

February 2015 Newsletter



WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF CAMPGROUND OWNERS

Convention is Almost Here!

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Campground Owners

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We had a blast last year as CSI's, but now it's time to get our CandyLand on! Yes, we will be camping in WACOLand this year. Not only did we choose CandyLand as our theme because it is yummy, but it also has some meaning. C: customer service, A: ancillary income, N: new ideas, D: daily activities, Y: yearly plan, L: legal advice, A: analytics, N: networking, D: do's and don'ts. Wednesday will be our Social Media Day, so for those who are interested or even if you don't know much, be sure to attend! You know how this world is turning nowadays! Our casino night is now Candy Carnival with still lots of prizes and fun! The kids will love it too! Speaking of kids, new to this year, we will be taking Kids Kamp to Mt. Olympus Waterpark! We hope to see you this year and will keep you updated!

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Green Bay & Madison RV Shows

The Green Bay RV Show was Jan. 22-25 and we hope you had a successful time if you attended. The Madison show is Jan. 30.-Feb 1. We hope to see you there! For more information call WACO at 608-525-2327.



From Woodall's Campground Management: One of Our Campgrounds!

► CAMPGROUNDPROFILE

Jellystone Park '2014 Camp-Resort of the Year' Earned its Accolades Through Family, Hard Work



'For us, I think the secret is simply just to work hard,' said Theresa Isaacson, who owns the Caledonia, Wisconsin, park with her husband, Randy. 'It's a big commitment — you really have to want to serve people because customer service is huge. People want a lot.'

If there's any one fact that sums up Theresa and Randy Isaacson's success as camp-resort entrepreneurs, it's this: Their Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp-Resort in Caledonia, Wis. was closed for the season, it was 30 degrees outside, there was a dusting of snow on the ground — and they were still working hard in December.

"We do a Christmas light show every year with over a million-and-a-half lights set to music, even though we're closed for camping, so that's keeping us busy."

Theresa told Woodall's *Campground Management*. "It's something nice we can do for the community to continue to have fun things for families to do. In January, we all collapse."

Leisure Systems Inc. (LSI), the parent company that franchises Jellystone Park Camp-Resorts around the country, recently announced that the Isaacsons' park in Caledonia had won the 2014 Camp-Resort of the Year award, marking the first time that they've received that particular honor

— LSI's highest award.

"We've received a couple other awards throughout the years, but this is the big one," Theresa said. "There are so many great parks within our system, and that makes it really special."

According to LSI, to win the award, recipients have to rate 95% or higher on their annual LSI inspection of the facilities and operations. The must have achieved strong growth in business, implemented sustained improvements and earned a reputation as a leader in the industry.

So how did the Isaacsons' operation rise to the top of the LSI system?

Theresa has several reasons she thinks their park has earned such an award-worthy position, coming out as the top of the 82 Jellystones in 2014.

Some of those they control, and some they don't. "It's a nice park and well laid out," she said. "We can't take credit for the beauty of the park itself and the natural landscape — but we work hard at making it an enjoyable place for families to vacation."

Located 25 minutes south of Milwaukee and an even shorter drive to the shores of Lake Michigan, Jellystone Park Caledonia serves up a forested, bucolic setting not far from major urban centers and attractions. In addition to providing campers with easy access to all the shopping and entertainment opportunities in and around Milwau-

kee, they are within 30 miles of the Milwaukee Brewers' Miller Park, the Harley Davidson Museum and the Jelly Belly Factory. The park has also become a convenient stop for vacationers headed north from Chicago, an hour-and-a-half to the south. The wooded campground sits right off the highway, and in addition to a wide variety of manmade amenities, there's also a fishing pond for guests.

The other major ingredient for the Isaacsons' success is family. Randy and Theresa have three adult daughters, and since they purchased the park in 2004, all of them have joined their parents in operating the business. Rachel, Bridget and Marley — and their families — are all now part of the management team.

