free Beach access. Many can accommodate RV parking on the sandy beach. If you are hesitant to park on the beach sand there is a cement slab next to the water tower 29.133957, -95.052075

Tom Blount #155120

skp stops

The Heart Of Lincoln's Early Childhood
Hodgenville, Kentucky



skip stops



It was a lovely spring day when I drove up to the site where Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809. Located just two miles north of Hodgenville, Kentucky, 200,000 visitors travel to the site each year. Hodgenville, a city of just over 3,000 residents, is home to several additional sites honoring Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park

I started my tour in the Visitor's Center. There is a museum chronicling Lincoln's life and the creation of the memorial.

Informative park rangers explained many aspects of the park, including the fact that the memorial was built between 1909 and 1911.

When the memorial cornerstone was placed, little Hodgenville, then with a population of less than 100, was the center of national attention as the memorial was dedicated before it was finished, and the Lincoln Farm Association continued to collect donations.

President Theodore Roosevelt spoke at the 1909 ceremony that "this rail splitter ... whose rise was by weary and painful labor, lived to lead his people through the burning flames of a struggle from which the nation emerged purified as by fire, born anew to a loftier life."

Once the building was finished, it housed the symbolic birth cabin. The building was dedicated by President William H. Taft on November 9, 1911, before an audience of approximately 3,000.

There are 56 steps leading up to the pillared building—one for each year of Lincoln's life. Inside, along with the cabin, are 16 rosettes on the ceiling representing Lincoln's presidency. It is an impressive memorial fit for Lincoln and his legacy.



Kentucky Boyhood Home at Knob Creek

Next, I was off to Knob Creek, where Lincoln and his family lived from 1811 to 1816. Located seven miles east of Hodgenville, the landscape offers an idea of where he lived between the ages of two and seven. The site is located in a flat valley along Knob Creek, surrounded by agricultural fields and woodlands, with hills rising nearby.

Like the birthplace memorial, the Knob Creek property offers additional information in a small museum inside the visitors center.

"The place Knob Creek, I remember well— but I was not born there... My earliest recollection, however, is of the Knob Creek place." Abraham Lincoln wrote in a letter to Samuel Haycraft in 1860.

The symbolic log cabin near the visitor's center replicates Lincoln's boyhood home and the land still conveys the setting where Lincoln spent his early, formative years.

"The six-foot sculpture sits atop a marble pedestal in front of the Lincoln Museum."

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Statue

In the center of Hodgenville, the famous statue of Lincoln sculpted by Adolph A. Weinman dominates the square. The six-foot sculpture sits atop a marble pedestal in front of the Lincoln Museum.

It was commissioned to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birthday with funds raised by residents of LaRue County in conjunction with Congressional and state support.

Officially dedicated on May 31, 1909, Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln, attended the ceremony, and Lincoln's sister-in-law, Mrs. Ben Hardin Helm, unveiled the statue. Over 10,000 people attended the ceremony.

A second statue, sculpted to commemorate the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, is facing the 1909 Presidential Statue. "He is depicted as a boy, shortly before his eighth birthday, on the family farm, reading from Webster's Elementary Spelling-Book, with his dog Honey, whose broken leg he splinted," says the Lincoln Museum website. It was created by the California firm of Daub-Firmin-Hendrickson.

The book is open to Noah Webster's fable about two dogs. Corn for the family dinner is in the linen satchel, and his stick-fishing pole is leans against a tree trunk.



Lincoln Museum

My last stop is the Lincoln Museum, an impressive salute to Lincoln. A collection of wax figures is set in antique-filled displays. The scenes depict historically accurate portrayals of the events in Lincoln's life, from his formative years in Kentucky to the night of his assassination at Ford's Theatre.

Museum galleries include Civil War memorabilia, a collection of original Lincoln art, a funeral train exhibit and more.

On the second level of the museum are more exhibits, including rare newspaper clippings, campaign posters,

quilts and Lincoln memorabilia. A Lincoln art gallery is filled with paintings, drawings and other artwork related to the Lincoln era.

You can easily see all four memorial sites in one day. For me, on this spring day, I was able to move freely and enjoy every aspect of Lincoln's early life in Kentucky.

It is humbling to be at the same places where this great man grew up.

For more information on the Lincoln sites and other attractions, restaurants and accommodations, check the website: <https://visithodgenville.com/>

Marilyn Jones, Guest Contributor

A Medieval, Renaissance or Viking Faire Experience **TIME TO “HUZZAH!”**



Travels take us to unique places where history, scenery, relaxation and new adventures might be present. But one “off the wall” experience for you might be taking in a Medieval, Renaissance or Viking Faire.

These events are usually planned and set to provide experiencing what life might have been like for everyone, from the poor servant to the wealthy royals. Besides offering patrons the dancing, music, skits, magic, juggling and foods of their eras, the festivals are also a venue to businesses that cater to those wanting to “step back” in time. The craft or product

offered by the vendor might be something that could only be from the particular era in its construction or materials, but perhaps also a souvenir or gift that could “fit” the image of the era, even though enhanced by modern techniques for manufacture. That might include baskets, brooms, hand-made paper, decorative boxes and chests, writing journals, books appropriate to the era, tapestries, shoes, furniture, costumes, soap, hats, candles, pewter, decorative and functional bottles and glass, spices and perfumes, masks, fans, musical instruments, stained glass and jewelry typical of the era.

In the same way, the faire might have “regular” food, but it might also be a place to enjoy foods and beverages that typify the era, especially foods that can be eaten without utensils or only with a spoon, adding a bit more authenticity.



Participants at such faires will “dress the part,” depicting the clothing and accessories of the times, and they often have a guild or group to demonstrate activities, some of which visitors might be able to try. There might be archery, axe throwing, dancing, darts, singing and displays of methods of weaving, woodworking or armor making, blacksmithing, glass blowing and so on.

Shows at such faires might include jousting, horsemanship, archery competitions, acrobatics, juggling, skits, comedy, lore, battles, falconry or events just for children anxious to wear a costume, crown, or receive a special honor.

Audience participation is often sought at faires or, at the very least, patrons might be asked to shout, “Huzzah,” instead of our modern “Yay” or “All right!”

So if you’ve a hankering to don your noble, merchant, peasant, knight, lady, pirate, Viking or royal costume, and try out your best “olde” accent whether it’s English, German, Italian, Norse or French, look for festivals within the areas in which you’ll be traveling. Log on to www.renfestusa.com, www.therenlist.com, www.america-fromtheroad.com (search for festivals), www.norsetradesman.com (search for festivals), www.renfair.com and www.sca.org.

Stephenie Slahor, Guest Contributor

How We Earn our Boondocking Freedom

*By David "Hutch" Hutchison and
Shari Galiardi #161101*

Photos by Shari Galiardi #161101

We started boondocking before we knew what it was. Call it dry camping, dispersed camping, it means parking your RV in a legal place, no campsite and no reservation. It also means no services, toilets, recycling bins, potable water nor electrical outlets.

If you're getting started with boondocking, you might know the wealth of information found in apps like: The Dyrty Pro, iOverlander, Good Sam and others. User reviews provide insider information on road access, level parking space, noise, cell phone signal, nearby trails and activities, and even the safety of the location. It's never been easier to truly get "out there"!

The freedom to explore and enjoy these gorgeous natural locations comes with an incredible, yet simple, responsibilities. We need to tread lightly and advocate for these places, so they remain accessible to us and the next generation of RV enthusiasts. In this article, we provide actionable steps that every RVer can take to minimize their impact while maximizing their enjoyment.

1. Choose Your Spot Wisely

It's not just opening an app and checking out the coolest boondocking areas; selecting where to physically park for a few nights means considering a few more things.

☑ **Stay on the Path:** Soil erosion is exacerbated by the weight of RVs, which compacts soil, reducing its ability to absorb water and support plant life. When RVers wander off of established paths or create new ones, they can destroy wildlife habitats contributing to runoff, soil degradation and long-lasting erosion. Cryptobiotic soils



Beautiful sunset while boondocking just outside of Capitol Reef National Park (UT) on BLM land.

in the American West can take 100 years or more to regenerate from one footprint!

☑ **Always look for established parking areas to avoid damaging untouched landscapes and vegetation.** When these are not available, look for durable surfaces, such as bare rock, gravel or sand that are more resistant to wear, and more porous for ground water saturation. Always use designated trails when hiking or biking and only use motorized vehicles on trails or roads designated accordingly.

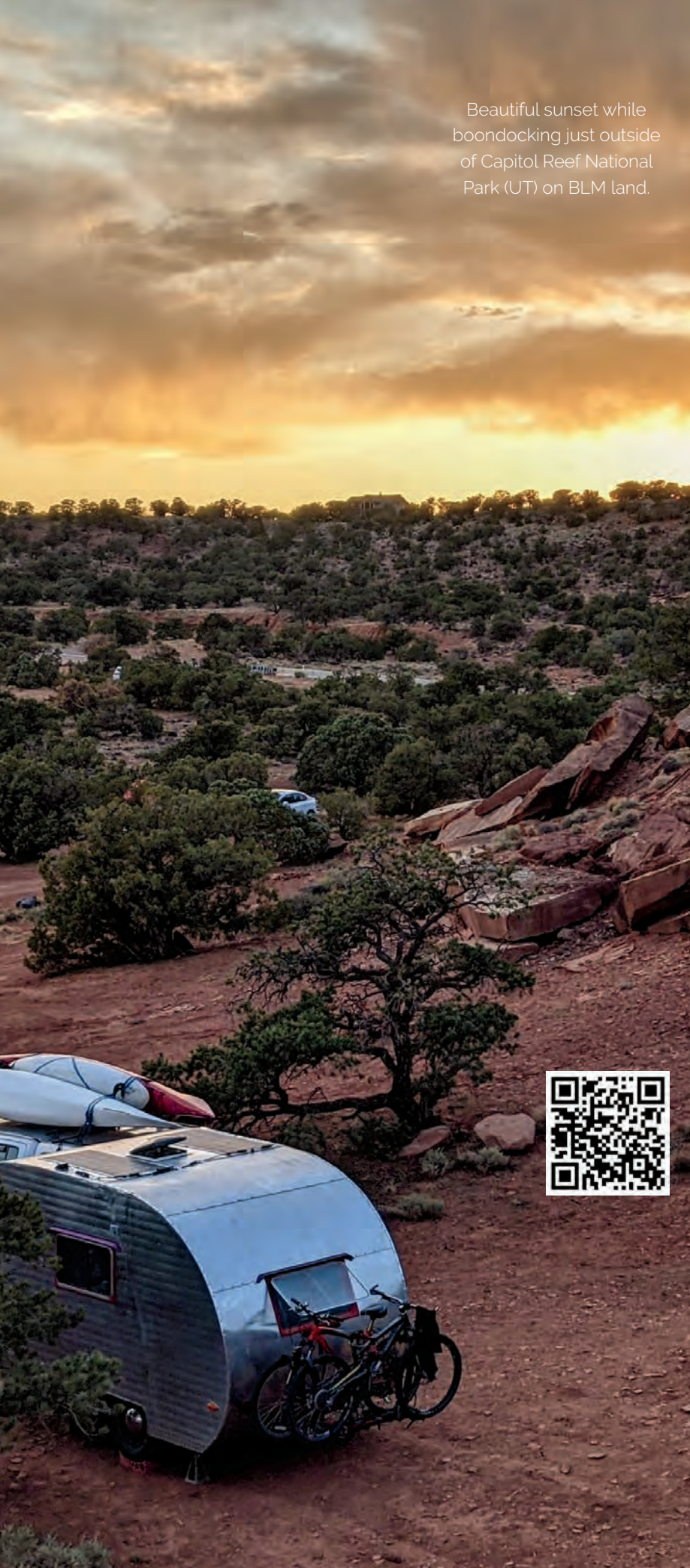
☑ **Be Mindful of Others:** Be considerate of other users by not parking too close to another party especially if you need to run your RV heater, or worse, a gas generator. If space is limited, be sure to introduce yourself to your neighbors.

☑ **Keep One Eye on the Weather:** Know the limitations of your vehicle, and the weather forecast. Many boondocking spots are on unpaved roads, which might be easy to reach in dry conditions, but are completely different in snow or rain. Trying to four-wheel it out of a location tears up roads, creates ruts and increases erosion.

2. Keep the Lights On

RVs provide great comfort and technology, but needing to run a gas generator in a popular boondocking area simply ruins the vibe. No one wants to listen to an engine while camping in a remote area. With so many solar panel options, and high efficiency LiFePO₄ batteries, an effective, quiet, off-grid solar powered system is within reach of every RVer. Learn how to appropriately size a solar-powered system using our solar system sizing worksheet. See QR CODE

☑ **Then, turn lights off...** Using external RV security lights in a boondocking area will impact your neighbors with a different kind of pollution: unwanted light. The night sky is one of our best shared resources to be enjoyed by all. Bright unnatural light also disrupts natural behaviors of nocturnal animals, like the owl hunting down the packrat that's checking out your engine wires, or even turtle hatchlings trying to get to the sea. Use low level, downward casting lights to minimize their impact and still be able to find your rig after an evening walk.





