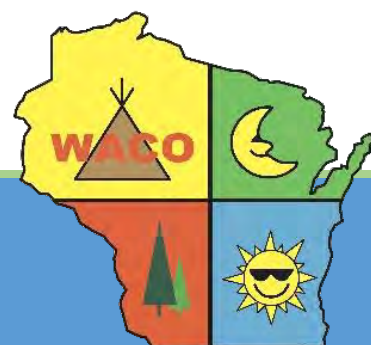


WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF CAMPGROUND OWNERS



61st ANNUAL
WACO
CONVENTION
AND TRADE SHOW
MARCH 13-17, 2024



WACO
Annual Meeting Report
2023-2024



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WACO Board Of Directors



Vista Royale Campground

Email: skollock@uniontel.net | **Phone:** 715-335-6860

2013-2023 | 1st Term 2021-2023 (Running for 2nd Term at March 2024 Annual Meeting)

Scott is a second generation owner of Vista Royale Campground in Bancroft, WI. The park was built by his family 45 years ago and has been ran by them since day one. Scott has valuable long term experience with all aspects of the camping business. Scott loves camping and looks forward to promoting it and WACO into the future. Scott is now serving as President of the WACO Board of Directors.

Scott Kollock – President



Red Barn Campground

Email: mrbud@budstyerassociates.com | **Phone:** 608-592-2128

2012-2023 | Past President

Bud is a member of both State and National professional associations, not only attends National and State conventions, but has spoken numerous times for the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (OHI), Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO), University of Illinois, Lewis University, IL, St. Mary's College, MN, and numerous state wide training courses. Bud is a committee member for the State of Wisconsin DNR, Governor's Small Business Committee, NFIB's Small Business Committee and Wisconsin's Business Voice Small Business Committee. At the local level, he actively participates in the Chamber of Commerce in five different communities in towns/cities near the Madison area.

Bud Styer- Past President



Wilderness Campground

Email: mweiss@wildernesscampground.com | **Phone:** 608-297-2002

2018-2024 | 2nd Term - THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME ON THE BOARD!

I am a proud third generation, future campground owner, of Wilderness Campground in Montello. We have around 390 sites and are in the Central Wisconsin River Country Region. I have been involved in day to day operations of the campground ever since I can remember. My very first memories involve the campground, and the WACO convention as a child. I graduated from U.W. Whitewater with my B.B.A. in Marketing in 2008. In 2010 I moved to Appleton, Wisconsin with my husband and took a position at Kimberly-Clark in the Consumer Services Department. We moved back to Montello in 2013 and I accepted a position in the Marketing Department for Brakebush Bros. In 2014, I decided I had enough experience outside the family business and went back to work at the campground full-time. I feel that my time away from the campground has helped me to realize that my passion and my skillset alike are really for the campground industry. It is a highly demanding, yet extremely rewarding career in which one must wear multiple hats. I truly am looking forward to helping continue the growth of our family campground.

**Ashley Weiss-Wegner
1st Vice President**



Warrens Jellystone / Jenkins Org

Email: Tricia@Jenkinsorg.com | **Phone:** 773-294-3364

2023-2026 | 1st Term

A lifelong Chicago resident, Tricia embraced the camping lifestyle so much that she became a seasonal at one of the Wisconsin parks, immersing herself in campground culture while providing "boots-on-the-ground" support for her team for six months of the year. Tricia holds degrees in Finance and Marketing from Loyola University Chicago and is a current participant in the National School of RV Park & Campground Management. While I bring a wealth of institutional experience to the table, I'm very aware that this industry was mostly built by mom and pop operators whose specialized knowledge remains invaluable. By working collaboratively - sharing information, resources, industry advocacy and best practices – we can continue to see guest satisfaction and financial rewards soar to the betterment of this industry.

**Patricia Lombardo
2nd Vice President**



Merry Mac's Campground

Email: camp@merrymacscampground.com | **Phone:** 815-541-4934

2020-2023 | 2nd Term 2023-2026

Rob owns and operates Merry Mac's Campground with his wife Nichole for the past 4 years. They were avid "weekend" campers for numerous years and were then seasonals at Merry Mac's for 5 years before purchasing the campground. For the prior 10 years, Rob was a propane manager for a local cooperative in northern Illinois and oversaw all aspects of the LP side of the business for their 7 locations. While in that position he was on the Illinois Propane Gas Association board. During his 7 years on the IPGA board, 5 of them he served in all positions on the Executive Board.

**Rob Brinkmeier
3rd President**



Scenic Ridge Campground

2022-2025 | 1st Term

Julie is the owner of Scenic Ridge Campground in Whitewater, WI. She, along with her family, has owned and operated the campground for 22 plus years. Growing up in a large family and running a business with her siblings, as she would put it, has been quite an adventure but extremely rewarding. Family is very important to her so being able to pass along the rewards of providing other families a safe and enjoyable place to create those memorable family moments is what she believes makes her job and this industry so special. When not tending her responsibilities at the campground, she enjoys spending her time crafting, painting and decorating. In turn, she uses these talents to create a visual atmosphere throughout the campground.

Julie Michaels – Treasurer



Stoney Creek RV Resort

Email: deneen@stoneycreekrvresrot.com | Phone: 715-597-2102

2021-2023 | (Running for 2nd Term at March 2024 Annual Meeting)

I started my campground career in high school working the front desk at Jellystone Park in Warrens, WI. I worked my way up to management. Over my 25+ years at Jellystone, I was the Director of Entertainment and Retail Services. I was monumental in growing the recreational program, developing a large, award-winning retail store, and running the day-to-day operations at the 1,000 site campground. In 2014, along with my husband, Brian, and mother, Joyce, we purchased Stoney Creek RV Resort in Osseo, WI. Stoney Creek has 233 sites with a newly finished expansion, with new RV sites, one-acre swim pond with wrap around beach with Wibits, and a new snack bar/retail space serving homemade pizza, hard scoop ice cream, Island Oasis Drinks, groceries, beach supplies and more. We are approaching our 10 year anniversary at Stoney Creek and can't imagine a better business to run with my family and share with generations to come. I have thoroughly enjoyed my last 3 years on the WACO board, and over 30+ years as a WACO member; I hope to continue to serve this organization and industry that I truly love. member of WACO for over 30+ years, she is excited to share her knowledge and passion with the industry.

Deneen Pedersen – Secretary



Lake Lenwood Beach & Campground

Email: mmdricken@gmail.com | Phone: 262-334-1335

2023-2025 | 1st Term

Mike Dricken and his wife, Mary, along with their three kids, have been operating Lake Lenwood Beach and Campground since 1983. My parents were charter members of WACO and started the campground in the early 60s. Since then, Mike has grown up, raised his children in, and purchased the campground. WACO was set up to represent only private parks, and Mike feels it should stay that way. Mike and his family operate a smaller park with limited staff, so can relate to and help represent smaller parks of the WACO membership. WACO has given so much to me, and he would like to give back!

Mike Dricken – Director



ELS / Lake of the Woods

Email: Christina_Kornetzke@equitylifestyle.com | Phone: 602-339-0698

2023-2025 | 1st Term

Christina has been with ELS for 9 years in their RV portfolio. Prior to EIS she was in the Hotel Resort Industry for over 25 years. During that time in the hotel industry, she sat on the tourism board for Sheboygan County for five years and Glenwood Springs, CO for three years. She and her husband are both WI natives and raised their family of five children in the Kiel area. They now live in the Elkhart Lake area and are busy in our spare time with seven grandchildren. They are outdoor enthusiasts and love to spend our free time traveling and exploring the great outdoors on backpacking trips.

Christina believes her experience will provide this board with some valuable insight into Campground operations and Wisconsin guidelines and statutes that will affect our industry.

Christina Kornetzke – Director



CCO at C&D Hospitality

Email: camp@riversedgewisconsin.com | Phone: 715-344-8058

2021-2023 | (Running for 2nd Term at March 2024 Annual Meeting)

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.

Sarah Krause - Director



WACO Board Of Directors



Duck Creek Campground

Email: duckcreekrcrg@frontier.com | **Phone:** 608-429-2425

2021-2023 | 1st Term (Running for 2nd Term at March 2024 Annual Meeting)

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.

Kristi Mlodzik – Director



Indian Trails Campground

Email: camp@indiantrailscampground.com | **Phone:** 608-429-3244

2022-2025 | 1st Term

Indian Trails Campground and the camping industry have been my heart and passion. My grandparents Chuck & Betty Meierdirk founded Indian Trails Campground in 1965, and I am a 3rd Generation Owner. Matt's family has camped at Indian Trails for almost 40 years, and yes, I married a camper boy. Matt ended his 25-year engineering career to be a full-time campground owner, and working together is challenging and rewarding at the same time. We have two boys who have been fortunate to grow up at the campground, just as I did. My grandparents joined WACO right from the start, and our campground has benefited so much from being a part of WACO. In 2007 & 2008, I attended the RV Park and Campground Management School at the Oglebay National Training Center in Wheeling, WV. I am passionate about our industry and will give 110% to the WACO board, just as I do my own business. I want every campground to succeed, and I wish you all the best. Make it a great 2024 season!

Tiffany Pargman – Director



Grand Valley Campground

Email: info@grandvalleycampground.com | **Phone:** 920-229-2001

2018-2024 | 2nd Term – THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME ON THE BOARD!

Mark owns and operates Grand Valley Campground with his family Joan, Brad, Ben and Jackie. Grand Valley Campground has 221 sites and is located in Kingston WI. Mark grew up in a family business with his parents owning Stefan Auto Body. He worked at Stefan Auto Body until he was 18. He then went into manufacturing for 24 years. In 2005 Mark and Joan purchased Grand Valley Campground. Mark enjoys hunting, fishing, cars, and working at the campground. Mark grew up camping with his family and enjoys camping with his family to this day.

Mark Stefan – Director



Lake Arrowhead Campground

Email: adam@lakearrowheadcampground.com | **Phone:** 920-295-3000

2016-2023 | Chair Elect – Legislative

Adam has been in the camping industry all his life, starting with weekend garbage collection at the age of 9 and advancing to full time Manager at 17. In 2009 he became co-owner of the Lake Arrowhead and Lakeside Campgrounds in Montello, marking the third generation of family ownership. Adam has undergraduate degrees from Ripon College in Computer Science and Mathematics, and received a Master of Science in Electrical engineering from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. In his free time Adam enjoys being involved in theatre, photography and most of all, he loves to camp. Adam has become a key player in the science of expressing our legislative ideas to people who matter.

**Adam Malsack
Appointed Legislative**



Evergreen Campsites and Resort

Email: evergreencampsites@gmail.com | **Phone:** 920-622-3498

2021-2023 OHI Representative Chair Elect (Now OHI Liaison)

Jim Button has fulfilled his childhood dream of operating and owning Evergreen Campsites & Resort. Jim has been in the industry for 40+ years and has owned Evergreen Campsites & Resort for 22 years. Jim is very passionate about the industry and is an advocate for his state association (WACO) where he currently serves on the BOD. He attends and teaches at conferences, and participates in fall tours and workshops. Jim is also an advocate for his national association (OHI) where he has participated in advocacy day on the hill, attends and teaches at national conferences, graduate from the OHEP program, OHE certifications, 2017-2018 OHI Large/Mega Park of the Year, and 2017-2018 OHI Campground Partner Award, and OHI 2020 Park of the Year & OHI 2020 Green Park of the Year. He is also active on the National Group 20 #4 for the past 10 years. This group is devised of campgrounds throughout the USA striving to be the best they can be. Jim does not do this alone he is married to Dawn Button and has four children: Emily, Joey, Ricky, and Rebecca who have started to join the family business. Jim also is an active volunteer firefighter for Saxeville.

**Jim Button
2023 OHI Liaison**



LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members:

We have had an incredible year working on creating better relationships with the folks who regulate us. This upcoming year will be the time to focus on these relationships and ensure that we do everything possible to contribute to this mission and get on the same page with them. We realize it takes time and effort to create lasting relationships like the one we've created with DATCP. The issue is that most other regulatory groups see a lot of staff rotation - maybe not turnover - but employees moving into various roles. That leaves our Association constantly renewing the relationship. However, it is one of the most critical issues to keep updated on. We must continually understand what is happening and be available to sit at the table with these folks to understand what laws and regulations will impact our membership.

The plan is to work with Mark Hazelbaker and Jason Culotta to train and introduce Tina to navigating legislation. Having someone on our team who understands our needs and requirements is essential to future regulatory requirements. The number one issue for our campgrounds is the ability to expand and continue to run our businesses. We are seeing more and more government involvement on both State and county levels. On the county level, we are working hard to get to know board members and people involved by participating in the Wisconsin County's Association Convention. Last year, we brought in free lemonade, and Gilbert Brown provided himself, Dorsey Levens, and LeRoy Butler to attend the County Association convention. The event was a huge hit and got some attention in a way we have not been able to do before! We will continue to do this and try to do more with the Towns Association. Tina has done a great job pulling together speakers for our Thursday event, providing us with face time for these folks.

Your organization is in great shape overall. Measuring the success of a non-profit organization is a multifaceted process that goes beyond financial metrics, of course. It involves assessing the organization's impact on its mission, the efficiency of its operations, financial health, and ability to engage members, provide benefits, and adapt to changing circumstances. While financial health is vital for sustainability, the impact and effectiveness of the organization's mission are equally crucial. We must examine our mission and align our strategic plan with our organization's programming and core values.

Recognizing things that affect all members brings value and benefits to our membership. We look at the data that tells us the number of members served and how we impact their business and improve the industry. We look at our program effectiveness and track the number of members attending our fall workshops and conventions and those participating in our co-op advertising and benefit programs. We gather feedback and conduct surveys with our members to gauge their satisfaction with our services and their impact on the industry and their business.

Our financial health indicates the organization's financial stability and sustainability. We aim to have enough funds to operate for a year without income if we have to. We are currently well on our way to that. We have recently worked with First National Bank and Trust Company, an organization with a new product to help us access our funds and still make a decent interest rate. In this Companion Program, if you, for example, put in \$100K in a CD, you get a competitive interest rate that allows you to open a companion savings account with matching funds and earn 3.25% on that companion account. This new program helps WACO achieve financial goals by creating revenue streams outside dues. I think our WACO staff does a great job of creating new income streams that help us accomplish enough revenue to make a bit of profit each year and still be sure we are advertising and getting the word out to our guests that WACO campgrounds are the place to bring your families and set up your seasonal site. The other factor is the ability to fundraise through events, grants, and donor programs.



LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Another factor is operational efficiencies, which the WACO office continues to do to increase revenues to our bottom line. We are consistently working towards analyzing program costs, determining if it's something members consider valuable enough to fund, and looking for cost savings. Volunteer engagement is critical to our bottom line. Did you know we have over 1008 hours of volunteers for the convention alone? If we paid just minimum wage, we would have \$7308.00 in costs for the convention alone. Please be sure to thank those folks you see volunteering.

Membership engagement is a large piece of a successful organization. Let's look at the community, industry, collaboration, and partnership levels. If you look at all the associations and partnerships we have added in the past years, it's a ton! The other huge piece is the board's effectiveness in providing oversight, strategic guidance, membership support, fundraising support, and allowing the staff to do the job they are hired for. In other words, they understand how to get out of the way or clear the way so they can do the job. Long-term sustainability is another factor in creating a great organization.

Strategic planning and updating the organization's mission and vision is critical. Succession planning is an effective tool many organizations use and ensures the organization sets a clear path for new staff. This pathway includes developing leadership pipelines, just like our founding fathers did, adding succession plans and strategies for organizational growth. We continue to work on guidelines and best practices in governance and operations. We work very hard to provide open communication to all members, to be accessible, and to provide needed information to all our members.

A great organization achieves industry-recognized accolades from peers and industry experts, and we have certainly obtained that. Comparative analysis benchmarks how we are doing versus other industries, comparing our organization's performance to similar states and identifying our strengths and areas for improvement.

Peer learning and mentors, engaging with other organizations, attending conferences, and participating in networks to share best practices and learn from others make a strong organization. WACO does a great job of this with minimal investment from IAAPA, Gift shows, KOA, OHI, COE, and many other organizations where we learn and bring back information to our members. One of the keys to success is our ability to adapt and be innovative.

Our flexibility in budgeting time, money, and resources allows us to become a true leader in the industry. If we see a great advertising opportunity that is good for everyone, unlike some organizations, we can take advantage of it because we have the flexibility to respond quickly. We can effectively watch changes and react appropriately. Your board works hard to create the time our WACO staff needs to focus on developing creative and impactful solutions. That adaptability is critical to keeping relevant in the industry.

I am proud to be the President of this thriving organization! Thanks to each and every one of you for contributing to this success.

Scott Kollock

Vista Royale Campground

5 Email: skollock@unionntel.net Phone: 715-335-6860





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

Dear Members:

Thank you so much for a fantastic year! We have accomplished quite a bit as a team! Looking at other organizations, I am consistently grateful for our WACO family. The industry is a bit jealous of the WACO family, and I am thankful for your patience and understanding as we grow. I have genuinely watched this organization become a definite leader in our industry. It is like watching your baby grow up and become successful.

One of the ways we do this is by having a board of directors with diverse personality styles. It is vital to always and forever be sure you have people on your board with new, exciting ideas and people who understand and know the history. We need thinkers who can see what to do financially and feelers who understand how members will react to decisions and benefits. Most importantly, you need a great leader who invests the time and energy necessary to create this kind of organization. Please believe me when I say this is the hardest you will ever work for free! The president takes responsibility for running the board and the WACO staff to be sure we are all focused on tasks and projects that improve the industry. I watch other associations struggle with this, constantly working on personality issues and problems, and it consumes their time. Our collaboration with multiple personality types is why we can develop more programs, create more advertising, and spend more time working on the things that make a difference to our bottom line and the organization's success! Everyone honestly would do anything we ask them to do! You all know we certainly do ask! You don't have to do something all the time, and it's incredible to know we have various skills to lean on when the time comes! Every member makes a difference, even if it's just one thing you contribute. We have members who get their legislators involved when necessary because they took time to develop a local relationship. Members are willing to pull a team together during a disaster. Members who will help mentor new members, members who give seminars, and members who share convention ideas. It does take just a little from every person to make us successful!

I want to give a "shout-out" to all the staff members who make our convention happen and work for our members. It's wild to think we have been running a Kids Kamp for over 20 years! In one of the first post-convention surveys, we asked members why they weren't attending. Number one response: "We have kids and can't leave them without care for a week." We fixed that issue, and it worked amazingly well. It's due to our fantastic volunteer staff that we can do this. Every other organization that makes it happen must hire help, and that's an expensive Kamp! I am grateful to all the people I have in my life, family, and friends who continuously make this happen year after year. I'm thankful that Tina works on new plans to research what kids like to do. If you don't have kids, you forget about the activities that keep them engaged and having fun. Our convention makes money because you all work hard at bringing baskets and finding unique items that make it fun for everyone! Thanks to all of you who bid on the auction items! We cannot make things happen without that!

I am very proud of the team we are building at WACO. Your staff is growing and developing, so we can contribute more to the industry! We are working with every association we can to obtain cutting-edge data and information to bring back to you!

***Thank you for allowing us to serve you for over 27 years.
We are thrilled to be part of such a dynamic organization,
and your help and support have been tremendous. We are
indeed lucky to be among the best!***

Lori Severson
W: 608-525-2327
C: 608-792-5915
E: lori@seversonandassociates.com



ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE

Saturday March 16, 2024

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA:

- **Scott Kollock – Call to order**
- **Secretary's Report - Approvals**
- **Treasurer's Approvals**
- **Nominations from the floor**
- **Nominations**
- **Elections for Board**
- **PAC Report**
- **OHI Update**
- **Any other new business**
- **Adjourn**

Celebration & WACO Updates

Board Member Recognition

- ✓ Check in
- ✓ Get your ballot
- ✓ One ballot per campground

2023 ANNUAL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MARCH 16, 2023
HOLIDAY INN & CONVENTION CENTER
1001 AMBER AVENUE
STEVENS POINT, WI 54481
(715) 344-0200

SECRETARY REPORT



WACO Board of Directors Annual Meeting
Saturday, March 18, 2023 | 8:00 am

Holiday Inn & Convention Center: 1001 Amber Avenue, Stevens Point, WI
Lori Cell: 608-792-5915 | Tina Cell: 608-386-3673 | Danielle Cell: 608-386-0752
Mission Statement: To Promote & Protect the Camping Experience

Antitrust Statement – It shall be the policy of the Association to be in strict compliance with all Federal and State Antitrust laws, rules and regulations.

Call to Order: 8:05 am – call meeting to order

Attendees:

- Bob Weiss, Pete Hagen, Jim Button, Tiffany Pargman, Scott Kollock, Mark Stefan, Rob Brinkmeier, Brian Huth, Sarah Krause
- Office attendees/guests: Lori Severson, Tina Severson, Carla Brown, and Mark Hazelbaker
- Members, checked in and received ballot – see list.

Addressed the flag and said pledge of allegiance.

Review Agenda: Rob – motioned to accept agenda as written, Jim second, all approved, none opposed – Agenda approved

Secretary Report: reviewed by membership, Jim motion to approve, Mark 2nd, all approved, none opposed – Annual meeting report from March 2022 approved.

Treasury Report reviewed by group and noted:

- Challenges the Board sees in the 2023 numbers and budget:
 - Print market is volatile – costs for that, we are using our best estimate;
 - May need to make changes re: the Directory and the Printing Program – impacts Distribution Program
 - May see total numbers on year down compared to years past; people may not feel they need to do as many shows – definitely seeing a downturn in those programs.
- Made \$15,843.39 in 2022
- Proposed budget for 2023 included in the report – showing a balanced budget
 - Mark motions to approve financial/treasury report, Tiffany 2nd, none opposed, all approved – Treasury Report & 2023 Budget approved.

Nominees from ballot introduced. Called for nominations from the floor – 3 times – no nominations from the floor, three open positions – unanimously elected 3 board members as follows:

- Christina Kornetzke, ELS/Lake of the Woods
- Mike Dricken, Lake Lenwood Beach & Campground
- Rob Brinkmeier, Merry Mac's Campground

PAC update – Bob Weiss: Slight difference in the transactions and reconciliation – some checks not cashed and didn't – Raised \$14,000 and made contributions to committees valuing \$10,000. Currently

SECRETARY REPORT



have \$11,748.88 in checking account. \$11,030 raised at the PAC auction Thursday night this week at Convention. From the floor – do the politicians we contribute to ask our thoughts and opinions - they absolutely do and take us very seriously.

ARVC Update – Jim Button: Financially stable; Paul Bambei shared information about EV – ARVC has some free tools that can help if you’re looking to add EV to your campground; savings/discounts are beneficial – Kubota; IL is pushing to hire lifeguards at \$22+/hour and Jeff Simms is helping combat things like that in the background to keep our businesses successful and healthy. Sit on the education Board as Chair – bringing back the National ARVC schooling to Olgivy. Highly recommend you look into this for yourself and staff – over 100 students. Scholarships covered some of those students. Encourage those that want to attend, to try and do so. Appreciate your vote in November for Area 3 ARVC Rep. Procedure for voting for ARVC – can do that absentee or in person in Kansas City. The WACO office will get the nomination information from ARVC and then send to membership with absentee ballot.

Bylaw Update:

- Review changes – focused mostly on the definition of a member (pg 1), what we do when a Board member no longer owns a campground (p3) and the ability of the President to appoint non-members to Board positions. (p3)
- Tiffany makes a motion to approve bylaw changes, Jim 2nd. Discussion: would members appointed by the President that are NOT members have the ability to vote? Yes, we feel there should be some skin in the game – we want to keep things open should we need expertise in an area for some reason.
- Rock Lake Lodge & Campground – opposed, all other approved, motion carries, Bylaws approved.

New Business: Called for any additional new business – Mark motion to adjourned and Pete second.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:41 am.