"Bridget (who is currently the general manager) and I moved down here from Eau Claire to run the park when we first bought it, and slowly, one by one, the rest have joined in," Theresa said. "It's been great to get them all involved."

With 282 sites and 25 cabins, the campground employs six full-time employees all year long and up to 57 seasonal employees during peak season.

'We're Going to Own a Campground Someday'

The Isaacsons followed a funny path to entering the outdoor recreation business. Theresa jokes that the story begins with a family vacation "ruined" by her husband's inability to leave work at home when the family vacationed at the Jellystone Park in Warrens, Wis.





"Randy is a banker by trade and he spent the whole vacation talking to the owner about finances and the business of running the park. So we like to say that he ruined our vacation, but for eight years, we kept coming home saying, 'It's such a fun business, it's great people, we're going to own a campground someday.'"

In fulfilling that goal, it certainly didn't hurt that a large part of Randy's bank work involved financing campgrounds nationwide. So he was already very familiar with the industry, both as a customer and with the books, when he and Theresa began making offers on parks for sale.

After making offers — unsuccessfully — on five other parks, the Isaacsons had their sixth offer accepted, which happened to be for the Jellystone Park in Caledonia. The park had been in operation since 1972, and was one of the oldest in the franchise system. That turned out to bring a mix of benefits and challenges.

"The landscape was really well established and the campground had that classic Jellystone feel, with the original colors," Theresa said. "But a lot of the amenities needed to be upgraded."

For example, the pool and water slide were both in rough shape. "We tore out the existing pool and existing water park," she said. "It was just one single water slide that wasn't functioning. We put in a big activity pool and what we call Yogi Picnic splash area. Over the years we've also added two water slides, one is a big tower. We've also added laser tag and a jumping pillow to help out in the shoulder seasons."

Other amenities at Caledonia include an 18-hole miniature golf course, rentable golf and pedal carts, a full-size outdoor basket-

ball court, a baseball diamond, volleyball courts, two pavilions, three bath houses and a water-wash area stocked with free water balloons and sling shots. There is also a snack shop, an ice cream shop, espresso bar and the camp gift store.

Because the campground was already a part of the Jellystone Park franchise, and because Randy had become very familiar with the details of such an arrangement, Theresa said they never considered striking out independently.

"It's been a great organization to be a part of, and I think it really makes so many things much easier," she said. "For us, it made a lot of sense business-wise."

In addition to all the natural and manmade amenities, there's a broad slate of activities and themed weekends at the Caledonia Jellystone, from the Easter Eggstravaganza Weekend to a Hawaiian Luau Weekend to the Christmas in July Weekend — and of course Halloween-themed weekends, in addition to many others.

An Eye Toward the Future

The improvements and hard work philosophy certainly seem to be working, as the Isaacsons have quadrupled park revenues since their first year in operations — but while they are having success and do have a hefty amenities and facility list, Theresa said that the pressure of continuing to add and improve is one of the biggest challenges.

"Camping is not just a picnic table and a fire ring any more," she said. "It seems like there's a constant need for staying ahead of the game as far as improvements and amenities. We're still searching for



what more to do. The biggest place that we feel like we lack is that teenage or 'tween demographic, having things for them to do. If you keep the kids happy, the mom and dad are usually happy."

One possible addition that they're currently pondering is an expansion of their water park capacities. In fact, Theresa said



Caledonia Jellystone has a Yogi Picnic splash area and two water slides.

they'll be meeting this winter with representatives of Wizard Works Product Development Co. to work on future concepts.

"That's not some thing that will happen immediately, but we're trying to plan for a few years down the road," she said. "It's always good to be looking forward."

For owners new to the business or others looking to copy their formula for success, the Isaacsons' best advice is nothing mystical. "For us, I think the secret is simply just to work hard," Theresa said. "It's a big commitment you really have to want to serve people because customer service is huge. People want a lot."