Bandelier National Monument (NM) inspired jack-o'-lanterns with battery operated puck lights for a fun evening glow instead of a campfire.

3. Keep the Home Fires Burning

☑ **Campfire Safety:** With an increase in fire bans across the continent due to climate change and drought, campfires are often in question. Boondocking areas can be littered with campfire rings, some within yards of each other based upon the aesthetic logic of their creators. Others contain half-burned wood, wooden pallets, metal cans and melted plastic which can be toxic.

RVers should bring their own portable fire pit/grill to keep fires small and controllable or use an existing campfire ring. Buy your wood locally, burn it completely and ensure your fire is “dead out” before leaving by dousing it with plenty of water and stirring the ashes cold. Finally, leave it better than you find it, break up unnecessary fire rings and clean up any fire pits in the area!

☑ **Cooking and Heating with Gas:** While cooking with propane is relatively efficient and sips at your tanks, running the RV heater or three-way fridge on the propane setting can really burn through your fuel. To reduce



Beach cookout in Gustavus, Alaska, using our portable OTZI Flame flat pack.



Boondocking near Gold Canyon, Arizona, using our Renogy portable solar panel to charge the LiFePO₄ battery that powers our ICECO 12V fridge.

propane heating, try a mattress pad heater or RV skirting (see Gadget Box column on page 10), down booties or a small Mr. Heater portable buddy to heat specific areas of your RV. For refrigeration, many RVs now come with a boondocking setting that runs off of your 12V battery bank. Consider installing an additional 12V fridge freezer (paired with a solar-powered system) to keep food fresh for as long as you want to stay out.

4. Keep it Flowing

Water can severely limit your boondocking stays more than food or power. Use water like a traditional American home and your tanks won't last long! Saving your fresh water for cooking and drinking while limiting bathing and flushing is your best approach. Consider using a portable toilet and shower.

☑ **Water In:** Most freshwater rivers and lakes in North America are non-potable due to harmful bacteria and viruses. However, this water can typically be treated to make it safe for consumption by boiling (for at least one minute) or filtering with an appropriate

Using lake water to wash dishes at an off-grid campground near Newberry National Volcanic Monument.



device. But it cannot filter out pollutants, so chose water as far up the watershed as practical. Untreated water can be used for dishwashing, laundry or personal hygiene. If you're nervous about untreated dishwashing water, use a small amount of bleach in the rinse water and allow dishes to fully dry.

☑ **Water Out:** Improper disposal of grey and blackwater tanks can contaminate water and soil, posing health risks to both humans and wildlife. Chemicals from soaps, detergents and human waste can upset the natural chemistry of ecosystems, leading to algal blooms (rapid accumulations of microscopic algae or cyanobacteria in freshwater or marine systems) as well as other negative environmental issues.

☑ **Pre-wipe dishes before washing:** Wash dishes in small bins to conserve water and carry out for disposal. Use biodegradable non-phosphate soap and filter out any food particles with a small sieve, then dispose in your trash. Scatter the wastewater in a different place each day (but never within 150 feet of a river/lake), to lessen the impact on a specific area and discourage wildlife from finding scraps. To locate water/dump stations, use an RV travel app like Harvest Hosts. Plan your trips into town around your tank level.

5. Stay on the Safe Side

Each person has a different threshold for safety. Ours generally assumes that where there's more people, there's more problems. We gravitate to remote areas that feel more secluded, and safer than large cities.

- Always scope out the camping area in daylight to determine if it's where you want to spend a night. Trust your gut, if something doesn't feel right, move on.
- Don't leave valuables outside of your vehicles, and don't leave any valuables visible inside your vehicles.
- Lock your vehicles and set vehicle alarms.
- Keep your phone on. Even in areas with weak cell reception 911 will still work.
- Make friends on the road, there's a great community out there, and most folks have your back.

6. Pack it Out

Trash in the wrong place is not only unsightly, it can also harm natural areas

and wildlife by teaching them to live off of human food/trash rather than finding their own. Micro-trash like twist ties, bread bag clips, chocolate bar wrapper corners, bottle caps and cigarette butts can be just as harmful because rodents and birds may think that they are food.

Bring trash bags and recycling containers to pack out what you bring. Before leaving, scour your campsite for all trash, including micro-trash left behind by others.

The Benefits of Boondocking

Over the past 14 years we've experienced some of the most amazingly beautiful places on this continent all from the comfort of our tiny rig. For those who love freedom, adventure and solitude, this is RV nirvana!

If you are new to boondocking, try unhooking your RV umbilical cords (electric/water/sewer) while at a serviced campground. Stay for a few days and see how long your resources last. Then try an off-grid campground for a longer visit before stepping up to boondocking. Soon, you'll be a pro!

As RVers, we hold the keys to making a difference with each choice we make—from the paths we travel to the ways we manage waste—we either contribute to the problem or become part of the solution! Join us on this journey! 🚐

Shari Galiardi & David "Hutch" Hutchison

In 2012, Shari and Hutch left behind careers and a home in North Carolina to travel with a vintage camper trailer they lovingly restored and outfitted with solar and named "Hamlet." What began as a short break from careers and responsibility quickly turned into a love affair with road life.

They have parlayed their higher education backgrounds, desire for life-long learning and thirst for adventure travel into writing, photography, video production and public speaking gigs from coast to coast. Known to their friends as Shari & Hutch,

you can learn about their full-time, solar-powered adventures at freedominacan.com.

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PEACE OF MIND ON THE OPEN ROAD



How to Choose Your First Golf Cart as an RVer

by Anders Myrmel

I bought my first golf cart because I was tired of walking to the bathhouse in flip-flops at 11:00 pm. My reason wasn't fancy or planned. I just wanted a ride.

It turns out I wasn't alone. More RVers are adding golf carts to their setup every year, and once you start using one at a campground, you wonder how you ever got by without it. Quick runs to the camp store, checking out the pool, hauling firewood back to your site. It changes the way you use the campground.

However, buying a cart isn't as simple as it sounds. There are choices that matter, especially for RVers who need to think about towing weight, storage and campground rules. Here's what I've learned.



Electric Is the Only Real Option

Start here, because this one's easy. Buy electric.

Gas carts are cheaper up front, but campgrounds don't want them. They're loud, they smell and a growing number of parks are banning them outright. Jellystone Parks, several KOA locations and dozens of independent campgrounds now only allow electric carts. Even parks that





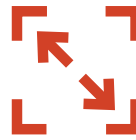


"Check the campground's golf cart policy before you show up with one... A quick call to the office before your trip saves you from surprises at check-in."

haven't made it official will give you looks if you're driving a gas cart past someone's site at 7:00 am.

Electric carts run quiet. You can drive one past a row of campers at night and nobody stirs. Charging only costs around a couple of dollars from empty to full, and a charge gives you 15-25 miles depending on the cart and terrain. For campground use, that's a week of driving without plugging in more than once or twice.

Charge your cart overnight at your site with a standard extension cord. Simply plug in, go to bed and wake up to a full battery. No generator needed.



What Size Cart Do You Need?

This is where RVers must think differently than regular buyers.

A four-seater or six-seater sounds great when you're shopping. Room for the entire family, gear in the back and maybe a cooler. But those carts weigh 800-1,200 lbs. That weight has to go somewhere, and if you're already pulling a fifth-wheel or travel trailer, your tow setup is working hard enough.

A two-seater weighs 400-600 lbs. It fits on a hitch carrier, it's easier to load and unload, and it does everything you need at a campground. That setup covers most campground driving.

If you have children or travel with a group, a four-seater makes sense. Just plan to tow it on a small utility trailer (4x8 or 5x8) rather than a hitch carrier. The extra weight and size won't work on a carrier behind most RVs.

Think about how you'll transport the cart before you pick a model. This single question narrows your options fast.



Getting Your Cart to the Campground

For getting your cart to the campground, there are three main options, and each has tradeoffs.

A hitch carrier slides into your RV's receiver hitch. It's a steel or aluminum platform, and you drive the cart right onto it. Carriers run \$300-\$600 for a good one, and they work well for lighter two-seater carts. Check your hitch's tongue weight rating before you buy. Towing a 500 lb. cart on the back of a motorhome handles differently than you'd expect.

A small utility trailer gives you more flexibility. Any size cart fits, and you can use the trailer for other things when you're not hauling the cart. The downside is length. An RV plus a trailer plus a golf cart trailer gets long in a hurry, and backing into tight campsites takes practice.

If you tow your RV with a pickup, the truck bed is an option for compact carts. Some models fold or disassemble enough to fit. Not common, but worth knowing about.



The Battery Decision

This one matters more than most buyers realize, and it matters double for RVers.

Older and cheaper carts use lead-acid batteries. They work fine, they're proven, and replacement sets cost \$600–\$1,000. The downside: they're heavy (a set of six 6-volt batteries weighs around 360 lbs), they need regular watering (checking electrolyte levels every month), and they last 4–5 years with good care.

Lithium batteries cost more up front, usually \$1,500–3,000 for a full set. But they weigh about half as much as lead-acid, they need zero maintenance, and they last 8–10 years. No watering, no corrosion, no wondering if you left the batteries sitting too long without a charge.

For an RVer, the weight difference alone is worth considering. Dropping 150–180 lbs off your cart changes how it handles on a hitch carrier. You'll feel it in your fuel economy too.

If you're buying new, spend the extra money on lithium. If you're buying used with lead-acid batteries, budget for a lithium upgrade down the road.



What Should You Spend?

It's less than you'd think. Used electric carts in good condition start around \$3,000–\$4,000. At that price you're getting a basic two-seater with lead-acid batteries, maybe 3–5 years old. Test the batteries before you buy. A cart might look great but have batteries that won't hold a charge through a full day.

New electric two-seaters start around \$5,000–\$7,000. For \$8,000–10,000 you're into a nice four-seater with lithium batteries and some extras.

For campground use, a \$4,000–6,000 budget gets you everything you need. You don't need a lifted cart with off-road tires and a sound system. You need something quiet, reliable and light enough to tow.

If you're renting carts at campgrounds now, do the math. Most parks charge \$50–75 per day. A full season of weekend camping, say 30–40 rental days, costs \$1,500–3,000. Your own cart pays for itself faster than you'd expect.



Living With a Cart at the Campground

The first time you drive your new cart through the park, you'll notice people watching. Some are curious, some are jealous and a few are keeping an eye on how fast you're going. Fair enough.

Golf carts and campgrounds get along great as long as you remember a few basics. Stay on paved roads and paths. Carts are heavier than they look and tear up grass and gravel quickly. Campground owners will notice ruts.

Speed is the big one. Your cart can probably do 15 mph. At a campground, 5–8 mph is the right pace. Kids on bikes, dogs off leash, people carrying plates of food from the grill to their picnic table. You're sharing the road with all of them.

For charging, just plug into shore power at your site overnight. I've seen people fire up a generator to charge their cart, and it did not go over well with the neighbors. Shore power, extension cord, overnight—that's all you need.

One More Thing

Check the campground's golf cart policy before you show up with one. Most RV parks and resorts welcome them, but some have age restrictions for drivers (usually 16+), require a valid driver's license, or limit cart use to certain hours. A quick call to the office before your trip saves you from surprises at check-in.

If you're staying at Escapees parks, ask the park manager about their specific rules. They're usually happy to fill you in. 🚗

Anders Myrmel

is a golf cart writer and the founder of GolfCartSearch.com, a dealer directory covering golf cart laws, reviews and buying guides across all 50 states. He can be reached at anders@mail.golfcartsearch.com.





