



WACO NEWS

**JANUARY
2024**

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lori Severson, Executive Director of WACO



Dear Members!

I start with an exclamation mark because we have soooo many exciting things happening in our world! We are doing many things right, and with your help, we can rock this Association to continue making it extraordinary. I'm always thrilled to see our members' commitment level, and it's growing stronger and stronger! When I travel and see other associations, I burst with pride in our organization. I understand we have different opinions and ways of looking at things, but I also know working through these makes us so very strong!

Sometimes, it's tough to look at your dues and wonder if we are making the best use of them, and it is complicated with 225 different ideas and opinions. Rest assured, we look at them all. Some work, some we try later, some we have to agree, just don't work for us now. I hope each of you realizes that for me, at the end of the day, WACO is really my baby. To me, it's like our campground.

In the beginning, we had to do so much with so little time, and we all made sacrifices, but I am proud of what we have done these last 20-plus years. When I look around, I see that our association is great! What makes us great is all of you! After that previous newsletter, I got many notes, texts, emails, and phone calls that warmed my heart! I want you to know that when I get discouraged or hear something that makes me doubt what we do, I look at those, and it makes such a difference! With all of you contributing in your way, we are in this pretty great place!

So many of you say you aren't able to be at the convention or you don't feel like you contribute enough, but when I ask something of any of you, I am never let down, not once! Our Board is comprised of those special people who donate so much of their time. Scott will

THIS ISSUE



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MEMBERS
EARLY BIRD
EXTENDED**

REGISTER BEFORE
Wednesday February 7th at 5pm

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NEVER brag about himself, but I would love people to recognize how much he does for our organization. He attends so many conferences when I know he would instead be living his life hunting or playing with big boy toys! Scott listens, learns, and gives excellent direction. He knows how to motivate our team.



He recently said, "Well, Lori and her team are going to get WACO some of the greatest benefits and savings programs because it's what they do. No one does it better." Statements like that give you no choice but to make it happen! Scott has personally

spent hours upon hours talking to individual members because if you are not on the Board, sometimes you hear pieces of what's happening, and it's like the telephone game! He is solely responsible for handling communication and explaining what our team is doing and why we can then focus on new ideas, new programs, and better benefits.

I promise other association directors to spend at least 1/3 of their time managing that. Right, there is our difference in Wisconsin. Obviously, it's more than just Scott. Your Board of directors is a working machine! They are crazy good at what they do, and we have it going on! When you look for a board, every Association should look! Depending on who is on, you need different skill sets every time! Just like your campgrounds, if you lose the person who pumps your poop, you need to find another one! In this case, we look to have history covered. Do we have people on the Board who understand what WACO was invented for, who can speak to mistakes we have made in the past, and who have learned from missed opportunities and reminded us of them? Do we have young professionals to help us do things better and faster? People who know about social media marketing, advertising, and distribution of our directories? Do we have "thinkers" to help with bylaws, running of the organization, financials, and being the devil's advocate when needed?



Do we have fresh energy? We know what that looks like when campground owners keep a park longer than they should! Do the people want to devote the time and energy it takes to improve this organization each year? Should we hand-pick our Board? Well, not necessarily the people, but for sure, LOOK hard for the skill set, which varies yearly when members go off the Board. Please remember these folks 100 percent volunteer their precious time to make us all better. There are not enough thanks in the world for that! Next time you see one of these board members, please thank them for helping us be the best we can be! Without them, this works.



I do want to give a quick shout-out to my team. Tina has taken this organization to a new level with her abilities in the political arena. She loves learn-

ing about how things work in the Government, and her Thinker personality is precious here! The newsletters are packed with great information, and the communication with members is tracked and accountable.

Danielle and Tina are working hard on speakers relevant to our industry and our level of owners. We are so grateful for members like Scott Grennon, who dedicate much time sourcing great keynotes and super entertainment!

Danielle is taking our social media to the next level, and we appreciate the help of board members like Sarah, who continuously challenge us with great new ideas!

Carla constantly looks for new RV partners and does a fantastic job representing us at the shows! Our entire team works on the vendors who support our convention! This is a critical part of our success at the convention and essential to offering a reasonable registration fee!

We have an excellent support team behind

us running the office with boots on the ground, which is terrific. Believe it or not, we have ten people helping us part-time and full-time; boy, has this grown? Thank you for allowing us to be of service and supporting us all these years!

You mean the world to us!

Lori

Lori Severson,
Executive Director, WACO

A Word from the President

Scott Kollock, WACO Board President



Dear Members,

Welcome to winter! It's time to focus on our spring activities and prepare for the best camping season we can have! Saying that is one thing; doing it is another! With our Convention right around the corner, I think it's time to focus on making our business and association the best we can. Over the past few months, I have had the privilege to look at our industry, state, national, and other industry-related organizations. I've had the opportunity to look at where other campgrounds in the US and Canada are in their growth and development. I have met with many campground owners and State Executives throughout the US. One thing I've learned is Wisconsin has a lot going on! I wondered, "Why do we seem extremely successful?" Here are some things I've thought about, and I'd like you to think about them too, then talk to me about it at the Convention. I've learned how quickly your success can go away if you don't keep working at it, so let's ensure that doesn't happen!

Camping in the Midwest overall reported down a bit, and from the CAMP meeting, KOA's Midwest numbers were also trending down - about 3%. COE campgrounds in the Midwest discussed amping up their marketing to get back to some of the pandemic numbers. RVIA spoke about the number of users in the Midwest being up, with sales down substantially due to the tripling of sales during

the pandemic. In Wisconsin, we are hearing good things about last season and are anticipating a good season for 2024. Many members reported sales from slightly over last year to a 25% increase. That means, as a total, we are doing some things right as an association to advertise and get the word out.

Here are some things that help us be successful in Wisconsin:

OUR WACO TEAM AMPED UP SNOWBIRD MARKETING! Mark and his family from Grand Valley traveled to the largest RV show in Tampa, Florida, encouraging Lori to check it out. It's really all about everyone working the connections angle. Lori investigated it and discovered it was a considerable investment to have a booth at that show, so she devised alternative ways to test it. Don Bennet, the ED in New York, had recently purchased Anderson Distributing. At the time, we didn't have any snowbird marketing money budgeted, so Lori and Don worked out a trade where Lori did some training for him, and he agreed to try our directories in his program at the Tampa show. The trade was for 5000 directories, and Lori required Don to bring the balance to camp as she was pretty sure there would be a lot left. Well, they ran out on Saturday at 4 pm at that first show. This year marked the 3rd year of getting our directories in the hands of snowbirds not only in Florida, but now we have expanded to



Arizona, and this year, we will get in the entire distribution for all Anderson's shows.

Our creativity and willingness to test things, not being afraid to try, makes Wisconsin the powerhouse it is. This one idea has expanded to many other ways to help our members. Lori has worked with Don, and next year, she has been invited to the industry day, where vendors can network with each other. One of the issues at this show is that it's so busy you need more time to visit with possible vendors or determine if partnerships are an option.

NETWORKING AND TEACHING OUR MEMBERS WHAT TO LOOK FOR MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE. Lori will tell you Mark and his family helped our organization open the floodgates to more national marketing than WACO has ever done. Lori's funny story is about how Mark figured out how many Wisconsin people were there – his family started counting Packer shirts, and the rest is history. It sounds like we ran out of directories again at this show, so printed material, at least in Florida, is still king. The networking over the years continues to pay off, and we are the benefactors of much of that. I think I go to many shows and conventions to try to keep up and do a good job as President, but when I look at what we do as a team, it's impressive. Knowledge is the answer to running a great business in any industry; we genuinely work at this.