It was also important for them to go into the business with an understanding of the major commitment involved. After spending much of her life on a dairy farm in northern Wisconsin, Theresa said she felt prepared to work hard, and acknowledged that the demands aren't too different, adding that there is one big difference between a campground and most small- to medium-sized businesses. "There is no locking the doors at night. You have guests on your property 24 hours, so you'd better be ready to respond."

They have also found that there is simply no substitute for having upper management on the property all the time, which doesn't allow for much downtime.

"For some reason, people are much happier when they see an owner or a manager rather than just hourly staff," Theresa said.

"So we do our best to make sure that someone in the family is on the property at all times. People want to see ownership really taking interest in the business. I think it shows that you care when you stop by in a golf cart and just check to see how campers are doing and tell them 'thank you.' They love that personal touch."

When it comes to the marketing and advertising realm, Caledonia focuses primarily on web-based forms of outreach, though they do still keep printed brochures on hand. "We don't do much advertising, to be honest," Theresa said. "We do have a social media presence and obviously get a lot of traffic from people finding us on the web, and we do seem to get a lot out of word-of-mouth."

As for the rewards of doing what they do, the Isaacsons relate it back to their own experience as lifelong campers.

"Creating memories for families is the most rewarding part," Theresa said. "My kids still talk about camping trips that we took as a family even though we all work in a park now. The memories of that stand out so much. Even though we took trips to Disneyland and places like that, the camping memories were the best that we made as a family — and we want to create those for other people." —Ty Adams WCM

Campground Overview

Name: Jellystone Park Camp-Resort, Caledonia, Wisconsin
Address: 8425 Hwy 38, Caledonia, WI 53108

Number of sites: 282, 25 cabins, 4 premium, 27 seasonal

Physical description: Located 25 minutes south of Milwaukee and 15 minutes west of the shores of Lake Michigan. The campground is wooded and well-sheltered by mature trees.

Season: First weekend in May to Columbus Day (around mid October)

Rates: Tent sites: \$29 weekday, \$39 weekend; Water/electric: \$39 weekday, \$49 weekend; Full hookup: \$41 weekday, \$51 weekend; Premium full hookup: \$56 weekday, \$66 weekend; Camping cabins: \$68 - \$163

Website: www.jellystone-caledonia.com

Contact: (262) 835-2565 WCM



Caledonia Jellystone offers a wide range of children's activities. "If you keep the kids happy, then mom and dad are usually happy," said park owner Theresa Isaacsos.





WACO-TACO!



Have a conversation with Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO) Executive Director Lori Severson and she'll tell you this weekend's NFC playoff game between the Green Bay Packers and the Dallas Cowboys is a no-brainer.

"Everybody knows the Packers are going to win," Severson said in an announcement Friday (Jan. 9).

"Not so fast," countered Brian Schaeffer, executive director and CEO of the Texas Association of Campground Owners (TACO).

"I realize this could be another 'Ice Bowl,' and the Packer quarterback is used to Hans and Franz pumping him up, but I think it will be the Cowboys' defense flattening him out. Meanwhile, Dez (Bryant) and DeMarco (Murray) will dance in the end zone. After all, the Cowboys are still America's team!"

Brian Schaeffer

Brian Schaeffer

Schaeffer, in fact, is so confident that the Cowboys will flatten the Packers this Sunday that he's willing to make Severson a wager: "If the team that wins this weekend makes it to the Super Bowl, then the loser takes the winner's entire state posse to dinner at the ARVC (National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds) convention this fall in Daytona, Fla. This could be dinner for dozens of people, basically every campground operator and employee from the winning state that attends the ARVC convention."

And just to make things clear, Schaeffer continued, "This means the winner of this weekend's game will have to play the winner of the Seattle/Carolina game to see who represents the NFC in the Super Bowl. That's no easy feat."

"Bring it on," Severson said, and quickly lined up her Packer alumni support.

"Hey Lori, take the bet. Give him five or six if you have to. Personally, been there done that," said Jerry Kramer, an actual player in the first Dallas/Green Bay ice bowl.