FINANCIALS

2023 Budget to Actuals



Budget vs. Actuals: Budget 2023 - FY23 P&L

January - December 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Income				
4-1020 Convention Income				
4-1021 Auction/Raffles Etc	56,679.00	60,000.00	-3,321.00	94.47 %
4-1023 Booth Fees	98,810.00	75,000.00	23,810.00	131.75 %
4-1024 Classes	4,875.00	4,000.00	875.00	121.88 %
4-1025 Kids Kamp	2,720.00	3,000.00	-280.00	90.67 %
4-1027 Optional Events		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
4-1028 Registrations	79,550.00	50,000.00	29,550.00	159.10 %
4-1029 Sponsorships	72,815.00	72,500.00	315.00	100.43 %
4-1030 Convention Income - inserts-opt	1,800.00	1,000.00	800.00	180.00 %
Total 4-1020 Convention Income	317,249.00	266,500.00	50,749.00	119.04 %
4-1210 Fall Workshop Income	6,330.00	5,250.00	1,080.00	120.57 %
4-1220 Interest Income	210.07	1,000.00	-789.93	21.01 %
4-1230 Internet Income	3,250.00	7,000.00	-3,750.00	46.43 %
4-1240 RV Literature Dist.	22,518.15	25,000.00	-2,481.85	90.07 %
4-1241 Madison Show Booth Inc-Member	4,325.00	9,000.00	-4,675.00	48.06 %
4-1300 Directory Advertising				
4-1301 Directory Advertising Member	111,232.05	110,000.00	1,232.05	101.12 %
4-1302 Directory Advertising Trade Mem	9,906.00	15,000.00	-5,094.00	66.04 %
4-1304 Additional Directory Listing	300.00	1,000.00	-700.00	30.00 %
Total 4-1300 Directory Advertising	121,438.05	126,000.00	-4,561.95	96.38 %
4-1330 Membership Dues				
4-1331 Membership Dues - WACO	151,164.72	148,000.00	3,164.72	102.14 %
4-1332 Membership Dues - ARVC	50,051.08	51,000.00	-948.92	98.14 %
Total 4-1330 Membership Dues	201,215.80	199,000.00	2,215.80	101.11 %
4-1400 RV Directory Distribution Inc.	0.00		0.00	
4-1420 Newsletter Ads	0.00	0.00	0.00	
4-1450 Trade Member Dues	41,900.00	26,000.00	15,900.00	161.15 %
4-1470 WACO Gift Certificate Sales	5,497.50	4,000.00	1,497.50	137.44 %
4-1480 The Piggy Back Promo Program		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
4-1485 Member Goodwill Income	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
4-1490 Freight Income (deleted)	0.00		0.00	
4-1610 Video Advertising		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
4-1700 Waco Member Printing Program	35,563.02	30,000.00	5,563.02	118.54 %
Total Income	\$769,496.59	\$710,750.00	\$58,746.59	108.27 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$769,496.59	\$710,750.00	\$58,746.59	108.27 %
Expenses				
5-1000 Advertising & Promotion				
5-1016 Madison Show Expense	2,049.00	9,000.00	-6,951.00	22.77 %
5-1020 Advertising Contract Fee	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
5-1030 Camping Coupons	12,415.00	15,000.00	-2,585.00	82.77 %
5-1040 Directory Distribution	24,735.99	25,000.00	-264.01	98.94 %

FINANCIALS

2023 Budget to Actuals



Budget vs. Actuals: Budget 2023 - FY23 P&L

January - December 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
5-1050 Directory Printing	77,575.74	77,000.00	575.74	100.75 %
5-1060 Internet Expense	13,378.91	10,000.00	3,378.91	133.79 %
5-1070 Printed Materials	25,550.35	20,000.00	5,550.35	127.75 %
5-1095 Show Expense	9,545.69	8,000.00	1,545.69	119.32 %
5-1096 Advertising/Promo. - Other	32,403.06	25,000.00	7,403.06	129.61 %
Total 5-1000 Advertising & Promotion	212,653.74	204,000.00	8,653.74	104.24 %
5-1097 Waco Mmb Printing Prog Expen	37,355.78	35,000.00	2,355.78	106.73 %
5-1300 Board of Directors	2,079.99	2,000.00	79.99	104.00 %
5-1400 Commissions	44,359.00	42,500.00	1,859.00	104.37 %
5-1500 Contract Fee	121,740.96	121,750.00	-9.04	99.99 %
5-1600 Convention Expense				
5-1610 General	144,043.83	140,000.00	4,043.83	102.89 %
5-1630 Speakers	10,135.58	10,000.00	135.58	101.36 %
5-1632 Classes		2,000.00	-2,000.00	
Total 5-1600 Convention Expense	154,179.41	152,000.00	2,179.41	101.43 %
5-1999 ARVC Dues Expense	45,354.79	45,000.00	354.79	100.79 %
5-2000 Credit Card Fees Expense	9,245.91	8,000.00	1,245.91	115.57 %
5-2010 Dues, Subscriptions, Reg.	890.92	2,000.00	-1,109.08	44.55 %
5-2020 Fall Workshop Expense	7,646.68	5,000.00	2,646.68	152.93 %
5-2030 Insurance	1,853.00	2,000.00	-147.00	92.65 %
5-2050 Legal & Professional	21,349.79	20,000.00	1,349.79	106.75 %
5-2055 Accounting Fees Expense	6,447.87	6,000.00	447.87	107.46 %
5-2060 Legislative Expense	7,730.36	5,000.00	2,730.36	154.61 %
5-2070 Member Goodwill	0.00		0.00	
5-3100 Newsletter Expense	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
5-3200 Office Expense	20,489.80	20,000.00	489.80	102.45 %
5-3400 Postage	11,766.40	12,500.00	-733.60	94.13 %
5-5000 Telephone	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
5-6000 Travel Expenses				
5-6010 Air Fare	1,222.21	3,000.00	-1,777.79	40.74 %
5-6020 Lodging	4,172.64	3,000.00	1,172.64	139.09 %
5-6030 Meals	1,555.28	2,000.00	-444.72	77.76 %
5-6040 Mileage	6,062.10	6,000.00	62.10	101.04 %
5-6050 Other Travel Expense	5,239.83	5,000.00	239.83	104.80 %
Total 5-6000 Travel Expenses	18,252.06	19,000.00	-747.94	96.06 %
QuickBooks Payments Fees	0.00		0.00	
Total Expenses	\$732,396.46	\$710,750.00	\$21,646.46	103.05 %
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$37,100.13	\$0.00	\$37,100.13	0.00%
Other Income				
9-5001 Misc. Income/Expense				
Scholarship Income	250.00		250.00	
Total 9-5001 Misc. Income/Expense	250.00		250.00	

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CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

FINANCIALS

2023 Budget to Actuals



WACO

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget 2023 - FY23 P&L

January - December 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Total Other Income	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	0.00%
NET OTHER INCOME	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	0.00%
NET INCOME	\$37,350.13	\$0.00	\$37,350.13	0.00%

FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet 2023



WACO

Balance Sheet

As of January 31, 2024

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1-1190 CCF 356 - CD Act.	105.21
1-1191 CCF Bank Checking 7592	446,005.06
1-1195 United Bank	0.00
1-1200 United Bank-Script Acct	0.00
New CD Nov 23	100,000.00
WACO DMO Checking	0.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$546,110.27
Accounts Receivable	
1-1205 A/R - Severson & Assoc.	0.00
1200 Accounts Receivable	40,518.83
1210 Accounts Receivable-S&H	0.00
1220 Accounts Receivable-Severson	0.00
Total 1200 Accounts Receivable	40,518.83
Due from Bank	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$40,518.83
Other Current Assets	
1-1340 Prepaid Expense	0.00
1-1400 Undeposited Funds	6,791.00
1-1450 Inventory-Script Cards	0.00
1-1500 Prepaid Booth Fees	0.00
1-1551 Prepaid Convention Expense	0.00
Due from VISA	0.00
MHC/Equity Lifestyle Holding Account	0.00
PayPal Holding	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$6,791.00
Total Current Assets	\$593,420.10
Fixed Assets	
1-2000 Fixed Assets	
1-2210 Software	0.00
Total 1-2000 Fixed Assets	0.00
1-2110 Equipment	0.00
1-2115 Equipment Cost	5,432.36
1-2120 Accum Depr - Equipment	-5,432.36
1-2215 Software Cost	295.35
1-2220 Accum. Depreciation - Software	-295.35
Total Fixed Assets	\$0.00

FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet 2023



WACO

Balance Sheet

As of January 31, 2024

	TOTAL
Other Assets	
1-2320 Suspense	0.00
Total Other Assets	\$0.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$593,420.10
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2-1110 Accounts Payable	0.00
2-1111 Accounts Payable-HACH	0.00
Total 2-1110 Accounts Payable	0.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$0.00
Credit Cards	
US Bank #4545	0.00
Total Credit Cards	\$0.00
Other Current Liabilities	
2-1130 Deferred Convention Income	0.00
2-1125 Def Convention Income - Inserts	0.00
2-1126 Deferred Madison Show Booth Inc	0.00
2-1131 Deferred Booth Fees	0.00
2-1132 Deferred Classes	0.00
2-1133 Deferred Kids Kamp	0.00
2-1134 Deferred Meals	0.00
2-1135 Deferred Optional Events	0.00
2-1136 Deferred Registration	0.00
2-1137 Deferred Sponsorships	0.00
2-1138 Deferred Cov. Inc. - Other	0.00
Total 2-1130 Deferred Convention Income	0.00
2-1200 Deferred Memb. Adv.	0.00
2-1201 Def Directory Adv - Trademember	0.00
2-1203 Def Directory Adv - Member	0.00
2-1204 Deferred Addl. Dir. Listing	0.00
2-1205 Deferred Directory Ad Listing	0.00
2-1208 Deferred New Ad Discount	0.00
2-1212 Deferred Inc. - Member Adv	0.00
2-1216 Deferred Piggy Back Program	0.00

FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet 2023



WACO

Balance Sheet

As of January 31, 2024

	TOTAL
Total 2-1200 Deferred Memb. Adv.	0.00
2-1210 Deferred Internet Income	0.00
2-1214 Deferred Video Advertising	0.00
2-1215 Deferred Member Printing Progra	0.00
2-1230 Deferred Member Dues	0.00
2-1120 Deferred Mem. Dues - ARVC	0.00
2-1231 Deferred Mem. Dues - WACO	0.00
2-1232 Deferred Mem. Dues - Other	0.00
2-1235 Deferred New Member Discount	0.00
Total 2-1230 Deferred Member Dues	0.00
2-1260 Deferred Trade Member Dues	0.00
2-1265 Deferred RV Show Booth	0.00
2-1266 Def RV Literature Distrubution	0.00
Deferred Newsletter Advertising	0.00
Due to Gilbert Brown Foundation	125.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$125.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$125.00
Total Liabilities	\$125.00
Equity	
3-1000 Opening Bal Equity	0.00
3-1010 Prior Period Adjustments	0.00
3-1020 Net Assets	41,121.37
Net Income	552,173.73
Total Equity	\$593,295.10
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$593,420.10

2024 Budget

2023



Income

	Actual	Budget	<u>2024</u>
4-1020 Convention Income			
4-1021 Auction/Raffles Etc	56,679.00	60,000.00	60,000.00
4-1023 Booth Fees	98,810.00	75,000.00	95,000.00
4-1024 Classes	4,875.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
4-1025 Kids Kamp	2,720.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
4-1027 Optional Events		1,000.00	1,000.00
4-1028 Registrations	79,550.00	50,000.00	75,000.00
4-1029 Sponsorships	72,815.00	72,500.00	72,500.00
4-1030 Convention Income - inserts-opt	1,800.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Total 4-1020 Convention Income	\$ 317,249.00	\$ 266,500.00	\$ 311,500.00
4-1210 Fall Workshop Income	6,330.00	5,250.00	6,000.00
4-1220 Interest Income	210.07	1,000.00	1,000.00
4-1230 Internet Income	3,250.00	7,000.00	4,000.00
4-1240 RV Literature Dist.	22,518.15	25,000.00	25,000.00
4-1241 Madison Show Booth Inc-Member	4,325.00	9,000.00	5,000.00
4-1300 Directory Advertising			
4-1301 Directory Advertising Member	111,232.05	110,000.00	110,000.00
4-1302 Directory Advertising Trade Mem	9,906.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
4-1304 Additional Directory Listing	300.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Total 4-1300 Directory Advertising	\$ 121,438.05	\$ 126,000.00	\$ 126,000.00
4-1330 Membership Dues			
4-1331 Membership Dues - WACO	151,164.72	148,000.00	150,000.00
4-1332 Membership Dues - ARVC	50,051.08	51,000.00	50,000.00
Total 4-1330 Membership Dues	\$ 201,215.80	\$ 199,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
4-1400 RV Directory Distribution Inc.	0.00		
4-1420 Newsletter Ads	0.00	0.00	0.00
4-1450 Trade Member Dues	41,900.00	26,000.00	35,000.00
4-1470 WACO Gift Certificate Sales	5,497.50	4,000.00	5,000.00
4-1480 The Piggy Back Promo Program		1,000.00	1,000.00
4-1485 Member Goodwill Income	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
4-1490 Freight Income (deleted)	0.00		
4-1610 Video Advertising		1,000.00	0.00
4-1700 Waco Member Printing Program	35,563.02	30,000.00	30,000.00
Total Income	\$ 769,496.59	\$ 710,750.00	\$ 759,500.00
Gross Profit	\$ 769,496.59	\$ 710,750.00	\$ 759,500.00
Expenses			
5-1000 Advertising & Promotion			
5-1016 Madison Show Expense	2,049.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
5-1020 Advertising Contract Fee	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00

2024 Budget



5-1030 Camping Coupons	12,415.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
5-1040 Directory Distribution	24,735.99	25,000.00	25,000.00
5-1050 Directory Printing	77,575.74	77,000.00	77,000.00
5-1060 Internet Expense	13,378.91	10,000.00	15,000.00
5-1070 Printed Materials	25,550.35	20,000.00	25,000.00
5-1095 Show Expense	9,545.69	8,000.00	10,000.00
5-1096 Advertising/Promo. - Other	32,403.06	25,000.00	30,000.00
Total 5-1000 Advertising & Promotion	\$ 212,653.74	\$ 204,000.00	\$ 221,000.00
5-1097 Waco Mmb Printing Prog Expen	37,355.78	35,000.00	35,000.00
5-1300 Board of Directors	2,079.99	2,000.00	2,000.00
5-1400 Commissions	44,359.00	42,500.00	45,000.00
5-1500 Contract Fee	121,740.96	121,750.00	129,000.00
5-1600 Convention Expense			
5-1610 General	144,043.83	140,000.00	145,000.00
5-1620 Kids Kamp			
5-1630 Speakers	10,135.58	10,000.00	10,000.00
5-1632 Classes		2,000.00	2,000.00
Total 5-1600 Convention Expense	\$ 154,179.41	\$ 152,000.00	\$ 157,000.00
5-1999 ARVC Dues Expense	45,354.79	45,000.00	45,000.00
5-2000 Credit Card Fees Expense	9,245.91	8,000.00	9,000.00
5-2010 Dues, Subscriptions, Reg.	890.92	2,000.00	2,000.00
5-2020 Fall Workshop Expense	7,646.68	5,000.00	6,000.00
5-2030 Insurance	1,853.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
5-2050 Legal & Professional	21,349.79	20,000.00	25,000.00
5-2055 Accounting Fees Expense	6,447.87	6,000.00	7,000.00
5-2060 Legislative Expense	7,730.36	5,000.00	10,000.00
5-2070 Member Goodwill	0.00	0.00	0.00
5-3100 Newsletter Expense	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
5-3200 Office Expense	20,489.80	20,000.00	20,000.00
5-3400 Postage	11,766.40	12,500.00	12,500.00
5-5000 Telephone	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
5-6000 Travel Expenses			
5-6010 Air Fare	1,222.21	3,000.00	4,000.00
5-6020 Lodging	4,172.64	3,000.00	4,000.00
5-6030 Meals	1,555.28	2,000.00	2,000.00
5-6040 Mileage	6,062.10	6,000.00	7,000.00
5-6050 Other Travel Expense	5,239.83	5,000.00	6,000.00
Total 5-6000 Travel Expenses	\$ 18,252.06	\$ 19,000.00	\$ 23,000.00
QuickBooks Payments Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Expenses	\$ 732,396.46	\$ 710,750.00	\$ 759,500.00
Net Operating Income	\$ 37,100.13	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Other Income			
9-5001 Misc. Income/Expense			
Scholarship Income	250.00	0.00	0.00
Total 9-5001 Misc. Income/Expense	\$ 250.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Other Income	\$ 250.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Other Expenses		0.00	0.00

2024 Budget



DMO Expenses Paid
 Total Other Expenses
 Net Other Income
 Net Income

0.00		
\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
\$ 37,350.13	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00



RUNNING FOR A 2ND TERM

SCOTT KOLLOCK
Vista Royale Campground

Scott is a second generation owner of Vista Royale Campground in Bancroft, WI. The park was built by his family 45 years ago and has been ran by them since day one. Scott has valuable long term experience with all aspects of the camping business. Scott loves camping and looks forward to promoting it and WACO into the future. Scott is now serving as President of the WACO Board of Directors.



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.

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

I started my campground career in high school working the front desk at Jellystone Park in Warrens, WI. I worked my way up to management. Over my 25+ years at Jellystone, I was the Director of Entertainment and Retail Services. I was monumental in growing the recreational program, developing a large, award-winning retail store, and running the day-to-day operations at the 1,000-site campground. In 2014, along with my husband, Brian, and mother, Joyce, we purchased Stoney Creek RV Resort in Osseo, WI. Stoney Creek has 233 sites with a newly finished expansion, with new RV sites, one-acre swim pond with wrap around beach with Wibits, and a new snack bar/retail space serving homemade pizza, hard scoop ice cream, Island Oasis Drinks, groceries, beach supplies and more. We are approaching our 10 year anniversary at Stoney Creek and can't imagine a better business to run with my family and share with generations to come. I have thoroughly enjoyed my last 3 years on the WACO board, and over 30+ years as a WACO member; I plan to continue to serve this organization and industry that I truly love.



BEN STEFAN

Grand Valley Campground

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.



LEANNE GIECK

Skillet Creek Campground

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 VP 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.



2024 FALL WORKSHOPS

SEPT

10-11

OCT

8-9

SIGN UP AT

CONVENTION

20



ABOUT PAC

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 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!

WACO PAC Report for 2023

The Jan 1st 2023 beginning balance was \$ 11,748.88. The ending balance for 2023 was \$17,586.67. Between fundraisers and donations, \$11,350.00 was raised for the PAC Fund last year. Awesome job everyone and many thanks. We made contributions to committees of \$10,000. We also had an annual fee from US bank of \$12.21. (Register report of all transactions included).

2023 wasn't a big election year in Wisconsin, however it is still important to keep in touch with our legislators, especially those that go out of their way to support tourism. 2024 will be a particularly important year with many seats up for grabs. We need to get a lot of work done early this year.

In the last few years, we have made some big strides in our PAC fund. We have been able to make some substantial contributions and it is all because of continued membership support. Trust me the candidates we have supported know who we are and come to us looking to see what they can do to help our industry. 2024 is going to be a big election year, there have been many crucial issues affecting how we as campground owners conduct business. It is more important than ever to have our voices heard and understood by the lawmakers of our state.

All candidates we contributed to were chosen by our board as those that have helped or are willing to help the tourism industry in Wisconsin. We are always open to suggestions from our members, If you know of a legislator or candidate in your area that is helpful with issues affecting tourism related businesses or promoting tourism, please let the board know so we can help keep these officials in office.



Register Report of All Transactions

US Bank Checking

1/1/2023 Through 12/31/2023

Num	Date	Payee	Category	Amount	Running Balance
Opening Balance as of 1/1/2023					11,748.88
Month Ending 3/31/2023					
	3/31/2023	pac fund raisers	fundraiser	7,030.00	18,778.88
Total Month Ending 3/31/2023				7,030.00	
Month Ending 4/30/2023					
	4/19/2023	pac fund raisers	fundraiser	3,420.00	22,198.88
	4/19/2023	US Bank	Bank Charges	(12.21)	22,186.67
	4/28/2023	pac fund raisers	fundraiser	900.00	23,086.67
Total Month Ending 4/30/2023				4,307.79	
Month Ending 8/31/2023					
1379	8/22/2023	Testin for Senate	contribution	(1,000.00)	22,086.67
Total Month Ending 8/31/2023				(1,000.00)	
Month Ending 12/31/2023					
1380	12/22/2023	Testin for Senate	contribution	(500.00)	21,586.67
1381	12/22/2023	Glenn Grothman for Congress	contribution	(500.00)	21,086.67
1382	12/22/2023	Jaque for Senate	contribution	(500.00)	20,586.67
1383	12/22/2023	jon Plumber for Assembly	Household	(500.00)	20,086.67
1384	12/22/2023	Committee to elect Joan Ballweg	contribution	(500.00)	19,586.67
1385	12/22/2023	Cory for Senate	contribution	(500.00)	19,086.67
1386	12/22/2023	Friends of Swearingen	contribution	(250.00)	18,836.67
1387	12/22/2023	Kitchens for Assembly	contribution	0.00	18,836.67
1388	12/22/2023	Nancy for Wisconsin	contribution	(250.00)	18,586.67
1389	12/22/2023	Kitchens for Assembly	contribution	(500.00)	18,086.67
1390	12/22/2023	Krug for Assembly	contribution	(500.00)	17,586.67
Total Month Ending 12/31/2023				(4,500.00)	
Grand Total				5,837.79	17,586.67



NEW NAME SAME GREAT ASSOCIATION

Not just for today but the future of tomorrow - committed to our membership!

**OHI is dedicated to its MEMBERS!
OHI is membership FOCUSED and DRIVEN.**

Your National Association stands by you. OHI has supported you since the 1960s, stood by you in the 1990s, and continues to be here for you not just today, but into the future.

Don't miss out on your new member benefits!

UPCOMING OHI EVENTS

- **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!

SAVE THE DATE

The Outdoor Hospitality Conference and Expo is the industry's premier show focused on possibility-driven professional development and networking to help you grow your business. Learn from industry-leading experts, network with your peers, engage with the best in the business on the expo floor – and so much more.



Save the Date for OHCE2024

**November 4-7
Oklahoma City, OK**

Our goal is your success, and we make sure you get there with unparalleled access to exclusive benefits.

As a member, you gain access to an array of exclusive benefits designed to propel your business (or potential new business) to new heights. From professional development resources, networking opportunities, vetted partners, member-only discounts, industry-tailored marketing tools, and advocacy at local, state, and national levels, the commitment to your success is in everything we do and offer.

**More INFO:
<https://ohi.org/membership/member-benefits/>**



**Report prepared by:
Jim Button**



OHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joe Moore, CPO, OHE (Chair) Moore's Campground Consulting

Jim Button, OHE (Vice Chair) Evergreen Campsites

Charles Amian, CPO, OHC (Second Vice Chair) Pismo Coast Village RV Resort

Bert Davis, OHC (Immediate Past Chair) Dells Camping Resorts

Jeff Hoffman (Treasurer) JAH Consulting

Brian Saunders, OHM (Secretary) Pinewood Lodge Campground

Robert Bouse, Travel Resorts of America

Kathy Dyer, Maine Campground Owners Association

Jon Gould, Treehouse Communities

Tyler Grim, Canyon Country Campground

Barb Krumm, CPO, OHC Ocean Lakes Family Campground

Karen Kymer, Kymer's Camping Resort

Ed Miller, Rush No More RV Park, Resort, Cabins & Campground

Michael Moore, CTE AGS Guest Guides

Terry Munoz, CPO, OHC The Retreat RV & Camping Resort

Lance Pitre, Lakeview Park & Beach

John Sheedy, Park Brokerage

Kitty Winship, OHP Papoose Pond Family Campground

Jed Wood, Blue Rocks Campground

OHI'S YOUNG PROFESSIONALS HAVE TWO NEW LEADERS AS WELL, WHO ARE READY TO LEAD THIS POSITIVE AND IMPACTFUL GROUP INTO THE FUTURE:

- **Erica Edmonds, Professional Development Committee Lead,** Thousand Palms RV Resort (FL)
- **Ashley Migliaccio, Co-Chair,** Hidden Acres Family Campground (CT)

Vision

A richly diverse Outdoor Hospitality Industry, thriving because of the work we do together, for the benefit of all who enjoy the outdoors.

Mission (Proposed)

To empower **RV parks, campgrounds, and glamping businesses** with the community, resources, professional development, and legislative advocacy needed to ensure successful futures for all Outdoor Hospitality Industry businesses.

Core Values

Authenticity | Actionable Leadership | Collaboration | Inclusion



Strategic Priorities

INFLUENCE:

We are the most trusted and influential advocate for the advancement of the outdoor hospitality industry.

GROWTH:

We promote outdoor hospitality and recreation to drive business for the industry.

KNOWLEDGE:

We elevate the outdoor hospitality industry through professional development, research, & community.

LEADERSHIP:

We champion the outdoor hospitality industry with our expertise, events, & resources.

Strategic Priorities



INFLUENCE

We advance the outdoor hospitality industry as the most trusted and influential advocate for outdoor hospitality.

WE WILL

Monitor local, state and national issues to protect the outdoor hospitality industry from burdensome legislative and regulatory outcomes and keep the future of outdoor hospitality in owners' hands everywhere.

Influence and educate policymakers through strategic coalitions and grassroots advocacy.



GROWTH

We promote outdoor hospitality and recreation to drive business for the industry.

WE WILL

Inspire adventuring customers to discover Outdoor Hospitality businesses and destinations to create memorable experiences.

Share stories of adventuring customers creating exceptional & memorable experiences at Outdoor Hospitality businesses.



KNOWLEDGE

We elevate the outdoor hospitality industry through professional development, research, & community.

WE WILL

Provide relevant data and research to help members succeed and meet the moment for their adventuring customers.

Pave the road for a sustainable and improved industry through best practices.



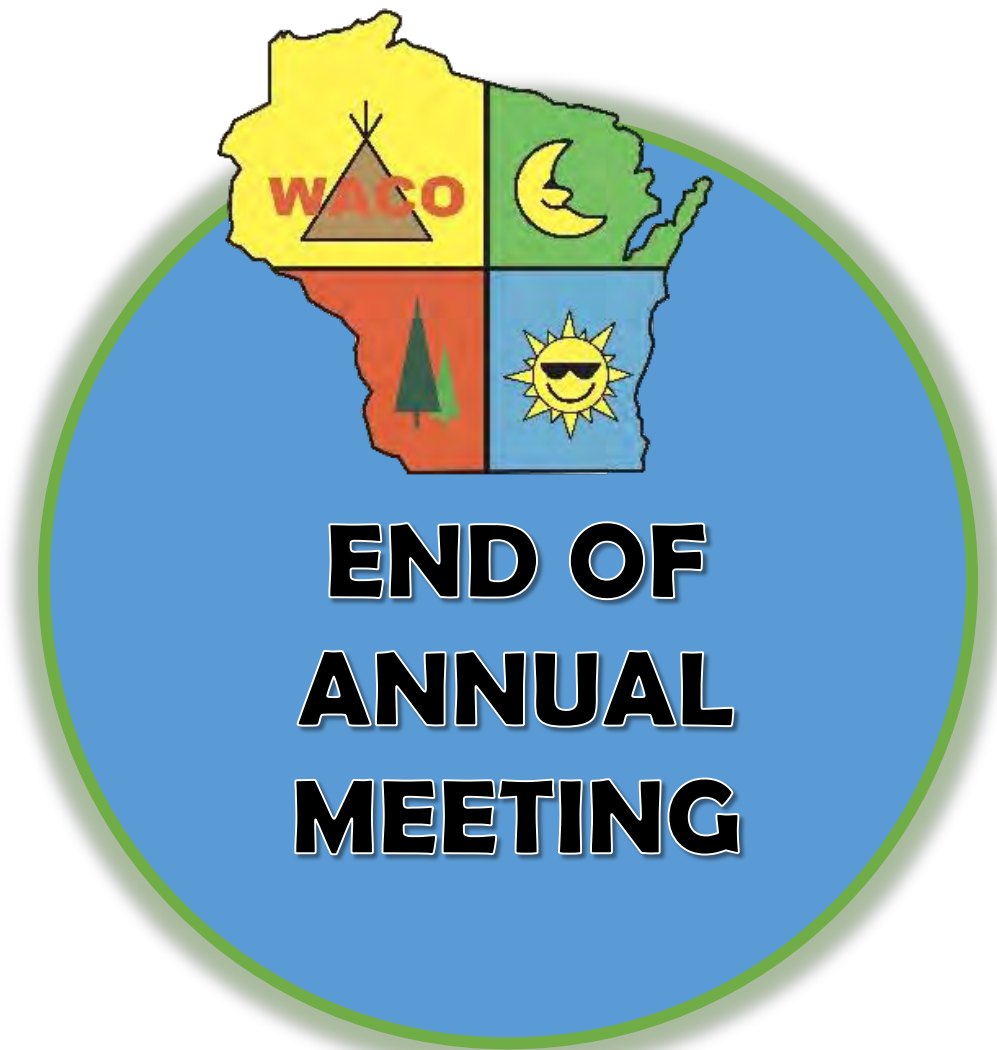
LEADERSHIP

We champion the outdoor hospitality industry with our expertise, events, & resources.

WE WILL

Offer ample opportunity for members to grow through tools and training to establish, sustain, and improve their individual Outdoor Hospitality destinations as part of a greater collective.

Foster a culture of philanthropy to support programs such as disaster relief grants, professional development and scholarships through the OHI Foundation.

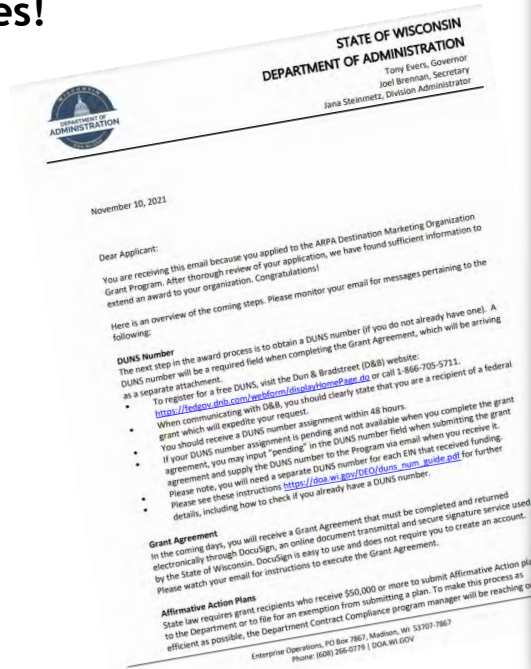


**Please read on for the full Annual
Report from the WACO Office &
Board of Directors**



MARKETING

AWARDED \$56,000 in DMO GRANT FUNDS in 2021 continued into 2023 - check out the Facebook Contests we ran with a portion of the funds on the following pages!



