

# **The Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners**

*Benefits of belonging to  
WACO*

## A Note from the WACO Executive Director

Every business needs to evaluate why they spend money where they do. Your WACO membership should be considered as value added to your business. Just take a look at how you use your membership. Businesses grouping together can get more done in so many ways!

Always look at your WACO family as your parks personal board of directors. Many times, the problems you are going through are exactly the same problems others have faced and already found the solution to. The WACO family should always be your go-to for this reason; we can save you the trouble of finding a solution!

When making your membership decision, consider the value of WACO to your business. Please feel free to set up an appointment to go over your membership perks and be sure you are making use of all the wonderful and useful benefits that your WACO membership offers you!

We look forward to welcoming you into the WACO family.

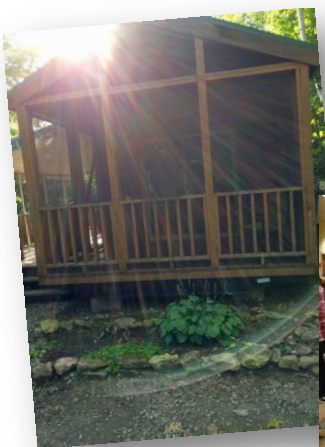
Kindly,

Lori Severson  
WACO Executive Director



# ABOUT WACO

- The Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners is a nonprofit organization of private campgrounds that work together to ensure the growth and protection of the camping industry.
- Our goal is to lead our members in creating excellent guest services, to be aware of legislative and other issues that affect our industry.
- We pride ourselves in offering a state of the art convention that boasts the largest trade show in the nation.
- Education and innovation is critical to the success of our members in their businesses. We focus on creating opportunities for our members to participate in activities that assist them in growing and expanding their individual businesses.



## REASONS TO BELONG

- |                      |                                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Education          | • Networking Opportunities          |
| • Strategic Planning | • Convention Vendor Buying Program  |
| • Advertising Arm    | • Hospitality and Customer Training |
| • Purchasing Power   | • Industry Knowledge                |
| • Relationships      |                                     |
| • Legislative        |                                     |
| • Marketing          |                                     |

Our educational program is truly second to none. We offer specific classes and certifications on everything a campground business owner needs.

We send out important information and updates for our members through our email contact. Education information includes new legal codes for campgrounds, awareness of state/local meetings, changes in social media and more.

We run the largest number of education classes in the nation so we can be informed of all the laws and certifications necessary to run our businesses. We also provide certifications at a much lower rate than you would be able to get anywhere else. For example, we offer a CPO (Certified Pool Operator) certification at a rate that saves our members up to \$200!

We host programs covering everything from “how to type” courses, septic information, ancillary income ideas, American Disabilities Act, free press ideas, workers compensation, insurance issues, banking options, preparing to sell, tax liability issues, sales tax, making use of the free stuff, water and well systems, electrical issues, understanding state fees, and minimum record keeping requirements...just to name a few!



# FALL WORKSHOP

Every year in September and October, WACO sponsors a Fall Workshop where we get together at a host campground to share fellowship, trade secrets and have great seminars to enhance our campground businesses.

You receive a guided tour of the host campground as well as surrounding campgrounds and have the ability to ask questions. These workshops provide a wonderful learning opportunity and have saved time and money for numerous campground owners!

Examples of seminars held at the workshops include:

- Customer Service
- Setting Goals
- Policies and Procedures
- Emergency Management
- How to build a new campground
- Legislation
- Seasonal options and issues
- Playground Safety
- Pet Policies



## HOST A FALL WORKSHOP

Show off your campground and all that it offers by hosting an upcoming Fall Workshop at your campground! The WACO office is always looking for new areas and campgrounds to explore. Contact the WACO Office for more information.





## LEGISLATIVE

We are grateful to have Jeff Sims from ARVC on our side acting as our watchdog to see any legislation issues that will affect us on a national level, that we personally may miss as campground owners. Jeff provides us with an update every time legislation brings up key words that are critical to our business.

We are proud to have many of our State Representatives be a big part of creating solutions, including: James Kaplanek (Chief Food & Safety Recreational Licensing), Dan Schuller (DNR), and Stephanie Klett (Secretary of Tourism)... just to name a few!

Most importantly, when things that are devastating to our business come up, we have a support team that can help us through it, with the resources to make a case. Without members like we have; that are experts and have been through these types of scenarios, decisions get made that are not helpful to our business plans. We are fortunate to have people in our association that make time in their busy schedules to become experts, talk to legislators, develop relationships on the State level, so that all of us can continue to run our businesses. Our membership money pays for these services, and that is the reason we encourage everyone to help share in that expense, recognizing that many members have funded the association for the good of all...both members and non-members.

## LEGAL

Mark Hazelbaker provides our members with a free legal hotline that saves members hundreds of dollars! This hotline is used to answer simple legal questions that can otherwise become complicated.

Mark helps us in reviewing seasonal agreements and provides direction in that area. He also helps to keep us informed and current on all new regulations and laws that affect us and our campground business.

### **Mark Hazelbaker - Attorney**

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The National Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds (ARVC), the leader in outdoor hospitality, is the only national association exclusively representing the interests of private RV parks and campgrounds in the U.S.