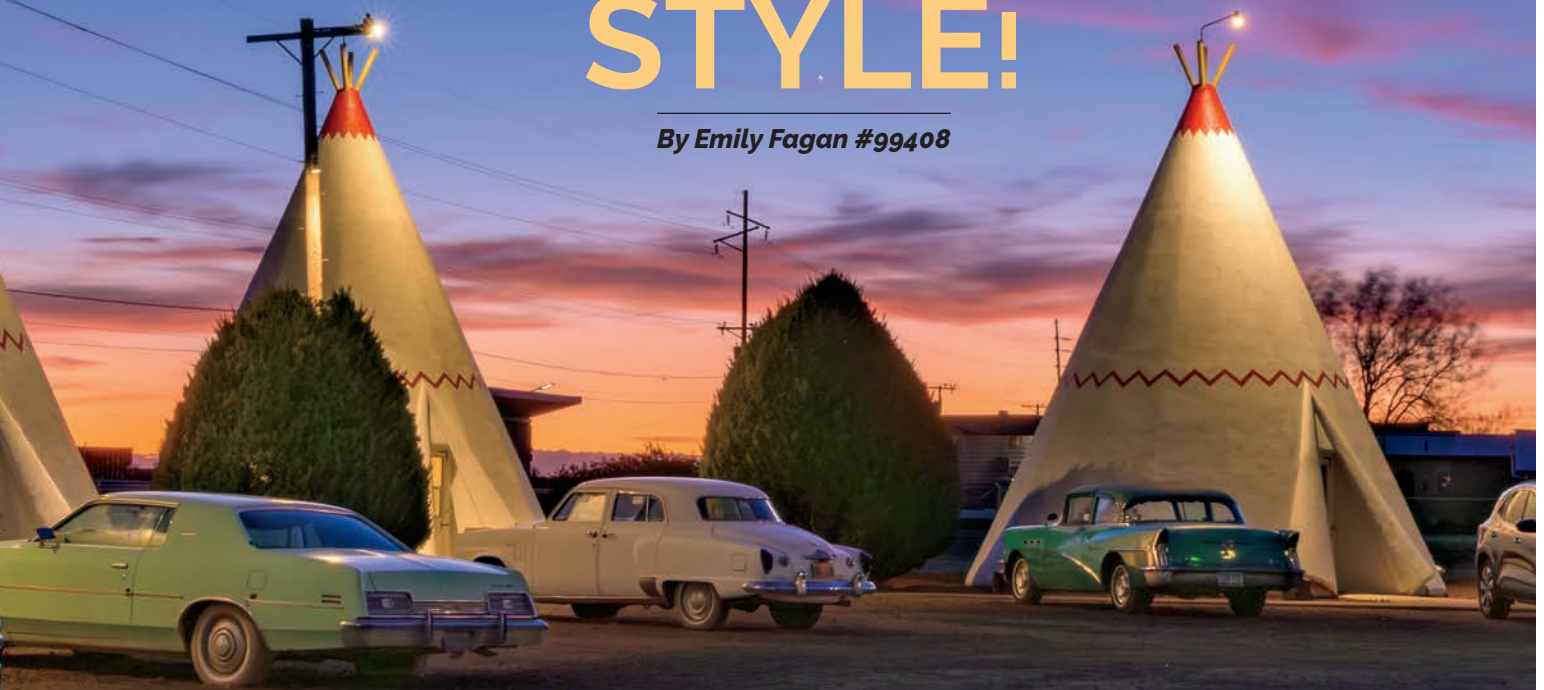
Holbrook Wigwam Motel



» **CENTENNIAL** «

ARIZONA STYLE!

By Emily Fagan #99408



Historic Route 66 has long been beloved as an immersion in mid-twentieth century American nostalgia. It turns out 2026 is the Mother Road's Centennial year, and every town along the route is celebrating.



Snow Cap serves the yummiest milkshakes we found anywhere along Arizona's Route 66.

Route 66 History

In the summer of 1926, the US Bureau of Public Roads built the nation's first federal highway system to connect Chicago, Illinois, to Santa Monica, California. Designated "Route 66," it was created from existing local, state and national roads. Many were dirt at the time, but in 1938 Route 66 became the first fully paved highway. A year later, novelist John Steinbeck penned *The Grapes of Wrath* about destitute farmers fleeing Oklahoma's dust bowl for lush farmland

in California via Route 66. Soon after, the Mother Road's use soared as World War II's manufacturing surge saw materials, products and workers traveling east and west. In 1946, as if to celebrate the War's end, Bobby Troup's song "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" filled the airways as tourists hit the road.

However, 1956 saw the beginning of the end for the Mother Road when President Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act to build a national interstate highway system. The interstates bypassed most of the Route 66 towns, and hop-scotching across



country from one unique hamlet to the next became a thing of the past. John Steinbeck drove the new interstates and commented wryly, "When we get these thruways across the whole country, as we will and must, it will be possible to drive from New York to California without seeing a thing." In 1984, Williams, Arizona, was the last Route 66 town to be bypassed, and the residents were so irate they took up arms and shot at the bulldozers building I-40. This didn't stop the construction, however, and in 1985 Route 66 was decommissioned nationwide.



Route 66 Heroes

My husband, Mark, and I did our own Centennial tour across Arizona's 400 miles of Route 66 this year, and as prep for our trip we read the delightful autobiography of Arizona's beloved raconteur and Western historian, Bob Boze Bell, titled *The Route 66 Kid*. He tells charming stories of growing up the son of a gas station owner on Route 66 in Kingman, Arizona, and the book is filled with his colorful illustrations and classic family photos from the 1920s to the 1980s. Although visiting any Route 66 town today provides a glimpse of the past, reading tales of a small desert town whose survival depended on Route 66 brings the significance of the Mother Road to life.

Another Arizona resident, Angel Delgadillo, was prominent in the resurrection of "Historic Route 66" from the ashes of the Mother Road during the 1980s. He's been dubbed "The Guardian Angel of Route 66" as well as "The Father of the Mother Road." Born in Seligman in 1927, he owned a barber shop in town which later expanded to include a gift shop. He witnessed the entire rise and fall of Route 66 and stated in an interview that traffic through Seligman literally vanished on the day I-40 opened a few miles away. Inspiration struck, however, when he realized the potential for tourism in Seligman if the town showcased the nostalgia of those early years. In 1987 he founded the Historic Route 66 Association of Arizona, and soon, all eight Route 66 states had similar organizations. One by one, many

Stopping at Hackberry General Store is a step back in time where antique gas pumps and a vintage Coca-Cola vending machine for tiny seven-ounce bottles evoke a bygone era.



Top Left: During the Route 66 Centennial celebration in Seligman, the local fire department encouraged the biggest muscle cars to do long burnouts!

Top Right: Our puppy Buddy wore his Route 66 finest to the parade.

Huge billboards visible from I-40 make it impossible to miss Jack Rabbit Trading Post

of the old Route 66 towns were revitalized as tourist destinations honoring a simpler time in a slower paced America.

Mr. Delgadillo turned 99 in April 2026, and Seligman celebrated both his birthday and the Centennial of Route 66 in style. Town dignitaries gave speeches, bands played, vendor booths sold Route 66 memorabilia, and 900 pristine antique cars from the 1920s to the 1970s cruised up and down Main Street (Route 66) all day long. The drivers had been warned not to do any burnouts (holding the brake pedal down while revving the accelerator). However, right before the official antique car parade began, the local fire department sprayed water on the road and encouraged the drivers of the biggest and most powerful muscle cars to do the longest and loudest burnouts they could

muster! Many drivers happily complied and the crowd went wild. The next morning, hundreds of antique cars lined up on Main Street once again to drive out of town on Route 66 towards Kingman. Angel Delgadillo waved a big American flag as each car drove off.

Route 66 Tour

We began our personal Route 66 tour in northeastern Arizona in the town of Holbrook which is home to the 1950s era Wigwam Motel. The rooms at the Wigwam are small buildings that resemble Indian teepees, and a big sign out front asks, "Have you slept in a Wigwam lately?" Of course, wigwams were used by Algonquin-speaking Native American tribes in the northeastern US while the southwestern tribes typically built cliff dwellings, pit houses, wickieups and hogans. Teepees were actually used by the Plains Indians! However, you've gotta sleep in one anyway because that's part of the schtick of Route 66. So we did!

Driving west on I-40, we got off for a short stretch of Route 66 at Joseph City to visit the Geronimo Trading Post, a tourist shop built with colorful petrified log slabs. Nearby, an enormous jackrabbit statue with a saddle on it stood outside the Jackrabbit Trading Post. It's perfect for a "Here I am!" selfie, especially since a massive yellow billboard that's easily seen from I-40 sports a painting of a very large black jackrabbit silhouette and the words, "Here it is!"

Winslow was next on our westerly drive, and classic Route 66 whimsy was on full display. In celebration of the Route 66 Centennial, the town put a rumble strip series of stutter bumps in the road at the east end of town, and if you drive at exactly 35 mph with one set of tires on the 40' long rumble strip, you can hear part of the Eagle's tune, "Standing on a corner in Winslow, Arizona. What a fine sight to see!" Decades ago, the town of Winslow was suffering, but visitors kept stopping in to ask the shop owners, "Where's The Corner?" The town realized opportunity was knocking, and they erected a tall brick wall with a huge mural of "a girl, (my Lord!) in a flat bed ford, slowing down to take a look at me!" Today, the town is thriving as people from all over the world come to get selfies on "The Corner."

"Our immersion in Americana memorabilia had been an excursion we highly recommend."



Every town polished up its appearance for the Centennial. Flagstaff painted a colorful new Centennial Route 66 badge on the pavement by the train depot.



Flagstaff was next up. Home to Northern Arizona University and an Amtrak train depot, plus the huge I-40 and I-17 interchange nearby, Flagstaff weathered the demise of Route 66 just fine. And 30 miles west of there, once the residents had stopped shooting at the bulldozers building I-40, the town of Williams ultimately reinvented itself as the Gateway to the Grand Canyon. The I-40 exit onto a 50-mile highway heading to the South Rim is close by and a popular tourist train excursion to Grand Canyon Village leaves from a train depot in town.

But, it was the next town, Seligman, that stole our hearts. This is in part because Main Street is lined with quirky Route 66 themed shops and a few classic old motor-court-style motels, but it's mostly because the original burger and ice cream shop called Snow Cap, which was opened by Angel Delgadillo's brother Juan in 1953, serves the best and most authentic milkshakes we've had anywhere! After slurping the last drop, we left town on old Route 66 and passed several series of amusing Burma Shave signs





A pristine candy apple red Mustang parked outside an old gas station/souvenir shop in Seligman.

with safety-oriented rhymes like “If daisies are...your favorite flower...keep pushing up... those miles per hour!...Burma-Shave.”

Sixty more miles of Route 66 across wide open land took us to Hackberry General Store where the original antique gas pumps, now rusted, stood outside and creaky wooden floors invited us inside. A 1960s era Coca-Cola vending machine surprised us with just how tiny the original glass Coke bottles were (7 ounces!). A little further on we sprang 60 years forward in time when we bumped into Giganticus Headicus, a huge green monster head erected in 2003 outside a Route 66 tourist shop. The silliness and playfulness of the Mother Road is infectious. There isn’t a whole lot out there—there never was—but the goofy highway sideshow is entertaining.

Kingman is a busy city, so we continued on to Oatman, famous for its nosy herd of burros wandering the western style boardwalks and begging for snacks from giggling tourists. Equally delightful, though less well known, were the spectacular canyon views surrounding us on the way into Oatman from the east.

Arizona’s Route 66 ends in Topock but we decided to save that town for another trip. Our immersion in Americana memorabilia had been an excursion we highly recommend. Even if you don’t get to Route 66 during the Centennial year, the enchanting, whimsical spirit of the Mother Road will welcome you for years to come. 🚗

Emily and Mark Fagan #99408

traveled full-time by RV and sailboat for 13 years and now enjoy RVing part-time. Their website RoadsLessTraveled.us is a treasure trove of RV and sailing lifestyle tips and tech tips, and they’ve also contributed hundreds of articles to magazines. Their photography has appeared on magazine covers, wall calendars, on a plaque at Bryce Canyon National Park and in a museum!



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The Road That Changed Everything

Mishelle's Harvest Hosts Journey

By Allison Smith

Mishelle Shooks has been RVing since she was young, but after signing up her small business as a Host in 2020 and starting a job at Harvest Hosts in 2022, her business and RV trips have transformed.

Mishelle grew up seeing the country from the backseat of her family's RV. Her fondest memories and her love of travel began on those trips.

As an adult, she had her own desire to give her family the same great experiences she had growing up. She bought a pop-up camper of her own to share that love of RV travel with her husband and children and eventually grew into larger travel trailers. They take RV trips together as much as they can, which amounts to one longer RV trip per year and several local camping trips near their home in northern Michigan.

However, when she's not RVing or working her job on the Host Success team at Harvest Hosts, you can find Mishelle and her family at their farm, a cherry orchard and winery, Cellar 1914.

It all began back in 1914, when her husband's Great-Grandpa purchased a 60-acre cherry farm. It stayed in the family for 100 years and has expanded to over 1,100 acres. In 2015, her husband, Rob, and brother-in-law, Greg, fourth generation farm operators, decided to start growing wine grapes to help keep the farm alive. Now, Cellar 1914 is a thriving cherry orchard and winery that grows and produces over 12 different wines and ciders.

Their business was how they found out about Harvest Hosts in the first place. In the early days of opening the winery, a Member of Harvest Hosts came in for a glass of wine and recognized that their land would make for a great Host location, and he recommended they sign up to be a Host. Mishelle and her husband were extremely grateful for his advice.



Mishelle and her family pictured at Cellar 1914





Ever since, Mishelle and her husband have loved hearing the stories of the RVers who come and stay at the orchard. It has helped their bottom line, but more importantly, it has helped them find customers who connect with the farm's history and are genuinely interested in and excited about what the farm and winery have to offer.

That connection is also what inspired Mishelle to keep an eye out for job openings at Harvest Hosts, to find work that would match her interests and values. Eventually, the right position opened on the Host Success team, and the job was hers!