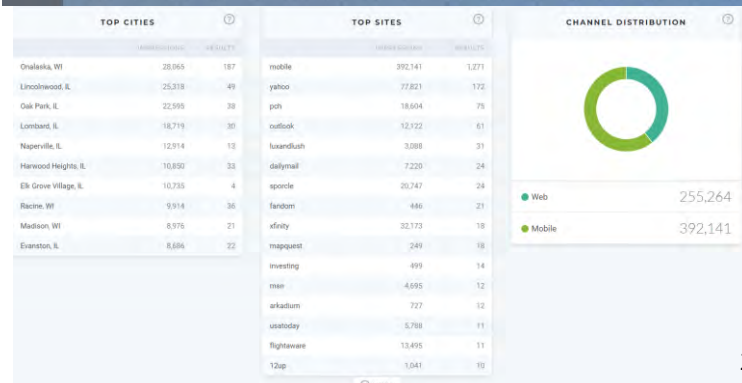
WACO was awarded \$56,000+ in the form of a Destination Marketing Organization Grant.

These funds are FREE money that our organization can utilize to promote to NEW guests, NEW campers, NEW customers to your campgrounds in 2022 & 2023. Reminder – these funds had to be focused on bringing people TO Wisconsin, so we targeted MN, IL, and IA.

- WACO Specific App for Campers
- SEO and Google Upgrade Package
- eNews Ads with Travel WI
- Distribution of Directory Nationwide with Anderson Brochures

VIVIAL/THRYV Digital Ads, 100K Impressions Targeting website and IL (have adjusted to various regions including IA and MN

VIVIAL/THRYV Digital Ads, 10K Impressions Targeting website and MN – adjusted to various location in MN





MARKETING

A portion of the DMO Grant funds WACO was awarded went towards Facebook Contests, which were geared toward expanding our reach to neighboring states and increasing engagement...and boy, did they work! We are thankful for Danielle being so creative and always coming up with new ways to get people on our page and keep them there!

WISCONSIN CAMPERS SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST REPORT - MAY 2023

DMO Grant Marketing Contest

- Contest:** Share your best camping photo to be entered to win.
- Prize:** Two winners will be chosen to win \$500 in WACO bucks each
- Ad Spend:** \$32.25 per day for 31 days - total of \$999.75
- Ad Copy:** "Share your best camping photo and you could win \$500 to spend on your next Wisconsin camping adventure! Two winners chosen!"
- Placements:** This ad will appear on Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger
- Graphics:** Facebook allows up to 5 graphics per ad - so I have the attached ads numbered in order that they will appear in the ad (#1-5)



Audience Details - Locations

This ad reached 150,497 people in our audience.



Performance



Audience Details - Placements

This ad reached 150,497 people in our audience.



Audience Details - People

This ad reached 150,497 people in our audience.



Audience details

Location - living in
United States: Illinois; Iowa; Minnesota

Age
18 - 65+

People who match

Interests: Adventure travel, Outdoors, Vacations, Camping, RV park, RVs, Tourism, Tent or Travel

Submissions

We had a total of nine submissions - eight were from Illinois, and one was from Iowa.

In the form, we asked if we had permission to use their uploaded photo in print and/or digital form for marketing purposes. Of the nine submissions, seven people allowed us to use their photos and four of them are good quality to use in future marketing.



Winners

Winners chosen were from the first two photos above (Green Trees and Rocks/Water).

Hannah P. from photo one is from Mahomet, IL.

Rebecca A. from photo two is from Davenport, IA.



WISCONSIN CAMPERS SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST REPORT - JUNE 2023

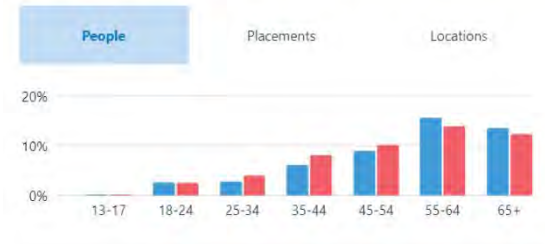
DMO Grant Marketing Contest

- **Contest:** Write a funny caption to be entered to win.
- **Prize:** Two winners will be chosen to win \$500 in WACO bucks each
- **Ad Spend:** \$34.48 per day for 29 days - total of \$999.92
- **Ad Copy:** "Write the best caption and you could win \$500 to spend on your next Wisconsin camping adventure! Two winners chosen!"
- **Placements:** This ad will appear on Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger
- **Graphics:** Just one graphic for this contest - see below.



Audience Details - People

This ad reached 104,607 people in our audience.



Audience details

Location - living in

United States: Illinois; Iowa; Minnesota

Age

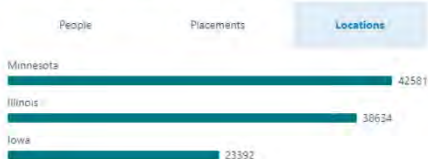
18 - 65+

People who match

Interests: Adventure travel, Outdoors, Vacations, Outdoor recreation, Vacation rental, Camping, RV park, RVs, Tourism, Tent or Travel and Employers: Travel + Leisure

Audience Details - Locations

This ad reached 104,607 people in our audience.



Performance



Audience Details - Placements

This ad reached 104,607 people in our audience.



Submissions/Outcome

We had a total of 414 submissions on the JotForm itself. While campers were supposed to submit their caption on the JotForm in order to win, many thought they could just leave the comment on the post itself they were seeing. So we also ended up with 532 comments on the post itself.

Those who submitted their caption on the JotForm had to include their email address, so that gives us an additional 414 emails to add to our WACO camper email list.

In June, we had a 57.4% increase in our Facebook page visits, and a 52.9% increase on our Instagram page. While not entirely related to this contest, it certainly helped our visibility.

Winners

Winners were chosen at random from the JotForm submissions using an online random number generator (the number correlated to their submission number on JotForm).

Our winners were:

Curtis E. from Evanston, IL - Fun fact: When we emailed him to let him know he won and that his prize was in the mail, he replied saying he was having a rough week and this totally turned his week around and he was excited to start planning a camping trip!

Craig M. from Welch, MN



WISCONSIN CAMPERS SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST REPORT - JULY 2023

DMO Grant Marketing Contest

- **Contest:** Test your camping knowledge with a fun, five-question quiz to be entered to win.
- **Prize:** Two winners will be chosen to win \$500 in WACO bucks each
- **Ad Spend:** \$33.33 per day for 30 days - total of \$999.86
- **Ad Copy:** "Test your camping knowledge with this short quiz and you could win \$500 to spend on your next Wisconsin camping adventure! 🏕️ Two winners chosen at the end of the month!"
- **Placements:** This ad will appear on Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger
- **Graphics:** Five graphics for this contest - see below.



Audience Details - People

This ad reached 135,104 people in our audience.



Audience details

Location - living in
United States: Illinois; Iowa; Minnesota

Age
18 - 65+

People who match

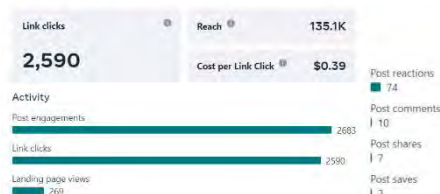
Interests: Adventure travel, Outdoors, Vacations, Outdoor recreation, Vacation rental, Camping, RV park, RVs, Tourism, Tent or Travel and Employers: Travel + Leisure

Audience Details - Locations

This ad reached 135,104 people in our audience.



Performance



Audience Details - Placements

This ad reached 135,104 people in our audience.



Submissions/Outcome

We had a total of 405 submissions on the JotForm.

Before submitting their answers, campers needed to include their name, address and email, so that gives us an additional 405 emails to add to our WACO camper email list.

Winners

Winners were chosen at random from the JotForm submissions using an online random number generator (the number correlated to their submission number on JotForm).

Our winners were:

Deb S. from Cedar Rapids, IA

Janna Neitzel from Fairmont, MN



WISCONSIN CAMPERS SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST REPORT - AUGUST 2023

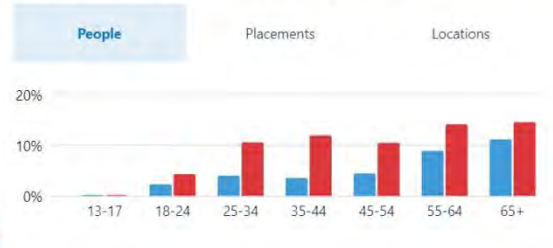
DMO Grant Marketing Contest

- **Contest:** Describe your best day camping to be entered to win.
- **Prize:** Two winners will be chosen to win \$500 in WACO bucks each
- **Ad Spend:** \$33.33 per day for 30 days - total of \$849.72
 - **NOTE:** This ad was randomly suspended by Facebook mid-way through the month. There was no explanation as to why it was suspended. We contested the suspension and within a few days, it was reinstated. So the total spend was a bit below what it should have been due to the suspension.
- **Ad Copy:** "Describe your best day camping and you could win \$500 to spend on your next Wisconsin camping adventure! 🌞 Two winners chosen at the end of the month! Click the button to enter!"
- **Placements:** This ad will appear on Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger
- **Graphics:** Five graphics for this contest - see below.



Audience Details - People

This ad reached 131,458 people in our audience.



Audience details

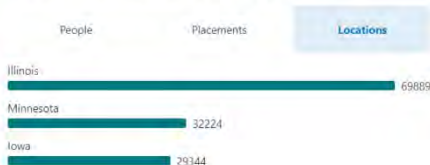
Location - living in
United States: Illinois; Iowa; Minnesota

Age
18 - 65+

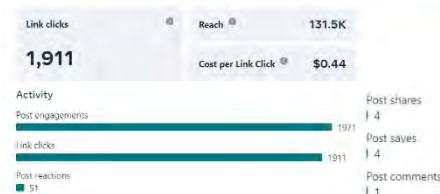
People who match
Interests: Adventure travel, Outdoors, Vacations, Outdoor recreation, Vacation rental, Camping, RV park, RVs, Tourism, Campfire or Tent and Employers: Travel + Leisure Co.

Audience Details - Locations

This ad reached 131,458 people in our audience.



Performance



Audience Details - Placements

This ad reached 131,458 people in our audience.



Submissions/Outcome

We had a total of 49 submissions on the JotForm. This one took a bit more thought on the campers side to participate in the contest. A lower amount of entries is fairly typical when people need to write more than a few words for an answer.

Before submitting their answers, campers needed to include their name, address and email, so that gives us an additional 49 emails to add to our WACO camper email list.

Winners

Winners were chosen at random from the JotForm submissions using an online random number generator (the number correlated to their submission number on JotForm).

Our winners were:

Yamah D. from Downers Grove, IL

Question response: "A birthday get away with laughter around the fire."

Janna Neitzel from Fairmont, MN

Question response: "Sitting on the edge of a stream with a fishing pole and a picnic basket."



WISCONSIN CAMPERS SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2023

DMO Grant Marketing Contest

- **Contest:** Share your favorite camping memory to be entered to win.
- **Prize:** Two winners will be chosen to win \$500 in WACO bucks each
- **Ad Spend:** \$34.48 per day for 29 days - total of \$999.87
- **Ad Copy:** "Click "Sign Up" to share your favorite camping memory and you could win \$500 to spend on your next Wisconsin camping adventure! 🏕️ Two winners chosen at the end of the month!"
- **Placements:** This ad will appear on Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger
- **Graphics:** Five graphics for this contest - see below.



Audience Details - People

This ad reached 182,485 people in our audience.



Audience details

Location - living in
United States: Illinois; Iowa; Minnesota

Age
18 - 65+

People who match

Interests: Adventure travel, Outdoors, Vacations, Outdoor recreation, Vacation rental, Camping, RV park, RVs, Tourism, Campfire or Tent and Employers: Travel + Leisure Co.

Audience Details - Locations

This ad reached 182,485 people in our audience.



Performance



Audience Details - Placements

This ad reached 182,485 people in our audience.



Submissions/Outcome

We had a total of 73 submissions on the JotForm. Just like in the August contest, this one took a bit more thought on the campers side to participate in the contest. A lower amount of entries is fairly typical when people need to write more than a few words for an answer. But we were up by 24 submissions from last month, so that increase was great to see.

Before submitting their answers, campers needed to include their name, address and email, so that gives us an additional 73 emails to add to our WACO camper email list.

Winners

Winners were chosen at random from the JotForm submissions using an online random number generator (the number correlated to their submission number on JotForm).

Our winners were:

Carri B. from Danville, IL

Question response: "I remember all the camping trips I took with my parents and siblings when I was younger. We always camped in a large tent in the electrical side so my mom could have her fan. The smell of the campfire at night, the taste of s'mores, and mom's homemade campfire breakfast cooking on the fire. Nothing beats those fun times. We didn't have money but we had each other, our family tent, and mom's fan."

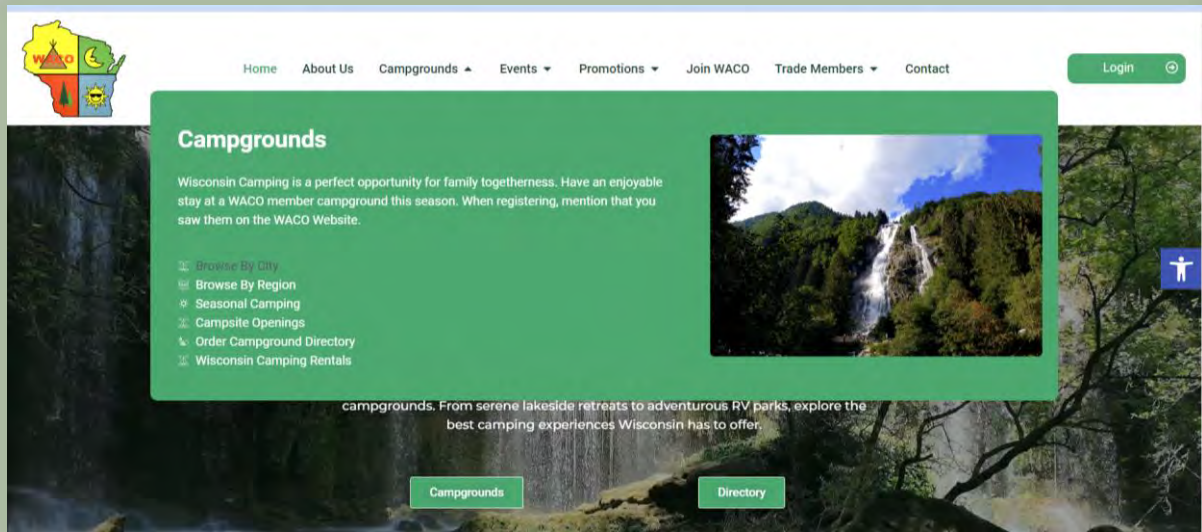
Judith D. from Dubuque, IA

Question response: "Being out at night under the stars with a bonfire making s'mores with my grandchildren for the first time age 6 and 4. They are smiling looking at all the stars enjoying the s'mores. They say this is my best ever night! Do the stars come out every night or only while we are camping."



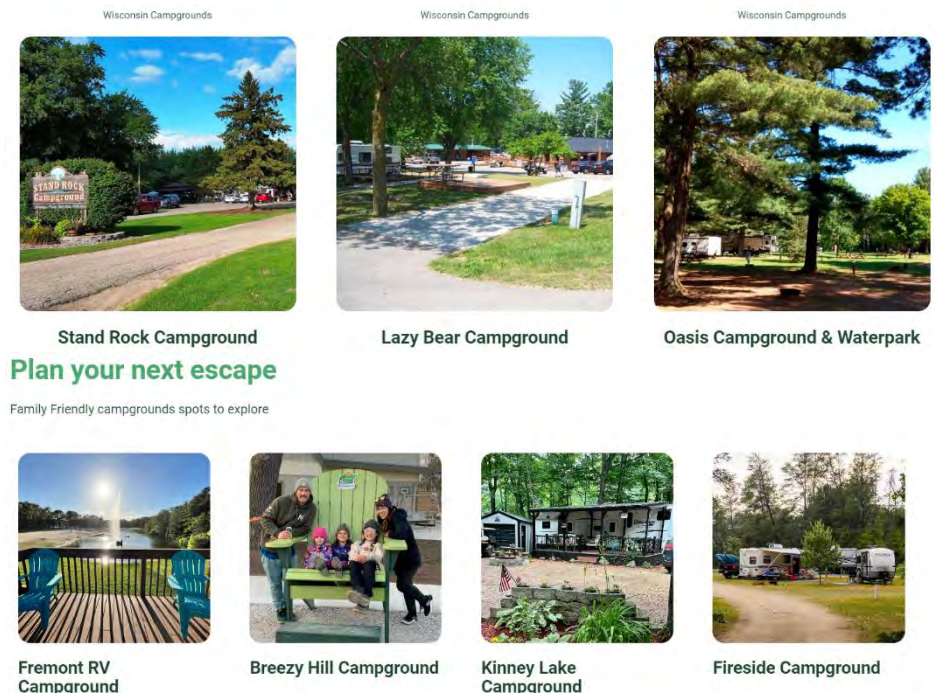
MARKETING – WEBSITE REVAMP

WACO was AWARDED \$56,000 in DMO GRANT FUNDS in 2021 to be used in 2022 & 2023. We've been working hard to create a website that our members and WACO staff can be proud of!



In 2024-2025, our WACO Website will be getting a complete overhaul! We will be:

- Updating SEO and Google Analytics4
- Updating Search Functionality by Region AND Amenity for our Camper Guests!
- Cleaning up the many pages and plug-ins that will “lighten” the website, making it respond much more quickly!
- Mobile-friendly to ensure what’s seen online can also be navigated on your mobile device



**STOP BY THE WACO BOOTH TO LET TINA KNOW
WHAT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE HERE!**



MARKETING – WEBSITE REVAMP

What Amenities Are We Missing from this List?

The WACO website will include search functionality based on selected amenities! Are there any amenities below that are outdated or should include different terminology? Most importantly, are we missing any?! This checklist will be an option on the landing page (see last page example) just like “Browse by City” when the website is ready to test.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ATM | <input type="checkbox"/> Offsite Storage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bait | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Movies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ball Diamond | <input type="checkbox"/> Pavilion / Rec Hall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Pay Showers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boat Lunch | <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cable TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Playground |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card Accepted | <input type="checkbox"/> Pond |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dump Stations | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Phone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Cleaning House | <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant / Bar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Shuffle Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free Showers | <input type="checkbox"/> Skate Park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gaga Ball | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobile Trails |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Game Room | <input type="checkbox"/> Space Ball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Groceries | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Beach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking Trails | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Pool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horseshoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Themed Weekends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Tubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Trails |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping Pillow | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kayaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Wagon Rides |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterslides |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LP Gas | <input type="checkbox"/> WIFI / Hot Spots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Golf | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood For Sale |



MARKETING – WEBSITE REVAMP

MEMBER LISTING EXAMPLE – top of page:

Grand Valley Campground

Address

W5855 County Rd B/H, Dalton, WI 53926

Website

www.grandvalleycampground.com

Email

info@grandvalleycampground.com



Owners

The Stefan Family

Rate Range

\$42.00 – \$47.00

Facebook



MEMBER LISTING EXAMPLE – bottom of page:

Recreation

Swimming Pool
Swimming Beach
Pond
Playground
Pavilion/Rec Hall
Recreation Field
Dog Park
Game Room
Wagon Rides
Fishing
Bait
Themed Weekends
Planned Activities
Heated Swimming Pool
Mini Golf
Horseshoes
Volleyball
Basketball
Shuffleboard
Gaga Ball

Items to Rent

Rental Units
Pedal Carts

Sites and Services

221 Total Sites
152 Seasonal Sites
69 Overnight Sites
Dump Station
Free Showers
LP Gas
Groceries
Laundry
Snack Bar
WiFi/Hot Spots
Wood for Sale
Credit Cards Accepted

More places to camp nearby.



TRADE MEMBER LANDING PAGE

CONVENTION LANDING PAGE EXAMPLE:

Campground Registration Trade Member/Sponsor Registration

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,



MARKETING – WEBSITE REVAMP



Northwoods Region

[Explore](#)

The **Northwoods Region** is a picturesque area located in the northern part of Wisconsin, in the United States. It is renowned for its vast forests, pristine lakes, and charming small towns, making it a beloved destination for outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers. Stretching across several counties, including Vilas, Oneida, Iron, Price, and Forest, the Northwoods Region is characterized by its dense woodlands and abundant wildlife.



Indian Head Region

[Explore](#)

The **Indian Head Region** is a scenic area located in northwest Wisconsin, in the United States. Named after the Native American motif found on some early American coins, this region is characterized by its natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. It encompasses parts of Barron, Burnett, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, and Washburn counties, offering a mix of forests, lakes, and rolling hills.

BROWSE BY REGION:

Each region is listed with a summary of the area, listing highlights of the area.



Central Wisconsin River Region

[Explore](#)

The **Central Wisconsin River Region** is a picturesque area located in central Wisconsin, in the United States. It is named after the Wisconsin River, a major waterway that flows through the region, shaping its landscape and providing numerous recreational opportunities. Encompassing counties such as Adams, Juneau, Wood, Portage, and Marathon, the Central Wisconsin River Region is known for its diverse natural beauty.



East Wisconsin Waters Region

[Explore](#)

The **East Wisconsin Waters Region** is a captivating area situated along the eastern coast of Wisconsin, in the United States. This region is defined by its proximity to the expansive waters of Lake Michigan and the diverse waterways that flow through it. Encompassing counties such as Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and Ozaukee, the East Wisconsin Waters Region offers a wealth of recreational activities centered around its stunning natural features.



Southeastern Wisconsin Region

[Explore](#)

The **Southeastern Wisconsin Region** is a vibrant and diverse area located in the southeastern part of the state, in the United States. This region encompasses counties such as Milwaukee, Waukesha, Racine, Kenosha, and Ozaukee, and it is known for its thriving cities, cultural attractions, and beautiful natural scenery.



Hidden Valleys Region

[Explore](#)

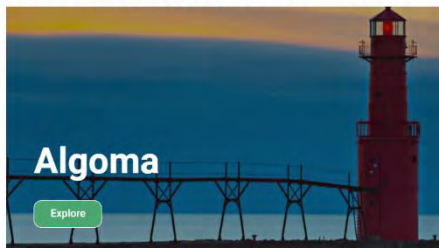
The **Hidden Valleys Region** is a captivating area located in southwestern Wisconsin, in the United States. Nestled among rolling hills, deep valleys, and winding rivers, this region offers a scenic and serene escape for visitors. Encompassing counties such as Vernon, Crawford, Monroe, and La Crosse, the Hidden Valleys Region is known for its picturesque landscapes and abundant outdoor recreation opportunities.

BROWSE BY CITY

Listed in Alphabetical order with SEARCH bar at the top.

Each city includes a landing image From Google Maps in that area:

A



Algoma

[Explore](#)

Alma

[Explore](#)



EVENT MARKETING – WCA Convention

THE WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF CAMPGROUND OWNERS (WACO) PRESENTS AN OVERVIEW OF THE CAMPING INDUSTRY!

Held at the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Conference | Kalahari Resort & Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells
Located in the Hospitality Suite

CAMP WITH THE PACK!

Join us to secure your ticket to have your picture taken with these Green Bay Superbowl Champions!

See what you learned by playing Team Trivia with Autographed jerseys for prizes!

LEAP VODKA

- ✓ FREE Lemonade - Loaded or unloaded with LeRoy Butler's own Leap Vodka!
- ✓ Light appetizers!
- ✓ Cash bar!

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

5-7pm

The Guava Room

LEROY BUTLER

GILBERT BROWN

DORSEY LEVENS

TRIVIA

After years of trying to attend and getting shot down, Lori opted to run locally for her County Board of Supervisors. Not only did this bode well for her as a business owner in the county, but it gave her some real insight into how County Supervisors thought, felt, and connected to their positions.

Meanwhile, we coordinated the WCA Executive Director, Mark O'Connell to speak at the 2023 Convention during our Legislative Luncheon. The relationship and Lori's new position gave WACO an "in" to their Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) Convention, which we've attempted and been denied being part of for decades. Since this was our first, we wanted it to be a winner.

Letter from the Executive Director Lori Severson, Executive Director of WACO

Dear Members,

Happy almost October! Thanks to everyone who joined us for the September fall workshop. Attendance was excellent! We have become busy this month! We took a crew to the Wisconsin County Association and served food and lemonade to the group! It was a fantastic turnout, with over 345 drinks served. I cannot thank everyone who showed up to help network, set up, and serve enough! It always amazes me how blessed we are when we ask for help! And boy, did we sure need it! Using the "Gilbert card," we were allowed to host a hospitality suite room to gather County Super-



Thank you to the members who were able to attend and help with Lemonade, tear down and networking with the WCA attendees! 38

WACO opted for a booth, and Lori called in some favors from GBF to host a hospitality event. **WOW.** Over 300 people attended, allowing WACO to connect with local county supervisors in a social setting while still educating them through a fun trivia full of the economic impacts of campgrounds, the regulations we're all subject in order to be licensed in the state of WI, and how we help our communities. WACO members helped our crew set up, served loaded lemonades, answered questions, handed out prizes, and lined up attendees for player signatures.



EVENT MARKETING – WCA Convention



visitors from Boards across the state. We presented a scrolling slide show highlighting the important things private business campgrounds contribute to their communities. We talked about bringing in revenue for counties and doing charity work. They were interested, and the timing was perfect.

We did the hospitality event,

and our booth was hopping the next day!

We spoke with people who needed education and learned why some county boards made the decisions they did. We had a particularly interesting talk with a gentleman from Burnett County struggling with the zoning issues himself. He spoke about how they had a campground owner on the board, and they did their homework! They brought in the sheriff, firefighters, and even hospitals to see if there were issues reported that occurred in campgrounds. Nothing of any significance was reported - even when looking back five years. So, this county did its due diligence and everything our Association would like to see when a County makes zoning decisions. Unfortunately, they were flooded with people from organizations like Preserve Washburn County - <https://www.preservewashburncounty.org/home> - Take a moment to read this and prepare to be shocked. They don't have the facts. They band together, flooding the Board of Supervisors with letters and in-person commentary about how campgrounds pay nothing and ruin the land in the area. Convinced campgrounds run low-income housing suburbs and abuse the county resources. The group spreads lies and misinformation. It was enlightening to hear this point of view as we spent a lot of time trying



to educate county supervisors, which is very much needed - the interactions at this show told me we need to go deeper! I think using our networks to

get campers to these meetings is also essential! We need to use our connections with RVIA and other sources to contact campers/guests and educate them on what's happening. We must take action as a team because I can tell you from experience that counties copy and paste ordinances! Once it gets started, they spread like wildfire! One of the biggest threats our industry has is not being allowed to expand.

It was interesting how much closer they listened when Gilbert Brown, LeRoy Butler, and Dorsey Levens read the trivia questions to connect the critical data on the screen to takeaways for their County boards. One lady asked the players to autograph the piece Tina created (that was great) and stated, "I'm taking this back to my board and telling them all about campgrounds. If these legends stay in them, how bad can they be?" We need to use every bit of ammunition to ensure we are not stopped from growing our businesses, especially when the rules do not apply to our State and county parks! Now, we must have a strong

membership. I would ask each of you to look around your area to be sure your neighbors are WACO members. Throughout the three-day event, we often heard, "How many members do you have in the state?" Legislators want to know this number, and so do the county boards. If you are uncomfortable asking them, inform us, and we'll ask! We are happy to call on them! Growing and strengthening our membership is a group effort; we all need to work together.





NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS - DATCP

ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS TO ALL INSPECTION REPORTS

Respectfully Submitted by Ted Tuchalski, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection



On September 25, 2023, online public access to inspection reports via the HealthSpace Portal expanded from restaurants and retail food establishments to include all recreational facilities. These additional facilities will include those inspected under ch. ATCP 72 - Hotel, Motels and Tourist Rooming Houses, ch. ATCP 73 - Bed and Breakfast Establishments, ch. ATCP 76 - Public Pools and Water Attractions, ch. ATCP 78 - Recreational and Educational Camps, and ch. ATCP 79 - Campgrounds.

The online access will align with the recent changes to administrative codes ch. ATCP 76 and ch. ATCP 78 that require the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and its agents to make inspection reports available to the public on the internet. The remaining administrative codes will reflect this change as they are updated.

The HealthSpace Portal can be accessed at the following link or QR code:

<https://healthspace.com/clients/wi/state/statewagportal.nsf/home.jspx>

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



How Does This Impact Me?

We heard about this update from the DATCP at the September Fall Workshop. Inspectors on their inspection reports as they have the history...

Years ago at DHS - there were a lot of rumors floating through the legislature about the online accessibility of inspection reports. In response, DHS got industry partners together to discuss these rumors and how their current process - uploading information as soon as the inspection was complete didn't provide an opportunity to provide full details. They wanted to control messaging somewhat and provide more background where it made sense, allow

for corrections, etc.

At that time, a plan for posting online inspection reports developed with a lag time purposefully included in the process. This lag time was between the completion of the inspection and the online posting - allowing any errors to be corrected before the report went live. Ensuring the errors could be corrected, and the reporting was as accurate as possible.

The DHS started posting public inspections with just retail because we weren't sure of the response. The change garnered a HUGE amount of hits on the website - people wanted to access the inspections! The DHS was ready to move forward, making ALL inspections available for online view-

ing. However, the DHS/DATCP merger happened in 2016, and COVID hit in 2019-2020.

WHY IS THAT LAG TIME AND THE ACCURACY OF THE INSPECTIONS SO SIGNIFICANT - I MEAN, OTHER THAN THE OBVIOUS?

As SEO and online search engines become more efficient, and since this reporting is open to the public, random 3rd party companies were (and still are) mining this data and putting their slant on the data analytics. The goal now is to have an accurate inspection available.



The cloud-based platform now in place and available on HealthSpace.com allows the public to search by county to see campground, swimming pool, and restaurant inspections. Again, you have that 7-day lag from time of inspection to the time of post to ask for any corrections. The inspections are available online for a 3-year window and then archived after that 3-year mark. - 3-year window that they stay online. After that, the inspection reports are archived.

LODGING CODE REWRITE



REQUEST FOR INTERESTED MEMBERS

WACO was invited to participate in a meeting held Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

The purpose of this meeting was to update the ATCP 72 code that deals with the housing (tourist rooming houses for campgrounds). This has not been updated in many years and we were invited to help with the rewrite. There were 23 people made up of the Wisconsin Lodging group, the Relators group, inspectors, and many other stakeholders.

We have till July 20 of 2025 to put this together. Public comment is always allowed. This will be much like the pool meetings we just went through.

Any interested parties should let Lori know by contacting her directly at lari@sevensonsandassociates.com.

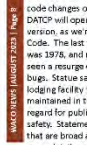


THANK YOU DATCP

We appreciate you attending our September Fall Workshop & Tours Jim Kaplanek & Mary Ellen Bruesch



Jim reminded us that code writing is never done, and we are so thankful for our relationship that allows WACO a seat at the table when these code changes occur. In the fall/spring, the DATCP will open up the Food Code to get to a 2022 version, as we're currently using the 2013 Food Code. The last time the food code was reviewed was 1978, and many things have changed. We've seen a resurgence of bed bugs. Statute says every lodging facility has to be maintained in the strictest regard for public health/safety. Statements like that are broad and need more details and consistency.

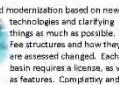


Mary Ellen touched on the new pool code that went in place on September 24th, which we discussed in two sessions at the Convention, and also in this webinar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dVYV3H3U>

Changes included modernization based on new technologies and clarifying things as much as possible. Fee structures and how they are assessed changed. Each basin requires a license, as well as features. Complexity and,

therefore, less depend on the siting. If it's a whirlpool, etc. Most campground pools will be simple. Side Note: Whirlpools are considered moderate because of all the bacteria issues. In the past, inspectors showed up and inspected the pools - but what if we create a chemical release? We're not plumbers or electricians. Operators must explain how the interlock works safely and that it's tested every month - pump power, chemical feed power, where things are stored, etc. Your staff that our inspectors meet with may not be the person who does the interlock testing. We need to have an affidavit of some kind - specific steps they are following and be able to sign off on this if it's not the pool operator. Side Note: If you have a simple swimming pool, you do not have to have a CPO. The insurance company would still like to see a CPO on staff.

As we noted, DATCP will also be reviewing the ATCP 72 - lodging rule, and again, WACO has been asked to be part of the conversation. As our industry changes, guests' needs change, and the code should reflect what the guests are doing for and want - meaning some are looking for unique accommodations while others look for rustic sites. What can we do to keep those guests safe, specific to lodging? Again, if you are interested in joining this conversation, please get in touch with lari@sevensonsandassociates.com



New VGBA Drain Cover Replacement Log

By Mary Ellen Bruesch, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)



The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has developed a new VGBA Drain and Equalizer Cover Replacement Log. This replaces the old log (with the same title) that had space for one drain cover replacement to be noted.

The new version has one log sheet per basin, allowing the cover information to be tracked throughout the life of the pool. This will also facilitate more efficient inspections because the inspector can immediately see the drain and equalizer cover replacement information history for each basin. Using the form will support meeting the specific requirements in the current and proposed revised ATCP 76, although the form itself is not specifically required (just strongly encouraged).

It is recommended that pool operators keep the log sheet in a plastic sleeve or similar protected environment so that it remains legible.

The VGBA Drain and Equalizer Cover Replacement Log is located on the Public Swimming Pools webpage under the Pool Operator Forms heading.



The webpage can be accessed at the following link or QR code:
DATCP Home Public Swimming Pools
https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/WaterRecreation.aspx

TWO Pool Code Sessions at Convention This Year!

Mary Ellen Bruesch, DATCP Presents:
11-12 Noon - Pool Code Changes
2-3 pm Day with TOL Campgrounds
Specific Questions



REVISED ATCP 76 Safety, Maintenance, and Operation of Public Pools and Water Attractions

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Ellen Bruesch, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection



The revised Pool Code will take effect on September 24, 2023. DATCP will be rolling out the new code by giving pool operators some time to get used to the new requirements - so far items that are new, unless a violation represents an imminent threat to health and safety, pool operators will have some time to adjust their practices for the new code.

For example, we will no longer be enforcing combined chlorine limits by testing the water and comparing it to our standards during the inspection. Instead we will require pool operators to have a combined chlorine management plan in place. If we inspect on September 25, 2023, and the pool operator does not have a combined chlorine plan, we will provide education but not list this lack of a combined chlorine management plan as a violation. Items such as self-closing and latching doors, however, will be critical, as will emergency phones. **If a cyanuric acid level of > 300 ppm is found, the pool must be closed until that level can be reduced.**

Also, the code revision will not affect fees for the 2023-24 license year (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024).

The entire code can be found at: [Wisconsin Legislature: CR 22-021 Rule Text](https://legis.wisconsin.gov/cr/cr-22-021/rule-text).

There will be future Q and A session(s) virtually! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mary Ellen Bruesch at Maryellen.bruesch@wisconsin.gov.



As many of our members rent lodging at their parks, we would like to share some helpful links regarding what we're guessing is one of everyone's worst nightmares: BED BUGS!

Bed bugs are small, reddish-brown insects that feed on the blood of animals and humans. They are about the size of an apple seed and are flat and oval-shaped.

Bed bugs are nocturnal and typically feed on their hosts while they sleep, which can cause itchy, red welts on the skin. Bed bugs are notorious for infesting mattresses, bedding, and furniture, but they can also be found in other places like curtains, carpets, and even electrical outlets. They can be transported from place to place on clothing, luggage, and other personal items.

If you suspect you have a bed bug infestation, take action immediately! Here are some resources and links that Thad from the DATCP sent our way:

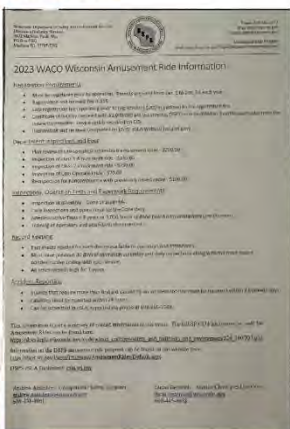
- Get Rid of Bed Bugs: Using integrated pest management: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/controlling-bed-bugs-using-integrated-pest-management>
- Pericides for bed bug control: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/pesticides-control-bed-bugs>
- Steps for "do-it-yourself": <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/do-it-yourself-bed-bug-control>
- Safety issues in controlling bed bugs: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/safety-issues-controlling-bed-bugs>
- Find help with bed bug problems: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs/local-resources-bed-bug-assistance>



NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS-Fall Workshop

TUESDAY LUNCH N' LEARN DSPS UPDATE

The Amusement Ride licensing and fees are a big topic of interest to owners as we look ahead to 2024. Lucas Dederich and Andrew Amacher from DSPS spoke to our group about the process, what you should know as a campground owner and how the fees will be applied. He mentioned if you are **CLOSED FOR THE SEASON**, you can wait to apply for your amusements until the 2024 season. **YOU MUST HAVE LICENSING IN PLACE BEFORE YOU OPEN in the Spring!** And remember – there are **TWO costs: (1) for the Registration – \$55 and (2) for the Inspection, which varies by the Amusement class.**



WACO requested a PDF copy of this letter from DSPS at the Workshop. Once received, it will be uploaded to the WACO Members Only Section of the Website!

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TUESDAY EVENING CRACKER BARREL

John Jaszewski of Campgrounds4Sale, Phil Whitehead of Blackhawk Bank, and Anders Hilquist led our cracker barrel over dinner on Tuesday evening of the Sept Fall Workshop. A few of the talking points included:

- Discuss with your accountant how equipment purchases and land use can improve or hinder your value - depreciation for example
- The importance of good record keeping and how it will help your ability to explain your financial situation
- Do you have at least \$1.25 of income for every \$1 of debt?



- Your responsibility as an owner is to keep rates at the right level, not only for the value of your park but for the other parks in your surrounding market
- There are many types of campers out there - no matter what you have to offer, your park is exciting to the right guests - find those guests and market to them
- Zoning is the biggest threat to our industry right now - be sure to know your local government officials and make a positive impact in your communities



OCTOBER FALL WORKSHOP & TOUR HOST MERRY MACS CAMPGROUND



A HUGE "thank you!" to Merry Macs Campground, our October Fall Workshop hosts for assisting with our luncheon, setting us up in such a beautiful space, and providing some killer cookies!

While on tour, members could check out their brand new swimming pool complex, complete with an adjacent wading pool and the new building space with garage doors. In the past years, they've upgraded electricity and re-graded all the sand for the beach area. The entire family lives on-site, and the business is truly a family affair! Their two cottages rent out instantly, and 80% of their customers are repeat business. As they cater primarily to families, Merry Macs' is fortunate to experience very few security issues for the most part! Thank you for all you did to make our tour and stay in your region a fantastic experience, Rob and Nichole Brinkmeier!



<https://form.jotform.com/231875143941055>

BEAR LAKE CAMPGROUND & RESORT



Bear Lake's gracious hosts Bob & Sarah Kahlschauer shared that they employ many teachers and high school students in the summer, so at one point, up to 40 people are working some PT/ some FT. The group serves 275 fish fries on their busiest nights. With this being their first year as owners, they are lucky to be part of a close-knit community, and most days are still happy – fun to see the kids. In the past, the campground didn't offer many kid-friendly activities, so that was a significant change for this year, and Sarah smiled, saying, "That's the part I really love is making it fun for the kids."



WEDNESDAY LUNCH N' LEARN DNR/STATE PARK UPDATE INSURANCE TRENDS



Eric from Coverra informed our group that we should expect a continued increase in rates based on weather claims and the average 20% loss insurance companies continue to expect from insuring campgrounds. The best way to offset the increased rates is with higher deductibles and putting yourself in the best position possible by keeping up with maintenance and conducting regular inspections for safety. Also, do you have a plan for accidents? If an accident should occur on your campground, having a written process helps navigate claims and keep your park in a better light.

The DNR also sent representatives to discuss the current camping trends in the municipal sector. The group was recently distributed funds for increasing electrical sites onsite at the County and State Parks. We discussed as a group the pros and cons of that, and from what we've heard, the timelines are pretty far out in terms of execution. There was a conversation about the parks also adding sleeping/ rustic cabins. WACO will keep an eye on this progress and keep you all updated.



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NEW LETTER HIGHLIGHTS - Legal

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 Hazebaker, our WACO Attorney, when those pesky legal troubles rear their head.

We've created an email specifically for your legal questions at WacoLegal@waco.com. Give the WACO office a call first to let your question, and Lori can provide direction on the next steps.

KICKIN' THEM OUT, DRUG USE AND MORE
LEGAL NOTES FOR YOUR SEASON

February 2023 Legal Update

This would seem like a good time to open up campsites occupied by former campers who failed to renew, failed to pay or were non-renewed by the campground. You should give camping unit owners a last chance to remove the trailers themselves. So, giving notice now leaves time to move the units once the weather improves.

CLEARING OUT CAMPING UNITS OF FORMER CAMPERS

If you have a camping unit that needs to go, start by retrieving the most recent camping agreement you have with the camper. Everything about the retrieval process is governed by what the agreement says.

Generally, the agreement will indicate how long campers have to pay for the next season. It should describe what happens when they do not pay. And it should provide for the kind of notice required.

Consider the agreement your instruction manual and begin with giving notice to the former camper. WACO has forms for these notice letters on the Members section. Keep a copy of all letter you send. Do not send these letters by registered or certified mail. Too many people will not accept those kinds of letters. Regular mail is sufficient.

Question: And how long does it take to get a notice for any notice unless there is a specific law which requires use of registered / certified mail.

It's a good idea to do something people rarely do anymore - call the camper on the phone. If nothing else, it looks good.



When you give notice to remove the camping unit, the notice will indicate that you intend to move the camping unit if it is not retrieved. Of course, that means you need a plan to relocate the unit - a place and a method to handle it.



AN OVERVIEW OF DRUG TESTING BY EMPLOYERS

Recently, a campground contacted me to discuss the issue of employee drug use and employee drug testing. The issue has been around

Employees' task when confronting drug use has become even more complicated in the past three years. Since January 1, 2020, it has been lawful to use marijuana in Illinois for recreational purposes. It is NOT legal to bring marijuana from Illinois to Wisconsin to consume it here. If an employee is in possession of marijuana on the employer's work premises, they are violating Wisconsin law and may be fired.

But suppose an employee comes to work on Monday morning and cheerfully tells you about the great weed they smoked in half of the day before? Wisconsin makes it illegal to discriminate against an employee based on the employee's use of lawful products off the employer's premises during non-work hours. Wis. Stats. sec. 111.321. This law was adopted to protect cigarette smokers, but the law's scope is much broader. The law protects employee's right to use anything that is lawful to use, including alcohol and marijuana - in states where it is legal.

Employees who use random drug testing of their employees have to pay for it - and it's not cheap. More importantly, employers have to deal with the consequences of a positive test. If an employee tests positive for THC, that's the ingredient in marijuana, the employer might claim they consumed the marijuana in Illinois. The remains in the body for a significant amount of time. It would be difficult or impossible to prove the employee used marijuana illegally.

SO, WHAT IS LEFT FOR EMPLOYERS TO DO?

I assume your campground has communicated to all employees that they are "at-will" employees. They can be terminated at any time for no reason. Drug testing is often used to justify employer action where the employer has to have cause to terminate an employee. Since at-will employees do not need to prove cause, if an employee caused an accident or misbehavior, you can simply terminate them based on their conduct. In other words, respond to the actions or mistakes without looking for drug use.

There is a shortcoming with that approach. Employers, especially in this job market, don't like fire anyone for one mistake. We would like to retain employees who are generally good workers while rooting



for decades, but it's becoming more complex. Employers can terminate or discipline employees for using drugs on the employer's premises or possessing drugs on the employer's work premises. That issue is relatively straightforward. If an employee operates heavy equipment or vehicles which require a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), they are required to have random drug tests. Beyond those two points, however, it becomes much more complicated. Employees who decide to require drug testing of their employees face difficult issues if there is a positive test. Here's a little background, which you can skip if you don't find background all that interesting, followed by analysis of the challenges drug use poses.

BACKGROUND

In 1988, Congress adopted legislation to encourage employers to maintain drug-free workplaces. Federal contractors were required to have drug- and alcohol-free workplace policies. The 1988 law was part of a wave of anti-drug legislation. The societal resolve against drug use was quite strong. Many employers began testing all new hires for drugs, some even posting signs informing their customers of that fact. Positive drug tests were often grounds for termination.

That changed in 1990 when Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA treats drug addiction and alcoholism as a disability. An employee who is addicted to drugs or alcohol and is less able to perform their job duties as the result is entitled to "reasonable accommodations." The usual accommodation provided is the opportunity to seek treatment.

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO WITH A POSITIVE DRUG TEST?

When an employee tests positive for drugs, employers may not simply fire the employee. If the employee wants to get help for addiction, which is a disability, the employer must accommodate that request. The employer is not required to pay for treatment. There may be health insurance coverage for treatment. There also are recovery programs that do not cost anything, notably, 12-step programs. However, employers cannot mandate that employees attend 12-step programs. The courts have held that 12-step programs' emphasis on a "high power" is a form of religious practice. All of these complications lead to the conclusion that drug testing may entangle the employer in a very complex and risky sequence of demands, counter-demands, and ultimately, the potential for litigation. By contrast, if the employer simply takes action against employees who fail to perform properly on the job, the employer has the burden of coming forward to indicate that their mistakes or tardiness were the result of addiction, and ask for accommodations.



EXAMPLE SCENARIO: An employee is repeatedly tardy. The employer has warned the employee to stop being late. The employee suspects, but does not mention, that the employee is having trouble waking up and getting to work because of excessive alcohol or marijuana consumption. The employee can elect to focus on the behavior and terminate the employee for tardiness without mentioning any concern about drinking or marijuana. If the employer responded to the firing by asking for help with a drug problem, the employer may be required to accommodate that request. These situations are difficult. If one arises, consult with legal counsel.

Abandoned RVs - The Next Steps

Jason Culotta (Midwest Food Products Association and formerly WMC) and Tina Severson from our WACO office met with the DOT and State Senators regarding SB-225 RV Manufacturers. They asked that we give the current forms they have in place a shot by issuing the complaint as a "Self-Storage" claim on their mv2881 Form, found here: <https://wisconsinidot.gov/documents/formdocs/mv2881.pdf>.



We know that the form refers to landlord/tenant language and know how hard we all worked to get that kind of language out of our Seasonal/Long-Term Stay agreements. That being said, the DOT report asked that we do a trial run using this form to confirm whether it would work. Our next step is to ask for a guinea pig or two - either proving our point when the request is denied - or getting the property transferred to the campground owner so they can dispose of / sell the abandoned unit properly. Either way is a step in the right direction!

If you are currently experiencing issues with an abandoned RV and wish to give this a shot, we'd surely appreciate it! Send your information to tina@seversonandassociates.com so we can get you set up in our trial process! Fingers crossed, this works for our group; if not, we'll continue working on things.

Bottom line with Abandoned RVs:

1. Make sure your seasonal agreements are signed!
2. Document all conversations, emails, letters (send certified), and phone calls with names/dates, etc.
3. If you have issues: The DOT will ask you to complete a form, include your documentation and send it to WACO!

Keepin' it Legal

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We've created an email specifically for your legal questions at WacoLegal@waco.com. Give the WACO office a call first to let your question, and Lori can provide direction on the next steps.

OT, MINORS, CONTRACTS & TAXES
LEGAL NOTES FOR YOUR SEASON

April 2023 Legal Update

FEDERAL AND STATE LAW EXEMPT SEASONAL RECREATIONAL EMPLOYERS FROM OVERTIME. BUT BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE FINE PRINT!

Camgrounds and other recreational businesses are exempt from paying overtime pay to ADULT employees if they meet one of the two tests of a seasonal amusement or recreational business. The two tests are:

- The business does not operate for more than seven months of year (Out of season maintenance and facility work at failing recreational does not count if guests are not being attracted on the premises), or
- The average monthly revenues of a business open more than seven months are concentrated in a six-month period. The business is exempt if the average revenue is at least six months are no more than 33 1/3 percent of the average revenue it generates in the last six months of the year.

All the ADULT employees of the amusement or recreational business are exempt from overtime, even if they work year around.

A DIFFERENT RULE FOR MINORS

Children ages 14 and 15 who work in positions followed by low count can be required to work more than 8 days in a week, 40 hours in a week or 8 hours in a day in weeks when school is not in session. Employees who are 16- and 17-year-olds cannot work more than 6 days in a week, 30 hours in a week. And they must be paid overtime for more than 10 hours worked in a day or 40 in a week, even if employed by recreational business.

MORE THAN ONE BUSINESS

Be careful! If you also operate non-recreational business. For example, if you have a self-storage business, those employees are not exempt from overtime at all. If you include that business in the same business entity as the recreational business, the revenue from the non-exempt business may count against the exemption. It's best to keep your amusement and recreational business in a separate entity.

PAYROLL

OVERTIME

PLEASE CALL THE WACO HOTLINE WITH QUESTIONS!

WHY A GOOD CONTRACT MATTERS

The Hotline has relayed numerous questions about business relationships that come down to the absence of a contract or a poorly drafted contract. Many of those problems arise because businesses are understandably reluctant to ask for a lawyer's help. Lawyers are expensive. Many projects or expenses seem too small to go to the expense of involving a lawyer. But the expense involved in resolving a dispute can far exceed the original matters.

I suggest you think about whether to go to the trouble of having a written contract by asking yourself if you would be comfortable with losing the entire amount of money involved if the contract doesn't work out. If you're hiring someone to do work for your business and you can live with losing \$150, then you're willing to take the risk of not having a written contract. On the other hand, if the contract is worth \$5,000, it would be hard to swallow that amount of loss. Attorneys spend a year studying contracts in law school, and that's just an introduction. So, (I cannot cover the entire subject here).

But I can make a few important points to keep in mind:

1. If you have a regular relationship with a lawyer, you should be able to ask for a set price. To let you know if the agreement has traps in it.
2. Pay close attention to the provisions in any contract which set the length of the contract. Companies frequently try to sneak in language which automatically renews the contract. Those are called "evergreen" clauses. Wisconsin law limits the enforceability of evergreen clauses, but the limit does not apply to contracts involving a lease of real estate. I have helped some campgrounds get out of solid waste contracts as they contained evergreen clauses. However, I found no way out of contracts that placed laundry machines on a business, because it included a lease of commercial space.

At the season's preparation, I welcome your questions. WACO can help you understand if we have advice's going on in the business world. In our own experience with the WACO office, we've seen how much advice can help.

AN OVERVIEW OF PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS: DON'T ASSUME THE ASSESSOR IS RIGHT

You may receive a notice stating the property tax assessment for your campground (or other real estate). It may surprise you or even outrage you. What can be done about it?

The proposed assessment is not final. It is the assessor's proposed assessment. It is not final until the Board of Review adopts the tax roll. Before the roll is finalized, taxpayers have the right to appeal the assessor's decision.

Assessments change to track changes in property values. At one time, a neighborhood may have fallen on hard times. But it may be revived by redevelopment. A commercial property may be built which creates demand for property that formerly was not desirable. Recent demand for housing has far outstripped the supply of homes, causing prices to soar. But some neighborhoods' values increase more than others.

Assessments are supposed to assure that no one pays more than their fair share of taxes. Over time, if assessments are not increased, the values of real estate become obsolete. Imagine that someone bought a home in 2008, when the real estate market was depressed. If the assessment were never increased to reflect the increase in property values since then, the owner of that house would be paying far less in taxes than someone who bought in 2018. Both owners would be paying less than someone who bought in 2022.

APPEALING ASSESSMENTS

If you appeal, the burden is on you to show that the assessment is erroneous. You will need evidence to prove that, almost always in the form of an appraisal of the property. An appraisal costs money, so the difference must be worth it.

WOW GUESTS WITH YOUR WATERFRONT

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NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS - Legal

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE WASHBURN COUNTY ZONING HEARING!

While the result was not what we hoped for, it was for lack of effort! The County Zoning Committee hearing included 21 total speakers, and we had about half of those from WACO, campground owners, and others who supported the growth of the campgrounds.



THE OPPONENTS OF CAMPGROUNDS ARE CONCERNED WITH THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Taxes (thinking we don't pay any)
- Septic Systems (don't feel we're held to any standards or that the code in place with D5PS isn't valid/accurate)
- Numbers / Population (concerned about the "instant sub-division" campgrounds create during their seasons/busy months and how that can impact a variety of things)
- Protecting the Natural Waterways (boating - too many people on the lakes; concerns re: groundwater and our waste being dumped into the waterways)

Unfortunately, they are ill-informed, even with the decades of experience that spoke in the room on behalf of Campground Owners - including Lori Severson (WACO/Campground Owner), Jim Button (ARVC, 3rd District Rep/Campground Owner), Bud Styer (Multi-Park Campground Owner), Gwen Walters (Ad Hoc Committee Member / Campground Owner) and Jamie Morales (Campground Owner). We also heard from Tina Severson (WACO) regarding economics, the impact of having little to no growth in the local counties, and the legality issues from veteran legal advisors Attorney Mark Hazelbaker and Anders Helquist, Attorney.

We could all tell the group walked in with the ordinances ready to be approved, making modifications to the grammar and some wording, but for the most part, keeping things as is - if not making them even more stringent. While the Zoning Committee approved the ordinance, it will still need to be approved by the Executive Committee and the Full Board. Those meetings will happen in June and July, respectively.

Continued on next page!

WHAT IS WACO DOING ABOUT THIS?

- We will obtain the final zoning document sent to the Executive Committee and confirm our concerns.
- We will continue to request assistance from the Membership regarding letters, meeting appearances, etc.
- We are connecting with WCA's Mark O'Connell (President/CEO) and Daniel Bahr (Government Affairs Associate) to educate the Counties better.
- We've asked Mike Knowles, Wisconsin Towns Association Executive Director, to join us at the same meeting with the WCA.
- Our attorney, Mark Hazelbaker, continues to draft documents to combat the illegalities of zoning proposals and how they are more stringent than the current WI Code.
- We will continue to keep you all informed on this issue. As we all know, once ordinances like this pass, they filter into the other surrounding counties.



WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!

If you have any information on the following that you're willing to share with WACO, specifically for this purpose, PLEASE email it in to: tina@seversonandassociates.com

- How much you pay in taxes - property, employee payroll, etc.
- How much you donate to, or other things you organize, for your local services such as police, fire department, etc.
- How often (number of days in the year, months, whatever you can send us) you are completely full and what that number looks like.
- Information on the gallons of water you're using, how your septic is metered, etc.
- If you have access to waterways:
 - » What you do to keep them safe/clean?
 - » The total number of boats your campground brings in annually (estimates even)?