SPEAKING OF NETWORKING, I CAN NEVER SAY ENOUGH ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP LORI AND HER TEAM HAVE CREATED WITH DATCP. Our 20+ year partnership is one of the most

incredible member benefits, and it's continued to work perfectly. On the other hand, DSPS has been difficult for their peers to work with, as well as their customers. The roles and responsibilities under the Department Chairs and the staff personnel change often, as do some of the rules and how they apply to our parks. I have personally taken the time to meet Secretary Hereth and will have another meeting in February. These folks oversee policies tied to our POWTS systems, water issues, and cabin inspections. They are in charge of the Amusement Rides licensing and inspections. They will be our focus for 2024. Jason Culotta and Tina are working hard to introduce some legislation that exempts campgrounds from this licensing. It's a huge deal, as all our jumping pillows, inflatables, barrel rides, etc., would need to be inspected and licensed. It's a long shot to introduce it in this session, but we will certainly try it! The ability to do this stems from our networking with Jason, WMC, and Tina's coordination efforts. We would be such a little player with WMC, but because we donate heavily to their golf event with our Packer memorabilia, they recognize and work with us.

THAT IS YOUR GILBERT BROWN CONNECTION AT WORK. Thank you to everyone who contributes to that! It's all about doing big things without big money; our WACO team is good at this. We often don't take enough time to explain how important these networking connections are to the organization's growth.

I THINK THE ONE THING WE DON'T REALIZE IS THAT WE TRADE TIME FOR MONEY. That includes your Board members who donate their time to share ideas and gather information. They have a term I learned about from CAMP members (Campground Association Management Professionals). They believe there are two kinds of Executive Directors:

1. The Bunny Slippers - these executives work the hours they are paid for and never an hour more, quitting when the clock chimes even if the job isn't done based on their contract terms. And I'm told they have shown up to meetings in their bunny slippers!

2. Then you have Executive Directors whose blood runs through the association. You can see the difference quickly. It's interesting to see how easily an association can go south. You guys who have been around a while have seen it!

Associations we have benchmarked against in the past are now barely holding on. Our financial picture is healthy. We are literally one of the few associations that did not have to borrow money during the pandemic. Yes, some of that was luck, but for the most part, it was good planning and doing things with less when we had to.

RVIA HAS SOME INTERESTING INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH CAMPGROUNDS. They have chosen Lori to come to their executive leadership conference and be one of 5 Campground leaders to discuss how we can collaborate to share information and create a better customer experience. Unfortunately, this comes before our conference, but she will make it work. They are willing to do another up-and-coming Exec from the same state at half price, but we shall see if we can figure out how to get another team member away. They have a customer list from Go RVing that Lori is working on getting her hands on. This list would be great as it's broken down by state. This is another networking event we just can't afford to miss.

TINA AND I ARE WORKING VERY HARD ON THE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX that includes decks and sheds in many of our parks already, but it is continuing to be a significant challenge. I have said this tax is for 2024, so assessors should refrain from implementing it. WMC is helping us with it, and I want to thank all the campground owners who have helped us with this process; it's been a crazy ride and a lot to digest and worth going through.



The following is an excerpt from Evan Umpir at WMC - its lengthy, but worth the read to see what we're dealing with specific to assessments:

Based on the letters you shared, I've seen at least one other letter, and they all appear to be using similar language; it's my understanding assessors have been in contact with DOR on the PPT elimination and how to handle assessing buildings/improvements/fixtures on leased lands. In the bill, buildings, improvements,

and fixtures on leased lands would be shifted to being assessed as real property (see Wis. Stat. §70.17(3)), whereas previously, they could have been assessed as real or personal. So, to the extent the assessors are explaining this in their letters and other conversations, that is true. I'll also note, though, that for buildings/improvements/fixtures owned by someone other than the landowner, "the assessor may create a separate tax parcel for the buildings, improvements, and fixtures and assess the buildings, improvements, and fixtures as real property to the owner of the buildings, improvements, and fixtures." *Id.* (emphasis added). So there is flexibility as to whom the property is assessed (it isn't required the landowner is assessed for the lessee's now-real property), but the mechanics of creating a separate parcel, as indicated in these asses-

sors' letters, isn't always simple, unfortunately.

For the campground owners who commented that they've passed the cost along previously, I don't know whether or not that is laid out in their lease agreements or not. They should treat this the same and theoretically address the situation (they may need to talk with the assessor and get a breakdown of the individual value of the property being assessed if they only have the total topline number so they can properly attribute taxes to their tenants). I also noted that fire pit covers are being taxed in some cases – I don't know exactly what those are from a physical standpoint. Still, it strikes me as something that could be personal property and therefore should be exempt, but that's a factual determination that needs to be made. There is a caselaw on determining whether a piece of property (I think this might be considered a "fixture") is real or personal. The thing to consider with these fire pit covers, if they are what I think they are, my guess is the assessed value is probably minimal and not adding much to the overall assessed value; it's the sheds and decks making up the bulk of the assessed value (but I could be wrong! Maybe the fire pit covers are much more "permanent" like structures and therefore may be considered real property). Likewise, with campers, those are some things, particularly since they are certainly not permanent structures and are movable; they might be something requiring a factual analysis to determine whether they are real or personal – I'd have to do a little more research and/or the individual may want to consult an attorney.

In the cases where the campground owners aren't able to pass along the taxes to the tenants or are unable to work with the tenant to amend the lease agreement to pass along the tax, I'd suggest talking to the assessor to get the breakdown of property values (if not already provided) and the status of recording the "new" real property on a new parcel to assess to the tenant, not the landowner. It is an ongoing and evolving process. In one of the responses an option 2 was discussed about selling the underlying land and maybe splitting the parcel – that's just seems ridiculous and a non-starter. Option 3 (creating a separate parcel to tax to the tenant) is, I think, ultimately, the best way to address this and ultimately where the assessors, property listers, and landowners want to get to, but we're going to have some growing pains in the meantime.

Another note, this really should be an issue for 2024 tax bills a year from now, not the 2023 tax bills. I'd find it concerning if assessors/municipalities are double-dipping and charging tenants a personal property tax bill and also charging landowners for the same items. That shouldn't be happening. If I'm reading correctly, they are talking about 2024 assessments ongoing now, so the last personal property tax bills should be for 2023 and in a year the 2024 tax bills will reflect the assessments as discussed in the letters relating to building/improvements/fixtures. I expect in the spring when assessment information is sent out there will be another flurry of activity. Anything in the meantime to work with assessors to ensure property (e.g. fire pit covers) are accurately assessed as real or personal will help once the clock starts ticking on the window to challenge property assessments (should a property owner wish to do so).

I'll look a little more into the comment about the Town of Seneca and review the DOR guide for property owners re: shed sizes.

I encourage everyone to work with their assessors as they, too, are trying to implement the law, and DOR et al. are working on how to address easily creating new parcels to get to option three scenarios. I'm sure some assessors will have difficulty, but many are willing to do what they can to attribute the property for assessment and taxation properly.

As you can see, one campground owner can't know everything that is going on in our industry. We need each other and a strong organization. I value every board member and am proud to see the

talent. We have a great mix of new members with fresh blood and members with years of experience to share. Please consider how much work these guys put into these positions and take time to thank them. It's definitely a commitment!

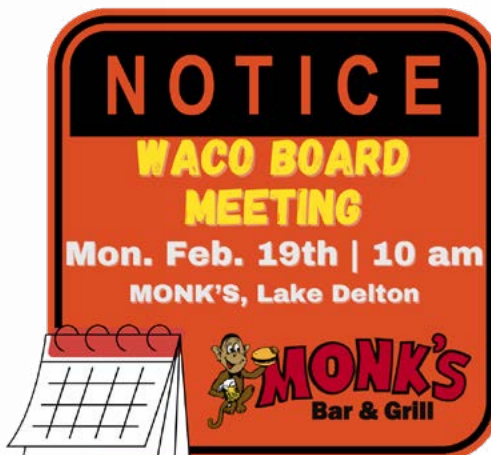
See you at the Convention!