After she started working at Harvest Hosts four years ago, her love of RV travel only grew. Through Harvest Hosts, she got inspired to take more trips off the beaten path, find new favorite destinations throughout the country, and even felt the courage to try dry-camping for the first time. Now, dry-camping is a breeze, and she's grown to appreciate the off-grid RV trips and even feels more recharged by them. Her family has gone on amazing trips together as Harvest Hosts members, like their trip to St. Louis, Missouri, where they stayed at Tarsha Homestead just outside the city and detached from their rig to visit the famous St. Louis Arch, caught a Cardinals baseball game and then returned to help feed the pigs in the morning.

Harvest Hosts has made her RV trips more exciting, helped her business thrive and given her a job that makes a difference in the lives of small business owners throughout the country. If you have a Harvest Hosts membership, you can stay at Cellar 1914 and experience the orchard and winery for yourself. If you're ever in northern Michigan, be sure to stop by! And if you are lucky, it might even be cherry season! 🍷

Allison Smith is a content writer for Harvest Hosts. She also serves as the brand copywriter, crafting the message of Harvest Hosts in all of their marketing. When Allison is not writing content for Harvest Hosts, you can find her with her cat, Ash, or spending time outdoors.





Smoke and Chiles That Answer to No One Fire Road

By *Evanne Schmarder*, #65409

There are meals that belong entirely to where they happen. You cannot order them online, recreate them at home or find them in January. Across the American South and Southwest, fall is when they come alive. Roasting drums appear on grocery store sidewalks in New Mexico. Pit fires in the Carolinas burn through the night again.

A long two-lane highway east and southeast of Austin, post oak smoke settles back into the Central Texas air after a long summer. These traditions are not staged for visitors, they follow the season because they have to, and they've been doing it this way for generations.

For anyone traveling with curiosity and a serious appetite, it's time to move.

The Smell Reaches You First

New Mexico announces itself in late summer through the nose. Outside grocery stores, roadside farm stands and farmers markets from Hatch north through Albuquerque and up to Santa Fe, wire-mesh drums rotate fresh green chiles over an open flame until the skins blister and blacken. The smell—vegetal, charred, sharp—drifts across parking lots and down main streets whether you were planning to stop or not.

Most people stop.

What makes New Mexico's chile season so specific: it's procurement, not performance.

Locals arrive with burlap sacks, buying raw chiles by the bushel to have roasted on the spot, then freeze for winter. It's closer to canning season than food festival—practical and non-negotiable. A good harvest produces chiles that taste bright and grassy; a dry year delivers something slower and hotter. Home cooks treat this variability the way winemakers treat vintage; it's part of the product.

One technique worth knowing: after the chiles come off the fire, locals seal them in Ziploc-style plastic bags to steam for 10 to 15 minutes before peeling. The trapped heat loosens the charred skin and drives the flavor deeper into the flesh. Skip that step, and you lose half of what you came for.

Once peeled, those peppers go into nearly everything. Green chile folds into scrambled eggs at breakfast diners that have been serving it for decades. It smothers cheeseburgers, layering smoke and char over melted cheese. Blue-corn enchiladas come blanketed in green chile sauce that's perfect for a cool desert evening.

Order "Christmas" and the kitchen sends both red and green on the same plate. The green is bright and sharp; the red is sweeter, earthier, slower. Together, they tell you more about New Mexico cooking than either one alone.

Roadside stands pile apples beside bags of still-warm peppers. Morning farmers markets smell of fresh tortillas and wood-smoke. Chile season runs hard from August through early October before the harvest is roasted, frozen and gone.

New Mexico remains exactly what it is and nowhere else.



The Sides Are the Story

Head east and southeast of Austin, Texas, and the character of the smoke shifts, moving from roasted pepper to a base built on post oak.

The reputation of Texas barbecue is so large that it can obscure what's most interesting about the food. Yes, the brisket is worth seeking out. But what fall reveals is the pit itself, because in Texas, smoke doesn't just stay with the meat. It moves into everything else on the table, and that's where the real story is found.

Borracho beans simmer in cast-iron pots beside the pit, cooked long and slow with beer, bacon and onion until they've absorbed hours of heat and wood smoke. Cream corn blisters at the edges. Sweet potatoes left near the coals wrinkle and soften. Even peach cobbler, baked in a Dutch oven at the edge of the fire, carries enough smoke to remind you it was never near a kitchen.

The meat markets scattered around Austin, through Lockhart, Luling, Taylor and Elgin, are where this culture is most plainly itself: cinderblock buildings with bakery cases beside butcher counters, handwritten signs, parking lots full of locals showing up early, before 10 a.m.

These are not restaurants that added a pit. They are Czech, German, Mexican and ranch-country traditions sharing the same counter for generations, and the side dishes carry that history as clearly as anything on the menu.

Warm potato salad arrives slicked with bacon drippings instead of mayonnaise—tangier, richer, better. Jalapeño-cheddar grits come baked until the edges pull from the pan. Pinto beans darkened with wood-smoke and beer taste like they went on the fire before breakfast—because they did.

What accumulates over a day here is unhurried: haze drifting across a gravel lot at dusk, a football game playing on a television mounted in the corner. Once the first cool fronts push through in late October and Central Texas shakes loose from summer, people linger under courthouse oaks long past when dinner should have ended.

Patience Is the Whole Point

By the time the road reaches the Carolinas, the approach to cooking slows considerably.



Image courtesy of New Mexico True



Pull into a fairground or church field outside Ayden or Wilson in eastern North Carolina before dawn, and the first thing you notice is the dark. The second is the smoke. Oak and hickory have been burning since before midnight, coaxed down to coals over hours, and an entire hog has been cooking above them for longer than most people sleep. The pitmaster is not interested in conversation. He is focused on the job he has to do, and it isn't finished.

Whole-hog barbecue cannot be rushed, and September through October is when

communities build their calendars around it. Once the summer heat breaks, usually by late September, churches schedule their annual fundraiser suppers, county fairs run their barbecue competitions and volunteer fire departments host the pig pickings that have paid for their equipment for decades.

These aren't pop-up events; many have been on the same Saturday of the same weekend for 30 or 40 years. Weekend afternoons fill up fast, and the community tables that go with them—trays of hush puppies, Brunswick stew, baked beans, coleslaw and



banana pudding are as fixed in the calendar as Thanksgiving.

A cleaver works a wooden chopping block in a steady rhythm while a line forms that doesn't seem to mind waiting. What comes off that block isn't pulled pork in any sense you've had elsewhere.

Traditional chopped whole hog combines meat from across the animal: shoulder, loin and rib meat with pieces of crisped skin folded into the mix. The skin provides salt, crackle, and a depth of flavor that no sauce can replace. You're tasting the entire animal, not a cut.

The sauces are where the regional arguments live, and they're worth having.

Eastern North Carolina keeps it strict: vinegar and pepper, nothing else, cutting through the richness of the pork without competing with the wood.

Push west toward Lexington, and tomato enters for sweetness and color. Cross into South Carolina, and it turns mustard-gold, a style long associated with the German immigrant communities that settled the Midlands. Food historians note the connection is more lore than documented fact.

These are not superficial variations. They're distinct culinary philosophies that happen to share a fire.

What stays with you is less the sauce than the scene around it. Cool air laced with pit smoke. Someone carrying out another tray while a conversation that started an hour ago shows no sign of stopping. The particular satisfaction of food that required real effort and real time, and the community that gathers around both.

The Window Is Short

These three traditions share one thing: none of them waits. By mid-October, the roasting drums are gone, the last of the harvest bagged and frozen, the farm stand back to selling squash and cider. The pitmaster who started his fire at 3:00 a.m. will sell out before you expect him to, he always does, and when the meat is gone, the pit goes cold and that's the end of it. The pig pickings happen on one Saturday, at one church or fairground, and the people standing around it with paper plates and no urgency about leaving won't gather in exactly that way again for another year.



All three exist within a single season's worth of driving—different fuels, different flavors, different histories, the same narrow window. The char and grass of the high desert, the post oak depth of a Central Texas meat market, the slow hardwood burn of a Carolina pit.

Each one is a place and a moment that can't be separated. Three fires, one season. Worth every mile. 🌮

Evanne Schmarder

is sure she got the wanderlust bug from her grandparents. In 2000, she and her husband, Ray, set off on their own adventure.

Eighteen-plus years later, they're still roaming the country, sharing interesting destinations and cooking up delicious RV kitchen recipes in their popular RV TV series, <https://www.youtube.com/c/RVCookingShow>



New Mexico Green Chile Sauce

This is the sauce that goes on everything from eggs to burgers to enchiladas. It's best made in late summer through early fall, when fresh-roasted Hatch chiles are still available at specialty grocers and some farmers markets. In a pinch, good frozen green chiles work nearly as well. Anaheim or poblano peppers can substitute too, though the flavor will be milder and less complex than Hatch. If using Anaheim, a pinch of smoked paprika helps close the gap.

This recipe makes about 2 cups (enough to sauce 8–10 enchiladas or dress eggs for 4).

- 6 roasted, peeled green chiles*, seeds removed, roughly chopped—about 1½ cups chopped
- 2 tablespoons neutral oil (such as vegetable or canola)
- ½ white onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- salt to taste

Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until soft and just beginning to color, about 8 minutes. Add the garlic and cook one minute more.

Add the chiles, broth and cumin. Simmer uncovered for 20 minutes, until the liquid reduces by about one third.

Remove from heat and cool for a few minutes. Blend half the sauce then stir it back in.

You want a texture that's thick enough to coat but still has body. Taste for salt. It should be bright, a little smoky and warmer than you expect.

Keeps refrigerated for one week. Freezes well for up to three months, which is, not coincidentally, exactly what New Mexico cooks do with it every October.

*Note: The heat in a chile lives in the veins (the ribs inside), not the seeds—the seeds pick up heat only from contact with the veins. According to the Hatch Chile Store, a useful rule of thumb: the darker yellow the vein, the hotter the chile. Give your chiles a quick taste before you start, and scrape away more or less of the vein depending on how much heat you want in the finished sauce.

You don't
have to go far
to feel far away.



BOB HURLEY RV

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Members of Solar Team cut the ribbon. Jim McDermott, Jay Whitehouse, Hank Eissler, Jeff Land, Tom Crawford, Bob Keith.



Here Comes the Sun, Part Two

Park Sierra

Powered by Solar

By Betty Prange #22195

On May 29, 2026, Park Sierra, the Escapee's SKP Co-Op Park in Coarsegold, California, celebrated the completion of its major solar field installation. Like all Park Sierra celebrations, this one included great food and fun along with recognition of the years of work to bring the project to fruition.

In actual fact, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), the service provider for much of Northern California, flipped the switch on April 10. But with the switch at one of their substations, it wasn't much of a show for the Park. The "Here Comes the Sun" party waited seven weeks to allow as many of the project volunteers to be present as possible. These volunteers played an extensive, multi-year role, envisioning, researching, negotiating, planning and overseeing this project.

As of this publication, the solar field at Park Sierra is up and running and producing twice the kilowatt-hour electrical output needed during daylight hours for all 254 sites, clubhouse, well pumps, outdoor lighting, maintenance buildings, laundry and all common areas.

The project was built and paid for by Sunwealth, contracting construction to Barrier Solar. Besides cheaper electric bills, the project reduces the carbon footprint. In the short time between PG&E flipping the switch and our "Here comes the Sun" party, the project had offset nearly 90 tons of CO₂. Even with elevated mpg fuel ratings when traveling, RVers have smaller carbon

footprints than most residents of the US and Canada. Park Sierra has now made an additional impact.

The system consists of 1,740 Canadian Solar Panels of 535 watts each. Since Coarsegold lies above the fog line of the Central Valley and below the snowline of the Sierra Nevada, our location has approximately 3425 sunny hours per year (out of 8760 annual hours, including nights and cloud cover). The National Weather Service's reported sunny hours is less than the total solar hours. In fact, on the day of our "Here Comes the Sun" celebration, there was cloud cover. Jim McDermot #134464, chair of the solar committee, kept checking the app on his phone and reporting that the panels were producing well.

During daylight hours the solar field at Park Sierra will produce more power than we need. In May, during its first month in operation, it produced about twice as much as we consumed.

Park Sierra pays Sunwealth 14.8 cents/KWH for all power generated. The Park owns the energy credit for the excess which we return to PG&E at the same rate they charge us, minus a few cents for some non-bypassable. Those credits will apply to our bill for the nighttime and possibly some winter use.

As of the writing of this article, bills to the Park do not reflect the solar credit. But by publication time, members can expect two things: the electrical charge for usage at their site and the electrical portion of the monthly maintenance fee will decrease dramatically. The best news is the rate is locked in at the 14.8 cents for the next 25 years regardless of future PG&E increases.