Zoning issues in Washburn County boiled up in the past year. Between a coalition that seemed bent on ensuring campgrounds were shut down in their area and a county that did not follow rules specific to setting zoning guidelines, our members were getting caught in the middle. After hearing from Gwen at Anchor Bay and contacting neighboring campgrounds and local business owners, Gwen and WACO gathered information and presented it at various county board meetings.

Gwen did everything we've always asked of a member - she got involved on a zoning review committee, got to know the decision-makers, and spoke with her local chamber and fellow business owners. She did EVERYTHING right.

Unfortunately, the County didn't want to listen to economic impact, business owner statements, or much else and opted to move forward with the zoning plans they had in place. However, they did so illegally, allowing WACO to continue to assist. (See how on the following page.)



NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS - Legal



THANK YOU to Those Who ATTENDED the JUNE FULL BOARD Meeting in Shell Lake

FIRST BIG WIN FOR WACO

While the very restrictive zoning ordinance in Washburn County is still in play, our members had their first big win this past Tuesday evening. At the Full Board Meeting of the County Supervisors, several members (and prospective WACO members) voiced their concerns regarding the size restrictions and setback limits in the proposed Chapter 38 - LAND DEVELOPMENT, ARTICLE II. - ZONING REGULATIONS, DIVISION 24. CAMPGROUNDS AND RESORTS.

The most glaring concerns include a 25-site limit and a 50-foot setback from the RR1 & RR2 property lines. What do most of the campgrounds in that County fall into? You guessed it, RR1 & RR2. After hearing the voices of several current campground owners and a couple of prospective owners hoping to take over a family business, many supervisors started questioning if the grandfathering issues were being addressed in the new ordinance's language.

The Board voted to send the ordinance back to the Zoning Committee with suggestions that included reviewing what a successful campground model looks like to determine if those site limits will drastically hinder the growth of campgrounds in their County. We all know the answer to that one!

Continued on the next page!

TOWN'S ANTI-CAMPGROUND ORDINANCE REPEALED IN RESPONSE TO LAWSUIT

Respectfully Submitted by Anders Helquist, Weld Riley, S.C.

Last month, in response to a lawsuit challenging its anti-campground Ordinance, the Town of Oakland in Burnett County unanimously repealed its Ordinance. Had it remained in effect, the Town could have used the Ordinance to: (1) shut down existing campgrounds, (2) charge campgrounds excessive fees, and (3) require unlimited searches of campgrounds by hostile Town Board members.

The repeal is a win for campgrounds and sends the message to towns, counties, and other local governments that overreaching ordinances which hurt campground development can and will be successfully challenged.

In 2022, going along with the anti-campground sentiment in Burnett County, the Town passed its "Campground Permitting Ordinance," which attempted to regulate campgrounds in several troubling ways:

1. Campground Permit Requirement and Vague Standards. The Ordinance attempted to have the Town step into the shoes of DATCP and the County Zoning Committee by requiring every campground, including existing ones, to obtain a campground permit from the Town. The Ordinance had vague and loose standards which gave the Town authority to deny the permit to existing campgrounds, potentially shutting them down even when those campgrounds had all other required permits from the State and County to operate.
2. Per Campsite Fee. The Ordinance charged a \$100 per site fee to campgrounds without any identifiable basis or reasonable relationship between any Town service provided to the campground and the fee (i.e., it was an attempt by the Town to make money through a fee and/or tax); and
3. Unlimited Searches by the Town. The Ordinance required unlimited consent for Town officials, including anti-campground Town Board members, to search campgrounds. This left campgrounds in a Catch-22 involving two bad options: (1) through the mere act of applying for the required campground permit, a campground would "consent" both then and into the future to unlimited Town searches of the campground without probable cause and without a warrant; or (2) if the campground didn't consent to the search, that would result in a permit denial because the application was deemed "incomplete," and the campground could be forced to close because it didn't receive the required Town campground permit.

Faced with those concerning Ordinance terms, on behalf of a WACO-member campground, our office filed a lawsuit against the Town challenging their Ordinance. (WACO's legal counsel, Mark Hazelbaker, also provided support during this legal challenge.) The lawsuit sought to ultimately have the Ordinance declared

Washburn County Woes...continued

We do still need your help! If you're willing to share any business models or plans that express the site counts, and how that impacts your success, we would GREATLY appreciate it! Please send anything you have to help support this fact to: tina@seversonandassociates.com.

Remember, just because this isn't directly impacting your County or business now doesn't mean it may not be in the future! Another reason why it's so important to get to know your local leaders, be friendly with your zoning committees, and help out your fellow member when you can!



GET to KNOW your COUNTY OFFICIALS

We say it all the time, but it's worth repeating! As you can tell from the recent issues we've seen in the northern regions of Wisconsin, city, town and county officials can directly (and sometimes negatively) impact your business! We're all busy and wearing many hats, but one of those hats MUST be your legislative hat. Whether actively involved or attending on the sideline, you'll know your local players better than anyone else.

Our WACO office is here to help! We can get you on the appropriate local websites, making navigating the red tape of agendas, minutes, and process more straightforward - which is never fun! They don't call it "red tape" for nothing.

However, YOU building those relationships will end up being much more important! Imagine a local elected official making a decision that doesn't know you vs. someone who has visited your park or shared a meal or drinks. The difference is vast!

Being involved in things like your local chamber, school board, city council, and town committees are ways to connect with community decision-makers. Most meetings are public and posted online, so it's always a great place to start on your township, city, or county websites. If you are uncomfortable making those connections or need more time, delegate this to another staff member or trusted advisor. And again, if you need help figuring out where to start, call the WACO office. We're happy to help!



HUGE SHOUT OUT to GWEN from ANCHOR BAY for her continued work and effort with this matter! She has been kicking butt and fighting so hard for her business - its inspiring to see such passion in a fellow member!

illegal and invalid.

Having been forced to defend the legality of their Ordinance in court, the Town saw the writing on the wall. The Town retreated and voluntarily repealed its Ordinance, without a court order requiring them to do so.

Unfortunately, as we see more towns and counties trying to further regulate campgrounds, it is often done based on misinformation from campground opponents. Even when campgrounds work cooperatively with local governments to educate them about the many benefits of and facts about campgrounds, sometimes the noisier opposition "gets the grease," and bad ordinances get passed. And when they do, those ordinances warrant additional scrutiny and if appropriate, a legal challenge.

As this successful lawsuit against the Town of Oakland shows, when those anti-campground ordinances push the legal boundaries too far, forcing a local government to defend its ordinances through litigation is sometimes the only way to undo bad local laws.

As the Town of Oakland Chairman put it, the Ordinance's repeal occurred "on the advice of the Town Attorney due to ongoing litigation." It took a lawsuit to get it done, but getting the Town to admit defeat like this is a win any day of the week for campgrounds.

The entire situation opened WACO's eyes to what our local government officials may or may not understand—the basic principles of what makes a campground a licensed business, with guidelines and regulations we are required to follow.

We also knew it was time to start tooting our horns about the communities we reside in - explaining the economic impact of our businesses and the fundraising we conduct for our local services such as police, fire, and schools. (See more in Event Marketing pages.)



NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS - Legal

CAMPGROUND OWNERS NEED OUR HELP!

Do you care about the county adjusting your site size, acreage, and other components associated with your campground zoning that will directly impact your bottom line?



Read on to see the latest happening in Washburn County. Don't feel just because your park isn't located there that, your campground is "safe." Counties have been "copying/pasting" local ordinances that supersede the state code in several counties.

We need to help our fellow members out!

As we've been communicating here, via email and at Convention, based on the prodding from a local, disgruntled Preservation Group, Washburn County formed an Ad Hoc Committee, whose purpose was to review and suggest edits to the zoning specific to Campgrounds and Resorts. While we've sent along information on how the campgrounds in that county bring in tax dollars, community assistance, employment, and tourism, our information seems to be falling on deaf ears.

The County Tourism Board is split – half of which are small business owners who understand the need for outside tourism/visitor dollars in their community entirely – with the other half wanting to keep their lakes and communities "walled off" for lack of a better term.

Our members have attended some of the zoning meetings. Still, from what we've seen/heard, they haven't been allowed to respond much in person – either the meeting at the time didn't

allow for public response or the changes weren't officially ready for review, so it wasn't the proper time in terms of the red tape.

In a hearing coming up at the end of May (tentatively scheduled for May 24th with the business meeting at 3:30 and then 4 pm for public hearing, which was originally scheduled for May 1st, then rescheduled after WACO held a meeting with WCA and WMC) [THIS DOCUMENT](#) will be presented (in a non-red line version, I would guess) for the zoning committee to: "Review Recommendations from Ad Hoc Campground Ordinance Review Committee and Take Action on Recommendations."

Our plan at this point is to present the (2) PDFs links below – which include all the documentation we've sent your way as campgrounds in this county, hoping to help dispel some of these myths – campgrounds don't pay taxes (we wish), dump sewage improperly (guess they haven't seen the wastewater rules listed in SPS 383), allow for

several permanent residences onsite (seasonals who don't get their mail, bus can't pick their kids up here, etc. because its not permanent).

The first: Campground Owners – The Benefits for Washburn County and the State of WI:

- **First page:** Benefits of Campgrounds in Washburn County and how the money comes back to the county, how they benefit from campgrounds contributing to the community, taxes, employment, etc.
- **Following pages:** 2-9 Response letters from our attorney, Mark Hazelbaker, to the complaints being tossed around at the meetings and in letters/emails sent to the board.
- **Pages 10-13 focus** on economic impact pulled from 3rd parties showing the value of campgrounds in communities.
- **Pages 14-25: Chapter ATCP 79 Code** specific to campgrounds. The state code already in place, that campgrounds are required to follow showing that most of these suggested county level adjustments are more strict/stringent than the state code.

The second: Economic Impact – WACO 4-3-23, which explains the WACO organization, examples of the community contributions from the campground members, the state overall economic impact and why it makes sense to support campgrounds as fellow business owners in your community.

IF YOU WANT TO HELP US, HELP YOU KEEP YOUR CAMPGROUNDS IN WASHBURN COUNTY WITH THE SAME ACREAGE, ZONING, AND REQUIREMENTS THAT YOU ALREADY FOLLOW AT THE STATE LEVEL, PLEASE:

- **Reach out to your local business owners** – make them aware of what's happening and how when less people come to camp, that will be less people at their taverns, restaurants, coffee shops, grocery stores, gas stations, boutiques, breweries, etc. Will they depend solely on local residents to support their businesses? Ask them to show up to the meeting or write in their comments!
- **Send us in written comments** of exactly how these suggested changes will negatively impact your business

nesses – what will it cost you? How will it impact what you provide to the county in terms of any support? What will these changes, if adopted force you to change in your business?

- **Written comments from your fellow business owners** may be submitted to: zoning@co.washburn.wi.us.
- **WACO Members and Campground Owners** may also send them directly to the zoning email above or else to the WACO office. Having trouble putting your thoughts into a letter? Send them to tina@seversonandassociates.com and she'll format for you! Here is also an example letter you can use as a starting point!
- **Finally, SHOW UP!** We need as many members as possible prepared to attend (tentatively scheduled) on May 24, 2023 at 3:30/4 pm at the Washburn County Zoning Committee Meeting, held at: Washburn County Services Center, 304 2nd Street Shell Lake WI 54871.

If you, or a business owner you're asking to attend, is unable to be there in person, there will also be a Zoom link available and we will be sure to send that out once its updated.

WACO IS HERE TO HELP, BUT WE NEED THE NUMBERS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN. LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING BACK, SEEING COMMENTS COME IN, AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR OUR MEMBERS IN THIS AREA!



BURNETT COUNTY CAMPGROUND OPPONENTS FILE LAWSUIT

A group of campground critics has filed a suit in Burnett County seeking a court order to close campgrounds that offer RV camping. They contend in their suit that campgrounds are offering permanent housing. The campgrounds involved are adjacent to manufactured home communities. Plaintiffs contend the campground is an illegal expansion of the manufactured home communities.

The campgrounds involved are seasonal campgrounds. As is almost universally the case, the RVs and park models are stored on the campgrounds over the winter. That is, of course, explicitly permitted by the Wisconsin campground rules.

The complaint makes it clear what is upsetting the plaintiffs bringing the lawsuit. They allege the campground residents are behind a "very large increase in boat traffic" caused by the campground. The plaintiffs claim they are being injured by the increase in boat traffic. The plaintiffs are overlooking an important point – the lake does not belong to them. All lakes in Wisconsin belong to the State of Wisconsin as a public trust. If ownership of a lake's shore has been divided among two or more owners, the lake is supposed to be accessible. It certainly is a public amenity.

What we are facing, then, is a group of people who bought a piece of land on a lake and now believe they have the right to pull up the ladder so no one else can follow them. We have an intense struggle ahead.

WACO will offer assistance to the campgrounds being sued in this case if requested.

PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES MAY BE ELIMINATED AS INCREASES IN OTHER TAXES PROPOSED

Wisconsin raises a surprisingly large amount – more than \$200 million per year – from its personal property tax. As business owners, you're familiar with the paperwork involved from the assessor. It seems a bit ridiculous. A kitchen chair which is tax exempt as part of a residence is subject to the property tax when owned by a business. Things like jumping pads, water toys, office machines – everything which is not fixed to the land – are subject to the tax.

Legislators and business groups have been talking about eliminating the personal property tax for decades. It has been debated many times, but it has always failed to pass. The price tag of eliminating the tax has been too much to swallow. This looks like it will be the budget where the repeal finally passes. No business owner will miss the paperwork involved.

At the same time, though, there is serious discussion about increasing the Wisconsin sales tax or other revenue sources to help local government. Local governments have been under levy limits for some time. Their expenses keep increasing. They have been clamoring for major increases in state aid or tax sources for some time. This year, the Legislature's leadership has indicated a willingness to consider increases in state funds or local taxes.

We should approach these decisions with skepticism. Wisconsin taxes are relatively high; that we are better off than Illinois is scant consolation. Local governments need to demonstrate that they have sought and implemented real economies in how they operate.



**Mark Hazelbaker, SC
WACO Attorney**

608-525-2327
tina@seversonandassociates.com
EMAIL THE OFFICE AND WE WILL ROUTE ALL REQUESTS!

This past year, WACO stepped in to assist when a county zoning issue proved a previous thought to be a reality: neighboring counties may use zoning practices that would limit campground site sizing, cut back expansion, and negatively impact the businesses.

Since this specific county acted illegally in changing the zoning policies, WACO's attorney, Mark Hazelbaker, took the opportunity to sue.

This situation is a perfect example of how gathering the information from the issues, reviewing the data, and determining the illegality gave WACO a chance to help our members – the impact will be more significant than one campground and greater than one member – making it beneficial for ALL the WACO Membership.



NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Taxes & Accounting

DOES WI TAX LABOR?

Respectfully Submitted by our Sponsor, Holly Hoffman

Depends.
Of course it is not a straight forward answer, this is sales tax after all!

If you recall our sales tax trainings at the WACO conferences, all tangible personal property is taxable unless an exemption applies but the opposite is true for services in Wisconsin. Services are non-taxable unless specified as being subject to tax. The taxable sales price for services would include labor, materials, installation (if applicable) and any fees necessary to complete the sale.



Even if the service is not one of the specified services listed on the previous page, but is necessary to complete the sale of a taxable product then it becomes part of the taxable sales price and is subject to sales tax. Example is computer network development consulting is nontaxable but if it results in the sale of taxable hardware and software, it becomes part of the taxable sales price.

Another example for a heating and cooling company. A diagnostic service charge for no heat call can result in either taxable or not taxable charge depending upon whether the source of the issue is furnace (taxable repair) or electrical (nontaxable).

Sometimes you can have a labor charge with no parts or materials. Maybe you provided the fixture and just hired a contractor to install the fixture. The labor may or may not be taxable depending upon what is being installed/repaired. A water heater is a real property install and so the contractor's labor is nontaxable. However, if you purchased parts and hired a contractor to provide labor to repair a water heater, that labor would be taxable. Yes, taxable even if they did not provide the parts.

If your own employees install the fixture or erect a building, there is no labor purchased as far as a sales and use tax transaction is concerned. There is only a concern of tax on labor if you are hiring someone from outside of your business to provide the labor.

Your purchase of the parts/materials/fixture will be taxable because it is a purchase of tangible personal property. You are the consumer of those materials. When the contractor is the one purchasing and installing the materials, then they are the consumer. So the contractor pays the tax on the materials. If you purchase your materials instead of buying through the contractor, you don't save sales tax. What you save is the contractor's markup on the materials.

There are many different scenarios, and it is good to verify that your vendors are charging you properly. That is why having Sales Tax Audit Protection Plan is smart! Don't overpay and don't have audit risk because vendors are not properly charging you sales tax.

For questions or to purchase Sales Tax Audit Protection Plan with unlimited advising, contact Holly Hoffman at holly@saletaxadvisory.com.



Contact
Holly@saletaxadvisory.com



Specified (Taxable) Services Include:

- Admission and access privileges to amusement, athletic, entertainment, or recreational places or events.
- Access or use of amusement devices
- Boat docking and storage
- Cable television services
- Contracts for future performance of services
- Internet access (not taxable beginning July 1, 2020)
- Landscaping and lawn maintenance services
- Laundry and dry cleaning services
- Parking services for motor vehicles and aircraft
- Photography/videography services
- Producing, fabricating and printing
- Repair and service of tangible personal property, items, property, or goods
- Rooms or lodging for less than 30 days
- Telecommunications message services
- Telecommunications services, including prepaid calling services, and ancillary services
- Towing and hauling of motor vehicles by a tow truck

So the point in explaining what services are taxable is to say that if labor is related to any of the above specified services or providing repairs/cleaning/maintenance/painting/etc. to tangible personal property then that labor is subject to sales tax.

Tax Business

NEWS FOR YOUR BUSINESS.
NEWS FOR YOUR LIFE.

Vol. 8

Respectfully Submitted by WACO partner Hawkins Ash, Author: Charlie Wendlandt, CPA

If you own an unincorporated small business, you probably don't like the size of your self-employment (SE) tax bills. No wonder!

For 2023, the SE tax is imposed at the painfully high rate of 15.3% on the first \$160,200 of net SE income. This includes 12.4% for Social Security tax and 2.9% for Medicare tax. The \$160,200 Social Security tax ceiling is up from the \$147,000 ceiling for 2022, and it's only going to get worse in future years, thanks to inflation. Above the Social Security tax ceiling, the Medicare tax component of the SE tax continues at a 2.9% rate before increasing to 3.8% at higher levels of net SE income thanks to the 0.9% additional Medicare tax, on all income.

THE S CORP ADVANTAGE: REDUCE YOUR TAX BURDEN FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

For wages paid in 2023 to an S corporation employee, including an employee who also happens to be a shareholder, the FICA tax wage withholding rate is 7.65% on the first \$160,200 of wages: 6.2% for Social Security tax and 1.45% for Medicare tax. Above \$160,200, the FICA tax wage withholding rate drops to 1.45% because the Social Security tax component is no longer imposed. But the 1.45% Medicare tax wage withholding hits compensation no matter how much you earn, and the rate increases to 2.35% at higher compensation levels thanks to the 0.9% additional Medicare tax.

An S corporation employer makes matching payments except for the 0.9% Additional Medicare tax,

which only falls on the employee. Therefore, the combined employee and employer FICA tax rate for the Social Security tax is 12.4%, and the combined rate for the Medicare tax is 2.9%, increasing to 3.8% at higher compensation levels — same as the corresponding SE tax rates.

Note: In this article, we'll refer to the Social Security and Medicare taxes collectively as federal employment taxes whether paid as SE tax for self-employed folks or FICA tax for employees.

STRATEGIC STEPS TO BECOMING AN S CORPORATION AND LOWERING YOUR TAX LIABILITY

While wages paid to an S corporation shareholder-employee get hit with federal employment taxes, any remaining S corp taxable income that's passed through to the employee-shareholder is exempt from federal employment taxes. The same is true for cash distributions paid out to a shareholder-employee. Since passed-through S corporation taxable income increases the tax basis of a shareholder-employee stock, distributions of corporate cash flow are usually free from federal income tax.

In appropriate circumstances, an S corp can follow the tax-saving strategy of paying modest, but justifiable, salaries to shareholder-employees. At the same time, it can pay out most or all of the remaining corporate cash flow in the form of federal-employment-tax-free shareholder distributions. In contrast, an owner's share of net taxable income from a sole proprietorship, partnership and LLC (treated as a partnership for tax purposes) is generally subject to the full ravages of the SE tax.

WATCH FOR POTENTIAL NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECTS OF S CORPORATION STATUS

Running your business as an S corporation and paying modest salaries to the shareholder-employee(s) may mean reduced capacity to make deductible contributions to tax-favored retirement accounts. For example, if an S corporation maintains a SEP, the maximum annual deductible contribution for a shareholder-employee is limited to 25% of salary. So the lower the salary, the lower the maximum contribution. However, if the S corp sets up a 401(k) plan, paying modest salaries generally won't preclude generous contributions.

OTHER LEGAL AND TAX IMPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN CONVERTING TO AN S CORPORATION

Converting an unincorporated business into an S corporation has other legal and tax implications. It's a big decision. We can explain all the issues.

CHARLIE WENDLANDT, CPA

715.384.1986

cwendlandt@ha.cpa



SALES & USE TAX

Getting Guidance During Busy Season

Respectfully Submitted by our Sponsor, Holly Hoffman

It's your busy season and that means sales tax decisions are being made hundreds of times a day. Questions will arise — some can wait until fall but what about big questions?

Campgrounds who have the Sales Tax Audit Protection Plan can ask questions directly at any time — just email or call. Even your staff members can reach out to me.

WACO members can use the Sales Tax hotline to ask general questions through the association. Email your questions to me and copy Lori Severson so that the answers can be shared with all members. This is a WACO member benefit provided to you.

If there are areas of sales tax reporting that you would like additional training on, reach out to me or Lori with requested topics for newsletters and/or the 2024 convention.

TIP: If you have an unusual transaction, make a note of what the facts are and how you handled it so that it can be revisited to review and/or correct the tax treatment.

Contact Holly Hoffman of Sales Tax Advisory Network, LLC at holly@saletaxadvisory.com for more information about the Sales Tax Audit Protection Plan.



Contact
Holly@saletaxadvisory.com





NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Taxes & Accounting

FINANCIAL FORTE

Financial strategy, insurance, legal, and HR are the four most common pain points business owners wrestle with every day. The WACO Association is here to provide helpful tidbits wherever we can. Fortunately, we have Christine Metcalf and her staff at CSAW Associates to assist with our accounting concerns! Her last seven years of experience, specific to the campground industry, gives her a lot of insight, which translates to a lot of help for you.

Happy May from your friends at CSAW Associates, LLC! As spring turns into summer, many WACO members are opening their doors to guests for the year. As owners get closer to opening weekends, quite a few have been wondering how to make things easier, better, and faster when it comes to their books. One stop owners can take is to look at their point of sale system and make sure it aligns with their Chart of Accounts and their sales tracking in their accounting.

Sound daunting? It can be, but we're here at CSAW Associates are ready and willing to demystify the process and give you tips to get your books back in line and save you time and money!

KNOW YOUR POINT-OF-SALE (POS) SYSTEM

Your point of sales system is the backbone of your customer facing process. This holds all the items and services you provide and the costs. This system tracks individual item purchases and will report those sales. However, as many campground owners have learned there are numerous products out there to choose from and each has their own capabilities and quirks. Learning the capabilities of your point of sales system can save you significant time and headaches later.

Some questions to consider:

- How does your POS handle reporting?
- Does it report individual items?
- Are sales summaries available?
- How does it report sales tax, discounts, gift certificates and sales?
- Does it link up to your bookkeeping software?

The answer to these questions can have an important impact on how it will be fed back into your accounting.

KNOW YOUR CHART OF ACCOUNTS (COA)

Your Chart of Accounts is the backbone of your accounting system. It forms the structure of how your expenses and income will be organized and reported. While there are some general accounts you will see in almost any set of books from any industry, WACO owners generally have specific accounts set up in their COA to track items specific to their business. Ensuring your chart of accounts is set up correctly is critical to tax filings and ensuring you are getting the data you need from your financial reporting. Some questions to ask:

- Does your chart of account include items for anything specific you want to track?
- Do you have the accounts you need for tax filings and the general flow of your financial transactions?
- Do you have unused or duplicate accounts?

The goal when setting up your COA is to make sure you have all the accounts you need in place and then focus on what accounts you might want.

PUT THE TWO TOGETHER

Now that you know what your POS can do and what you need, and more importantly, want in your chart of accounts you can begin planning how to bring them together. Does your POS offer reporting by item? Then you may not need to duplicate this in your chart of accounts. For example, while it may be beneficial to know that on a certain day you sold 3 pairs of sunglasses, 2 cans of bug spray, and one orange

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Now it's time and WACO members are in full swing with their 2023 camping season. Now that your year is fully underway, it's a good time to assess your sales needs and decide if you might need a change. Ask yourself are you able to handle all the day-to-day tasks that keep your guests coming back to visit? Are you spending as much time with family and friends as you need or want? What does your current budget look like? Many of our members are proud owners who handle all aspects of their park year in and year out. Sometimes though, as your business grows and expands, or you add more services or features, or as you start calculating up with you, you realize that it might be time to look at getting a helping hand.

For some, the prospect of adding payroll can seem like a daunting prospect. Navigating the rules and regulations can be a confusing challenge. Fortunately, your friends here at CSAW Associates have the knowledge and experience to help get you up and running! Today, we are doing a deep dive into the process and you will need to make sure to get your payroll set up and operational.

Withholding IDs

• Federal Withholding ID - This is one of the most important IDs that you need to have on file for your employees. It is used to determine how much federal income tax to withhold from your employees' pay.

• State Withholding ID - In Wisconsin, this is issued from the DOR and can be obtained as part of your Business Registration when you obtain your Sales and Use Tax ID.

• Social Security Number - This is a unique number assigned to each individual by the Social Security Administration. It is used to track your employee's earnings and contributions to Social Security.

• Employer Identification Number (EIN) - This is a unique number assigned to your business by the IRS. It is used to identify your business for tax purposes.

• Direct Deposit Authorization Form - This form is used to authorize your business to deposit your employee's pay directly into their bank account.

• New Hire Reporting Form - This form is used to report new hires to the state of Wisconsin.

• W-9 Form - This form is used to collect tax information from your vendors and contractors.

• 1099-MISC Form - This form is used to report miscellaneous income to your vendors and contractors.

• 1099-NEC Form - This form is used to report non-employee compensation to your vendors and contractors.

• 1099-DIV Form - This form is used to report dividend income to your shareholders.

• 1099-INT Form - This form is used to report interest income to your lenders.

• 1099-B Form - This form is used to report capital gains and dividends to your investors.

• 1099-R Form - This form is used to report retirement income to your retirees.

• 1099-DA Form - This form is used to report disability payments to your employees.

• 1099-VA Form - This form is used to report veterans' benefits to your employees.

• 1099-SS Form - This form is used to report Social Security benefits to your employees.

• 1099-PR Form - This form is used to report Puerto Rico income to your employees.

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NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

WACO Members

Expansion Projects Brings Milton Hidden Valley KOA to a new level!