Scott

Scott Kollock, WACO Board President,
Owner at Vista Royale Campground

Running for a 2nd Term

Scott Kollock graciously accepted our request to run for another term as our WACO Board President and we're so thankful! Please see ballots at our Annual Meeting in March! Should you wish to nominate another owner, send in their picture and bio to tina@seversonandassocaites.com just like Ben Stefen and Lea Ann Gieck, mentioned on p. 11!



CAMPGROUND MEMBERS EARLY BIRD EXTENDED

REGISTER BEFORE
Wednesday February 7th at 5pm

**MEMBER OR CAMPGROUND
REGISTRATION**

Running for a 2nd Term

The following Board Members are willing to run for an additional term in March 2024 - if you have an interest in running for one of the other two board openings, be sure to let the office know!

KRISTI MLODZIK

Duck Creek Campground



Kristi Mlodzik, was born and raised on a Dairy Farm in Green Lake County and always involved in 4-H, where she was involved in leadership programs. She loves sewing, doing Crafts and just repurposing things. After High School, she went to Cosmetology School in Green Bay and has been a Hair Stylist for 36 years. Kristi owned a salon for 7 years and managed other salons while raising children and working in another business with her sister in-law, "Jill's of all Trades". Always staying busy! When Denny and I started to look at a business to buy, we had camped for years with our family and Grandchildren. We had enough of working for someone else. We bought Duck Creek Campground after touring several Campgrounds. I have always been a people person so being in the Campground Industry is just perfect because it is everyone's "Happy Place." I would like to be on the Board of WACO. I am a firm believer of WACO. When we were on the hunt for Campground to buy we could tell the difference in Campgrounds that were WACO Members or not based on the support behind them. WACO is a wonderful organization of support and knowledge.

DENEEN PEDERSEN

Stoney Creek RV Resort

Deneen started her campground career in high school working the front desk at Jellystone in Warrens. She worked her way up to management in 4 short years. Over her 25+ years at Jellystone, she worked as Operations Manager and was monumental in growing the recreation program, developing a large successful retail store, and running day-to-day operations at a 1,000 site campground. In 2014, Deneen along with her husband, Brian, and mother, Joyce, purchased Stoney Creek RV Resort in Osseo, Wi. Deneen owns and operates Stoney Creek RV Resort with her family, Brian, Joyce, daughters-Tia and Amber, son-in-laws- John and Josh, and grandson- King Roy. She is excited to be welcoming her two new granddaughters this spring too! Stoney Creek has 200 sites and is currently undergoing an expansion to include additional RV sites, year-round cabins, swimming pond with inflatables, beach and new snack bar. Deneen has always loved the campground industry and enjoys working side by side with her family. As a member of WACO for over 30+ years, she is excited to share her knowledge and passion with the industry.



SARAH KRAUSE

C&D Hospitality



I am thrilled to be running for my second term on the Waco Board, drawing upon my eight years of invaluable experience at C & D Hospitality. Passionate about the camping industry, I have cultivated a deep appreciation for its intricacies and have been privileged to contribute to its growth.

My journey at C & D Hospitality has not only honed my skills but instilled in me a profound love for the camping sector. Embracing the collaborative spirit of the industry, I find joy in learning from my peers and fostering a sense of community.

As a current member of the board, I have relished the opportunity to actively contribute to shaping the future of the camping industry. Being part of the board allows me to play a pivotal role in creating cherished family memories through the growth and development of our beloved industry.

Join me in this endeavor to continue building a thriving camping community that leaves a lasting impact on families and enthusiasts alike. Your support will propel us towards a future where the camping industry flourishes, making memories for generations to come.



Some of your amazing **NEW** **MEMBER DISCOUNTS!**

- ASK ME about Kubota Discount!
- ASK ME about your Polaris Discount!
- ASK ME about your Quiet Kat Discount!

Savings Calculator



Jim Button

UPCOMING OHI EVENTS

- January 23, 2024—Member-Only Webinar: 3 Key Elements to a Successful 2024 Season. This webinar will cover data from the 2024 Outdoor Hospitality Industry Outlook Report and will feature Q&A with special guest, Blake Collins, the Chief Growth Officer at Newbook.
- February 25-March 1, 2024—The George O'Leary National School of Outdoor Hospitality will take place at Oglebay in West Virginia. Expecting another record-breaking attendance.
- May 5-7, 2024—Members of the OHI team will be traveling to Washington DC to advocate for the outdoor hospitality industry alongside other members of the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR).
- June 2-6, 2024—Members of the OHI team, alongside selected campground owners/operators, will be traveling to Washington DC to participate in RVs Move America and will host separate meetings with lawmakers on topics specifically important to the outdoor hospitality industry.
- November 4-7, 2024—OHCE2024 will take place in Oklahoma City, OK. More than \$50 million in business was done on the tradeshow floor at OHCE2023 in Kansas City, so the OHI team is already planning for an even bigger show this year!

CONVENTION SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT



JOE TETI | Friday Night

Get inspired and motivated from a man who's been through it all! Joseph Teti is the co-star of the show Dual Survival on the DiscoveryChannel, as well as a former Force Recon Marine, Army Special Forces "Green Beret", and a former operative in a highly classified government counter-terrorist unit. Mr. Teti is also a published author.

THURSDAY
For the Love
of All Things
Seasonal
.....
FRIDAY
How Up to
Date is
Your Hiring
Process?



MARK HAZELBAKER

THURSDAY
Clearing
the Path:
Goal
Setting for
your Life &
Business



ALLYSON HURLEY



2024-2025 BOARD NOMINEES



**AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,
SAT. MARCH 16**

I am Ben Stefan and my family has owned and operated Grand Valley Campground since 2005. I grew up working in the campground from a young age. As a second-generation owner I now work full time at the campground with my parents, brother, wife and sister-in-law. I also worked as a Systems Engineer in the IT department at Moraine Park Technical College for 10 years while working at the campground every weekend. WACO has helped my family grow our campground in so many ways. I hope to be on the WACO board to give back and share the knowledge that I have learned from WACO over the past 20 years.



My name is Lea Ann Gieck, and I am writing to express my keen interest in joining the WACO Board of Directors. Having recently "retired" from my role as the Regional Vice President in Human Resources/Staffing, where I managed a team of 70 and oversaw operations across 20+ office locations, I bring a wealth of expertise in developing people, implementing system and process improvements, and leading teams to surpass financial targets.

My professional background is complemented by my current role as co-owner and operator of Skillet Creek Campground, a venture my husband and I purchased in 2021. Over the past three seasons, I have successfully collaborated with government entities, contractors, engineers, and surveyors to expand the campground, adding over 100 RV sites, 9 rental units, and a 1-acre swimming pond. Additionally, I manage the front-end operations, including the camp store, reservations, customer service, and activities. My proficiency in marketing allows me to contribute to the business's success with a keen eye for content and graphics.

I take pride in my ability to excel in execution, consistently delivering high-quality products and services within deadlines. Joining the WACO Board of Directors is an opportunity for me to give back to an organization from which I have gained invaluable information, connected with the right resources and people, and continue to grow in the industry. I firmly believe that my diverse skill set and experiences make me a valuable candidate for the position.

I am excited about the prospect of contributing to the success and growth of WACO, and I am confident that my background aligns well with the organization's mission. I appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to the possibility of discussing how I can contribute to the Board further.

WACO 2024 CONVENTION REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!