And what did this project cost Park Sierra and its members? Almost nothing. We



provided the land, the single electrical meter into the Park and incurred some legal review expenses. Volunteers spend thousands of hours on research, contract negotiations and related work to make the project happen. Sunwealth gets the tax write offs, carbon footprint credits and maintains the system for 25 years; Park Sierra gets electricity at substantially reduced rates as well as all the equipment in 25 years for the astronomical price of one dollar. To make sure that is clear, it will be transferred to our ownership for one dollar. Panels will no longer be at 100 percent efficiency, but 85 percent is expected.

The idea of solar energy for the park was explored a number of years ago. It wasn't feasible at that time, but things had changed when two park members, Jay Whitehouse #134960 and Tony Straight #102866 began a new study in the fall of 2021. Later Jim McDermott, Hank Eissler #109930, Frank Halaz #100321, Jeff Land #140693, Bob Keith #149435 and Board President Tom Crawford #34932, were added to the ad hoc group. All of these volunteers, except Tony and Frank, are still members of the Park and attended the ribbon cutting.

A recent memo to Park Sierra members from the Solar Committee explained how the transfer between PG&E works: "One way to look at it would be this: We were originally pumping from one well, PG&E. We are now pumping from two sources; our solar field, and P&GE, with a valve (switch) returning excess to PG&E for later use. In the future some of this excess could be stored in batteries when the cost is financially viable."

Construction took longer than anticipated, but we met the major rate benefit deadline. Problems included an earlier construction contractor who declared bankruptcy, a late decision to cover the ground with gravel, and a huge slab of granite below the surface of the field. All these caused delays and headaches. The huge slab of granite, about 6-8 feet below the surface had to be pulverized to grade the site. In summer of 2025, those in the Park got used to the daily sound of jack hammering the rocks left from the same glaciers that created nearby Yosemite National Park. It was a welcome sound knowing what would result.

Sunwealth and Barrier Solar will maintain the solar field for 25 years, including

cleaning the panels four times a year, weed abatement and insurance.

The Park Sierra landscape committee began planting native bushes and trees above the site before construction began to provide a buffer between member sites and the installation. A view corridor greets members and visitors coming through the front gate.

Park Serra was built to the terrain of rolling, granite studded hills, rather than a flat pad. Members have always taken pride in the natural beauty of the Sierra foothills of gold rush fame. This continues with the effort to minimize the view of the panels.

Visitors are encouraged to take our Park history tour, showing off 161 acres, much of it wild. The solar field is included, along with the creek, nature area and amenities.

Jim McDermott, who chaired the Park's volunteer solar committee through this long process, had this to say, "The Escapees who purchased this land, laid out and built this Park, left a legacy for all who followed. Likewise this solar array leaves a legacy for future members and guests of Park Sierra."

You can find an article explaining the project in the July/August 2025 issue of *Escapees Magazine*.

We encourage Escapees and Harvest Host members to visit this unique RV Park and enjoy energy produced by our sunny skies.

To paraphrase the well-known Beatles lyrics: "It's been a long, long time....but here comes the sun!" 🌞

Betty Prange #22195

and her husband, Lin Strout, joined Escapees in 1993 and hit the road as full-time RVers that August. Widowed in 1999, Betty stayed on the road. In 2014 she became a member of the Escapees SKP Co-Op Park Sierra while still traveling much of the year. A couple years ago, she hung up her RV keys (although she still travels by rail, water, air and car.) She has written previous articles for *Escapees* magazine and has had cover photographs over the years. Check out her blog at www.PrangeDePlume.blogspot.com.



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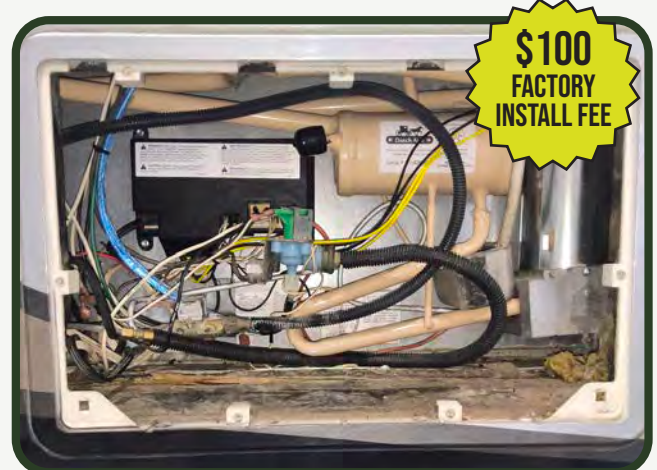
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Laura and Rob Kernodle greet the crowd at the 2026 Escapade in Fryeburg, Maine.
Photo by Paige Denkin.



Wicked Good in Fryeburg, Maine

By Rob and Laura Kernodle #131897

WOW! There really isn't a better way to describe Escapade 2026.

For one unforgettable week in June, the Fryeburg Fairgrounds became home to one of the largest gatherings of RVers in North America as 1,243 attendees and 565 RVs rolled into western Maine for a celebration of learning, laughter, music and community. Long before Opening Ceremonies, RVs had already begun

arriving the week of June 8, and excitement spread throughout Fryeburg as friends reunited, first-time attendees were welcomed and new adventures began.

The festivities officially kicked off with our "SNEAK Party" Saturday evening. Maine's famous Red Snappah hot dogs disappeared almost as quickly as they could be served, creating some impressive food and beverage lines. But if there's one thing RVers know how to do, it's make the most of any situation. Those lines quickly became gathering places where strangers introduced themselves, swapped travel stories, compared rigs and often walked away as new friends. A lively round of Singo kept the energy high and set the tone for the week ahead.



message from the team



Opening Ceremonies officially welcomed all 1,243 attendees to Mountain View Pavilion to launch Escapade 2026. Following the celebration, everyone enjoyed a true taste of Maine with homemade whoopie pies during our “Maine Event Munchies” before making their way to the Midway for Brew with a View and the debut of Boondockers Brew, a special collaboration with Boothbay Craft Brewery created exclusively for Escapade. Nearby, first-time attendees gathered by home region, swapping stories, sharing travel dreams and quickly discovering why the Escapees community feels like family.

Education remained at the heart of Escapade with more than 50 seminars covering every aspect of the RV lifestyle. From technical maintenance sessions and safety topics to travel planning, solar power, wellness and lifestyle seminars, attendees had opportunities to learn something new every day. Community Day welcomed local residents to experience Escapade first-hand through seminars, activities, vendor exhibits and conversations with experienced RVers, giving many their first glimpse into the welcoming RV lifestyle.

The adventure didn’t stop at the fairgrounds. Off-site experiences, including the Boothbay Craft Brewery takeover and the North Conway shopping shuttle, gave attendees another opportunity to explore the region together while creating even more shared memories beyond Escapade. Back on the grounds, two bustling vendor buildings, wellness activities, social gatherings and impromptu meetups kept every corner of the fairgrounds alive from morning until night.

Perhaps the biggest attraction wasn’t found on any schedule at all—it was the conversations happening everywhere. Morning coffee turned into a hour-long chat with neighbors. Lawn chairs appeared in circles between RVs. The Midway became a nightly gathering place where music, laughter and stories flowed long after the day’s activities had ended. Whether reconnecting with longtime friends or meeting someone for the very first time, attendees found countless opportunities to build the friendships that make Escapade so much more than an RV rally.

message from the team



When it came time to have fun, Escapade delivered in a big way.

Entertainment kept the energy high from beginning to end. Southern Maine favorite, Bad Habit, kicked off the week with an unforgettable performance, followed by crowd favorites including Keys to the City Dueling Pianos and the Status Crowe's. The fun didn't stop in the middle of the week with what many attendees called one of the best-ever editions of Escapade's Got Talent, and an incredible "Slightly Salty Circus Finale" featuring live music, circus performers, games and dancing that perfectly captured the spirit of the week.

One of the biggest new additions for 2026 quickly became one of the week's biggest hits—the inaugural Escapade Cornhole Tournament.

Thirty-two teams battled through qualifying rounds before returning for championship night, where crowds gathered to cheer on competitors chasing the first-ever Escapade Cornhole Champion title and the coveted name-badge dangle. Friendly competition, great sportsmanship and plenty of laughs made the tournament an instant favorite and a tradition that's sure to return.

As the week drew to a close, Mother Nature threw one final curveball with forecasts of severe weather. Thanks to advance planning, Thursday evening's festivities moved indoors to Mountain View Pavilion, where food vendors, carnival games, a photo booth, live music and roaming circus performers kept the celebration going



without missing a beat. Despite the rain outside, spirits remained high, and the indoor finale became one of the week's most memorable moments.

Escapade's sense of community was perhaps best captured after closing ceremonies, when a recently widowed attendee unexpectedly reunited with a college friend he hadn't seen in 48 years. Their chance meeting quickly turned into plans to attend future Escapades together—a heartfelt reminder that the friendships made here often last a lifetime.

None of this would have been possible without an incredible team of more than 150 volunteers whose countless hours of planning, parking, registration, hospitality, seminars, entertainment, transportation and behind-the-scenes work created an experience attendees will never forget. Their dedication, enthusiasm and servant hearts truly made the event.

Escapade 2026 proved once again that this event is about far more than RVs. It's about learning together, exploring together, giving back, laughing until your sides hurt, dancing with friends old and new and creating memories that last long after the last RV pulls out of the fairground.

As the final hugs were shared and the last campers headed down the road, one thing was certain: Fryeburg, Maine, delivered a truly wicked good Escapade.

We can't wait to do it all again at Escapade 2027 in Tucson, Arizona! 🐾

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upcoming events



Upcoming HOPs

Balloon Fiesta HOP

Albuquerque, NM • October 2–11, 2026

Maine Leaves and Lobster HOP

Trenton, ME • October 5–10, 2026

Rose Parade HOP

Pasadena, CA • Dec. 27, 2026—Jan. 3, 2027



Upcoming Hangouts

Carlsbad Caverns Restoration Hangout

Whites City, NM • October 17–24, 2026

Texas Coast: Body, Mind & Spirits Hangout

Crystal Beach, TX • November 12–19, 2026

Winter Blast Hangout

Lake Havasu City, AZ • February 08–15, 2027



Upcoming CampOuts

Pre-Hershey Show CampOut

Middletown, PA • September 13–16, 2026

Clydesdale Farm Barn Party CampOut

Mechanicsville, MD • October 8–11, 2026



Upcoming Xscapers Convergences

Xscapers Fun Days

Redmond, OR • September 15–20, 2026

Balloon Fiesta Convergence

Albuquerque, NM • October 2–6, 2026

Second Session: October 6–11, 2026

Or pay for both sessions and stay the entire week!

Xscapers Annual Bash

Lake Havasu City, AZ • January 9–17, 2027



Scan to learn more about
Escapees RV Club Events.

upcoming events



ESCAPEES Hangouts!

**BODY, MIND & SPIRITS HANGOUT
NOVEMBER 12-19, 2026**

Heading to the shores of Crystal Beach, this years BMS Hangout at Camp Margaritaville will turn the Texas coast into a vibrant hub for wellness and community. Members can fill their days with sound healing, shorebird tours, bay paddling, and practical sessions on everything from essential oils to Ayurveda. Nights center on gathering around the fire for a vegan potluck, open RV tours, and beachside meditations.





Events Calendar

Join us at one of these rallies or National events!



Scan for more info on
Escapes Events

Dates	Location	Host Chapter	Registration
September 2026			
09-13	OR Florence, Florence Elks RV Park	37	541-450-5065
09-14	NM Sante Fe, Santa Fe Skies RV Park	02	404-428-3063
13-16	PA Middletown, Pre-Hershey Show CampOut	CampOut/National	936-329-6499
13-18	WA Hoquiam River RV Park	05	360-538-2870
14-19	CA Chowchilla, The Lakes RV Park	24	817-832-1019
15-20	OR Redmond, Xscapers FunDays	Xscapers/National	936-329-6499
17-20	CA Montague, Montague Balloon Festival	37	541-944-2354
17-21	AZ Florence, Rancho Sonora RV Park	59	520-396-0293
22-25	MO Hannibal, Mark Twain Cave and C/G	17	918-378-7117
28-Oct 02	TX Crystal Beach, Texas Resort Getaway	Getaway/National	936-329-6499
30-Oct 11	NM Albuquerque, Balloon Fiesta Crewing Rally	Balloon Crew RVers BoF	ballooncrewrvrs@gmail.com
October 2026			
02-11	NM Albuquerque, Balloon Fiesta HOP	HOP/National	936-329-6499
05-10	ME Trenton, Maine Leaves and Lobster HOP	HOP/National	936-329-6499
06-11	NM Albuquerque, BFiesta Convergence (2nd)	Xscapers/National	936-329-6499
08-11	MD Mechanicsville, Clydesdale Farm Barn Party CampOut	CampOut/National	936-329-6499
12-18	TX Fredericksburg, Fredericksburg RV Park	11	210-240-0925
15-19	OR Merlin, Indian Mary Park	37	541-474-5285
17-24	NM Whites City, Carlsbad Restoration Hangout	Hangouts/National	936-329-6499
19-25	CA Corning, Heritage RV Park	24	817-832-1019
20-23	MO Carthage, Coachlight RV Park	17	620-423-9648
21-26	FL Bushnell, Homebound RV Park	57	rsens2672per@yahoo.com
29-Nov 2	AZ Arivaca, Sagauro Trails RV Park	59	520-396-0293
November 2026			
06-08	TX Livingston, Rainbow's End RV Park, RVers Bootcamp	Bootcamp/ National	936-329-6499
12-19	TX Crystal Beach, Body, Mind & Spirits Hangout	Hangouts/National	936-329-6499
13-15	TX Livingston, Rainbow's End RV Park, Beyond RVers Boot Camp	Bootcamp/ National	936-329-6499
30-Dec 7	CA Oroville, Feather Falls RV Park	24	817-832-1019

events calendar

Dates	Location	Host Chapter	Registration
December 2026			
07-11	FL Auburndale, Florida Resort Getaway	Getaway/National	936-329-6499
27-Jan 3	CA Pasadena, Rose Parade HOP	HOP/National	936-329-6499
January 2027			
09-17	AZ Lake Havasu City, Xscapers Annual Bash	Xscapers/National	936-329-6499
February 2027			
08-15	AZ Lake Havasu City, Winter Blast Hangout	Hangouts/National	936-329-6499
March 2027			
April 2027			
11-15	TX Rockport, Lagoon's RV Resort	11	210-240-0925
15-18	TX Mineola, Mineola Civic Cntr & RV Pk	10	253-370-6169
May 2027			
17-21	NV Pahrump, Lakeside RV park and Casino	25	janisleebell@gmail.com

The Events Calendar is reserved for chapter, certified BoF groups and National events. All submissions must be in writing. Deadline for submissions for the Winter issue is September 25. Submissions should be sent on an official Escapees Magazine Chapter/BoF report form to editor@escapees.com.