WACO Member Interview with Matt Riggio, Milton/Hidden Valley KOA

The initial vision for the WACO member's expansion project at Milton/Hidden Valley KOA, located in Southern Wisconsin, came from Jim Kersten in 1993. Jim and Marcia purchased the KOA in 1993. Since then, Mindy, Jim's daughter, and her husband, Matt, are proud 2nd generation owners.

They start their 4th year of ownership during the 30th anniversary of the park - and when they host an anniversary, they know how to party! Well, party like a campground owner anyway. This year they embarked on a 15-acre expansion project, which features:

- 2-acre lake with 600 ft sandy beach
- Dozens of W/it inflations
- About 50 Lakeside sites - full W/E/S sites
- 2900 sq ft clubhouse with showers and bathrooms
- Picnic area
- Rustic wooded sites with the same full hookup with W/E/S

They are also building a large shed to house all the inflatables for end-of-season storage and other maintenance equipment.



The family is doing as much work as possible; as you can see from the pictures, it truly is a family affair! They've rented a D6 bulldozer for about 3.5 months to do the digging as they have done all the earth moving in-house. The Riggios are blessed to have team members able to operate skid steers, dump trucks, etc.

The goal is to see the project complete end of 2025-Beg of 2026. Three years may seem like a long time, but as Matt reminded us, "When you're taking on the work yourself, to save the money, you are doing projects between handling customers and fixing plumbing - you know how that goes!"

The KOA will host 264 sites - 100 seasonal, with the remaining sites including a combination of overnights, two deluxe cabins, and four "sleeper cabins" / basic camping cabins.



"The pond area will almost be like another campground with the rustic sites in the surrounded wooded area," says Riggio.



Planning has all gone well because Jim Kersten won "initial battles with the local" powers that be for zoning and planning years ago." We always talk about the importance of knowing your local government and officials. WACO is here to assist with broad-picture legislative issues, but in the end, as an owner, you need to get out and meet your township board, your County Board Supervisors, your Sheriff, etc. Otherwise, when it comes time to adjust your CUP (Conditional Use Permit), or secure building permits, things could get very tough. Matt remarked, "Jim was brilliant in setting up the initial CUP and the relationships he put in place - thankful for that!"

Matt reminisced about how crazy to think one night they were eating dinner with Mindy's parents, and Jim asked if he'd ever thought about owning a campground. "And look at us now - I had no idea what an opportunity I was being given."

From your entire WACO family - best wishes on completing your project. Sleep when you can haha!

If your campground is going through an upgrade, adding unique camping accommodations, or would like to share some highlights of your season, be sure to send them to the office at tina@seversonandassociates.com.



WACO OUT & ABOUT



CONGRATS TO YUKON TRAILS / ELS!
What an amazing grand opening ceremony for your NEW container units! We were excited to have WACO representatives and Gilbert Brown (GBF) be part of the event. Your unique lodging options are sure to be a big hit this season!

Members MAKING AN IMPACT

SHOUT OUT TO O'NEIL CREEK CAMPGROUND FOR MAKING AN IMPACT! POSTED FROM THEIR FACEBOOK PAGE:



"Saturday, August 19th, we had the honor of sharing in the gifting of a new and bigger trike on behalf of a joint project between the Gilbert Brown Foundation and the Western Wisconsin Wheels to an adorable 8 year old girl, right here at O'Neil Creek Campground. Her name is Trinity. Trinity has a rare genetic mutation that less than 200 people on the world are known to have. Affecting her muscles, development delay and she is non verbal. Cassidy, a volunteer from the Western Wisconsin Wheels presented it to her and assisted with the fitting of Trinity's new trike. The afternoon continued with many of our campers participating and cheering her on, as Trinity took her new trike for a test drive around the campground."

Thank you to all our OCC visitors, supporters and volunteers who showed up for Trinity's new trike day."





NEWSLETTER- General Highlights



MAY 2023

We all hope you survived the Memorial Day craziness and were successful with excellent customer service in your parks! There is so much happening in the upcoming months - a virtual pool code review (watch your emails!), continued efforts for zoning ordinances in favor of campgrounds, and of course, just being incredibly busy! Let us know if there is anything WACO can do to help during your peak season.

Letter from the Executive Director Lori Severson, Executive Director of WACO

Dear Members,

We are full-swing into your busy season! Everyone is gearing up for a money-making time! Travel opportunities continue to open for the WACO office to learn and grow our association business. I just got back from CAMP, and it's interesting how various associations like us are doing business. One of the things to note is Wisconsin truly offers a vast variety of benefits for our members. It's also interesting to see where there are differences. For instance, Florida, Texas, Indiana, New York, and New Jersey have minimal difficulty obtaining RV and outside sales to support their directory. We struggle with that. The RV dealers in Wisconsin never purchase a full page in our directory; in other states, that is the norm. Granted, we would need to have a much larger book if we did get more attractions and RV places, but to date, we haven't had a lot of luck. If members have an "in" or connection - maybe someone they work with - we'd really appreciate the help! We are seeing the other states continue with the number of directories printing, although Wisconsin is in the top 3 of the number of directories. As you all heard at the annual meeting,



inside...

Know the Facts

ZONING UPDATES

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Got an Abandoned RV? Let us help!

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Letter from Your E.D.	P. 1
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we printed less this year due to the high printing costs. We continue to get requests for the printed directory from consumers and our other partners. We are experimenting with rack cards with QR codes to see if this is another option. We shall see if this works! The CAMP group - Campground Association of Management Professionals all states a flat or slightly reduced number of members.



CAMP Executive Board

AI and ChatGPT and how it's a fantastic tool to help write handbooks, policy manuals, etc, for your campground. The considerable caution is to check your facts as she is an attorney who found it can make errors! It's a time saver - just don't forget to check. The good news is it can get you started on letters, handbooks, and anything you need to write to get your brain working and started down a great path! CAMP also had a great strategic online marketing speaker in Wendy Taylor and our own Mark Hazelbaker.

Many attribute this flatline to the high sales volume and attitude that business is great. Everyone also commented that the number of consumers attending RV shows is record-breaking. There is a movement on more 'all-inclusive' training - we listened to a speaker, Kavita Sawh from the University of Central Florida, who encourages us to use diverse pictures in our marketing materials. Nothing new, but she talked about how different cultures like to recreate and how we can better understand and cater to various demographics.

One individual who is interested in talking with more associations is Earl B. Hunter, Jr., who is the founder of Blackfolkscamping. Check out their website to learn more:

<https://www.blackfolkscamping.com/about/>

I think it's important we all try to be aware of different cultures in general and how we can become accommodating, whether it is space and activities for kids with Autism or other diverse demographics. It's surely exciting to see how the pandemic has created more educational opportunities for our owners. The big takeaway is to be sure you survey your customers and pay attention to different demographics and why they choose to camp with you.

We also learned a lot from Wendy Sellers - an HR Lady who is truly a camper. She spoke about using

Baby boomers are looking for winter spaces - For Wisconsin, this means Florida, Arizona, etc. And in the summer, they are looking to camp here! Our idea of marketing to these customers seems to be paying off, and we need to continue that focus. Scott Bahr, who works with Cairn Consulting Group, speaks a lot about the trends of both Baby Boomers and how generation demographics relate to camping. Scott presented at the Florida and Alabama outdoor hospitality conference. He assists with the surveys from many campers, including KOA's camping survey.

He has 30 years of experience in surveying campers and was quite interesting to listen to, especially if you want to learn more about the industry's data.

Here is some additional information on what Generation Z is looking for in a camping experience:

- Generation Z, or Gen Z, refers to individuals born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s. This generation has grown up in a world that is increasingly digital and fast-paced, and as a result, they often seek

UPDATED IN JUNE!

If you need any of the following, WACO can help!



- Economic Data by County, including tax information
- Economic Data by State
- What WACO provides and what our members look like
- General Campground Industry Data

Check out these links in Members-Only!



unique and authentic experiences that allow them to connect with nature and disconnect from technology.

- Regarding camping, Gen Zers are looking for experiences that offer adventure, sustainability, and community.
- Gen Zers are known for their love of adventure and trying new things, which is no different when it comes to camping. They want to explore new places, challenge themselves, and make memories that they can share on social media. Camping experiences that offer hiking, rock climbing, kayaking, and mountain biking are beautiful to this generation.

allow them to connect with others. This includes group camping trips with friends or family and camping festivals or retreats where they can meet like-minded individuals. It's essential to tie in what festivals, fairs, and events are happening in your area. They also appreciate campsites that offer communal spaces, such as shared fire pits or picnic areas, where they can socialize and make new friends.

- In addition to these experiences, Gen Zers also value diversity and inclusivity in their camping experiences. They want to feel welcome and represented, regardless of their background or identity. They appreciate campsites that are welcoming to all and offer facilities that cater to different needs and preferences.

Please watch for your membership renewals - remember, there is power in everything we do, and we need your numbers. We have worked hard to ensure that we have what you need! If you genuinely don't understand the value of membership, I would love to talk to you.

Thanks so much for all you do! I was so proud to represent WACO at our CAMP meeting! You guys make us the best!

Lori

Lori Severson,
Executive Director, WACO

Severson
& ASSOCIATES

A woman-owned business, offering a wide range of marketing, promotional, and training options to meet your needs, big or small!

PO Box 228 | N22676 HWY 53 | Ethrick, WI 54627
(608) 525-2525 | lina@seversonandassociates.com

TOOLS AVAILABLE!

If you need any of the following, WACO can help!



- Economic Data by County, including tax information
- Economic Data by State
- What WACO provides and what our members look like
- General Campground Industry Data

Check out these links in Members-Only!



NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS-Sponsored



Growing Your Business' Website: Should You Use AI-Generated Content to Boost SEO?

Respectfully Submitted by our Sponsor, Blackhawk Bank

One way you can grow your business' online presence is through Search Engine Optimization (SEO), which centers around improving organic traffic to your website by increasing your visibility to search engines, such as Google and Bing.

To increase SEO rankings, many owners write web content that includes target keywords. The hope is that your website will rank higher for searches that include those keywords, which means more people will find your website.

However, business owners have recently turned to artificial intelligence (AI) to help them write copy with the purpose of increasing SEO rankings, creating a lot of buzz in the SEO world. We wanted to provide some background on AI-generated content, what is currently available on the market, and the pros and cons of using AI to boost your SEO.

WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Generally speaking, artificial intelligence is the programming of computers to complete tasks and solve problems that typically require human input. It is supposed to mimic human intelligence by learning and adapting to new information.

AI has been developed over the years to help people become more efficient. Because of this, it has been adopted by many industries and trades, including marketing.

WHAT IS AI-GENERATED CONTENT?

AI-generated content is exactly how it sounds: content, such as web copy or an article, that was

written by AI. Many are utilizing AI chatbots to write fresh, relevant content that will boost engagement among readers, and be noticed by search engines.

Currently, there are two AI chatbots that are making headlines: Microsoft's ChatGPT and Google's Bard. If you have not had the opportunity to try either of these out, the idea is simple: ask the chatbot a question or type a command, and it will supply an answer. These chatbots can handle a wide range of tasks, including writing copy, drafting emails, explaining computer code in different programming languages, and much more.

So, instead of a human hand at the helm of writing copy, you can ask either of these tools to write about a topic or product for you, and like magic, it appears within seconds. This is what makes AI chatbots so attractive to business owners. If you don't have time to write fresh content for your website (which has been proven to boost SEO rankings) then why not take advantage of an AI tool to write the copy for you? However, before you begin down this track, there are some things to consider in order to ensure you are using these AI tools the best way possible.

CONCERNS WITH USING AI-GENERATED CONTENT

Algorithms Don't Like AI Content

There are mixed responses from search engines about promoting content written by AI. Google has said that "Using automation - including AI - to generate content with the primary purpose of manipulating ranking in search results is a violation of our spam policies." In other words, Google knows what



The Start of it All

Firefly Reservations Origin Story,
Respectfully Submitted by Sponsor, Firefly Reservations

In 2017, Firefly founder Brady Adams and his brother Clay started a small, 10-site campground. Both brothers had full-time jobs in addition to this new undertaking and it was quickly determined that they were going to need good campground reservation software to automate the office work if they were going to keep up with everything that they now had on their plates. So Brady set out to find a software solution for their small campground and its growing workload. He had discovered very early on that they needed help with automating the monthly payments for the ongoing reservations, as well as the booking of new reservations. And, just as quickly he became disappointed in what he found available for purchase on the market.

Now, this is where the plot thickens. Brady Adams was a "techie". He knew what was possible because he is a software developer by trade. The campground reservation software options that he found were either too old, too clunky, or too expensive...and most often they were all three. But, he became most disappointed when he found out that the management systems that were currently on the market at that time had no "self-serve" options. All of the choices he could find required that the account be set up for him by a person he didn't know, someone he had never met and that was not always available to answer questions or change information quickly. While we're not saying that he was a control freak - he did want full and total control 24/7/365.

So, he had an idea. Brady thought he could do better, in fact - he KNEW he could do better! And, he figured that he could not only make a program that would help him out managing their campground, but he could also make a campground reservation software that could help all campgrounds and RV parks by using the pain points that he and Clay were experiencing in running their own campground. After a full year of discovery and research that always seemed to ultimately lead to disappointment, he began writing the computer code for Firefly Reservations in 2018. Brady had grown tired of talking and began doing. Two short years later, the Firefly product was successfully released to the campground reservation software

market and their customers and the rest, as they say, is history.

"Success is Best When it's Shared"

There could not have been a better time for Firefly to hit the marketplace. With the onset of the Pandemic and the belief that camping was a safer way to travel and avoid crowds, there were an additional 10.1 million households who camped for the first time in 2020. This increase in camping volume directly corresponded to the urgency for campground owners to find campground reservation software that could help them manage the load.

With the rapidly expanding customer base, as well as Brady's own expanding campground, features were quickly and continuously added to Firefly Reservations to make running a campground easier and more responsive than ever before. As a user of his own product, Brady was able to leverage his experience running a campground to make the product stand far above the rest. What made Firefly Reservations different from the others on the market is that they could sell the problems that the software could solve...not just the product itself.

"Moving Forward"

Fast forward today: Firefly continues to operate the brothers' campground and hundreds of campgrounds throughout North America. In 2021, Firefly Reservations joined the Aspira, ReserveAmerica.com, and, RVParly.com family. ReserveAmerica has decades of park management experience and is now considered the premier outdoor ecosystem serving park owners, managers, and their camping guests. RVParly.com is an RV directory made for recreational vehicle owners, by those who RV fulltime. Firefly Reservations was built by campground owners, for campground owners. Firefly makes it easy to accept online reservations and automate tasks like collecting payments and sending out emails. Firefly excels in ease of use, and streamlined operations and gives the promise to busy campground owners, managers, and clerks of having more time in their day.

With Firefly Reservations...

It isn't about the software, it's about the solutions.

"First Be the Best and Then Be First"

To find out more, visit www.FireflyReservations.com.

3 Low-Cost Perks You can Add Today

Are you looking for creative ways to enhance your customers' experience? Providing extra amenities or services can help differentiate your campground from competitors, and make your guests feel appreciated and valued. Add these three perks and you'll really stand out from the crowd!

- 1. Early Check-ins:** By providing RVers with the chance to check in early, you are going to make a lot of campers very happy! After driving for multiple hours, those campers will feel mentally fatigued. The last thing they want to do is waste time in a congested parking lot waiting to check in.
- 2. Late Check-Outs:** Likewise, late check-outs are great too. By offering late check-outs, you allow your guests to actually enjoy their last night on the grounds. It will create a positive last impression on them, rather than a stressful experience of trying to hurry up and meet the check-out deadline.
- 3. Offer Firewood:** While some campgrounds may sell firewood, others do not. If you're looking to simplify the process of providing firewood, there are options to consider. Outsource firewood delivery to a local vendor who can provide daily deliveries to your RVers. Another option is to partner with a tree trimming company, offering them the opportunity to sell firewood at your campground in exchange for their tree trimming services.

These low-cost perks can generate positive reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations, leading to increased bookings and revenue!

This article is sponsored by **CampersCard** - a free marketing platform to give your campground exposure to 800,000 RVers.

Our mission is simple - to make happier campers and communities. We're passionate about supporting small businesses that are the backbone of this country.

That's why our platform is 100% free for campgrounds to market their business. There's no annual program fee. There's no commission structure. And, you get to keep using your current reservation system. We will simply send you additional traffic and bookings!

List your campground today by visiting CampersCard.com/List-A-Campground/



AI Voice Generator Scam: A New Wave of Imposter Scams

Respectfully Submitted by our Sponsor, Blackhawk Bank

victims confused and wondering if the problem has been resolved.

FRAUDSTERS ARE NOW USING AI-GENERATION

To further this gimmick, fraudsters are now using Artificial Intelligence to clone the voice of someone, and then use that voice to scam people out of money. Scammers will often use videos found on social media platforms to pull a snippet of someone talking, and run it through an AI voice generator to clone it.

Scammers will then target people close to the person whose voice is being cloned. Whether that's relatives or friends, the fraudsters will use the duplicated voice to call people in their circle, pretending to be the real-life version, and demand funds. As with many impersonator scams, scammers will use an emergency situation to convince the victims that the person on the phone needs cash immediately, such as a medical emergency or to be released from an alleged captor. An Arizona mom recently experienced this first-hand, as she received a disturbing phone call from someone pretending to be her daughter who claimed to be kidnapped, and her captors were demanding a ransom.

HOW DO IMPOSTER SCAMS WORK?

Imposter scams typically start with an unexpected phone call, text, message on social media, or an email from a fraudster impersonating someone from an organization. The most common organizations that scammers will impersonate is a government agency, such as the IRS, Sheriff's Department, or Social Security.

Whatever the ruse is, the message will most likely be urgent. The fraudster will try to convince you that a bill is overdue, a warrant is out for your arrest, or an account has been compromised, and it needs immediate attention. However, the only option to solve this problem is by making a payment, typically through a wire transfer or gift cards. Once payment has been received, the person on the other end quickly vanishes, leaving many





E-NEWS & PRINT MARKETING



**MODERN
CAMPGROUND**

**Outdoor Hospitality News
For Campground & RV Park Owners**



Wisconsin Campgrounds Gear Up for a Busy Autumn Season

Modern Campground - July 24, 2023



Lori Severson to Share Expert Insights at Upcoming Campground Conventions

Ken Lunaba - February 21, 2024



Wisconsin Campgrounds Gearing Up for 2023 Season with Exciting Upgrades and Expansions

Modern Campground - April 3, 2023

Wisconsin

Wisconsin Campgrounds Gearing Up for 2023 Season with Exciting Upgrades and Expansions

As the 2023 camping season approaches, the [Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners \(WACO\)](#) is showcasing numerous campgrounds across the state that are expanding and upgrading their facilities to offer visitors an even better experience in the great outdoors.

According to a press release, improvements range from exciting new recreational amenities to additional campsites and rental accommodations catering to families and friends seeking memorable outdoor adventures.

Many Wisconsin campgrounds are making significant improvements to their parks, providing a variety of new amenities, such as inflatable toys for children, ropes courses, and swimming ponds with inflatable climbing structures. These additions aim to attract more visitors and enhance the overall [camping](#) experience for all ages.

Lori Severson, executive director of WACO, expressed her excitement for the upcoming [camping season](#) and emphasized the growth and reinvestment of new and existing campgrounds.



E-NEWS & PRINT MARKETING



WOODALL'S

• CAMPGROUND MAGAZINE •

Wisconsin Parks Continue to Expand Water Amenities

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: May 2, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



The Jellystone Park and Bear Paw Beach in Caledonia, Wis., is one of many parks in Wisconsin that have expanded water features.

With so many of Wisconsin's campgrounds being located next to lakes and rivers, campground operators are finding they can offer everything from traditional water recreation to modern splashgrounds and waterzones with interactive play features, according to a press release.

For example, the Jellystone Park Camp-Resort in the Wisconsin Dells not only offers a water playground with 25 water features, including dumping buckets, water cannons and waterslides, but kayaks, rafts and canoes for use on Mirror Lake, the oldest manmade lake in Wisconsin.

Lori Severson Set to Speak at 3 Events, 'Giving Back'

By: Woodalls Campground Magazine | Published on: Feb 21, 2024 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Lori Severson is one of the few campground association executives who owns and operates a campground, according to a press release.

Severson has been the executive director of the **Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO)** for 27 years, but she's also owned and operated **Champions Riverside Resort** in **Galesville, Wis.** for the past 13 years, an experience that has prompted her to learn as much as she can to improve her park because her livelihood is at stake as well as that of her daughters, Christina and Danielle, who also help her with her responsibilities at WACO, as well as their family campground business.

In recent years, however, Severson has increasingly recognized the value in giving back to the private park industry, not only in her home state of Wisconsin but in states across the country.

"I like to give seminars and share some of the best tips I've learned

Wis. Campground Set to Host Cancer Survivors Event

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: Sep 25, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



A park in Wisconsin is set to host a camping event for cancer survivors.

In an initiative aimed at providing solace and connection, **Glacier Valley Campground** in Cambria, Wis., is extending a warm invitation to cancer survivors for a special weekend of free RV and tent camping. The event, scheduled for Friday and Saturday night, Sept. 29-30, is a unique opportunity for survivors and their support groups to come together, share their stories and find comfort in a supportive community. Survivors camp for free, while a portion of the camping fee paid by supporters will be donated

to the Gilbert Brown Foundation for distribution to cancer-fighting organizations, according to a press release.

Wisconsin Parks Ready to Celebrate the Fall Season

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: Sep 8, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Merry Mac's Campground will be celebrating the Halloween season with trick-or-treating, campsite decorating contests, hayrides and more. Credit: MERRY MAC'S CAMPGROUND

There might be monsters in Merrimac, Wisc., demons at Duck Creek, and princesses in Pardeeville this coming fall, according to **WiscNews**.

That's because local campgrounds are celebrating the Halloween season with their guests. There will be plenty of spooky goings-on throughout the autumn season.

Just because summer is almost over, it doesn't mean having fun camping is over. **Merry Mac's Campground** in Merrimac, **Duck Creek Campground** in Pardeeville, and **Pride of America Camping Resort**, also in Pardeeville, all have Halloween festivities planned.

Merry Mac's Campground, located at E12995 Halweg



E-NEWS & PRINT MARKETING



WOODALL'S

• CAMPGROUND MAGAZINE •

Wisconsin Parks Gearing Up For a Busy Fall Season

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: Jul 24, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Fall is still officially nearly two months away, but campgrounds across Wisconsin are already mapping out pre-Halloween-themed weekends, carnivals and other weekend activities with autumn themes, according to a press release.

"Wisconsin campgrounds have lots of activities planned every weekend heading into October," said Lori Severson, executive director of the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners, which hosts [WisconsinCampgrounds.com](https://www.wisconsin-campgrounds.com), the travel planning website. "We recommend people check [WisconsinCampgrounds.com](https://www.wisconsin-campgrounds.com) to find campgrounds in areas they would like to visit, and then click on the campgrounds' websites to check out their activity listings."

Here's a sampling of some of the activities planned at Wisconsin campgrounds over the next couple of months:

Dell Pines Campground in Baraboo: This campground is planning a Halloween-themed weekend Sept. 22-24.

Wisconsin Parks Developing New Summer Activities

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: May 3, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Puckaway Pigfest Barbecue Competition at Lake Arrowhead Campground in Montello, Wis., hosts a popular BBQ festival every summer.

For Jessica Malsack, one of the greatest joys of co-owning and operating Lake Arrowhead Campground in Montello, Wis., is developing new activities to entertain families during the camping season, according to a press release.

"We do challenges like picking pennies out of the mud with your toes or putting your hand in a bucket of live cockroaches — things you can't do at home!" Malsack says with a laugh.

Sometimes Malsack and her team will mix it up by mimicking games they see on TikTok

or on television game shows. They also create challenges, like "Rock and Roll bingo," in which guests have to correctly name the song to win the game.

Wis. Parks Make Improvements Ahead of Season

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: Apr 5, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Syren RV Resort in Siren, Wis., has added some new campsites for the 2023 season.

Wisconsin is blessed with hundreds of family-owned and operated campgrounds that offer attractions for families and friends seeking to create wonderful memories in the Great Outdoors, according to a press release.

"We're excited to begin the 2023 camping season," said Lori Severson, executive director of the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO), which hosts [WisconsinCampgrounds.com](https://www.wisconsin-campgrounds.com), the travel planning website that features family-owned and operated campgrounds.

"Several new campgrounds have opened in Wisconsin in recent years," she added. "But at the same time, existing campgrounds have

Gilbert Brown Found. Hosting Events at Wis. Parks

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: Jun 30, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Gilbert Brown, on the left, and his foundation, the Gilbert Brown Foundation, are set to host a number of fundraising events at campgrounds in Wisconsin this summer.

Last week, the **Gilbert Brown Foundation** and its partners donated a car to 16-year-old Caden Dahl, of Arcadia, Wis., who was born with no right arm and a short left arm with two fingers.

Through his nonprofit foundation, Brown, a retired Green Bay football player, has made a positive difference in the lives of more than 150 children since he established his namesake foundation in 2005, providing families of children suffering various hardships with everything from gas cards to access to summer football camps to funding for life-changing surgeries, according to a press release.

But Brown is the first to admit the funding for such efforts would not be possible without the support his foundation receives at fundraising events that take place at Wisconsin campgrounds every summer.

"It's our fundraising events that help us generate the resources we need to make a difference in the lives of Over the next three months, Brown plans to visit 17 Wisconsin campgrounds where he will engage in

creative activities, including meeting with campground guests, playing games and signing football memorabilia. Gilbert believes it's important to engage in some fun way when he's out raising money for kids. Some of the events may include Brown's other Green Bay football friends, such as Santana Dotson, Dorsey Levens or Leroy Butler, subject to their availability.

"We always have fun whenever we're together, and this makes our events especially fun," Brown said, adding that his schedule of appearances at campgrounds, restaurants and other venues is posted at gilbertbrownfoundation.org.

Brown plans to make appearances at the following 17 campgrounds through mid-October:

July 7: 8 to 10 p.m., **Champions Riverside Resort in Gatesville**

July 8: 12 to 2 p.m., **Chapparral Campground & Resort in Wonewoc**; 3 to 4 p.m., **River Bay Premier Camping Resort in Lyndon Station**; 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., **Rustic Ridge Resort in Friendship**

July 22: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., **Duck Creek Campground in Pardeeville**; 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., **Yukon Trails Campground in Lyndon Station**

Aug. 12: 4 to 5 p.m., **Hickory Hills Campground in Edgerton**; 6 to 7 p.m., **River Bend RV Resort in Watertown**

Aug. 26: Noon to 1 p.m., **Oasis Campground in Hancock**; 2 to 3 p.m., **River's Edge Campground in Stephens Point**; 4 to 5 p.m., **Kinney Lake Campground in Marion**

Sept. 2: Noon to 1 p.m., **Stoney Creek Resort in Osseo**; 2 to 3 p.m., **O'Neil Creek Campground in Chippewa Falls**; 4:30

WACO Partners to Give Disabled Teen His First Car

By: Rick Kessler | Published on: Jun 19, 2023 | Categories: Industry News | 0 comments



Caden stands with Gilbert Brown, second from right, and his mother, Heather Mares. Standing on the other side of the car are Mike Gross, left, and Steve Gunderson.

Caden Dahl was born with no right arm and a short left arm with two fingers. He also suffers from severe scoliosis and has endured numerous surgeries.

Despite these challenges, Caden has excelled in school, played football and runs cross country. He even painted a house with his toes. He recently landed a job working with a law firm in Arcadia, Wis., his hometown, and plans to attend an Ivy League university with the goal of becoming an attorney, notes a press release from the **Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO)**.