**We are excited to welcome you back to
Stevens Point, WI on March 13–17, 2024, for another
fun-filled WACO Convention & Trade Show!**

**NEW in 2024: We now have a convenient online
registration link – Easily register and pay online
so you can check it off your list!**

**MEMBER OR CAMPGROUND
REGISTRATION**

**TRADE MEMBER OR
SPONSOR REGISTRATION**



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Vice President - Leisure & Hospitality

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CONVENTION SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

DATCP

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

The DATCP, one of WACO's long-time standing partners, will be available Wednesday and Thursday for several sessions to ensure all our members know codes and requirements for a successful season!

THURSDAY

Food Safety:
Keep Your Snack
Shacks Up to Code



JAMES KAPLANECK

Pool Code
Conversations



**MARY ELLEN
BRUESCH**

DATCP Panel
If you miss a DATCP
Session, attend this Q&A!



**REED MC ROBERTS,
JAMES, MARY ELLEN
& TED**

Legionella:
What you Need
to Know!



TED TUCHALSKI

FRIDAY

Scams & Fraud
Targeting Small
Businesses



JEFF KERSTEN



TAX TALK



Sales & Income
TAX ADVISORY NETWORK



END OF YEAR SALES TAX TIPS

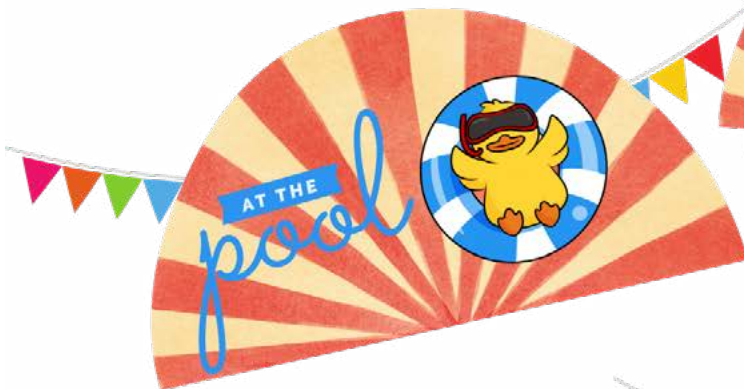
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY, HOLLY HOFFMAN

Sales and use tax does not have a "tax season" because you generally report all year (monthly or quarterly) unless your campground is truly seasonal. So, unlike income tax, you must think about sales and use tax all year long. However, I recommend a little more reflection at the end of the year (if you report on a calendar year basis). A few things you should look for include:

1. Double-check large purchases throughout the year. Did you properly pay tax if the purchase was taxable? A great place to look is at the new purchases on your depreciation schedule. If you're not sure if the purchase is subject to WI sales/use tax and you didn't pay tax on the purchase, you better ask an expert.
2. Verify that you have printed/downloaded actual receipts for all online purchases. These receipts will show items purchased, shipping charges, and sales tax paid. Amazon purchases, subscriptions, online accounts where payments automatically get deducted from your bank account/card for business purposes must have actual receipts showing tax. These electronic invoices are not maintained by the vendor often for longer than 2 years. A sales tax audit goes back 4 years. Without proof that you properly paid sales tax at the time of an audit, you will be assessed the sales tax with interest and penalties.
3. Total all your sales tax return Line 1 amounts (Total Sales) for January through December. This should match total receipts reported on your income tax return - Schedule C, 1120S, etc. Only minor adjustments would make the income tax return amount different but most often these amounts should match. If it doesn't match, this is a red flag for audit. Are you only reporting taxable sales on your sales tax return? Are you not reporting all revenue on Line 1? What items are not getting included - and should any of those revenue items be subject to sales tax?

This is also a great time to bring the Sales Tax Advisory Network onboard to work with you to ensure we are preventing audit and reducing overpayment of tax. As we used to say at Wisconsin Department of Revenue, it is about paying the accurate amount of tax. You don't want to pay too much or too little, neither is good for a business. The Sales Tax Audit Protection Plan will ensure that you are sales/use tax compliant.

Contact Holly Hoffman for more information at holly@salestaxlady.com.



**MEMBER OR CAMPGROUND
REGISTRATION**

**REGISTER TODAY SO WE
CAN PROPERLY PLAN FOR
EVENTS, T-SHIRTS, FOOD,
ETC FOR ALL OUR MEMBER
KIDDOS AND TEENS!**



Keepin' it Legal

Let's be honest. No one loves legal concerns, but we sure do love having access to a 27-year veteran like Mark Hazelbaker, our WACO Attorney, when those pesky legal troubles rear their head. We've created an email specifically for your legal questions at wacolegal@gmail.com. Give the WACO office a call first to vet your question, and Lori can provide direction on the next steps.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Watch for these Topics & More at Convention!

SETTING EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION LEGALLY AND PRACTICALLY

We're all operating businesses in the toughest job market for employers since 1946. The unprecedented labor shortage has driven wage rates to levels unimaginable in 2019. So campgrounds are working hard to find qualified workers when other jobs are offering wages that just a short time ago were being offered to college educated professionals. As you struggle to set wage rates, please be aware that you need to do so with awareness that your decisions might be reviewed by third parties – the U.S. Wage and Hour Division, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission or the Wisconsin Equal

Rights Division are the leading agencies. In this article, I'm going to address why your campground should have a wage schedule, and then, how that schedule affects workampers.

Now, the only rule you have to follow about the amount of wages you pay is the federal or state

WAGE RULES

minimum wage. But we all know that the minimum wage, still \$7.25 an hour, is all but moot. Employers have enormous discretion to set wages to meet market conditions as they judge them. But the decisions you made are subject to second-guessing. Let me explain.

Suppose you made it a practice to ask people you hired the least amount of money per hour they would accept. You interview four people for a campground maintenance job. Each of them comes up with a different number. One says \$15.00; the second, \$16.25, the third \$16.55. You decide to offer each of them the job at that wage rate.

The first consequence of doing that will almost always happen soon after they start. Employees always wind up comparing how much they are being paid. And it is now unlawful (thanks to the National Labor Relations Board) to adopt a rule forbidding employees from discussing their pay rates. When the two employees being paid less find out, they will be upset and hurt. They will want to know why they are being paid less.

If one of the lower paid employees happens to be a member of a protected class, they may do more than wonder. They may be concerned they are being paid less because they are female as opposed to male, or, black or Hispanic as opposed to white. If they filed a complaint against you with the EEOC, you will have the burden of proving there was a reason for paying the employee less. It is a valid defense to say that you relied on the market, but it will take much more effort and expense to vindicate yourself.

For that reason, I strongly urge all employers to have a wage schedule. The schedule

needs to treat like employees alike. That doesn't mean you can't recognize performance. It means you need to have a system that does so consistently.

Accompanying this article is a "SAMPLE PAY SCHEDULE FOR CAMPGROUNDS."

The pay rates in it are completely fictional – I know no one is paying \$8.00 per hour. I deliberately avoided trying to guess what the job market is today. You will need to make your own assessment of what wage rates to use. And you also

WAGE SCHEDULE

should use your own judgment about how much of a raise to give people between steps. I put 5 percent in because it's a round number. Step increases are designed to reward people who are becoming better at their jobs. Employees grow in the position. They learn about your business and customers. They learn skills and become more efficient. Ideally, they mature in the position and become better at customer service. It's worth paying them more to keep them in position and avoid the loss of productivity which results from

hiring a new employee.

In my sample, I set out a hypothetical system for moving employees through these pay grades. I like to let new employees know that if they devote themselves to learning the job, they get a raise to their regular rate. Most new employees simply aren't as productive as they will be with some experience. You can learn a lot from how the new hire responds. If they are indifferent to working toward a raise, they may not be a good choice. It may be that in today's job market, the increases need to be bigger. As young people go from 16 to 21, they change enormously. Their physical capacity and their abilities increase. And there are some tasks you can't assign to 16 or 17 year olds. So, you may need to hold out bigger increases. Just offer them to all employees who demonstrate satisfactory performance.