LeRoy Butler, a former Packers strong safety, said, "Miss Lori, these two teams have not played in the playoffs since the Ice Bowl in 1967. We have been waiting for this a long time."

Former Packers fullback William Henderson, who regularly speaks at WACO events and attended the ARVC gathering a couple of years ago, also chimed in, recalling the wisdom of former Seahawks/Packers coach Mike Holmgren: "A good man once said, 'Know your past and protect your future.'"

Gilbert Brown, a former Packers nose tackle nicknamed "The Gravedigger," said, "We are the real team America loves. You will find a G anywhere you go. So to me, it's not so much what you know about the game, but how and who you play with. Wisconsin has this, Brian. I am in!"

In response, Schaeffer said, "The Boys and I can already smell the steaks cooking in Daytona!" ARVC's Outdoor Hospitality Convention & Expo is scheduled for Nov. 3-6 in Daytona Beach. For more information on WACO, TACO and ARVC, visit their respective websites at www.wisconsin-campgrounds.com, www.texascampgrounds.com and www.arvc.org. Note to members: in Wisconsin this bet will not affect your dues, this is personal between Lori and Brian!



IN OTHER WACO NEWS...

LOOK WHO IS COMING TO LUNCH!

Office of the Lt. Governor, Rebecca Kleefisch, will be joining us for WACO convention! This past November, she was elected to a second term as the Lt. Governor. We are grateful that she has chosen to come to our convention! Hope to see you there! A biography of Rebecca Kleefisch:



Rebecca Kleefisch, a former small business owner and news reporter, serves as Wisconsin's 44th Lieutenant Governor. She was elected Wisconsin's Lieutenant Governor on November 2, 2010.

Widely credited for coining the phrase, "Wisconsin is Open for Business," Rebecca played a key role from day one in business growth and retention for Wisconsin – cold-calling Illinois businesses that, in turn, relocated to Wisconsin, and nimbly responding to businesses looking for support.

Rebecca serves as Wisconsin's "Jobs Ambassador" and spearheads the Governor's Small Business Summits and Tax Reform Roundtables. She chaired the Governor's Sub-Cabinet on Workforce Investment, which developed the "Wisconsin Working" plan to connect the unemployed to jobs, encourage the hiring of veterans, and address Wisconsin's graying manufacturing workforce. Rebecca serves as an economic development liaison and advocate for small business owners and chairs the Task Force on Minority Unemployment for the Wisconsin Council on Workforce Investment and the Manufacturing Committee for the Aerospace States Association.

The Lieutenant Governor is also known for her work on veterans' issues. She advocated for the declaration of 2012 as "The Year of the Veteran." The public/private partnership initiative honors, celebrates, and offers opportunities to Wisconsin's heroes.

Rebecca's leadership has been recognized with a "Courage in Leadership Award" by the Faith & Freedom Coalition and a "Woman of Exceptional Courage" award from the Clare Booth Luce Policy Institute. She was named as a champion for lower taxes by the National Tax Limitation Committee and The 60 Plus Association. In May 2014, the Washington Post recognized her as one of 40 rising stars in politics across the country.

Rebecca is a colon cancer survivor, a member of the NRA, and graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the mother of two daughters, Ella and Violet. She lives in Oconomowoc with her husband, State Representative Joel Kleefisch.



PORCH MEASUREMENTS SUSPENSION

ARVC provided great news that HUD has suspended its April 1, 2015 interpretation that would have included exterior porch measurements in the 400 square foot definition of a park model RV.

This news is a direct result of the grassroots campaign organized by ARVC and its campground members over the past several months, combined with expert lobby work in DC through partnership with RVIA and RVDA. A finalization of a park model RV definition will be announced soon.

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

HUD INDEFINITELY DELAYS ENFORCEMENT OF PARK MODEL RV PORCH RESTRICTIONS

DENVER, Jan. 20, 2015 - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced today that the federal agency will not require that porches be included in the 400 square foot limit on park model RVs until new regulations are published on this topic.