ESCAPEES BADGES ARE BACK!

Make sure to get your Escapees name badge and other Escapees gear for your next Event!



STORE.ESCAPEES.COM

RVers Good Neighbor Policy

Overnight Parking Etiquette

Dear Fellow RVers,

The Good Neighbor Policy was created in the early 90s by Escapees RV Club. Since then, it has become the industry standard code of conduct for overnight parking. We hope that the Good Neighbor Policy serves as a reminder that RVers must be respectful of the communities they visit.

Some of the most respected RV consumer clubs have joined Escapees to support your privilege to park on private businesses' property overnight under the following code of conduct:

Industry-sanctioned Code of Conduct (RVers Good Neighbor Policy)

1. Stay one night only!
2. Obtain permission from a qualified individual.
3. Obey posted regulations.
4. No awnings, chairs or barbecue grills.
5. Do not use hydraulic jacks on soft surfaces (including asphalt).
6. Always leave an area cleaner than you found it.
7. Purchase gas, food or supplies as a form of thank you, when feasible.
8. Be safe! Always be aware of your surroundings and leave if you feel unsafe.

Preserve the privilege of overnight parking.

Follow the code and encourage others to follow it, too!

If your plans include touring the area, staying for more than one night, or necessitate conduct not within the code, please relocate to a local campground. It's the right thing to do!

Most of the complaints lodged regarding RV parking on business parking lots have to do with aesthetics and perceived abuse of the privilege. There are a variety of competing interests that were balanced to arrive at this industry-sanctioned code of conduct. As you can see, the code of conduct is nothing more than an RVers "Good Neighbor" policy.

Not following the code has serious consequences and is detrimental to the rights of all RVers. Already, some municipalities have passed ordinances to prohibit parking on private business property overnight.

Please do not take offense to this letter; it is only provided as a reminder that RVers must be perceived as good neighbors or there will be more pressure to institute state, county and local ordinances to prohibit parking on private business property.

We wish you safe and happy travels,



Download a copy of the RVers Good Neighbor Policy at
www.escapees.com/pages/good-neighbor-policy



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Chapter Map *Let's Get Together!*



A Word from Our Group Manager

By Wendy Stanwood #170314, Chapter/BoF Manager



Hello, my Escapees Family!

It's already fall once again and a great time to attend our Escapees gatherings.

Many of our Chapters

and BoF groups are having rallies throughout the country. If you are going to be in the area where they are happening, please feel free to reach out to them and join in the fun.

Escapees regional Chapters, BoF special interest groups and Escapees Co-Op parks are available for everyone to visit. I encourage you all to stop by and see us. If any Chapter, BoF or SKP Co-Op would like to place a submission in the magazine, please e-mail it to me along with any high-resolution photos to chapterdirectors@escapees.com. We would all love to hear about what you guys are doing and what you may have planned for the future.

E-mail chapterdirectors@escapees.com to start a group in your area.

Reminder: You can join our BOFS/Chapters via the Escapees Website, but our chapters maintain their own membership application's and dues in addition to national Escapees membership. Please complete the full sign up to be a member of a Chapter.

Calling All Chapters *Escapees Regional Groups*

See the map for a chapter near you.

Chapter Number	Chapter Name	Chapter President	Phone Number	E-mail Address
2	Rocky Mtn. High	Maggi Parris	404-428-3063	president@skpschapter2.org
5	Evergreen	Sharon Eberly	360-204-1185	foreveresb@hotmail.com
6	Great Lakes	Bill Daines	269-806-3043	bd1770@aol.com
8	Mexican Connection	Cynthia Ponder	515-991-9049	cynacat@gmail.com
10	Rainbow Chapter	Leroy Kasch	936-252-1074	lksutpj@yahoo.com
11	Alamo Area SKPs	Ken Dixon	210-218-7656	kennethdixon1@ATT.net
14	Lucky Rollers	Charlene Darling	603-686-6184	wheel4home218@yahoo.com
17	Ozark Chapter	Alvin Baker	918-378-7117	bakerskp17@gmail.com
18	Maple Leaf	Howard Krakower	613-829-3587	howardkrakower@yahoo.com
21	Arizona Saguaro	Michael T. Burger	989-930-9919	mikeburger.skp@gmail.com
24	Gold Nugget	Kathy Honig	916-366-1436	pkhonig@sbcglobal.net
25	Shanty Shakers	Dan Garcia	619 846-5239	dangarcia@cox.net
29	Carolina Rovers	Craig Rickenbach	803-372-2998	carickenbach@gmail.com
34	Columbia River SKPs	Nancy Steward	360-513-8724	dcstew3@gmail.com
37	Rogue Valley Rovers	Ken Webber	541-944-2354	ken2354@aol.com
44	Alberta Roamers	John VandenBerg	403-380 0141	fayjohn@shaw.ca
46	Lincolnland	Michael Huffine	618-559-3107	huffinemichael@yahoo.com
51	Hoosier Neighbor	Vernon Berg	219-608-1148	berg3025@comcast.net
57	Florida Sun Gators	Russell Sens	941-730-3755	rsens2672per@yahoo.com
58	Rocky Mountain Country Coachers	Jamie Erickson	505-330-1380	larryerickson9935@comcast.net
59	The Desert Roadrunners	Andy Teach	520-350-0421	ateach_99@yahoo.com

Regional dine-outs are chapter luncheons/gatherings for any Escapees who are in or passing through a specific area and would like to attend.

Arizona

Tonopah: Taco Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., moving meal meeting place. Call or text to confirm, Mike: 602-325-3171, Ajo: 602-380-7932, ajo@thecatdragdinn.org

Yuma: 2nd Wed, 10 a.m.,
Izzie's Diner, 11375 S. Foothills Blvd. Yuma, AZ. 85367. Bob Harnish: 936-933-4049, Nov-April

California

Clovis: 1st Thurs, 11:15 a.m.,
Denny's Restaurant, 710 W Shaw Ave. 936-612-3216. Wayne Zimmerman: 559-638-1631

Redding: 2nd Tues, 11:00 a.m., Vittles Restaurant, 2385 North St., Anderson.

Jim Rogers: 530-347-1878
jrogers5@sbcglobal.net

Sacramento: 2nd Wed, 11:30 a.m.,
Brookfield's Restaurant, 4343 Madison Ave. Exception: 1st Wednesday in July, August, September, October and December due to campouts the second week. Kathy Honig: 916-366-1436 • pkhonig@sbcglobal.net or www.goldnug-get24.org

Southern California area: 4th Sat, 9 a.m. breakfast, Marie Callender's, 6950 Alvarado Rd, San Diego. Meeting follows at 10 a.m., also available on Zoom.
Larry Rice: 619-368-5295 • larrydrice@aol.com

Colorado

Englewood: 2nd Tues, 12 p.m.,
Golden Corral, 4000 River Point Pkwy.
Linda Gilmore: 303-349-8845 • president@skpschapter2.org

Florida

Zephyrhills: 1st Thurs, 11 a.m.,
Golden Corral, 6855 Gall Blvd.,
Russell Sens: 941-730-3755 • rsens2672per@yahoo.com, Oct-April

Missouri

Springfield: 2nd Fri, 1:00 p.m., monthly
Golden Corral (off Glenstone),
2020 E. Primrose Place.
Joanne Eide: 417-799-2191 • eidevernon@yahoo.com

Nevada

Pahrump: 2nd Mon, 11:30 a.m., Email or call for the location of the current month's luncheon.

Julie Klein: juliecklein@gmail.com or 210-268-4031, Sept-May

Reno: 1st. Wed, 1 p.m., Gold 'N Silver Inn Restaurant, 790 W 4th St. Adrian Jones: adrianandrebecca@att.net

New Mexico

Lakewood: Ladies coffee every Fri, 10 am. Mens coffee every Tues, 8:30 am.

For more information, 575-457-2303 or skpranch22@pvtn.net

Oregon

Medford: 2nd Tues, 11 a.m., E
Imer's Restaurant, 2000 Biddle Rd.
Ken Webber: 541-944-2354 • ken2354@aol.com

Gladstone: 4th Mon, 11a.m.,
High Rocks Restaurant, 915 Arlington St.
Nancy Steward: 360-513-8724 • dcstew3@gmail.com

Tennessee

Crossville: 2nd Wed, 11:30 a.m.,
Vegas Steakhouse, 3152 North Main St.,
Marcia Espander: 505-975-0387 • mystuff4sale@att.net

Texas

Livingston: 2nd Fri, 1:30 p.m. every month unless there's a rally, Location varies. Contact Ann Heureax: 865-556-2253, raheureuxoo@gmail.com

Washington

Maple valley: 1st Thurs, 11:00 a.m.,
Stockton's Restaurant,
23220 Maple Valley Black Diamond Rd SE
Larry: 206-849-0205 • larrybaumgart@comcast.net

Mount Vernon: 1st Wed, 11:00 a.m.,
Royal Star Buffet, 2300 Freeway Dr. (across from Walmart) I 5
College St. Exit, W to Freeway, Drive N to restaurant.
Ron/Bonnie: 425-218-2839 • bonniehough2@gmail.com

Canada

AB (location TBA): 2nd Wed, 12 p.m. Check Chapter 44 website to verify locations and times.

Fay VandenBerg: fayjohn@shaw.ca • 403 380-0141

BC, Nanaimo: 3rd Wed, 11:30 a.m.,
Smitty's, in the Southgate Mall,
117-50 Tenth Street.

Linda Henton: lfhenton@gmail.com,
April-Oct, except June and Sept

ON, Barrie: 1st Thurs, 12:30 p.m.,
Mandarin Restaurant,
28 Fairview Rd. Peta: 705-728-5639 • petaarends@gmail.com

Join fellow Escapees for any one of these regional dine-outs. Please confirm the time and location of luncheons before making plans to attend.

RVers Boondocking Policy

Dear Fellow RVers,

As thousands of new RV enthusiasts join us on the road, it is more important than ever to be good stewards of our environment. Protecting and preserving our public lands should be our honor and must be our pledge. Whether we choose a national park, national forest, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) site, or other public lands, these practices always apply. Remember, camping on public lands is a privilege, not a right. Abuse can create tighter regulations, raise maintenance fees, and have an overall negative impact on public lands and our ability to use them in the spirit in which they were intended. With the help and support of our advocates, the Escapees RV Club has created a condensed list of “Best RVing Practices” to ensure that our public lands will remain beautiful treasures that we can retreat to as we travel.

Public Lands Parking Etiquette RVers Boondocking Policy

Respect the Rules of the Land. Observe posted signs, obtain permits when necessary, follow usage limits, and camp only in designated areas and pre-established campsites, which vary depending on agency and state regulations. Bear in mind, some of these lands fall under federal laws, not state laws.

Treasure the Terrain. Camp on durable surfaces. Avoid damaging surfaces or modifying terrain by digging, moving large rocks, cutting plants, etc. Stick to predesignated paths without widening them or creating new ones. Remember, there are native plants, organisms, and ecosystems that interplay here and can be easily damaged.

Respect Your Neighbors. Avoid overcrowding an area or blocking your neighbors' view. Orient your RV so that your generator isn't directed at them and respect quiet hours. Rules vary but are generally between 10pm–8am. Maintain a tidy campsite. Keep noise to a minimum so everyone has a peaceful experience. Drive at a campground speed and be aware of kids, wildlife, pets, and your dust trails.