It's the time of year we begin to focus on the next season. You may be hiring already. I'd like you to evaluate your current system for paying employees. If an investigator from the EEOC asked you to explain why employees were paid differently, could you offer a reason?

SAMPLE PAY SCHEDULE FOR CAMPGROUNDS						
NOTE: THE PAY RATES ARE FICTIONAL -- NOT TO BE TAKEN AS A GUIDE, JUST AN EXAMPLE						
There are 5 % step increases shown.						
Hourly Position	Hire	Regular Rate	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Maximum
Summer Maintenance	\$8.00	\$8.40	\$8.82	\$9.26	\$9.72	\$10.21
Lifeguard	\$9.00	\$9.45	\$9.92	\$10.42	\$10.94	\$11.49
Store Clerk	\$10.00	\$10.50	\$11.03	\$11.58	\$12.16	\$12.76
Housekeeper	\$11.00	\$11.55	\$12.13	\$12.73	\$13.37	\$14.04
CRITERIA FOR ADVANCING FROM PAY GRADE TO PAYGRADE:						
Advance to the regular rate after 60 days of satisfactory work. Each step increase afterward will be granted on completion of a full season of work; for outstanding performance or to meet competitive offers. Employees with equivalent experience may start at the grade their experience warrants..						
YEAR ROUND JOBS -- SALARIED						
Manager	\$20,000.00	\$21,000.00	\$22,050.00	\$23,152.50	\$24,310.13	\$25,525.63
Maintenance Supervisor	\$18,000.00	\$18,900.00	\$19,845.00	\$20,837.25	\$21,879.11	\$22,973.07
Business Manager	\$16,000.00	\$16,800.00	\$17,640.00	\$18,522.00	\$19,448.10	\$20,420.51

WORKAMPER COMPENSATION

Campgrounds are increasingly relying on workampers. Workampers are employees. They are paid part of their compensation through the value of a campsite. A few years ago, my biggest point about workampers was that they had to be paid at least the minimum wage. That's now different. It is that you need to pay them using the same methodology you use for other employees.

Let's say you enter into a workamper agreement (there is a form on the WACO website) with the husband of a couple who will be camping on your campground. The site's seasonal rate is \$3,200. Under the sample wage schedule, you decide the camper has experience which slots him in at the maximum level. That might be, for example, five years' fulltime experience in a maintenance job. To earn the \$3,200, the workamper would have to work 313.42 hours at the \$10.21 rate. That \$3,200 is reported on a W-2, but you do not withhold taxes. The value of in-kind housing provided for the convenience of the employer is not taxable. If the workamper continues to work past the \$3,200 mark, that income is taxable and taxes must be withheld. Make sure workampers understand that.

As always, the WACO hotline is available as a resource!



Mark Hazelbaker, SC
WACO Attorney

**ALL LEGAL HOTLINE QUESTIONS
SHOULD COME TO: 608-525-2327 or
tina@seversonandassociates.com
EMAIL THE OFFICE AND WE WILL ROUTE
ALL REQUESTS!**

**The WACO office also set up a NEW
Hotline JotForm for easier information
gathering - check it out:**



**[https://form.jotform.
com/240223765436051](https://form.jotform.com/240223765436051)**





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ATCP 72 RULE REVISION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

By Ted Tuchalski, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection



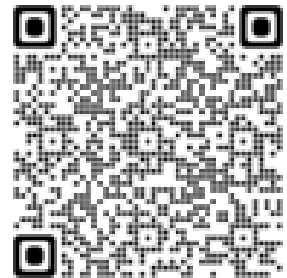
The ATCP 72 Rule Revision Advisory Committee was created to assist the Department in the repeal and recreation process of Wisconsin Administrative Code chapter ATCP 72 - Hotels, Motels, and Tourist Rooming Houses. The committee is tasked with vetting the objectives outlined in the SS 010-23 Scope Statement and developing a revised rule from those discussions.

The committee is comprised of a diverse group of individuals that represent various facets of the lodging industry. Membership includes individuals from the Wisconsin Hotel and Lodging Association, Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners, Wisconsin Realtors Association, Wisconsin County Code Administrators, Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards – Environmental Health, tourist rooming house owners and Department staff. Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. until the rule language drafting process has been completed.

The ATCP 72 Rule Revision Advisory Committee webpage can be accessed at the following link or QR code:

https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/ATCP72RuleRevisionAdvisoryCommittee.aspx

If you have questions, please contact Ted Tuchalski at Thaddeus.Tuchalski@Wisconsin.gov.



CONVENTION SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

DSPS

Department of Safety & Professional Services

WACO continues to work on the relationship between our members and the DSPS, whose main goal is to promote economic growth and stability while protecting the citizens of Wisconsin as designated by statute.

YOU ASKED, WE ARE DELIVERING!

THURSDAY

Getting to Know the DSPS Amusement Ride Program



**ANDREW AMACHER
& TIM CONDON**

We've arranged for
additional DSPS Inspectors
and Section Chiefs to
present information on
Thursday!

**POWTS
APRIL HAMMOND**

**CAMPING UNITS &
ELECTRICAL
KIRK RUETTEN**





*Respectfully submitted by our
Sponsor, CSAW Associates, LLC*

Happy January WACO Members from your friends at CSAW Associates, LLC!

2023 is officially over, which means forms for 2023 are starting to become due. Let's review a list of common tax forms and their due dates courtesy of QuickBooks.

Small business tax forms

The IRS offers several forms that help small businesses file taxes and make deductions. Knowing which ones you need will help you focus on completing these important documents.

Form 940

What it is: Form 940 reports annual Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) tax.

When employees are let go for reasons beyond their control, they receive unemployment insurance. As an employer, you pay into this program and Form 940 determines the amount you contribute. You only need to submit Form 940 once a year, but you need to pay your FUTA tax payments quarterly.

Due date: January 31, 2024

Form 941/Schedule B

What it is: Form 941, also known as Schedule B, reports how much federal income tax and payroll taxes you've withheld from employee paychecks. Form 941 must be filed on a quarterly basis. This form is only required for businesses with employees.

Due dates: January 31, 2024 (Quarterly)

Form 1099

What it is: Send Form 1099 to your independent contractors; this form reports how much you paid them for their services within the tax year.

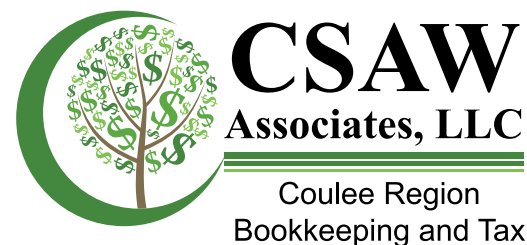
Due date:

1099-NEC - January 31, 2024

Form 1099-MISC, and all other 1099 forms - February 28 if filed on paper, or March 31 if filed electronically.

Form W2

What it is: Send Form W2 to each of your employees; this form reports their annual wages and the amount of taxes withheld from their paychecks. As a small business owner, you're responsible for issuing W2 forms to your employees no later than January 31 and submit-



ting copies to the IRS.
Due date: January 31, 2024

Schedule C/Form 1040

What it is: Schedule C reports how much money your business made or lost in a given tax year. If your business is classified as a sole proprietorship, you need to file Schedule C with Form 1040 each year.

