



# Newsletter

## Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners

May, 2013

### Executive Director's Report

By Lori Severson



### Message from the President

Let me start by Congratulating Lori, her family and staff for putting together our biggest and best convention yet to celebrate WACO's 50th Anniversary.

The time and effort put into the preparation and execution of this event is simply incredible and is applauded by not only our association members but by the industry nationwide; it is readily recognized as the best around.

Thanks Lori for everything you do to make this happen. That being said, we will be back in Stevens Point again next March and I hope to see you there.

As we move forward in 2013 the board continues to work with the powers in Madison on our hot topics for the last couple of years. The campground code rewrite should finally be ready for public hearings and hopefully implemented yet this year, but definitely by next year's camping season.

Bud Styer continues to work diligently on a compromise easing the regulation of the UDC as it relates to cabin construction and other rental units we offer in our parks. I am optimistic that we will have both of these topics in hand by the fall workshops and be able to give a full report. As always please feel free to contact me or any other board member with your concerns regarding these or any other issues.

Happy Camping. Scott

Dear Members:

Hopefully everyone is enjoying some well deserved business. It's no secret that mother nature hasn't been very good to our industry this year!

One of the tricks I have heard owners talking about is "rainy day activities". This really makes some sense when you think about it. The kids, big kids too, need to have activity options for all types of weather. Just having some little things available really makes a difference. Check out the newsletter for some ideas!

We have been working on the website. Please be sure to check over your listing. Let us know if we need to make any changes!

Watch for information on customer service training. You will have an opportunity to get your staff trained for free!



Great service is the only differentiator in today's competitive world and every company is investing in hiring professionals with a service oriented attitude.

Good communication is the lifeblood of the service industry and it's impor-

Cont. on page 2

Published by the  
Wisconsin Association of  
Campground Owners

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
LORI SEVERSON  
P.O. Box 228  
N22676 US Hwy. 53  
Ettrick, WI 54627  
WACO Phone #:  
608-525-2327

Severson & Associates  
Phone #: 608-525-2323  
Fax #: 608-525-2328  
email:

lori@seversonandassociates.com

## INSIDE

Page 2

Communicate

ARVC Targets State Local Efforts  
to Tax Recreational Park Trailers  
in Hill Briefings

**Year 2013  
WACO celebrates  
50 Years!**



**WISCONSIN**  
Come stay with us!



tant that your communication style reflects professionalism. This means your language should be devoid of grammatical errors and you should be able to demonstrate a satisfactory use of word choice so that your customer maintains confidence in your skill sets. Follow the T.I.S rule (Think it, Ink it, Sink it). When you come across a new word, make a note of it in your personal diary and read it out loud at least three times.

You need to speak in an upbeat and positive tone when you connect with your customers and colleagues. Remember a lot of negative emotions like anger, sarcasm, impatience, etc. can get communicated through your tone so it's important to watch out for it. Your tone should reflect empathy and concern for your customer.

Good listening skills will help you understand the main ideas of the person you are communicating with. It also enables you to understand the specifics of a particular situation that you could be dealing with. Good listening skills will also ensure that you provide appropriate answers to customers' questions and understand the emotional clues that they may drop.

You should be committed and have a sincere desire to solve the customers' problems. Your ability to ask the right kind of questions will be a key factor in providing an effective solution. You also need to prioritize your time and understand a customer's needs and wants.

Adapt to your customer's unique needs and changing circumstances. You should be open to change and be willing to take your customer's feedback and act on it. Being flexible also helps you identify new business opportunities and make more sales for your organization.

Be proactive and anticipate customers' problems. You should be able to apologize and correct a mistake rather than hiding behind company policies. Walking the extra mile for the customer will cement your relationship and can lead to repeat business.

Be professional, friendly, and courteous. Being direct and expressive helps you build a strong relationship with the customer. Conveying respect for your customers, team members, and competitors is also important as this demonstrates confidence in self and the organization. A professional attitude will leave the customer with a positive feeling.

As a customer service professional, it's important to strike a balance between the job at hand and relationship & rapport building activities. While you need to engage in building a positive relationship with the customer, you must keep issue resolution and meeting targets as the top priority. You are ineffective if you keep sweet talking with customers without asking the customer for the order and closing the sale.

## ARVC Targets State Local Efforts to Tax Recreational Park Trailers in Hill Briefings

(Article found in Industry E-News, written by Jeff Sims, ARVC's Director of State Relations & Program Advocacy.)