Respect Nature and Wildlife. Keep pets under control and clean up after them, even in the wild. Don't entice, feed, or approach wildlife. Limit or eliminate use of pesticides. Check for burn bans; be mindful of firewood rules and make sure your fire is fully extinguished. (Remember, exhaust pipes on vehicles and generators can trigger fires.) Consider a propane fire pit that you can carry with you and snub out easily.

Pack it In, Pack it Out. Keep your holding tanks closed! Secure fresh water from approved sources and dispose of trash respectfully in public trash receptacles. Lower your impact with bio-degradable products.

Always leave the area cleaner than you found it! Take only memories, leave only footprints.

As RVers, we should be good stewards of the land to protect this privilege for future generations. Not following these practices can have serious consequences and could be detrimental to all RVers. Public lands can be closed to camping because of overcrowding, damage to the land, and guests overstaying the time limits. Following the best practices will help ensure that we all remain good neighbors to each other and the land. If you feel that someone is unaware of these practices, share these resources with them in a positive way.

We wish you safe and happy travels,



For more information and resources on boondocking best practices, please visit: www.escapees.com/rvers-boondocking-policy





Tiffin RV Owners BoF

In March, the newly formed Tiffin RV Owners BoF met in Red Bay, Alabama, for the group's first MeetUp. Seven rigs attended the event. Our group met at a local campground that provided full hookup/50-amp sites for a weekly rate of \$20 per night. For those who may not know, Tiffin RVs have been manufactured in Red Bay, Alabama, since their inception in 1972 when Bob Tiffin started his family owned business building class-A motorhomes. Red Bay is the perfect location for our event.

Highlights of the Event

Service work Near the manufacturing plant is the Bob Tiffin Service Center that provides complete maintenance and repairs for all models and years of Tiffin RVs. Additionally, to help his customers and the local economy, Bob Tiffin supported the development of "After Hours Service." This service consists of over 50 local companies and people who either currently work for Tiffin or have left Tiffin and started their own businesses. Whether they come to your campsite, or you

go to their facility, they perform most services, repairs and upgrades to all RVs. Our members took full advantage of both the Tiffin Service Center and the After Hours Service businesses to have all levels of work performed on their campers. Every weekday, RVs were coming and going from our campground to have services done.

One day, we toured both the Tiffin manufacturing plant and the paint plant. The factory tour was good, but because of manufacturing process changes due to the plant undergoing a redesign, our tour was not as in-depth as past plant tour experiences. But, of course, no plant tour is complete without a visit, photo op and Q&A with Mr. Tiffin! Tiffin has sold their paint plant to Patrick and has stopped paint plant tours. However, the paint plant operations manager made an exception and gave our group a very detailed, behind-the-scenes tour. It was fantastic! Just like most RV manufacturers, Tiffin has its own club which is based in Red Bay. The Allegro Club Dinner & Meeting provided our group with welcome bags full of neat logoed treasures, a delicious Alabama barbecue dinner and an evening of Q&A. Our thanks go to Greg Clark, VP of Allegro Club and Events for a great evening! One of the most valuable parts of the event was the evening huddles and dinner around the firepit or at local restaurants. This gave the group the opportunity to get to know each other, share travel stories and discuss the service work being performed on our rigs.

A lot of questions, upgrades and camping experiences were shared with all who attended. Based on the comments from the attendees, planning is already underway for next year's meet-up. 🍷

**Submitted by Jim and Karen Teunas,
Tiffin RV Owners BoF Administrator**

BOOMERS BoF *It's Not About Age—It's About Adventure*

One of the great things about the RV lifestyle is discovering your tribe. For many of us in the Escapees RV Club's Birds of a Feather (BoF) groups, that tribe is the Boomers. Despite the name, we're not really about age. We're about friendship, adventure, and making the most of life on the road.

Our year often begins during the week between Christmas and New Year's in Pasadena, California, where many of us gather to help decorate floats for the world-famous Rose Parade. Some members work a few hours, others work all week, and some simply enjoy the camaraderie surrounding the event. That's the beauty of the group—participation is entirely up to you.

As the holiday season ends, we point our rigs toward Quartzsite, Arizona. For the last two weeks of January, we create our own temporary community known as Boomerville. What starts as a gathering of RVs quickly becomes a vibrant little city filled with activity and friendship.

Boomerville offers something for everyone. Days are filled with discussion groups, potluck dinners, hikes, morning walks, four-wheel-drive adventures, movie nights, music and travel presentations where members share stories and photos from their summer journeys. New friendships are formed, old friendships are renewed, and everyone finds a place to belong.

The fun continues over Presidents' Day weekend when many of us head to Lake Havasu City, Arizona, for Winter Blast. This unique event brings together fireworks manufacturers from around the world to showcase their displays for municipalities and organizations planning future



fireworks shows. For attendees, it provides several days of spectacular pyrotechnics lighting up the desert sky.

As summer winds down, another favorite gathering appears on the calendar: Crabarang. Each September, members converge on Charleston, Oregon, for two weeks of crabbing, seafood feasts, laughter and good times. Whether you're pulling crab pots from the water, enjoying a fresh-cooked meal with friends, or simply relaxing by the coast, Crabarang captures the spirit of what makes our group special.

These annual events are only part of the story. Throughout the year, Boomers gather wherever the mood strikes. Someone posts an invitation on Facebook, and before long, friends are rolling in from every direction. Sometimes the destination matters less than the people.

What makes the Boomers special isn't an age bracket or a birth year. It's a shared enthusiasm for adventure, community, and the freedom of the RV lifestyle.

We welcome all who enjoy gathering with friends, exploring and creating memorable experiences.

If you're interested in joining us, simply e-mail your name and Escapees member number to boomerbof@gmail.com. Once your membership is verified, you'll be welcomed into the group and invited to join our Facebook page, where you'll find information about upcoming events, gatherings, and spontaneous adventures.

After all, being a Boomer isn't about your age, it's about being ready for the next adventure. 

Submitted by Gretchen Mattison and Pattie Weber



bofs: birds of a feather

Escapees Special Interest Groups

Escapees Birds of a Feather (BoF) groups share lifestyle interests. Expand your talents and share your knowledge. Whether you are a beginner or an expert, you are welcome.



For detailed information on each group, scan the code and visit www.escapees.com.

Alternative Medicine:

Newsletter: herbs, vitamins, dietary ideas, natural healing and attaining and maintaining health.

Amateur Radio:

For members who are licensed or are interested in becoming amateur radio operators.

AVA America's Walking Club:

AVA is a nationwide network of walking clubs. Its members arrange walks to local points of interest.

Bikes, Boots 'n Paddles:

For those who like to read about or participate in cycling, walking and hiking and/or paddling activities.

Balloon Crew RVers:

Publicizes and encourages volunteer crewing for pilots at hot air balloon events around the country.

Bird Watchers and Lovers:

For those who enjoy all things birds and birding.

Boomers:

For those who have a youthful mindset.

Boondockers:

For those who enjoy the dry-camping lifestyle.

Boot Camp Graduates:

For SKPs who have graduated from Escapees RVers Boot Camp or Beyond RVers Boot Camp and want to maintain a connection with other graduates.

Christian Fellowship:

A gathering of Escapees believers drawing together to form a mobile church-without-walls for fellowship, fun, worship, spiritual growth and serving communities.

Content Creators:

A group for anyone who publishes their RV adventures to any social media platform.

DOVE (the Doves) • C-BoF:

Join the DOVEs and partner with the Red Cross to fill real needs in the event of natural disasters.

***NEW* FindUsCamping Villagers:**

We bring campers, RVers and families together through campouts, crawls and philanthropic activities.

Follow Me to Mexico:

For experienced RV travelers in Mexico who enjoy the fun, adventure and safety of travel with other Escapees in a spontaneous and unstructured way.

Foodies & Tipplers:

A community of people who share a passion for exploring and enjoying the culinary world through food and food pairings.

Freethinkers:

We focus on support and community for atheists, agnostics, skeptics and all those who reject supernatural belief.

bofs: birds of a feather

Friends of Bill W:

This group meets at Escapades and other Escapees gatherings.

Full Time RVers:

This group shares the highs and lows of full-time life on the road.

Genealogy:

SKP Genies. This group is all about friendship and family history. Communication is shared through a private Facebook group.

Geocache:

We provide a link enabling members to connect with other SKP geocachers to share information.

Handicapped Travel Club:

HTC is a national organization encouraging people with disabilities and their families to travel, meet and share information on making RVs accessible for the disabled.

***NEW* Health and Fitness for RVers:**

A community for adults of all ages and fitness levels who want to stay healthy, active, and connected while living life on the road.

Hitches and Stitches:

Projects include working with fabrics by hand or machine, clothes, quilts, embroidery or crafts. We love them all.

Jeepers:

We enjoy off-roading. No rules. No officers. No cost.

Low-Carb Lifestyle:

If you're eating low-carb, join us! We're here to support and encourage each other online as well as during meetups.

Maple Valley 55+ RVers:

The group is comprised of local Maple Valley, Washington, resident RV owners who are retired, about to or wannabe retired.

Nomadic Families:

We bring RV families together to share info about our lifestyle and promote exploration and freedom.

NOMADS:

A ministry dedicated to rebuilding lives, homes and facilities with God's love and our hands. (construction, remodeling and repairs)

NudeScapers:

Do you enjoy escaping the world of textiles and enjoy wholesome nude recreation, specifically while RVing.

Penwheels:

Quarterly e-letter inspires writers in all styles of writing, published or not.

Pet Lovers:

For people who love animals. All pets welcome.

Photographers:

For all photographers, casual to serious.

Prospecting and Metal Detecting:

Teach and share tips and information.

Red State Ramblers:

RVers connecting over a shared appreciation for traditional values, freedoms and a deep love for America.

RVICS (Roving Volunteers in Christ's Service):

RVICS is a Christian ministry for retirees seeking service, adventure and fellowship.

● **SOLOs • C-BoF:** A group for solo Escapees.

SOWERs (Servants on Wheels):

A nondenominational ministry of born-again believers.

Stonewall:

Welcomes all gays, lesbians, bis, trans and their friends.

Tiffin RV Owners:

A casual group open to Escapees who own any type of Tiffin RV and are interested in sharing their Tiffin stories.

Veterans:

Outreach to all Escapees and Xscapers veterans to provide camaraderie, support, help, and communicate information.

Wheels of Progress:

Politically engaged moderates/progressives committed to addressing public policy at every level of government.

Whole-Food, Plant-Based (WFPB):

This WFPB BoF group is for those interested in learning about and sharing information.

Yoga:

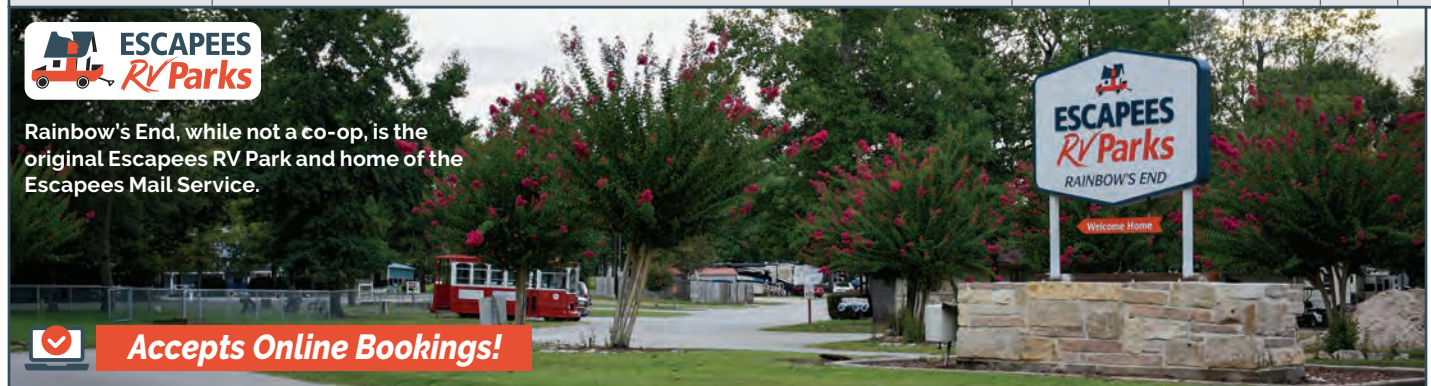
All welcome, from dedicated yogis to those curious about learning yoga.

SKP Co-Ops

Parks owned and operated by individual member groups of Escapees. And available only to Escapees Members.