Think of it like this: Form 1099 reports how much each of your independent contractors made, and a W-2 form reports how much each of your employees made. The Schedule C form exists so you can report how much your business made, too.
Due date: April 15, 2024

Form 1065

What it is: Form 1065, also known as the U.S. Return of Partnership Income, declares business income or loss. If your business is a partnership or a limited liability company (LLC), you'll file Form 1065 each year to declare profits, losses, deductions, and credits.
Due date: March 15, 2024

Form 1120

What it is: Form 1120, also referred to as the U.S. Corporation Income Tax Return, reports corporate income or losses. If your business is classified as a regular corporation, you are required to file Form 1120 each year.
Due date: The 15th day of the fourth month after the end of the corporation's tax year

Schedule SE

What it is: Schedule SE calculates the Social Security and Medicare tax (SE tax) that self-employed individuals need to pay. If you're self-employed, you need to file Schedule SE.
Due date: April 15, 2024

Form 8829

What it is: Form 8829, also known as Expenses for Business Use of Your Home, is used to deduct eligible living costs like rent and utilities as business expenses.

Business owners who work from home either partially or full-time will find Form 8829 helpful for identifying which expenses qualify as tax deductible. The IRS is very specific about which costs can be deducted and what constitutes a workspace. This means it's important to do your research or consult a tax professional before claiming deductions.
Due date: April 15, 2024

Ensuring these crucial forms are completed accurately and on time can save you a ton of time and potentially money by avoiding costly fees, fines, and audits.

Looking for help completing your 2023 paperwork? We here at CSAW Associates have a wealth of experience helping new owners get their books set for success as well as helping veteran owners get their books back on track. If you're interested in learning more about how you can set your books up for success or have any other bookkeeping or payroll questions don't hesitate to reach out to us at 608-779-2143 or by email at couleebokkeeping@gmail.com. We love meeting new business owners and working with them to grow their business!



CHRISTINE METCALF

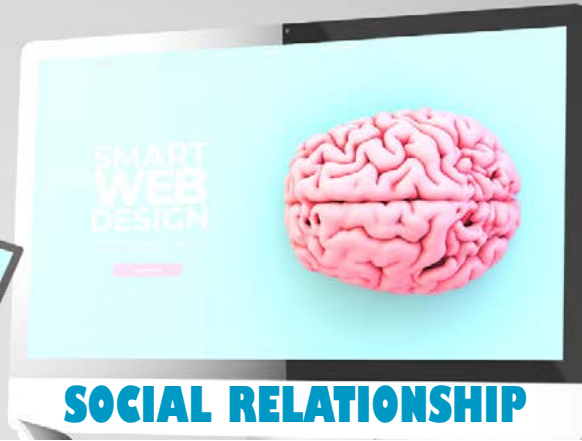
(608) 779-2143

couleebokkeeping@gmail.com



ANDREW METCALF

WACO WEB



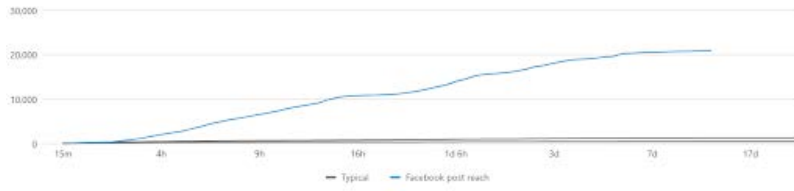
How is my post performing?

Facebook post reach

30,408

Higher than typical

Typically 510-1,121



What's affecting my post reach?

The more interactions your post receives, the higher in Feed it may appear.

Organic interactions

Facebook post reactions

828

Higher than typical

Typically 1-7

Facebook post comments

194

Higher than typical

Typically 0-4

Facebook post shares

110

Higher than typical

Typically 0

How is my post performing?

Instagram post reach

108

Higher than typical

Typically 20-42

What's affecting my post reach?

The more interactions your post receives, the higher in Feed it may appear.

Organic interactions

Instagram post comments

0

Typical

Typically 0

Instagram post shares

2

Higher than typical

Typically 0

Instagram post likes

8

Higher than typical

Typically 1-4

Instagram post saves

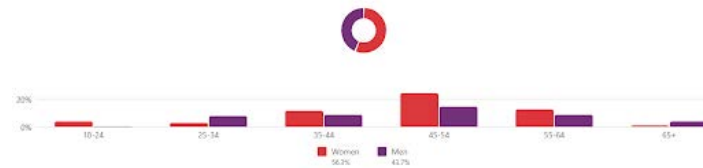
1

Higher than typical

Typically 0

Who am I reaching with this post?

Age & gender



Top Facebook & IG Posts Performance

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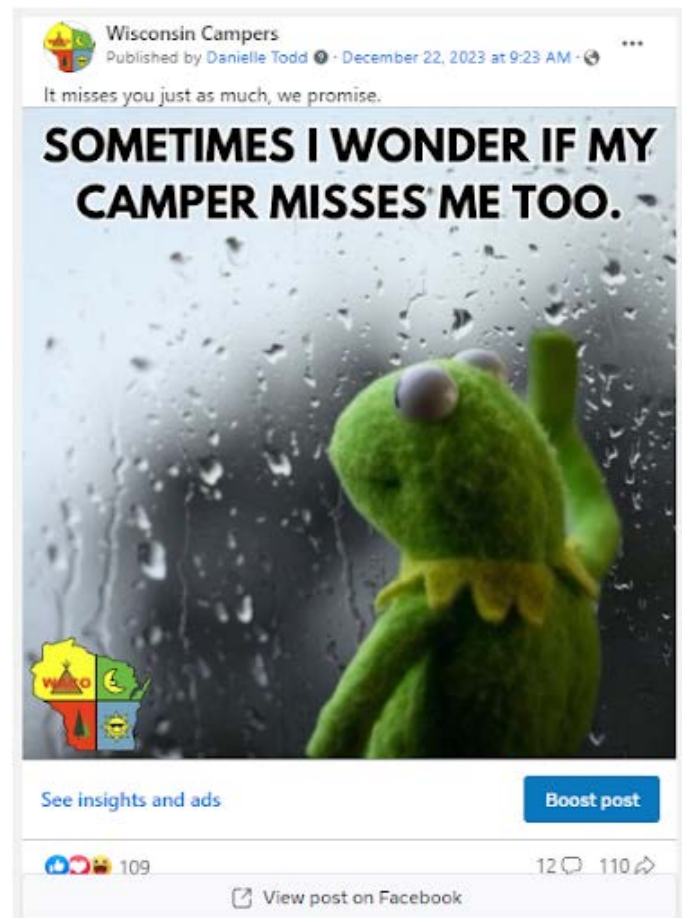
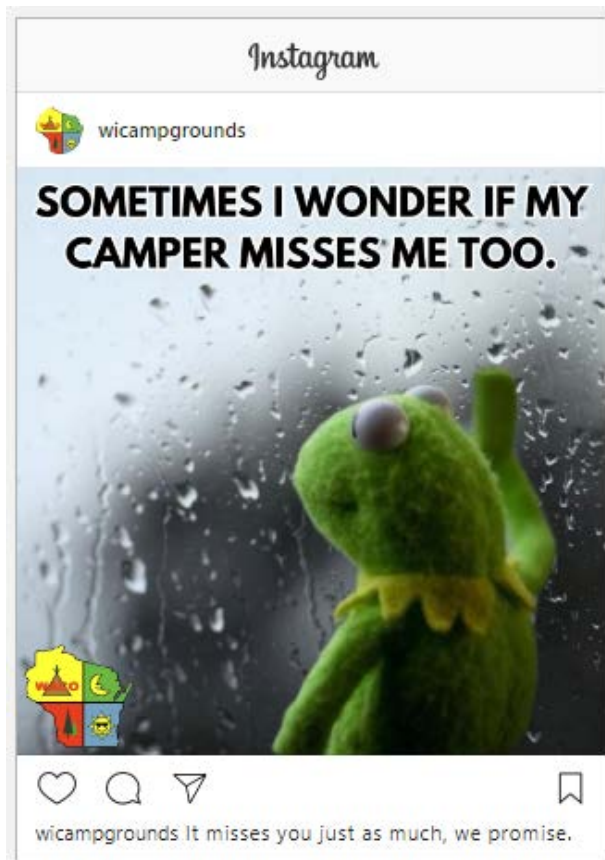