E-NEWS & PRINT MARKETING

FALL ACTIVITIES COLLECTED FOR THE NEWS from JEFF CRIDER!

Many thanks to those members who responded to the Jeff Crider interview request for Fall / Halloween activities. We will undoubtedly see publications picking up the press release shortly, and we'll be sure to share those as they come out! Check out who replied below and what kinds of Fall activities they have scheduled - anything you can adjust for your park? Let's learn from each other!

Wisconsin campgrounds over the next couple of months:

- **Dell Pines Campground in Baraboo:** This campground is planning a Halloween-themed weekend Sept. 22-24. Children will be able to sow magic pumpkin seeds. Other activities include pumpkin painting and carving, a costume contest, trick or treating and dancing. The last weekend of September will feature a fall chili and soup cooking competition.
- **Duck Creek Campground in Pardeeville:** This campground will have three consecutive Halloween-themed weekends starting Sept. 16. Activities include costume and campsite decorating contests and spooky wagon rides.
- **Evergreen Campsites in Wild Rose:** This campground's fall activities include a Harvestfest Weekend Sept. 7-10 featuring craft beer samples, caramel apples, a pumpkin patch ride and a vendor craft fair. The park's four-consecutive Halloween-themed weekends begin Sept. 13-15 with spooky train rides, trick or treating for children and adults, and dances.
- **Holiday Shores Campground & Resort in the Wisconsin Dells:** This park will have a Halloween-themed weekend Sept. 22-24. Activities include a campsite decorating contest, a golf cart decorating contest and trick or treating.
- **Lake Arrowhead Campground in Montello, Wisconsin:** This campground has a state-sanctioned barbecue competition called the Puckaway Pigfest Sept. 8-10 and four Halloween-themed weekends including the last three weekends of September and Oct. 13-15. Activities include a magic pumpkin patch, a haunted walk, a costume dance and trick-or-treating. Halloween-themed weekends will also include a Candy Corn Carnival where you can play games, win prizes, make a caramel apple, or tie dye a shirt.
- **Lakeside Fire Campground in Nekoosa:** Two Halloween-themed weekends are planned at this campground Sept. 15-17 and Sept. 22-24. Activities each weekend include a visit to the pumpkin patch, face painting, a campsite decorating contest, a haunted walk, a movie and trick or treating for children and adults. A football and chili weekend is planned for Oct. 6-8 with a campsite decorating contest, a football-themed golf cart parade, a chili cookoff and a bonfire. Sunday's activities include a potluck brunch.
- **Little Creek Family Campground in Fairchild:** This campground will have its third annual "Church Lady's Potluck Dinner" on the weekend of Sept. 22-24. Guests are invited to bring their favorite comfort dish to share. The park will have a Halloween-themed weekend Oct. 6-8 with games and crafts, a costume parade, and trick or treating.
- **Wilderness Campground in Montello:** This campground is planning two Halloween-themed weekends, Sept. 15-17 and 22-24, with a magic pumpkin patch, a pumpkin decorating contest, a kid's costume jam, a Halloween costume party, a campsite decorating contest and an outdoor movie. The weekend of Sept. 29-Oct. 1 will have a Camptoberfest theme with German-inspired activities, including kids hammerschlagen (hammering a nail into a wooden beam) and schokoladenessen (chocolate eating) competitions. There will also be an adult hammerschlagen and a stein holding contest for men and women. The winner keeps the steins and gets a 12-pack of beer.

Chicago Tribune milwaukee journal sentinel Wausau Daily Herald

TRAVEL

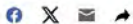
As camping grows in popularity, new website helps Wisconsin campers find the perfect spot



Keith Uhlig

Wausau Daily Herald

Published 5:05 a.m. CT April 7, 2023



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SNOWBIRDS & RV TRAVELERS PARKS & RESORTS SUNCRUISER 4WD COLUMNS C

Many Wisconsin campgrounds are making improvements in preparation for the 2023 camping season

APRIL 5, 2023 12:00 AM

WisconsinCampgrounds.com, operated by the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners, features campgrounds that are enhancing their facilities with new amenities. These improvements range from inflatable toys for kids to ropes courses and swimming ponds equipped with inflatable climbing structures. With so many family-owned campgrounds in Wisconsin, visitors have plenty of options for outdoor recreation and memory-making with loved ones.

WACO IN THE NEWS

Jeff Crider's articles continue to make headlines!

Check out this article from WOODALLS, featuring those of our Members who sent in their information: [WOODALLS](#)

Jeff also sent us this amazing update!

The Chicago Tribune has referenced our water activity release and included a link to WisconsinCampgrounds.com in a report highlighting trends and opportunities in camping across the country. The writer, referenced the types of water activities in Wisconsin, using wording from our release, (thanks Jeff!) and when you click on lakefront water activities in her report it will take you to your website!

This is a syndicated column so it will get picked up by newspapers in different media markets around the country.

[CHICAGO TRIBUNE](#)

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/travel/ct-taking-the-kids-camping-20230518-5eh-7gtt47nevtafmmkuofb45om-story.html>

Check out the press releases already picked up by several media outlets and below that, topics he plans to cover in this year:

Articles so far:

- [Wausau Daily Herald](#)
- [Modern Campground](#)
- [Industry e-News](#)
- [Sun Cruiser Media](#)
- [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#)



TOPICS:

- Wisconsin Parks that are Open in Winter
- Wisconsin's Best Parks for Canoeing, Kayaking and White Water Rafting
- Wisconsin's Newest Campgrounds
- Wisconsin Park Improvements and Expansions for the 2023 Camping Season
- Unique Accommodations at Wisconsin Parks
- Newest Activities at Wisconsin's Family Parks
- Green Bay Packer Appearances at WACO-Member Parks
- Fun Fall Activities at Wisconsin Campgrounds
- Wisconsin Parks that have or are planning to add EV charging stations this year.
- Wisconsin Parks that believe they offer some of the most affordable camping opportunities



RADIO ADVERTISING

Two Major Radio Promotions Ran in 2023:

- **WAXX 104.5 FM Midwest Family Broadcasting –**
 - 5 stations - Early Spring promotion
 - WACO Received 120 promotional ads and 200 60-second ads along with the contest promotion introductions. We used this promotion to drive campers to our website and Facebook. These went along with Jeff's press releases.
 - Statewide campaign
 - ✓ \$2000 in WACO Certificates
 - ✓ Earned Media \$10,500
- **WOODWARD RADIO GROUP VAN BOXTEL RV GREAT CAMPER GIVEAWAY KICKOFF EVENT!**
 - 1PM-5PM WITH LIVE BROADCASTS FROM OUR SISTER STATIONS - 95-3 THE SCORE (1 PM-3 PM) AND RAZOR 94-7 | 104-7 (3PM-5PM)!
 - VAN BOXTEL RV - 1956 BOND ST. - GREEN BAY
 - IT'S YOUR FIRST CHANCE TO REGISTER TO WIN A BRAND NEW 2022 KEYSTONE RV SPRINGDALE TRAVEL TRAILER!
 - GRAB SOME FREE STATION SWAG! Camp at any WACO Campground:
 - ✓ Used \$5000.00 in WACO Certificates.
 - ✓ Received \$20k in earned advertising





WACO PROMOTIONS

BRANDING THE WACO NAME

We are continuing to create a strong brand identity for the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO) involving capturing the essence of camping, as it continues to grow. We are focused on creating messages that appeal to every kind of camper. Whether you are the camper who needs stimulation, toys and activities, or you want to enjoy the beauty of Wisconsin's nature land, and the sense of community that campgrounds foster, we want our consumers to know we have it all. Look to WACO for whatever that camping experience looks like to you and we can provide it.

- Sports Marketing
- Media Identification Program
- Gift Certificate Program
- Campgrounds Members - by hosting events from April 1 – October 31
- Jeff Crider – who wrote several articles throughout the year, highlighting who we are, our brand, and activities available throughout all our parks!

Branding was a major issue we faced several years ago. The consumer, our camping guests, really didn't understand the WACO brand. We would survey people at RV shows, and they were familiar with the camping bible "The Directory" but not with WACO as a name brand.

We began exploring various avenues to create better brand recognition and even explored changing the name. Research showed us that brand recognition of the stature we wanted would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. We looked for ways to create that kind of awareness without the cost. We created programs that really helped.

1. **WACO Gift Certificates**—This program has helped WACO develop further into the campers' homes allowing campers to purchase, win, or donate the certificates. Further information can be found on the page.
2. The second piece came to us through **Sports Marketing and the Charity work** WACO does. Many of WACO campgrounds have been doing wonderful charity work. Unfortunately—or fortunately for us—media is very interested in the football phenomenon in Green Bay. Our partnerships with Gilbert Foundation have created many media opportunities for WACO to get our name out there.
3. **The Department of Tourism is helping us play a key role in branding and supporting our WACO brand.**
4. We are consistently **trying new programs**, such as Camping for Kids, a state-wide bean bag Armed Forces weekend, and Charity weekend, to gather more publicity.
5. We have participated in **festivals and parades** to bring awareness to our brand.
6. We are working with **radio stations and television** to drive people to our social media sites.
7. **Partner with WCA, WMC, WTA**, and others to educate local officials on the regulations, rules, and we at WACO follow as state-licensed campgrounds. Last year we were able to put on an event prior to opening of the Wisconsin association of Counties, and it was a crazy good success. By using Gilbert LeRoy Butler, and Dorsey Levens, we brought board members to this event to educate them with a fun game about what camping is and isn't. With LeRoys amazing Leap Vodka (that the hotel allowed us to because he was coming) helped us quickly make new friends – (we offered loaded and unloaded to everyone) It was very successful and we truly appreciated all the help from campground owners who amazing lemon squeezers and networkers! It's crazy how you can teach people basics by doing entertaining and fun.



WACO PROMOTIONS

REGIONAL ADVERTISING

We are continuing to create a strong brand identity for the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO) involving capturing the essence of camping, as it continues to grow. We are focused on creating messages that appeal to every kind of camper. Whether you are the camper who needs stimulation, toys and activities, or you want to enjoy the beauty of Wisconsin's "nature land," and the sense of community that campgrounds foster, we want our consumers to know we have it all. Look to WACO for whatever that camping experience looks like to you and we can provide it. We continue to do this through:

- Called and developed a data base of Kwik Trips, BP's and other convenience stores that will take our directories. Need to continually develop these relationships as they change with management.
- Leveraged our advertising dollars by teaming up with members, Department of Tourism, and partnering with businesses that fit our camping demographics.
- Used the player connections to get us into free local and state wide events.
- Distributed WACO Directories through Ad-Lit to the waysides in Portage and Green Bay.
- Called Libraries throughout Wisconsin and Minnesota for directory distribution.
- Distributed WACO directories at sporting goods stores through-out Wisconsin. Includes Dicks Sporting Goods, Cabela's and Camping World.
- Created a data base for WACO with emails from Madison Show attendees.
- Use certificates to entice Chamber of Commerce's and businesses who have the same customers we want to distribute our directory.

TRADE ADVERTISING

- WACO Gift Certificate coupons good in any WACO member campground are used to sell on radio programs & expanded into for print & television
- WACO Gift Certificate coupons are used for contest giveaways, promotions and incentives
- Members receive credit as a re-reimbursement for the value of the certificate
- Media venues sell them to the public, at a reduced price, or uses them promotionally
- The Association gets full price in advertising
- Last year we had Jeff Crider interview campground owners and it was great to see that Wisconsin was featured in every article. Our goals for next year include using more camping certificates to create social media excitement and get more campers to engage with our brand. Through our sports marketing efforts and all the campgrounds working to include the WACO logo in their marketing materials we are beginning to make our mark as a brand.
- Our partnership with Drew and the Department of tourism has truly elevated our name brand. Drew continues to look for new ways to partner and make things happen publicity wise for us.
- We have started to see radio station promotions go much more digital and less and less "family owned" stations, much like our industry in a way. So the corporate stations offer less in earned media. We are finding that creating more excitement through unique giveaways like using Charlie Berens as a spokes person, giving away Camping and Jersey's on his podcast, much more effective. We are working to get more involved in linking our customers back to our site and filling out the information.

DIRECTORY ADVERTISING

- OHI Survey says that State Directory is the number one way campers find you! The WACO Directory belongs to the members. Each campground receives one free listing.
- Campground ad options including 1/8 page, 1/4 page, 1/3 page, 1/2 page, 2/3 page, 3/4 page, Full Page, Cover (4), Cover (2-3), coupon on center map page, add an additional listing, ATV listing, Camping Rental listing, Canoe/Kayak/Fishing listing, and special event fillers.
- RV shows are much more engaging when they can fill out our JotForms to win items. This also gets us legible email contacts to use in our branding and marketing.



MEMBER EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS

Swank Motion Pictures

25% off yearly Public Performance Site License

Your license provides you exclusive coverage for thousands of Lionsgate films, as well as thousands of films from Sony, Columbia and TriStar Pictures.

**Disney is not covered under the site license anymore-we can only license it on a single event basis (one movie for the one date you choose)

With our license you have peace of mind knowing your campground is covered for movie nights that:

- « Highlight new services or features
- « Encourage longer stays
- « Increase camper spending through stores and concession stands
- « Add to the diverse amenities your property offers guests

Contact:

Kaitlyn Pollock
Senior Account Executive
Swank Motion Pictures
1.800.876.5577
kpollock@swankmp.com

**Swank Motion Pictures,
Inc.**
10795 Watson
Road
St. Louis, MO 63127

Oriental Trading / Fun Express

20% off and free shipping on orders over \$125.00

The Website for the Discounted program is *Fun Express* and you need to contact Jeannie (info below) to set up an account for you. You will then get 20% off and free shipping with any order over \$125.00. Your WACO office can also help small campground owners pool orders together in order to take advantage of the discount!

Below is the information for our account manager. Jeannie is great to work with! Simply email or call, tell her you are with WACO, and she will set you up. This benefit will save you money!

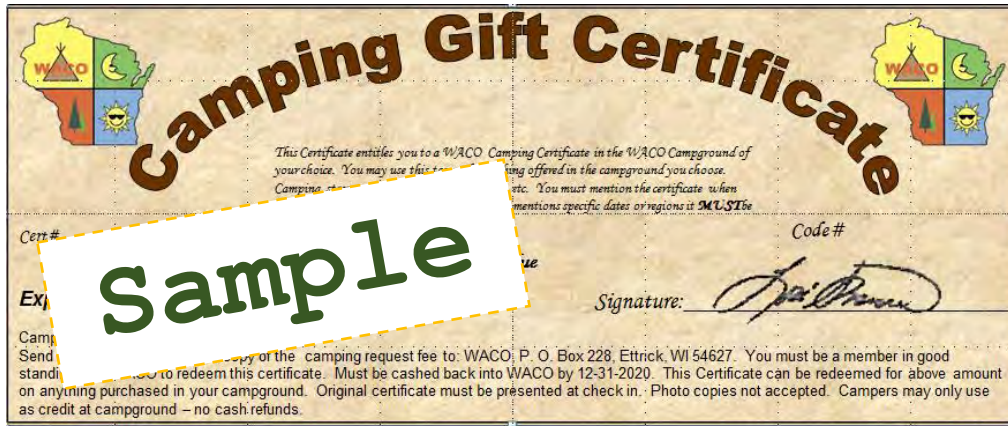
Contact:

Jeannie Carlsen
Business Development Manager
Phone: 402-939-3056 or 877-619-8497
Email: JCarlsen@oriental.com

Oriental Trading Company
4206 S. 108th Street
Omaha, NE 68137



WACO MEMBER GIFT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM



A WACO Gift Certificate is campground cash. The WACO Gift Certificate program is implemented and developed in several different ways.

- Certificates are awarded as prizes at most RV shows through games played onsite.
- They are used by various media to promote WACO and educate the public on the name. The WACO office “trades” them for promotional use to media all over Wisconsin, Minnesota & Ill. We get the total amount of the certificate to use for advertising.
 - For example, if we send a \$100 certificate to a TV station, they would run a \$100 TV ad for us. When used for a contest or sold at a reduced price on their auction, we get the additional advertising they use to promote their auction or contest.
 - WACO members are paid the full value of the certificate! Instead of paying thousands of dollars directly to the media, we get the advertising, and our members get the money.
- They can be purchased by calling the WACO office or by ordering online through WisconsinCampgrounds.com and WisconsinCampingRentals.com.
- Certificates are also used for grand prizes for events to drive our social media programs.
- They can be used for convention expenses, like treating the staff, paying the speakers, and even tipping the servers! Again, another way to take the cash we would pay for this service and give it to members.
- Donations requested by Campground owners

WHEN A GUEST HANDS ME A WACO CERTIFICATE, WHAT DO I DO?

- Waco will reimburse you 100% of the value of the certificate!
- Just mail the certificate to the WACO office, and WACO sends you the money!
- Certificates can be used to purchase anything in your campground!
- Accepting a certificate costs you nothing except the time to send it to WACO and the postage!

If you would like WACO to donate to a charity or cause you support direct them to our website and have them complete the form!



GIFT CERTIFICATES

WACO GIFT CERTIFICATES as TRADE ADVERTISING

- WACO Gift Certificate coupons good in any WACO member campground are used to sell on radio programs & expanded into for print & television
- WACO Gift Certificate coupons are used for contest giveaways, promotions and incentives
- Members receive credit as a re-reimbursement for the value of the certificate
- Media venues sell them to the public, at a reduced price, or uses them promotionally
- The Association gets full price in advertising

GIFT CERTIFICATES WILL BE USED FOR:

- Sports/RV shows as prizes
- Sold on radio marts for advertising use
- Sold to the public as gift certificates
- Used to “pay” speakers
- Newspaper contest prizes
- TV Trade



Camping Gift Certificate

VALID SUNDAY – THURSDAY ONLY

*This Certificate entitles you to a WACO Camping Certificate in the WACO Campground of your choice. You may use this towards anything offered in the campground you choose. Camping, store, amenities, per person charges, etc. You must mention the certificate when you are making reservations! If the certificate mentions specific dates or regions it **MUST** be used*

Cert # _____ Code # _____

Sample

No Cash Value

Signature: _____

Redemption Process:
Send certificate along with copy of the camping request fee to: WACO, P. O. Box 228, Ettrick, WI 54627. You must be a member in good standing with WACO to redeem this certificate. Must be cashed back into WACO by 12-31-15. This Certificate can be redeemed for above amount on anything purchased in your campground. Original certificate must be presented at check in. Photo copies not accepted. Campers may only use as credit at campground – no cash refunds.



GIFT CERTIFICATES

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM BREAKDOWN

- Speakers at Convention: \$5,000
- Convention Incentives (for Members): \$2,500
- RV show: \$10,800 to date
- Charlie Behrens Giveaway at Shows: \$1000
- Remaining Media (WACO Purchased): \$5,497
- Severson & Associates Volunteers: \$0 (Covered by Champions Riverside Resort)
- GBF Donation request relating to campgrounds: \$650
- Purchased Certificates: \$6400.00

Media	Certs Sent	Earned Media
Leighton Broadcasting	\$1000.00	\$9,200.00
Big Radio Chicago	\$3000.00	\$10,500.00
Capital Media Group	\$500.00	\$9000.00
Post Media Group	\$1000.00	\$23,500.00
WAXX 104	\$1500.00	\$7400.00
TOTALS for Certificates	\$7,000.00	\$59,600.00



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE



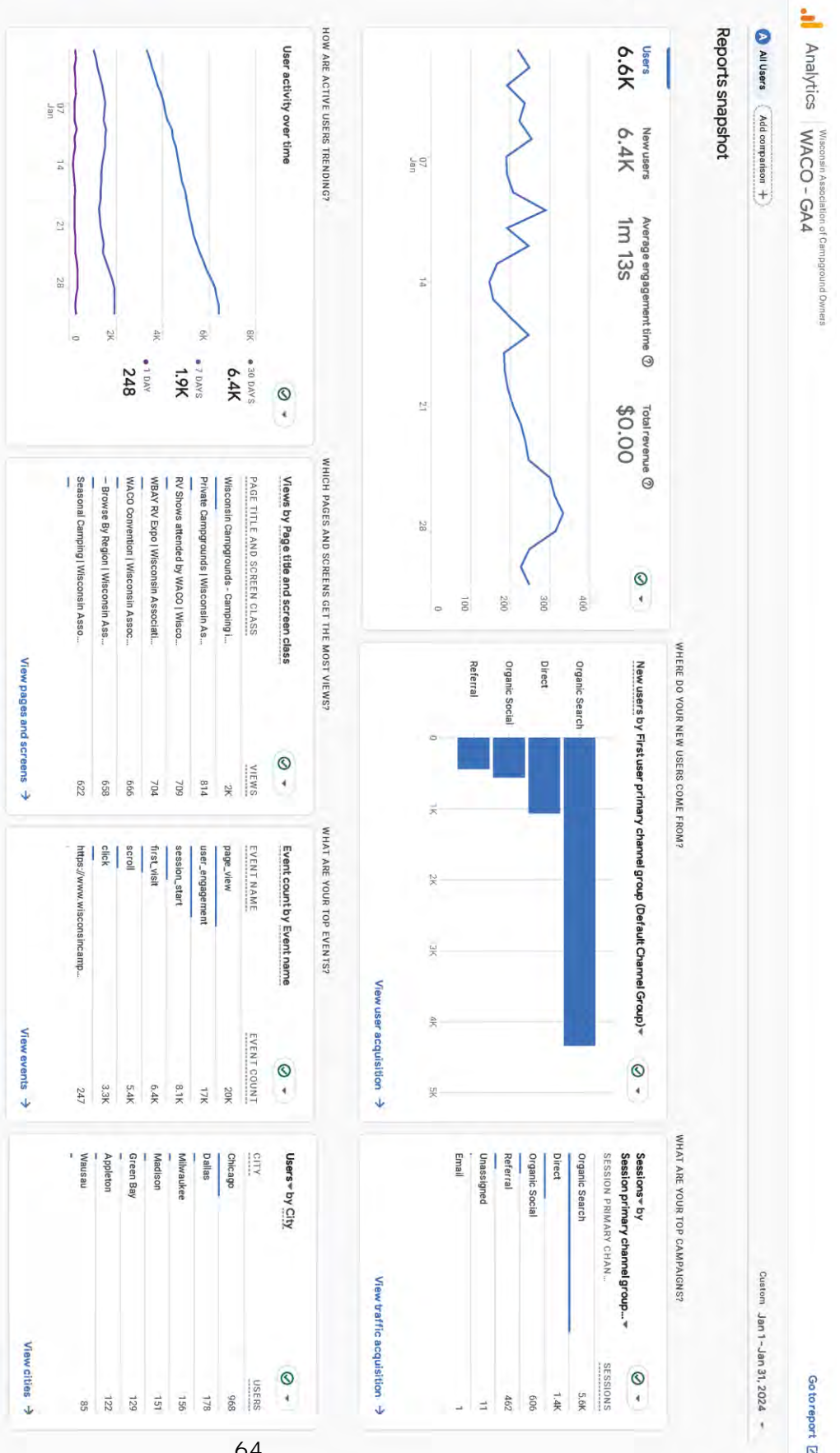


SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE



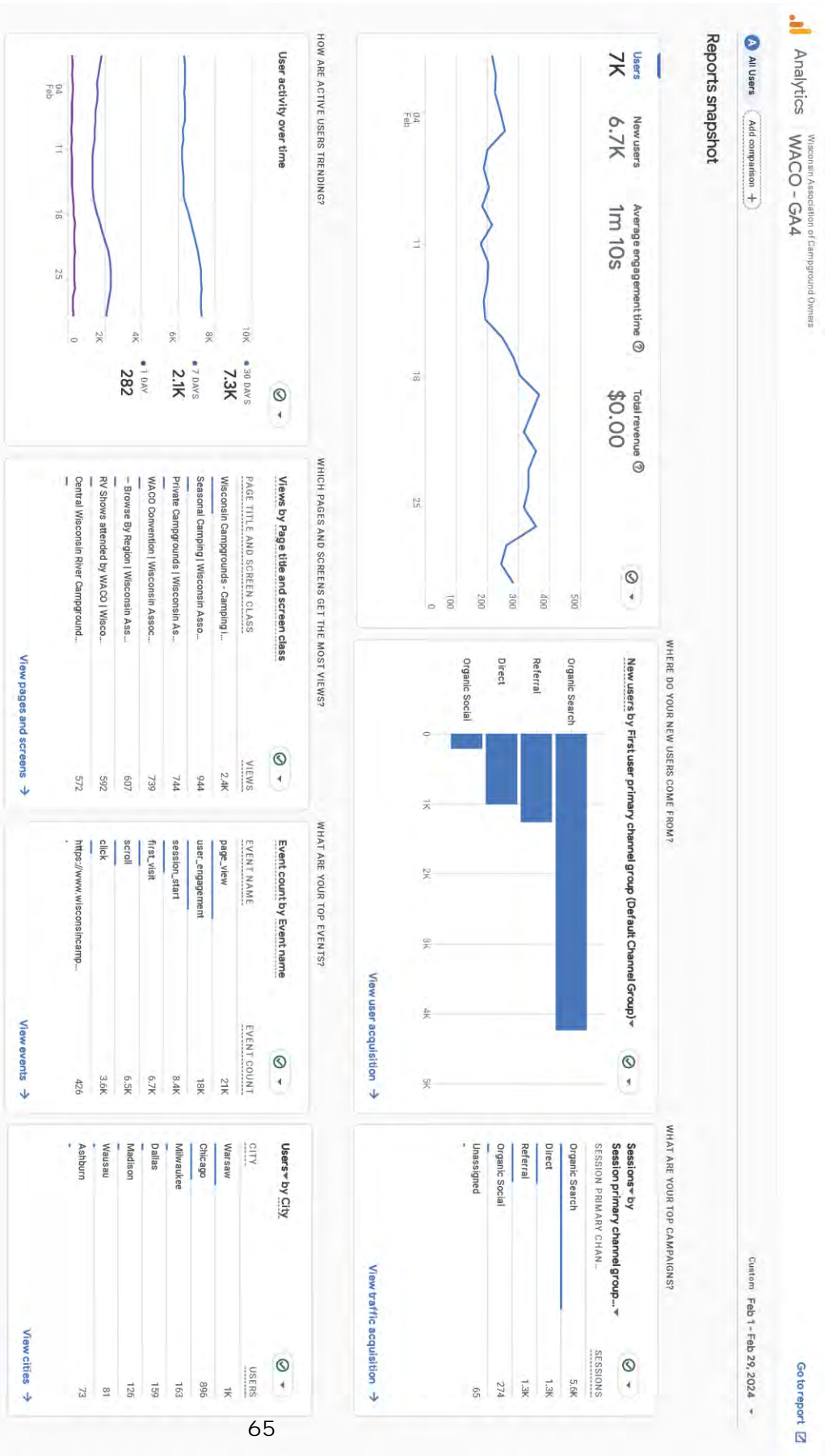


SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE





SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE





WISCONSIN CAMPERS SOCIAL MEDIA

Weekly Social Media Insights - January 2024

Facebook/Instagram Insights

Total FB current likes: 10,381 (+135 from December)

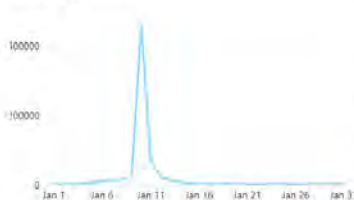
Total IG current followers: 580 (+2 from December)