		Daily Member Rates	Weekly Member Rates	Monthly Member Rates
ARIZONA	SAGUARO CO-OP 600 E. Saguaro Dr., #245, Benson, AZ 85602 520-586-7343, Fax: 520-586-4683, skpsaguaro@gmail.com, www.skpsaguaro.org	\$32 Incl CTV + Elec & tax	\$166 Incl CTV + Elec & tax	\$465 Incl CTV + Elec & tax
	ROVERS ROOST 3241 S. Montgomery Rd., Casa Grande, AZ 85193 For current rates visit RoVersRoost.com or call the office at 520-426-3589 info@roversroost.com, www.roversroost.com	\$30 incl Elec & tax-	\$150 + Elec & tax-	\$450 + tax
	KOFA KO-OP 3750 E. County 17th St., Yuma, AZ 85365 928-344-0645, 928-344-0900, office@kofako-op.com, www.kofako-op.com	\$30 Incl Elec	\$140 + Elec & tax	\$465 + Elec & tax
CALIFORNIA	JOJOBA HILLS RESORT 45120 Hwy. 79 S., Aguanga, CA 92536 951-767-9130, office@jojobahills.com, www.jojobahillsvcommunity.com	\$45 limited + Elec	- -	- -
	PARK SIERRA 45323 Park Sierra Dr., Coarsegold, CA 93614 559-206-9907, parksierra@skppos.com, https://parkofthesierras.org/	\$42 Incl Elec, WiFi & CTV	\$260 Incl Elec Incl WiFi & CTV	\$695 + Elec Incl WiFi & CTV
FLORIDA	FL SKP RESORT 2219 SKP Way, Wauchula, FL 33873 For seasonal rates and long term discounts, see website https://fl-skp-resort.org/rental-rates/	+ Elec	- -	- -
NEVADA	PAIR-A-DICE 5150 Oakridge, Unit 2, Pahrump, NV 89048 775-727-7221, Fax: 775-727-3966, spairadice@gmail.com	\$30 Inc Elec	\$150 Inc Elec	\$450 + Elec
NEW MEXICO	THE RANCH PO Box 109, Lakewood, NM 88254 575-457-2303, officestaff@theoriginalranch.com, www.skpranch.com	\$30 + Tax Incl Elec	\$180 + Tax Incl Elec	\$450 +Elec & Tax
OREGON	TIMBER VALLEY 800 S. State St., Sutherlin, OR 97479 541-459-4465, skptimbr@rosenet.net, www.timbervalleyskp.com	\$40 Incl Elec	\$240 Incl Elec	\$500 + Elec
TEXAS	LONE STAR CORRAL 131 Private Rd. 5240, Hondo, TX 78861 (US cash, check and CC accepted) 830-363-7623, Fax: 830-363-5110, info@lone-starcorral.com, www.lonestarcorral.com	\$25 inc W&E FHU \$39	\$189 + Elec	\$395 + Elec Incl W & S
WASHINGTON	EVERGREEN COHO 2481 Anderson Lake Rd., Chimacum, WA 98325 360-385-6538, Fax: 360-379-5669, evergreen.coho@gmail.com, www.cohoskp.com	\$33-41 Incl Elec + tax	\$198- 248 Incl Elec + tax	\$595- 619 + Elec

		MEMBER	NON-MEMBER	MEMBER	NON-MEMBER	MEMBER	NON-MEMBER
TEXAS 	RAINBOW'S END 140 Escapees Dr., Livingston, TX 77351 936-327-1279, Fax: 936-328-8168, rainbowsend@escapees.com, www.rainbowsend.escapeesrvparks.com	\$25 \$27	\$31- \$33	\$150 \$162	\$186 \$198	\$375+ \$395+	\$410+ \$430+



- THE PLUS SYMBOL (+) IS USED TO INDICATE "PLUS ELECTRIC." ADDITIONAL CHARGES MAY APPLY FOR 50-AMP ELECTRIC, PULL-THRU AND/OR ADDITIONAL OCCUPANTS.
- PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. CONTACT PARKS FOR HOURS OF OPERATION AND TO VERIFY RENTAL FEES BEFORE ARRIVAL.
- RECEIVING MAIL AT ESCAPEES PARKS: ROUTE YOUR MAIL TO GENERAL DELIVERY, CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE. VERIFY ZIP CODE BY CALLING: 800-275-8777.
- AVAILABILITY OF RENTAL SPACES AT SKP CO-OPS DEPENDS ON MEMBERS PUTTING THEIR LOTS INTO A RENTAL POOL WHILE THEY TRAVEL. DURING THE POPULAR SEASON, THERE MAY BE FEW SPACES LEFT TO RENT. CALL IN ADVANCE TO CHECK THE AVAILABILITY OF RENTAL SITES.

Events and Extras

Jojoba Hills SKP Co-Op: Aguanga, CA

Join in the fun of many social activities. Enjoy pickleball, tennis, swimming, hiking, nightly games and Friday happy hour. Deserts and beaches are only one hour away. Sunset magazine calls nearby Temecula, "Disneyland for adults."

Pair-A-Dice SKP Co-Op: Pahrump, NV

Come check us out between Las Vegas and Death Valley. There are several state parks nearby and lots of off-road opportunities. First-time visitor rate is \$100+E for the first week.

Park Sierra SKP Co-Op: Coarsegold, CA

Park Sierra is 25 miles from the southern entrance to Yosemite. Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are only a day-trip away! Winter months are mild, and the spring wildflowers are glorious. Guests can enjoy our pickleball court. Visitors can enjoy \$50 off a week's stay! See website or call for reservations.

RoVers Roost SKP Co-Op: Casa Grande, AZ

Located between Tucson and Phoenix, RoVer's Roost RV Retreat is a great, cost-effective location for exciting day-trips to visit Biosphere II, Cactus League Spring Training, Casa Grande National Monument and Phoenix Desert Botanical Gardens. First-time renters get 10 days for the price of 7! Fun and Pet friendly. Max RV length 40'. Dry camp is \$10.

Saguaro SKP Co-Op: Benson, AZ

Located 45 miles east of Tucson in Benson, AZ, Saguaro Co-Op is bustling with activities. We are also the gateway to Kartchner Caverns State Park, Chiricahua National Monument, and the historic towns of Tombstone and Bisbee. First-time visitors can stay for one week at 50% off (plus elec/tax).

The Ranch SKP Co-Op: Lakewood, NM

Are you planning a trip to Carlsbad Caverns or the Guadalupe Mountains National Park? Then, we're your place to stay: Lg sites, reverse-osmosis water. First night of boondocking FREE. Extended BD: \$10 per day (limit 30 days per year). First-time visitors: \$100 for a full week (plus E). Daily rate: \$30. (Prices do not include tax or CCd processing fee. NOTE: This park is exclusively for Escapees members. Escapees membership (standalone, HH+SKP, or All-Ac-cess) is required to stay with us. Harvest Host members can add Escapees to their account in membership settings (click on your photo on top right of page).

The Florida SKP Resort Co-Op: Wauchula, FL

Compare our seasonal rates with other resorts in the area. Ask how to become a full-time lot holder. The Website has more information. Visit <http://fl-skp-resort.org> or call 863-735-1499.

Lone Star Corral Co-Op: Hondo, TX

Dry camp: \$5 per night. First-time Escapees visitors will receive 50% off one week's stay, plus E. Offer not valid for Dec. or the last full week in Feb. Your extended stay will allow you to explore San Antonio and Texas Hill Country. In addition, the park is only a 2 to 3-hr drive from the Gulf Coast and Mexico.

Timber Valley Co-Op: Sutherlin, OR

Join us in Oregon's banana belt. Large lots; more privacy. Costco has five chain grocery outlets within 12 miles. Walk to restaurants, churches and other amenities. Award-winning wineries, fishing, forest trails and wildlife. Waterfalls, 50 miles; the ocean, 70 miles. Stay six nights and get a seventh night free!

Evergreen CoHo: Chimacum, WA

Explore Washington's Olympic Peninsula from Seattle to Victoria, B.C. Enjoy art, biking, birding, breweries, casinos, cideries, concerts, distilleries, festivals, hiking, kayaking, live music, wineries/wine routes and whale watching. Stay up to 6 months beginning Oct. 1 (depart by May 31). Reserve now at Evergreen Coho SKP Park. Call 360-385-6538.

55+ Park	30 AMP	50 AMP	# of Sites	ERPU Sites	Lease Lots	Pull-thru	Dry-camping	Storage	WiFi	Reservations	Activity Center	Clubhouse	Laundry	Dog Run	Pet Friendly
-	✓	✓	297	n/a	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	118	n/a	✓	N	✓	-	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	N	✓
✓	✓	✓	152	n/a	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	N	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	283	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	254	n/a	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	140	n/a	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
-	✓	✓	182	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	N	✓	✓	✓	✓
-	✓	✓	118	n/a	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	206	n/a	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	130	n/a	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	N	N	✓	✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓	175	n/a	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓
-	✓	✓	130	24	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Only Escapees members may purchase an SKP Co-Op membership (when one is available), and that membership entitles them to use a specified lot until they are deceased or sell the membership back to the corporation. Each SKP Co-Op sets its own rules and is self-governing with a board of directors elected by the members. Members share in the financial responsibilities of the SKP Co-Op. Operating expenses are shared equally among the membership by way of an annual maintenance fee. Most SKP Co-Op sites have buildings and other improvements that may add several thousand dollars to the buy-in price. Most also have a waiting list. Call individual parks for more information.

Forty-Five Years of Community and Connection Rovers Roost:



Years after Kay and Joe Peterson founded the Escapees RV Club in 1978, they set out for the Arizona desert with another dream. A growing community of RVers, they envisioned a unique place where like-minded travelers could gather, support one another and build lasting connections.

That dream began in Casa Grande, Arizona, when 100 RVers from across the country each contributed \$100 to help purchase 10 acres of land. The property was modest, containing a pole barn and a dump station but it held tremendous potential. In 1981, the purchase

was complete and work began in 1982 creating a different kind of RV park. Built entirely by volunteers, the project became a true labor of love. As construction progressed, the community found creative and humorous ways to raise money. One fundraiser gave members an opportunity to buy chances to win the honor of the “first flush” when the new bathrooms were finally completed.

Through hard work and shared purpose, volunteers established a place that became central to the culture of long-term RV living and the growing Escapees community. Rovers Roost hosted the first Escapade at the first SKP Co-Op. Kay and Joe came to Arizona with a vision of building more than a campground—they wanted a community. The first lots were assigned by lottery drawing, and several fortunate RVers became the first leaseholders.

Rovers Roost SKP Co-Op became the first campground in the Escapees system of parks and continues today as



a thriving 55+ Co-Op community. The Petersons were among those who believed the RV movement needed a physical home base: an affordable and welcoming place where members could gather, spend the winter, maintain their rigs and help one another with repairs and advice. Their philosophy centered on the core principles of caring and sharing. Casa Grande proved to be an ideal location. Positioned midway between Phoenix and Tucson, it offers mild winters, accessible services, healthcare and a welcoming local community, all important ingredients for seasonal RV living.

Rovers Roost continues to reflect Escapees values of self-reliance, community and advocacy. As one of the earliest communities of full-time RVers, it provides a place where members can share ideas such as mail forwarding, vehicle modifications and residency and voting issues—important considerations for a grow-

ing population of nomadic citizens. Today, perhaps more than ever, our community continues to welcome newcomers and fellow travelers.

Becoming a leaseholder means more than securing a space. It means becoming a part of a community. Campers are invited to participate in all activities. Leaseholders comprise committees, and the self-governing spirit that continues to shape Rovers Roost.

Rovers Roost SKP Co-Op will celebrate its 45th anniversary in February 2027 as part of our annual fundraising event. More information will be shared on our website (<http://roversroost.com>) and in a future edition of *Escapees* magazine. The dream continues as we celebrate 45 years and honor the volunteers that make it all possible.

Cathryne Richards #27144 and Jacque Martin #144423: Photos By: Myrna Hansen (in the 1980s)

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Adventure, Education and Support Services

- Mail Forwarding Service with scanning option (domicile-compliant addresses in Texas, Florida and South Dakota)
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- Escapade (annual rally with education and social opportunities)
- RVers Boot Camp (fundamental RV training)
- SmartWeigh (accurate and detailed RV-weighing service)
- Member News (biweekly updates on events, benefits, and articles)
- RVers Online University (reliable, online RV education)
- RVNetwork.com (discussion forum for all RV-related topics)
- HOPs (unique land, sea and air adventures with Escapees)
- Chapters and BoF groups (fun ways to meet other RVers)
- Online Blog and Resources section
- Hangouts (meet up with other Escapees for fun, active experiences)
- Xscapers (working-age lifestyle group with events)

Association Specials

- Escapees Roadside Assistance
- Product discounts on tires, batteries, and more
- RV insurance (full-time RV specialists)
- Legal services
- Opportunities for additional savings through partnerships with other RV clubs and organizations
- Escapees CARE (rest, recover and recuperate)

A Comprehensive RV Park System

- SKP Co-Ops- Community Built RV parks available exclusively to Escapees members.
- An extensive network of parks across North America, offering Escapees members 15–50% off overnight rates
- Escapees RV Park—home base options and discounted stays

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