The National Association of RV Parks & (ARVC) has alerted members of  
(Cont. pg 4)



## Board of Directors

SCOTT KOLLOCK  
PRESIDENT

Vista Royale Campground  
1-715-335-6631

JUDY BUCHTA  
Past PRESIDENT  
Duck Creek Campground  
1-608-429-2425

DAWN BUTTON  
SECRETARY  
Evergreen Campsites LLC  
1-920-622-3498

BERT DAVIS  
Pride of America  
1-608-742-6395

MIKE DRICKEN  
Lake Lenwood Beach & Campground  
1-262-334-1335

ADAM MALSACK  
Lake Arrowhead Campground  
1-920-295-3000

DAWN REHWINKEL  
Merry Mac's Campground  
1-608-493-2367

DAVE SCHNEIDER  
Indian Trails Campground  
1-608-429-3244

BUD STYER  
Smokey Hollow Campground  
1-608-592-2128

ROBERT WEISS  
Wilderness Campgrounds  
1-608-297-2002

BECKY GUSSEL  
Sherwood Forrest Camping  
1-608-254-7080

RANDY SONDALE  
Pineland Camping  
1-608-564-7818

BUD STYER  
ARVC Representative  
Smokey Hollow Campground  
1-608-592-2128



## WHEN PROBLEMS ERUPT

by Mark Hazelbaker

WACO legal counsel

Sometimes, despite the best efforts of everyone at a campground to maintain peace in order, a problem erupts. Despite the tranquility of being in the country, campgrounds face the same challenges every public facility does today. People who are at odds over perceived insults, trespasses or mistreatment seem to be more prone to escalate those conflicts into confrontations, including violent confrontations. Alcohol fuels more than just automobiles; it energizes and escalates controversies between people all too far out of proportion. There are several important considerations campgrounds need to consider.

First, the safety of campground guests and staff is an unconditional and absolute priority. There is no campground customer or customers whose business is worth putting the safety of the campground and its guests at risk. If incidents or behavior demonstrate that a camper poses a risk, they need to be removed.

Removing campers is relatively straightforward if you have used the WACO model seasonal agreement as the basis for your campground's contract. The WACO agreement makes it clear that campers are not tenants, and therefore, do not need to be evicted. They can be given the boot at the pleasure (although it actually would be displeasure) of the campground. If it does become necessary to remove a camper, experience suggests that the unpleasantness be handled as quickly and carefully as

possible. Do not tell a camper "you have to move in two days." Make arrangements so that you can inform the camper that they are to leave, determine when it will be possible for them to remove their camper unit. If that is not immediate (such as, for example, because they need to go get a pickup truck to move a fifth wheel trailer) then escort the camper from the campground and direct them to a motel until they can move. Of course, they may need some time to grab some close and personal items, but have campground staff monitor the situation until they leave. This is a potentially explosive situation and should be handled with care. If it is extremely volatile, call the local police, and indicate that you need a "keep the peace" presence.

I'm sure that this sounds excessive. In almost all cases, it is. But, we have to be realistic about the environment we live in today and the possibility of extreme violence. We have to handle ourselves in anticipation of the worst possibilities, not what we hope for. In a world where violence has become an epidemic, we have to anticipate the worst and breathe a sigh of relief when we do not actually experience it.

There are other considerations to keep in mind here. Many campgrounds have alcohol licenses and serve alcohol. Of course, guests have their own supply of alcohol in their campers. When alcohol is a factor in campground disruptions, to the degree that the campground's

bar served alcohol to the patron, the campground's alcohol license may be at risk. This suggests the importance of bartenders and others involved in the Tavern operation going well beyond the ordinary mandatory server training to be very careful about over serving patrons. If people seem to have a pattern of becoming offensively intoxicated, the campground needs to assess quite seriously whether or not they should be refused service as someone who simply is a danger to themselves and others.

If it is necessary to intervene to remove a camper after a police response, it is wise to your decision to remove them on the events involved in the actual incident, rather than asserting that the person is being removed because the police were called. Although it is legal to remove someone from public accommodations because of a police intervention, doing so makes your decision contingent upon the police standing behind theirs. You will find that the police are interested in protecting the public, keeping order, and not terribly concerned with supporting the campground in a dispute with a camper. Rely on your own facts.

Above all, try to keep calm, keep your own temper under control, and remember to document what happened while you still remember it.