Facebook/Instagram Insights

Total FB current likes: 10,246 (-3 from November)

Total IG current followers: 578 (-1 from November)

Top Facebook Posts in Past 90 Days - Dec 2023



Top Instagram Posts in Last 90 Days / Nov

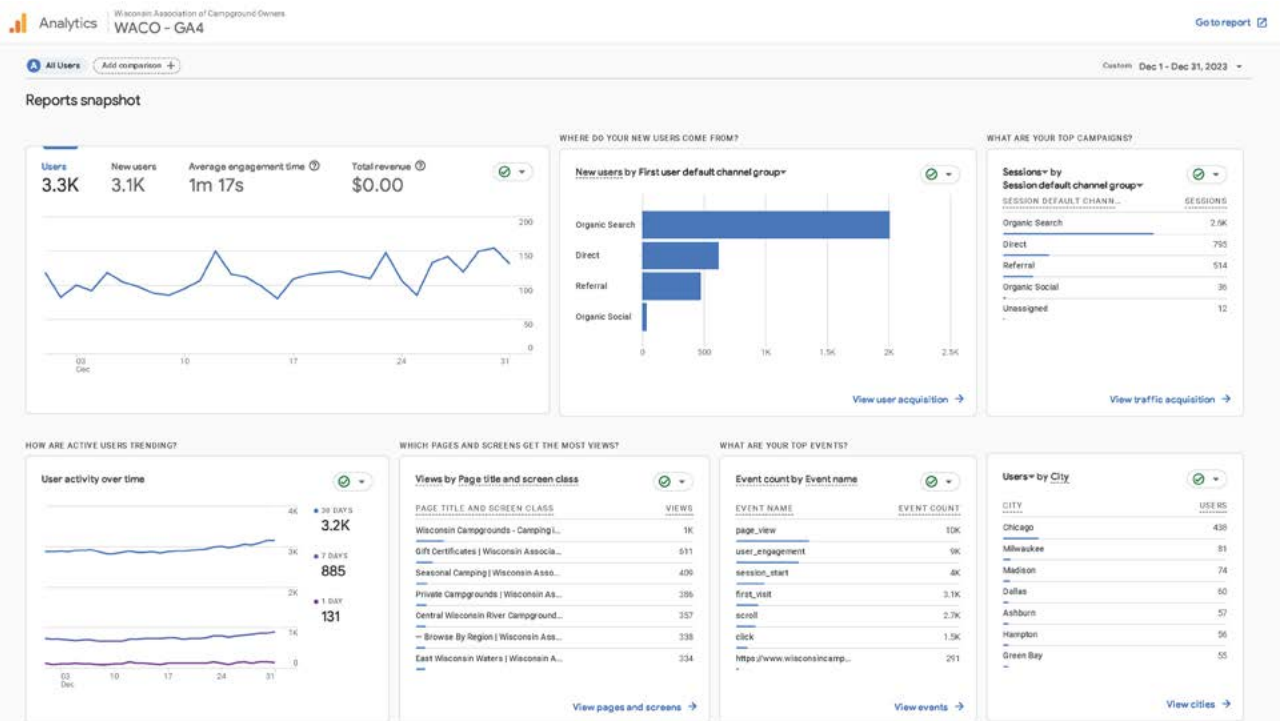


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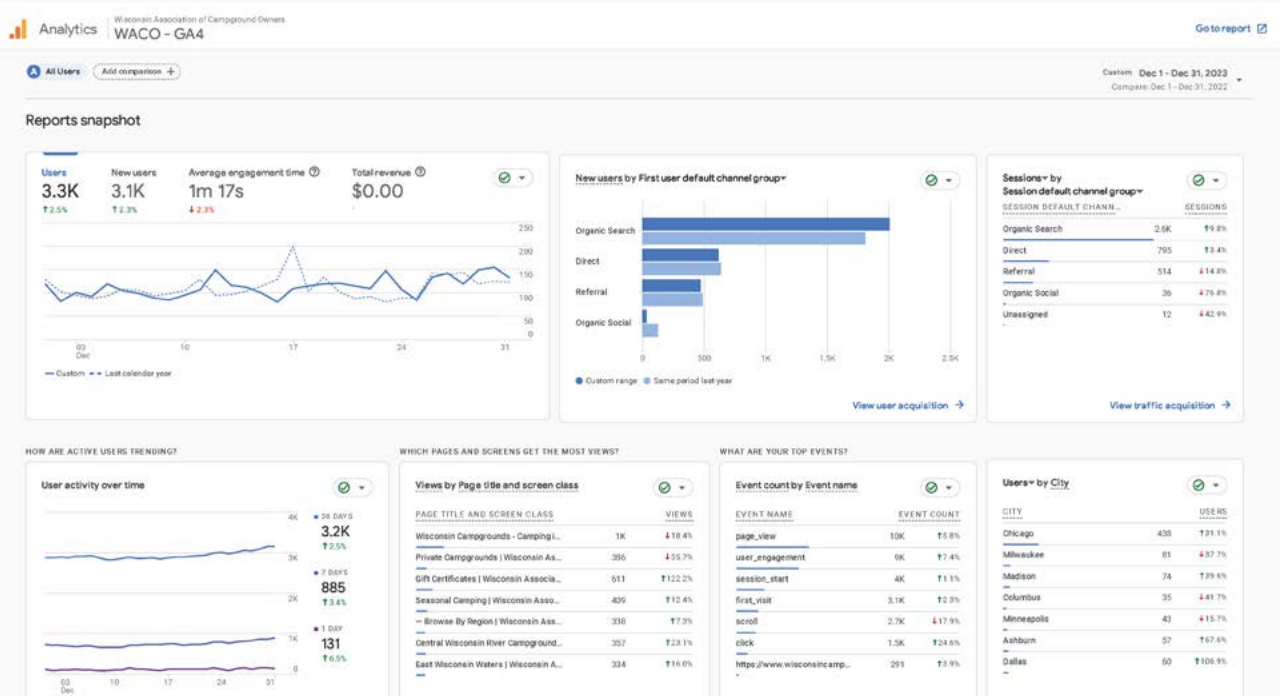


WEB MONTHLY SNAPSHOT

Dec 2023



Dec 2022 vs 2023



WACO WEB



YTD & Last Year Compare

Analytics | WACO - GA4

[Go to report](#)

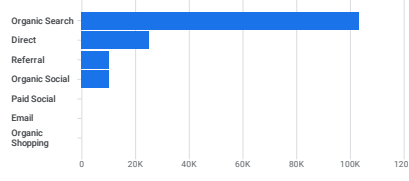
Reports snapshot

Users: 148K, New users: 149K, Average engagement time: 1m 24s, Total revenue: \$0.00



WHERE DO YOUR NEW USERS COME FROM?

New users by First user default channel group



Jan 13, 2022 - Dec 31, 2023

[View user acquisition](#)

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP CAMPAIGNS?

Sessions by Session default channel group

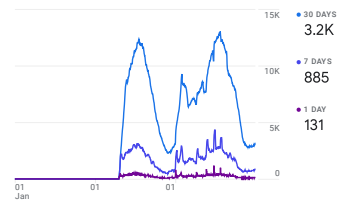
SESSION DEFAULT CHANN...	SESSIONS
Organic Search	129K
Direct	32K
Referral	11K
Organic Social	11K
Unassigned	739
Paid Social	36
Email	13

Jan 13, 2022 - Dec 31, 2023

[View traffic acquisition](#)

HOW ARE ACTIVE USERS TRENDING?

User activity over time



WHICH PAGES AND SCREENS GET THE MOST VIEWS?