"This is great news for consumers, for private park operators and for the park model RV industry," said Paul Bambei, president and CEO of the National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds (ARVC). "This is what ARVC had requested along with our industry partners."

HUD Administrator Pamela Beck Danner issued a memo on Oct. 1 stating that factory-built porches would be included in HUD's calculation of the square footage of park model RVs beginning April 1.

But ARVC co-signed a letter to HUD with the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) and the Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA) in which the three associations sought to delay the enforcement of HUD's new square footage guidelines until after new rules could be adopted that clearly define park model

RVs as recreational vehicles. ARVC also rallied park operators across the country to contact their congressional representatives to request that enforcement of the new HUD guidelines be delayed pending the outcome of proposed legislation that would clearly define park model RVs as recreational vehicles in the HUD code.

HUD's Manufactured Housing Consensus Committee (MHCC) clearly felt the heat during its Dec. 2 meeting on this topic.

"The issue was placed on the MHCC's agenda as a direct result of the political pressure from the campground industry, which mobilized park owners across the United States to write to their Members of Congress to support HR 5658, 'The Recreational Vehicle Certainty Act,' and to ask for a grandfather provision for park models already in campgrounds," Bambei said. "Our members embraced our call to action and played a major role in HUD's latest memorandum."

In total, nearly 800 park owners sent approximately 2700 electronic letters to 335 Members of Congress in the ARVC grassroots campaign for park owners. The MHCC also recommended at its Dec. 2 meeting that specific language be adopted to more clearly define those RVs that are exempt from HUD's manufactured housing standards. That language referred to the NFPA and ANSI standards to which RVs are built as defining them as RVs, rather than a complicated set of criteria that includes specific square footage requirements and tow vehicle restrictions.

"While it remains to be seen how HUD will handle the new RV definition recommendation, park model manufacturers and especially RV campgrounds can rest assured that, for now, porches on the chassis will not be counted toward the 400 square foot limit on park model RVs," said Jeff Sims, director of state relations and program advocacy for ARVC, the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds. "The





park model RVs that are in campgrounds today and the park model RVs they buy tomorrow can have porches that do not count toward the size limit. This also means no state or local regulators should have issues with park model RV porches, either."

Matt Wald, RVIA's executive director of Park Model RVs, said he was pleased with HUD's response. "We are extremely grateful to Administrator Danner as well as the MHCC for taking the time to understand the RV and campground industry's perspective on this issue and working with us toward a consensus outcome where RVs are clearly defined as recreational units and manufactured housing is clearly defined as housing in a way that everyone knows exactly where the line between them is," he said, adding, "We look forward to finalizing that consensus process in the coming months."

MEAN GREEN CLEANER RECALL

Recall Date: January 21, 2015

Recall Number: 15-061

CR Brands Recalls Mean Green Cleaner and Degreaser Products Due to Chemical Hazard

Recall Summary

Name of Product: Mean Green® Super Strength Cleaner & Degreaser and Mean Green® Industrial Strength Cleaner & Degreaser

Hazard: The products are labeled "Does not contain Ammonia." The products may contain ammonia. The mislabeling of the bottles can pose a chemical hazard to consumers. If ammonia is mixed with bleach or other household chemicals, irritating or toxic gases could be produced.

Remedy: Replace

Consumer Contact: CR Brands toll free at (866) 447-3369 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET Mondays

through Fridays or online at www.crbrandsinc.com and click on Safety Letters for more information.

Recall Details

Units: About 83,800

Description: The recalled cleaning products came in white plastic spray bottles and white or green plastic containers. The words "Mean Green Super Strength Cleaner & Degreaser" or "Mean Green Industrial Strength Cleaner & Degreaser" are on a label on the front and the UPC number is on the back. The recall involves products with date codes 4225, 4226, 4227, 4228, 4229 and 4230. The date code is printed on the back of the bottle near the QR code. For a list of recalled units, click here: <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Recalls/2015/CR-Brands-Recalls-Mean-Green-Cleaner-and-Degreaser-Products/>

Incidents/Injuries: None reported

Remedy: Consumers who have a product with the UPC and date code should immediately discontinue use of the product and return it to the retailer for a replacement.