---

*We can learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty and some are dull. Some have weird names and all are different colors, but they all have to live in the same box!*

---





## How to log on to the WACO Site

Go to [www.wisconsinincampgrounds.com](http://www.wisconsinincampgrounds.com)  
 member@wisconsinincampground.com  
 password: born2camp

Congress that cash-strapped cities, counties, and states are increasingly attempting to impose property taxes on recreational park trailers or "park models" in violation of federal law. This is probably the biggest single state and national issue facing our industry today," said Jeff Sims, ARVC's



director of state relations & program advocacy. Sims joined 27 private campground operators and industry officials in person alerting 123 members of Congress

and their staffs about illegal state and local efforts to tax park trailers during their May 8-9 visits to legislators on Capitol Hill. The meetings were arranged in conjunction with ARVC's annual National Issues Conference.

The ARVC delegation also personally briefed members of Congress on ARVC positions regarding a variety of other issues ranging from rules and requirements involving the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to de-funding of National parks, Hwys and tourism promotion.

"We had two days' worth of very productive meetings," Sims said, adding that private park operators and industry officials prefaced their congressional meetings by reviewing talking points with ARVC's govern-

Sims also said it was important to brief legislators on state and local attempts to circumvent congressional mandates and impose property taxes on recreational park trailers because they are increasingly being used by consumers as vacation cottages by private park operators as rental accommodations.

"The intent is to educate legislators so they know what's going on." "Recreational park trailers are for recreational purposes only. They are not meant to be affixed in any way. They do not improve property values in any way and they are neither designed nor intended by permanent residences. In fact, rec. park trailers are titled and licensed as motor vehicles by the various states." And unlike real property, which can appreciate over time, park trailers depreciate over time. "A recreational park trailer is like a pickup," he said. "It's a vehicle that's licensed. It's not meant to enhance the value of a property."

For more information visit ARVC's website [arvc.org](http://arvc.org).



## Undivided Attention®

Rural isn't where you live; it's what you value. It's a belief that people who know each other look out for each other. Rural Mutual Insurance Company provides "undivided attention" to campgrounds here in Wisconsin—so we get the details right. Working close together. That's what we do. That's who we are. Contact a Rural Mutual Insurance agent.

Steven Berger, Mondovi (715) 926-3871  
 C & D Prof. Insurance Services,  
 Wautoma (920) 787-2100  
 Carl Thomfohrda, Balsam Lake (715) 485-3010  
 Chad Wiedenhoft, Ft. Atkinson (920) 563-9355  
 David Tiffany, Elkhorn (262) 743-2400  
 Fred Clary, Richland Center (608) 647-2972  
 Jaime Congdon, Green Lake (920) 294-3338  
 Thomas Hebert, Eau Claire (715) 830-1101  
 Jennifer Howen, Marshfield (715) 384-2826

Matthew Kripschack, Richland Center (608) 647-2251  
 Mike Hutchinson, Monroe (608) 325-4052  
 Patrick Gillis, Eau Claire (715) 514-4477  
 PTR, Sturgeon Bay/Chilton (920) 746-4017  
 Robert Hahn, Portage/Rio (608) 742-4444  
 Robin Rubisch, West Salem (608) 786-1550  
 Stella Westfall, Three Lakes (715) 546-4100  
 Debra Young, Verona (608) 845-9190

**Rural Mutual**  
 Insurance Company  
 UndividedAttention.com

## Bud Styer & Associates, LLC

(29 years as an Owner/Operator)

- Campground Consultant
- Pre-Purchase Park Inspections
- Operation Evaluations
- Advertising & Marketing Strategies



**608-370-4500 or 608-592-2128**

[www.budstyerassociates.com](http://www.budstyerassociates.com)  
 Email: [mrbud@budstyerassociates.com](mailto:mrbud@budstyerassociates.com)

"TAKE YOUR CAMPGROUND TO THE NEXT LEVEL"  
[www.wisconsinincampgroundsforale.com](http://www.wisconsinincampgroundsforale.com)

## Advertising in the WACO Newsletter

BUSINESS CARD SIZE AD	one time	\$100.00
DOUBLE BUSINESS CARD SIZE AD	one time	\$150.00
¼ Page	one time	\$200.00
½ Page	one time	\$300.00
Full Page	one time	\$500.00

INSERT TO NEWSLETTER - one time - Something you design/print - \$300.00  
 INSERT TO NEWSLETTER - one time - Designed/printed by us - \$400.00  
 20% discount for 6 months - Consecutive 30% discount for 12 months