Views by Page title and screen class

PAGE TITLE AND SCREEN CLASS	VIEWS
Wisconsin Campgrounds - Camping L...	51K
Private Campgrounds Wisconsin As...	27K
Seasonal Camping Wisconsin Asso...	20K
Central Wisconsin River Campground...	18K
Browse By Region Wisconsin Ass...	17K
East Wisconsin Waters Wisconsin A...	16K
Northwoods Region Wisconsin Ass...	14K

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP EVENTS?

Event count by Event name

EVENT NAME	EVENT COUNT
page_view	510K
user_engagement	441K
session_start	186K
first_visit	149K
scroll	136K
click	72K
https://www.wisconsincamp...	6.5K

Users by City

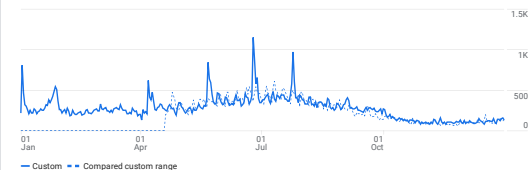
CITY	USERS
Chicago	20K
Milwaukee	9.9K
Madison	3.1K
Minneapolis	2.8K
Appleton	2.2K
Green Bay	1.9K
Denver	1.8K

Analytics | WACO - GA4

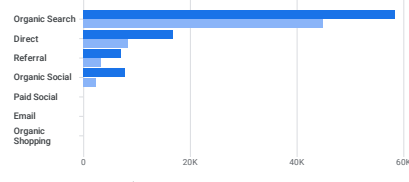
[Go to report](#)

Reports snapshot

Users: 90K, New users: 90K, Average engagement time: 1m 23s, Total revenue: \$0.00



New users by First user default channel group



Jan 13, 2022 - Dec 31, 2023

[View user acquisition](#)

Sessions by Session default channel group

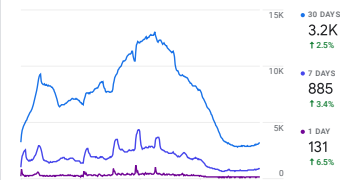
SESSION DEFAULT CHANN...	SESSIONS
Organic Search	73K
Direct	21K
Referral	7.6K
Organic Social	8.7K
Unassigned	491
Paid Social	36
Email	10

Jan 13, 2022 - Dec 31, 2023

[View traffic acquisition](#)

HOW ARE ACTIVE USERS TRENDING?

User activity over time



WHICH PAGES AND SCREENS GET THE MOST VIEWS?

Views by Page title and screen class

PAGE TITLE AND SCREEN CLASS	VIEWS
Wisconsin Campgrounds - Camping L...	32K
Private Campgrounds Wisconsin As...	15K
Seasonal Camping Wisconsin Asso...	12K
Central Wisconsin River Campground...	11K
Browse By Region Wisconsin Ass...	10K
East Wisconsin Waters Wisconsin A...	9.7K
Northwoods Region Wisconsin Ass...	9.1K

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP EVENTS?

Event count by Event name

EVENT NAME	EVENT COUNT
page_view	309K
user_engagement	264K
session_start	113K
first_visit	90K
scroll	88K
click	47K
https://www.wisconsincamp...	4.5K

Users by City

CITY	USERS
Chicago	11K
Milwaukee	4.7K
Madison	1.8K
Minneapolis	1.5K
Appleton	1.4K
Green Bay	1.3K
Denver	1.1K

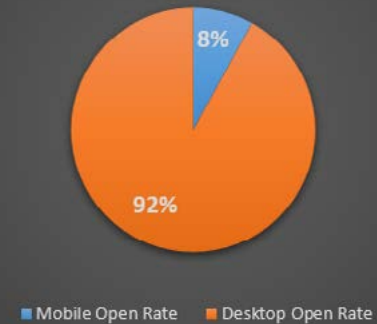
WACO WEB



1,213 Total Sends in December 2023



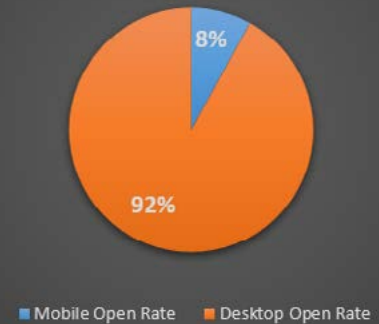
Devices by Open Rate December 2023



1,213 Total Sends in December 2023



Devices by Open Rate December 2023



Top Emails by Open Rate for December 2023

Campaign Name	Sends	Opens	Open Rate	Mobile Open Rate	Desktop Open Rate	Clicks	Click Rate	Bounces	Bounce Rate
December 2023 WACO Newsletter	466	271	65.00%	13.80%	86.20%	111	26.60%	49	10.50%
Property Tax - Assessment Increases Survey WACO Members	248	125	55.30%	7.90%	92.10%	18	8.00%	22	8.90%
2024 Madison RV Show Registration	223	120	58.80%	4.20%	95.80%	10	4.90%	19	8.50%
2023 COE Campground Survey	153	111	76.00%	11.40%	88.60%	49	33.60%	7	4.60%
Exhibitors - Attendee List Coming	123	87	74.40%	2.70%	97.30%	3	2.60%	6	4.90%



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CHECK THIS LISTING OVER and make sure your donation to GBF is **ACCURATE!** We want to get everything correct for Convention!
If you see any errors, email Tina at tina@seversonandassociates.com to make sure we have the proper totals for your park!

<div>  GBF Member Donations 2023 TOTALS FOR YEAR <i>(as of 1-13-2023)</i>  </div>	
Campground	Total Funds Raised
Great River Harbor	\$52,216
Champions Riverside Resort	\$42,450
Backyard Campground	\$30,750
Duck Creek	\$21,880
River Bend RV Resort	\$15,214
Rustic Ridge Resort	\$10,370
Grand Valley Campground	\$8,410
Wilderness Campground	\$8,325
Rivers Edge	\$7,061
Kinney Lake Campground	\$6,939
Stoney Creek	\$6,050
Chapparal Campground	\$5,565
Vista Royale Campground	\$5,000
TJ's Timberline	\$4,230
Yukon Trails / ELS	\$3,518
Scenic Ridge	\$3,500
Buckhorn Campground & Resort	\$3,395
Harbor Village	\$3,000
Chetek River Campground	\$2,975
Pride of America	\$2,745
Glacier Valley Campground	\$2,500
Hickory Hills Campground	\$2,375
O'Neil Creek Campground	\$2,155
Smokey Hollow	\$2,128
Hitts Wildwood Resort	\$2,065
Buffalo Lake	\$2,048
Spur of the Moment	\$2,000
Stand Rock Campground	\$2,000
Jellystone Park Warrens	\$1,840
Badgerland Campground	\$1,800
Maple View Campsites	\$1,731
Lake Arrowhead	\$1,404
Snug Harbor	\$800
Rock Lake Resort & Campground	\$585
Oakdale KOA	\$450
Camping in the Clouds	\$365
Neshonoc Lake / ELS	\$358
McSweet RV Resort	\$300
Evergreen Campsites	\$255
Lake Lenwood Beach and Campground	\$250
Blue Bird Family Campground	\$175
Whiskey Creek Family RV Park	\$126
Grand Total	\$271,303

2024

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Board of Directors

The WACO Board of Directors consists of dedicated members focused on determining the best options for your association. If you have ideas, questions, or want to get more involved, reach out to one of them or the WACO office.



Scott Kollock, President
Vista Royale Campground
skollock@uniontel.net
715-335-6860
2021-2024 1st Term



Bud Styer, Past President
Jellystone Park™ Fort Atkinson
mrbud@budstyerassociates.com
608-592-2128
2023-2024



Ashley Weiss-Wegner,
1st Vice President
Wilderness Campground
awegner@wildernesscampground.com
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2018-2024 2nd Term



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