Choosing to be an ARVC member gets you these benefits:

- **Exclusive money-saving programs and discounts from over 120 supplier partners.** By leveraging the buying power of our thousands of member parks, we are able to negotiate significant discounts from national suppliers on products and services that are essential to the successful operation of your business. These special pricing programs include everything from paper products, propane and maintenance to liability and health insurance, vehicle and equipment purchases, wireless phone service and music licensing.
- **Powerful legislative and regulatory advocacy programs and resources.** We monitor state and national policy issues that affect RV parks and campgrounds and take action to protect your interests. We work closely with Jeff Sims at ARVC who is always watching legislation that affects us.
- **Opportunities for professional development.** Through the Outdoor Hospitality Education Program (OHEP) - a practical, outcome-based curriculum focusing on real-world, hands-on education enrichment and experiences -you can advance your industry expertise.
- **A “members only” listing on GoCampingAmerica.com.** Our online RV park and campground directory is visited nearly one million times each year by campers planning their next adventure. As an arvc member you’ll receive a complimentary listing in this exclusive directory, giving your park visibility to a nationwide audience.
- **Marketing, Management and Operational Resources and Programs.** We provide a members only website, magazine and monthly e-newsletter, all filled with innovative ideas, operational strategies, industry insights, expert perspectives and vendor resources to help you improve your park's operations and find the products and services you need.
- **Specific Campground Licensing.** By joining ARVC, your campground has access to the Music License and Movie License critical for many campgrounds.
- **A nationwide network of fellow park owners, vendors and industry experts.** As an ARVC member, you will have a nationwide network of fellow park owners and operators, vendors and industry experts you can connect with in a variety of ways - by picking up the phone to get your questions answered, by going online and exchanging ideas at the ARVC Exchange and by meeting face-to-face at the annual ARVC Outdoor Hospitality Conference & Expo (OHCE). You can also get involved by joining a committee or taking a leadership role on an issue that's important to you.

Your WACO PAC (Political Action Committee) is making a difference in legislation that affects your campground business!

WACO Board members are instrumental in working with our Legislators and Mark Hazelbaker (WACO Attorney) to keep our members informed on all the latest information that is being reviewed in Madison that can affect the campground industry.

Politics can affect your tax rates, the wages you pay your employees, the amount you pay for insurance, when you can schedule teen employees to work, your licensing fees, and the list goes on!

The WACO PAC is a non-partisan fund supported by voluntary personal contributions by Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners members.

As a contributor to WACO PAC, your donation will be combined with those of your fellow WACO members to create a sizable fund with great impact.

Our PAC's active involvement in campaigns will then help to elect candidates with small business experience or pro-business attitudes on the state and local level as well as help create a positive legislative environment.

With your contribution, you can help make WACO one of the strongest political forces in the state!



# MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

- **WACO Annual Camping Directory**

As a member, your campground listing is included in our directory. With over 315,000 copies distributed throughout the year, your campground listing gets in the hands of campers throughout Wisconsin and surrounding states. Directories are also sent to convention and visitor bureaus, waysides, gas stations, sporting stores, grocery stores and more for distribution to the public. As a member, you also have the option to place ads within the directory at discounted prices!



- **WACO Website**

In addition to your directory listing, you are also listed on the WACO website. Your listing will show campers a snapshot of what you offer at your park, a few photos, contact information and a link to your own website. This website generates millions of hits a year! There are also opportunities to place banner ads and side ads on the WACO website that link to your personal website for campers to see you first!

As a member, you gain access to the members only section on our website where you have 24/7/365 access to a plethora of information useful to you and your campground business!

- **WACO Camping Rental Website**

New in 2016, WACO introduced a website specifically for camping rentals. All WACO members have the opportunity to advertise and display an in-depth look of their campground rentals for campers to view.

- **RV Trade Shows**

Save yourself the time, money and effort of getting your name out there via RV shows and let WACO help! We offer programs that distribute your brochures along with the camping directory at eight of the largest RV and camping shows in the Midwest!

- **Purchasing Power**

There are various opportunities provided to members from our trade members who offer special deals to WACO as a group! One example is the bi-annual Printing Program for campgrounds of 30,000 flyers for \$500! There really is power in numbers!

## The WACO Annual Convention is hosted in Stevens Point in March. It is currently the largest trade show in the nation!

- **Classes and Certifications**

Starting on the Wednesday of convention week, there are multiple classes scheduled for campground owners and their staff to obtain and/or renew certifications that will benefit their campground. Such certifications include the ServSafe Manager course, Certified Pool Operator course and more!

- **Speakers and Seminars**

Our convention is host to more than 50 speakers and seminars throughout convention week. We offer a wide range of topics including technology, social media, landscaping, how to better your business, motivating employees, legislative issues, ADA rules and more!

- **Trade Show**

The WACO trade show presents over 190 vendors from all over the country. Our trade members work with WACO to provide discounts and deals exclusively for our members. Throughout the show, there are hands-on demonstrations, direct communication with suppliers and the ability to take home purchases that week.

- **Environment**

The WACO Convention is one that really cannot be beat. It is a family-friendly environment with events for everyone in the family to do. We provide a Kids Kamp for kids to learn, play and laugh while the adults enjoy the full effect of all the WACO convention has to offer. The combination of classes, speakers, the trade show, and other campground owners makes for a perfect week to get ready for camping season! The information that is gathered while at the WACO convention will last you, your family and your staff a lifetime!

- **The Gilbert Brown Foundation**

Former Green Bay Packer and Super Bowl Champion, Gilbert Brown and his Foundation help our branding efforts and support our philanthropic efforts. His name connects us through social media, advertising and connects us to the Packer nation!

The Gilbert Brown Foundation supports over 156 children's charities throughout Wisconsin. Being a Green Bay Packer, Gilbert loves his Wisconsin fans and has adopted the idea that “the money raised in Wisconsin, stays in Wisconsin!”

Gilbert partners with the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners and makes appearances at various parks throughout the summer to raise funds for kids with cancer and other illnesses. Campers truly enjoy spending time, and talking, with the former Super Bowl Champion while raising money for a great cause.



# Contact the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners today!

**Have questions? Want to know more about  
membership with WACO? Contact the WACO office!**

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