Sold at: Dollar General, Dollar Tree, Family Dollar, Fred's, Walmart and small retailers nationwide from August 2014 to November 2014 for between \$1 and \$8.

Manufacturer: CR Brands, Inc., West Chester, OH

Manufactured in: United States



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GO GREEN GO SAFE PRODUCTS FROM PREMIER MAKE THE GREAT OUTDOORS EVEN GREATER

Premier Outdoors™ is taking the lead in developing outdoor products that replace many of the traditional offerings currently sold at or near campgrounds, which are known to contain hazardous materials that are known to cause cancer.

Products such as lighter fluid and petroleum-infused charcoal and fire starters are proven to be bad for you and bad for the environment. They are being replaced with Premier's GO GREEN GO SAFE products which burn cleaner, safer, and more efficiently than traditional products.

This not only makes them better for the environment, but also better for campground retailers. Since there are no hazardous materials with a petroleum base, our products are cheaper to ship and safer to store with no "clear and present combustibility factor" in your retail environment.

Take Premier's EZSTARTS Lighter Fluid Alternative, for instance. It burns 7 to 10 minutes at 450 degrees, easily igniting any charcoal. No douse after douse of traditional lighter fluid which flash flames for just a minute or two and then burns out. No noxious fumes and best of all, no burgers and dogs with a petrol taste. The Premier product is safer, healthier and more effective and there's a full line of fire starters to meet your needs.

You can simplify everything by using Premier's QUICK & EASY Charcoal. Strike a match and it's ready to cook in just 3 minutes! There's a variety of sizes and even a selection of hardwood lump charcoal for the grilling gurus.

Premier Outdoors products are available for the camping/campground retailer in a point of purchase rack system that adds to, rather than takes from, your existing shelf space. It's available in a variety of sizes and signage options which basically sells the products for you.

The man who developed the Premier Outdoors line of products, Dave P. (you wouldn't know how to pronounce it even if you saw it), is an avid outdoorsman. He's canoed, camped and guided tours in the back country of Minnesota and Canada. He feels the heartbeat of camping and campers and has a deep and abiding respect for both them and the great outdoors.

Whether you're selling to grillers or campfire starters, smokers of meat, or people who love a fireplace fire, join us at the WACO Show and hear the Premier Outdoors story. We're helping to make the great outdoors even greater.

PREMIER OUTDOORS™

ABOUT US

Premier Outdoors' company initiative is to provide you with quality fire and charcoal starters and charcoal products that do not use any petroleum or harsh chemicals. Check out our website to see our complete lineup of GO GREEN - GO SAFE products.



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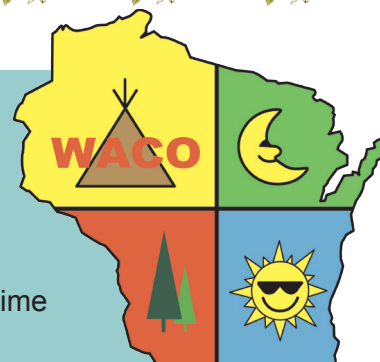
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20% discount for 6 months - Consecutive 30% discount for 12 months

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



13TH Annual Business Day in Madison

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

**Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center
Madison, Wisconsin**

Business Day in Madison brings business leaders - from sole proprietors to major corporations - together with policymakers to discuss the most important issues facing our state.

7:30 a.m. Business Day Kick-Off

NFIB/Wisconsin "Exclusive" Small Business Session

9:00 a.m. Business Day General Session Begins - Program to be Announced

**Mark your calendar and make plans to attend
this very special event next March.**

We also encourage you to invite others to attend.

NFIB registration information for the event will be sent in the fall.

**Questions, contact Deanna at the NFIB State Public Policy Office
608/255-6083 or Deanna.esser@nfib.org**

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