Results

Reach

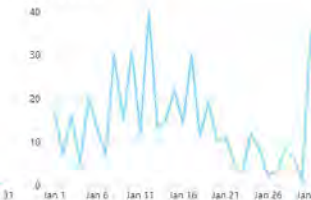
Facebook reach

631.3K ↑ 2.0%



Instagram reach

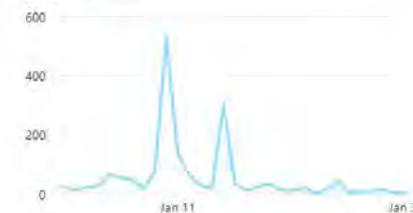
132 ↑ 2.2%



Visits

Facebook visits

1,687 ↑ 43.1%



Instagram profile visits

12 ↑ 120%



New likes and follows

Facebook Page new likes

29 ↑ 480%



New Instagram followers

6 ↑ 50%





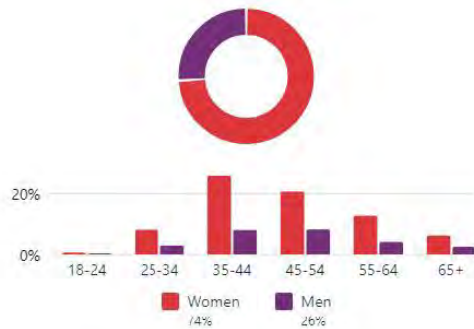
SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

Audience - Facebook

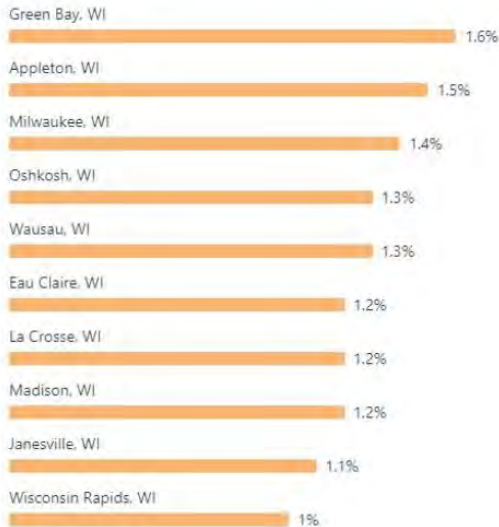
Facebook followers ⓘ

10,381

Age & gender ⓘ



Top cities

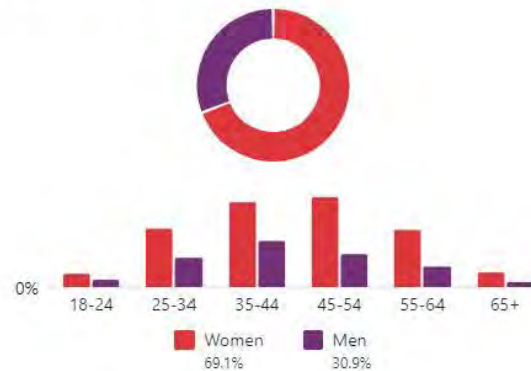


Audience - Instagram

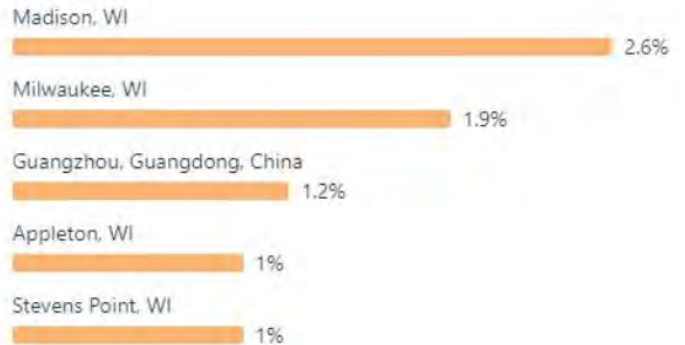
Instagram followers ⓘ

580

Age & gender ⓘ



Top cities





Content Overview - Facebook Last 90 Days

Reach

Post reach ⓘ

651.1K ↑ 8.1K%

Total from last 90 days vs 90 days prior



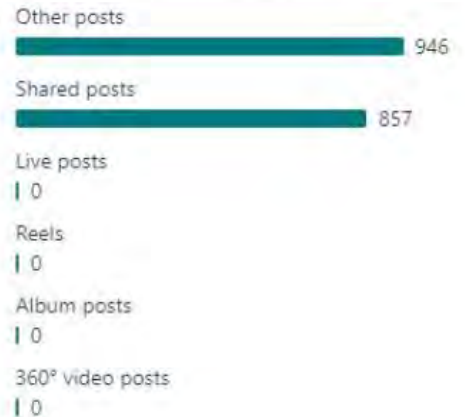
Median post reach per media type ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Median post reach per content format ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Engagement

Post reactions, comments and shares ⓘ

17K ↑ 7.0K%

Total from last 90 days vs 90 days prior



Median post reactions, comments and shares per media type ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Median post reactions, comments and shares per content format ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Top-performing organic posts

Here are posts that have performed well over the last 90 days. Understanding what's working can help you decide what to create and share next, so you can keep up the great work.

Highest reach on a post ⓘ



Facebook post

Okay, holidays are over. Is it camping season yet? Get a...

Jan 3, 2024, 5:15 PM

This post's reach (622,695) is **67,218%** higher than your median post reach (925) on Facebook.

Highest reactions on a post ⓘ



Facebook post

Okay, holidays are over. Is it camping season yet? Get a...

Jan 3, 2024, 5:15 PM

This post received **239,175%** more reactions (9,571 reactions) than your median post (4 reactions) on Facebook.

Highest comments on a post ⓘ



Facebook post

Okay, holidays are over. Is it camping season yet? Get a...

Jan 3, 2024, 5:15 PM

This post received **290,800%** more comments (2,909 comments) than your median post (1 comment) on Facebook.



Content Overview - Instagram Last 90 Days

Reach

Post reach ⓘ

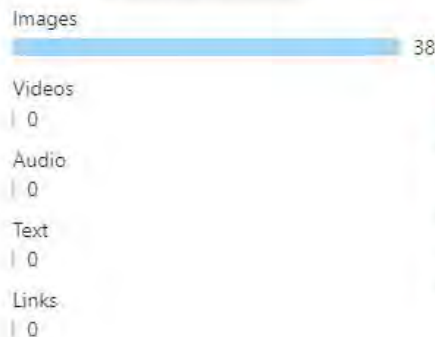
206 ↓ 98%

Total from last 90 days vs 90 days prior



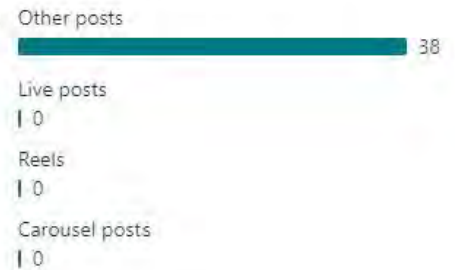
Median post reach per media type ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Median post reach per content format ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days

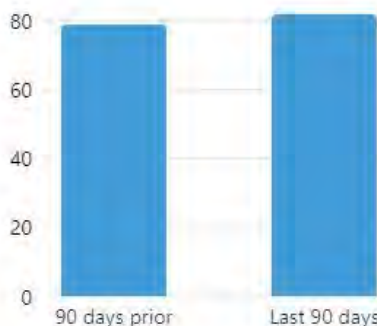


Engagement

Post likes, comments and shares ⓘ

82 ↑ 3.8%

Total from last 90 days vs 90 days prior



Median post likes, comments and shares per media type ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Median post likes, comments and shares per content format ⓘ

For posts created in the last 90 days



Top-performing organic posts

Here are posts that have performed well over the last 90 days. Understanding what's working can help you decide what to create and share next, so you can keep up the great work.

Highest reach on a post ⓘ



Instagram post
One of the great debates of the holiday season! 🎄 Whil...
Nov 8, 2023, 6:22 AM

This post's reach (114) is **200%** higher than your median post reach (38) on Instagram.

Highest likes on a post ⓘ



Instagram post
It misses you just as much. we promise.
Dec 22, 2023, 7:23 AM

This post received 8 likes.

Highest comments on a post ⓘ



Instagram post
One of the great debates of the holiday season! 🎄 Whil...
Nov 8, 2023, 6:22 AM

This post received 2 comments compared to your median post (0 comments) on Instagram.



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

Top Performing Post This Month - Facebook

Two things to note on this post:

- I believe this is the highest reach we've ever had on a post - and it's all organic.
- 128 click links to our website is also very high from our other posts with a website link.



Wisconsin Campers

Published by Canva · January 3 at 7:15 PM · 🌐

Okay, holidays are over. Is it camping season yet? Get a jumpstart on planning your summer adventures at www.wisconsincampgrounds.com!



See insights and ads

Boost post

👍❤️ 1.3K

147 💬 2.9K ➡️

Overview

Reach ⓘ

622,695

Higher than typical

Impressions ⓘ

631,150

Higher than typical

Interactions ⓘ

4,469

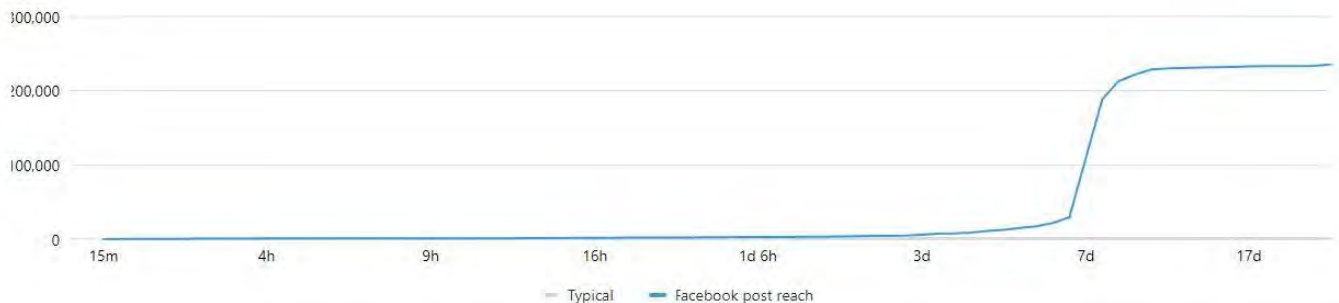
Higher than typical

Link clicks ⓘ

128

Higher than typical

Reach



Interactions ⓘ

Reactions ⓘ

1,397

Higher than typical

Comments ⓘ

147

Higher than typical

Shares ⓘ

2,917

Higher than typical

Saves ⓘ

8

Higher than typical



Top Performing Post This Month - Instagram



Overview

Reach ⓘ

78

Higher than typical

Impressions ⓘ

81

Higher than typical

Interactions ⓘ

6

Higher than typical

Interactions ⓘ

Likes ⓘ

5

Higher than typical

Comments ⓘ

1

Higher than typical

Shares ⓘ

0

Typical

Saves ⓘ

0

Typical



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE



<https://www.facebook.com/wicampgrounds>

Top Post in 2023



Top Post in 2024*



* As of March 6, 2024



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE

	Total Sends	Open Rate	Unopened Rate	Click Rate	Bounce Rate	Opened Mobile	Opened Desktop
Jan-23	18875	34%	66%	20%	23%	10%	90%
Feb-23	3572	33%	67%	24%	18%	10%	90%
Mar-23	8514	36%	64%	27%	21%	12%	88%
Apr-23	2569	52%	48%	13%	8%	8%	92%
May-23	1424	58%	42%	14%	7%	6%	94%
Jun-23	4290	39%	61%	16%	21%	9%	91%
Jul-23	2429	52%	48%	19%	10%	8%	92%
Aug-23	991	60%	40%	27%	8%	15%	85%
Sep-23	903	53%	47%	26%	8%	13%	87%
Oct-23	1761	48%	52%	25%	12%	8%	92%
Nov-23	784	58%	42%	30%	10%	15%	85%
Dec-23	1213	59%	41%	27%	8%	8%	92%
2023 Totals & Averages	47325	48%	52%	22%	13%	10%	90%



GOALS IN 2023 – Met 2 out of 4

- Hold **BOUNCE RATE** to 9% - 13% in 2023 w/ a large increase of contacts
- Hold **CLICK RATE** to 25% - industry rate is 1% - at 22% in 2023
- Increase **OPEN RATE** to 35% - industry rate is 20% - **48% in 2023**
- Use new website, start redesign with amenity search functionality – **started!**



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE



2024 CONSTANT CONTACT STATS

	Total Sends	Open Rate	Unopened Rate	Click Rate	Bounce Rate	Opened Mobile	Opened Desktop
Jan-24	5219	35%	65%	17%	24%	10%	90%
Feb-24	5978	28%	72%	18%	25%	9%	91%
Mar-24							
Apr-24							
May-24							
Jun-24							
Jul-24							
Aug-24							
Sep-24							
Oct-24							
Nov-24							
Dec-24							

	Total Sends	Open Rate	Unopened Rate	Click Rate	Bounce Rate	Opened Mobile	Opened Desktop
2024 Totals & Averages	11197	31%	69%	18%	24%	10%	90%

11,197 Total Emails Sent to WACO Members January-February 2024 by Month



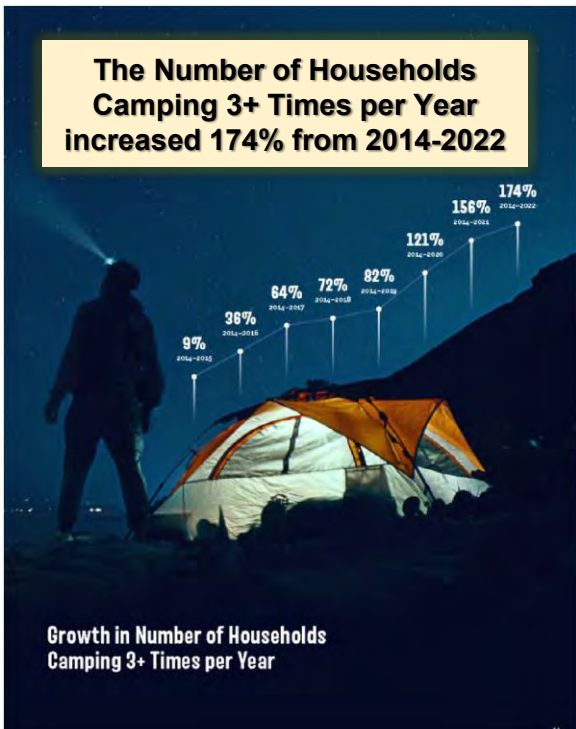
GOALS IN 2024

- **Decrease BOUNCE RATE to 9%**
- **Increase CLICK RATE to 23% - industry rate is 1%**
- **Hold OPEN RATE to 48% - industry rate is 20%**
- **Launch New website with online payment options and amenity search functions**



INDUSTRY TRENDS

KOA's 2023 NORTH AMERICAN CAMPING & OUTDOOR HOSPITALITY REPORT is chock full of great industry data this year! Big takeaways: Almost 1 out of every 3 leisure trips included camping or glamping; 80% want to try new things, camping AND glamping continue to grow!





The Importance of Food in Outdoor Hospitality

Overall, more than a third of all campers (36%) express a direct interest in food tourism in the coming year. Their desire to venture out and seek new culinary experiences is also expressed in the number of miles they drive (140 miles more than other travelers), as well as how much money they spend in the areas they visit (nearly an additional \$300 per trip when compared to other campers or other travelers).

More than 4-in-10 campers say that it's important for a campground offering outdoor hospitality to also provide food service. More than half (56%) say that when glamping, they are most likely to expect the food and beverage service to be of the highest quality compared to all other attributes. Similarly, almost 6-in-10 (57%) want access to local dining options.



Campers want food! If you don't have a bar, restaurant to offer unique options – something people can only get from you – then be sure to partner with local snack shops, hot spots, and food trucks so you can give your guests what they want while staying in your park!

Experiences Campers Want This Year

What Specific Types of Trips Are Campers Planning for 2023?

Trips to locations that have specific natural events, or attractions

40%

Food tourism which is seeking out culinary experiences

36%

Visiting small towns

31%

Adventure travel to remote locations in order to take part in challenging outdoor activities

29%

Take "hush trips" which includes exploring or vacationing while working

28%

Engage with local community; to have more immersive experiences

26%

An all-inclusive resort vacation

25%

Agritourism

25%

Unique outdoor experiences (spelunking, canyoneering, hot springs, scuba divers, cattle drives/ranching)

22%

Trips that include volunteer work, trail maintenance, trash pick-up, etc.

22%

Eco-tourism / sustainability / environmentally friendly preferences

19%

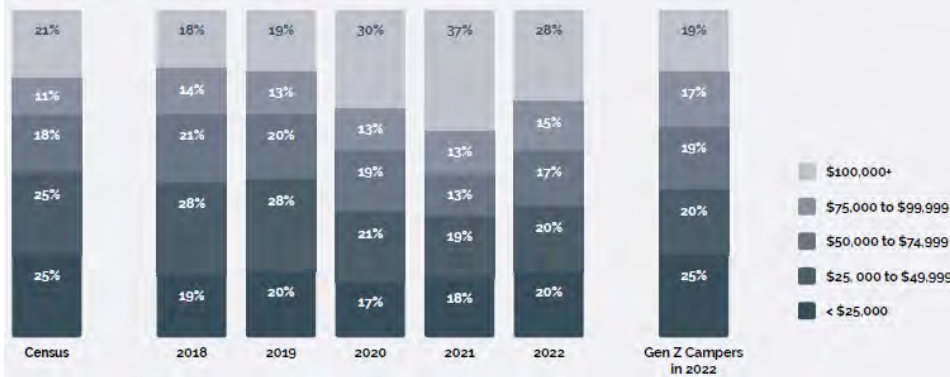
Leading or taking part in a group on a youth trip

16%

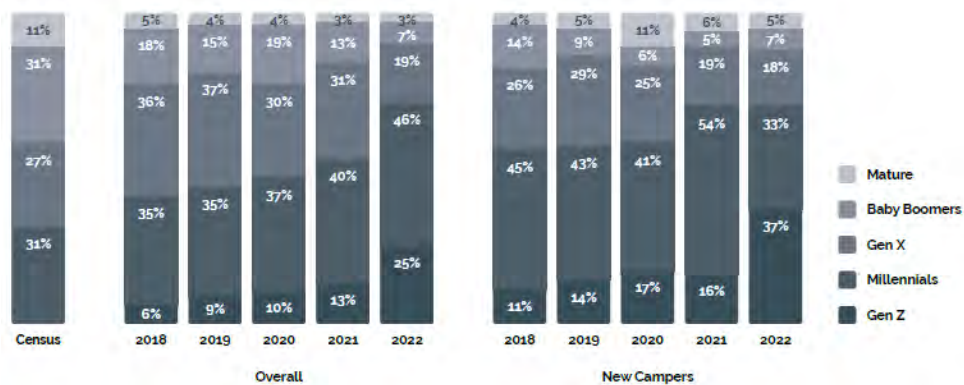


INDUSTRY TRENDS

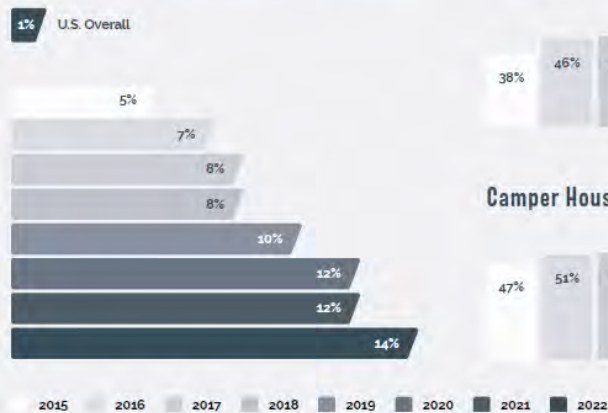
Percentage of Campers by Household Income



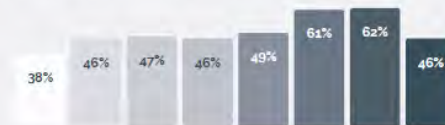
Percentage of Campers by Generation



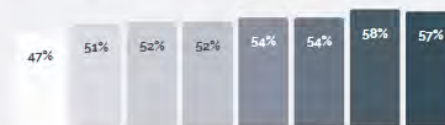
Same-Sex Camper Households 2015-2022



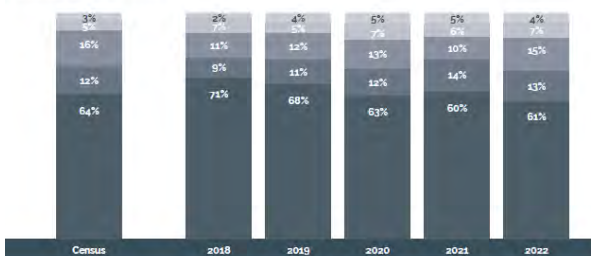
Same-Sex Camper Households With Children



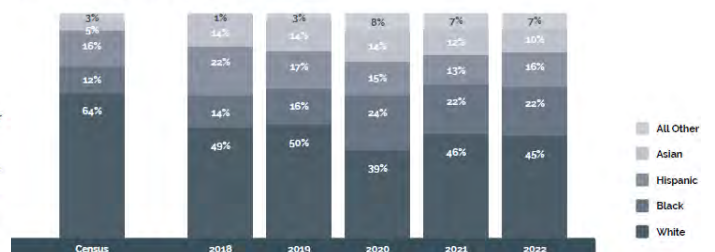
Camper Households With Children



Ethnicity 2012 to 2022



Ethnicity Among New Campers 2015 to 2022





INDUSTRY TRENDS



A [report](#) from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel highlighted that the sector contributed \$9.8 billion to the state's gross domestic product (GDP), a 6.8% increase from the previous year's record.

This growth is part of a national trend, with the U.S. outdoor recreation industry [exceeding \\$1 trillion](#) in gross output, representing 2.2% of the nation's GDP.

According to a news release from Gov. Tony Evers, the substantial increase in the industry's contribution to the state's GDP underscores the growing importance of outdoor activities in the state's economy.

Monroe Brown, director of the Wisconsin Office of [Outdoor Recreation](#), emphasized the economic significance of the sector. "These historic numbers are a testament to the importance of the outdoors and the outdoor recreation economy to [Wisconsin](#)," Brown said. He highlighted the industry's role in driving tourism, workforce attraction, and retention across various economic sectors.

"Camping in style" is getting more popular. Not only were 44.8% of campers using RVs in 2022, "glamping" was up 10% year over year. Property managers adjusted campsites accordingly, with 44% of managers that added new types of camping to their site in 2022 opting to add glamping-specific options.

<https://moderncampground.com/usa/outdoor-recreation-industry-surpasses-1-trillion-fuels-us-economy/>

https://subscribe.jsonline.com/restricted?return=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.jsonline.com%2Fstory%2Ftravel%2Fwisconsin%2Foutdoors%2F2023%2F12%2F12%2Fwisconsin-tourism-brings-in-record-9-8-billion-in-2022%2F71825619007%2F®=true&sltsqmt=TBP_1-1&gps-source=CPROADBLOCKDH

<https://moderncampground.com/tag/outdoor-recreation/>

<https://moderncampground.com/category/usa/wisconsin/>

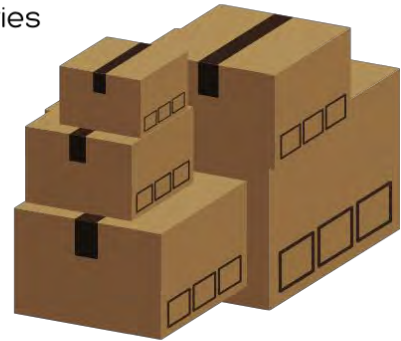
https://madison.com/travel/5-camping-trends-of-2023-more-campers-more-money-more-problems/article_655b42a8-3ea1-593b-a357-cbec75ea4527.html#:~:text=%22Camping%20in%20style%22%20is%20getting,to%20add%20glamping%2Ds%20specific%20options.



RV SHOW UPDATES

2024 RV SHOWS WACO ATTENDED SO FAR...

- **Green Bay RV & Camping Expo:**
 - January 25-28, 2024
 - 6,000 Stuffed Bags given out and 3,000 bag sponsors , total of 9,000 distributed
- **The Ultimate RV Show (Minneapolis, MN)**
 - February 1-4, 2024
 - 3,000 stuffed Bags + additional 280 individual directories
- **Madison Camper & RV Show & Sale**
 - February 2-4, 2024
 - 3,000 stuffed bags were given out, and 420 individual directories
- **La Crosse Sport Show**
 - February 8-11, 2024
 - 2,000 Stuffed Bags given out and 280 individual directories
- **RV & Boat Main Event (Oshkosh, WI)**
 - February 23-25, 2024
 - 1500 distributed
- **Milwaukee RV Show**
 - February 29 - March 3, 2024
 - 3000 distributed



2024 RV SHOW: WACO SCHEDULED TO APPEAR:

- **Central Wisconsin RV & Camping Show (Wausau, WI)**
 - March 8-10, 2024
- **Rockford RV, Camping & Travel Show**
 - March 8-10, 2024
- **Wisconsin Sport Show (Eau Claire, WI)**
 - March 15-17, 2024
- **Kunes Greater Midwest RV Show (Sheboygan, WI)**
 - April 5-7, 2024



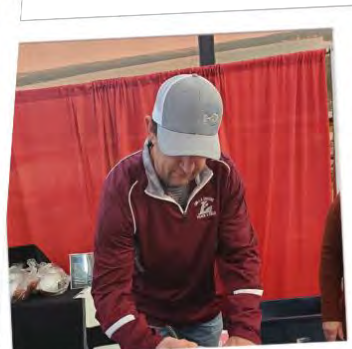
EXCITED WINNERS



OUR RV SHOW WONDER WOMAN!



BINGO FUN WITH WACO



BILL SCHROEDER



Builds Relationships

- We have continued to grow our relationships with the RV Dealers throughout Wisconsin and Beyond.
- Develop relationships with all shows to the extent we can to become more valuable to them.

Grow & Cultivate Our Audience

- Become a true partner with the shows to be able to communicate our ideas with them and gather new customers for our WACO Campgrounds.
- Using our sports marketing connection (GBF) brings in people to our booths and games we play that may not have just stopped for the Directories!
- Use interaction to bring value to the show and teach consumers how campgrounds entertain as well as show off nature's beauty.

•Directory & Certificates Combined

- The Green Bay Boat Show has given us a larger booth as well as several exclusive programming spots throughout the weekend to do trivia with campers and give away certificates. They have also handed out our WACO bags with the Literature
- Distribution and Directory in them at the front entrance door.

•Marketing 101

- Interview campers to see why they camp at WACO campgrounds.
- Use the testimonials (ones that work) on our Facebook and website to promote camping. We can also use them in our TV advertising.
- Create a sign off document for their photo and audio release.
- Use new systems to gather usable names to contact our potential customers.

**WACO will
continue to...**

**Investigate
Neighboring
States**

**Partner with
Other
Conventions**

**Organize
Our Own
Show?**



RV SHOW UPDATES

2024 WACO

GREEN BAY RV SHOW

**9,000 BAGGED
DIRECTORIES**

RV Shows

MINNEAPOLIS RV SHOW

**3,280 BAGGED
DIRECTORIES**

LA CROSSE RV SHOW

**2,280 BAGGED
DIRECTORIES**

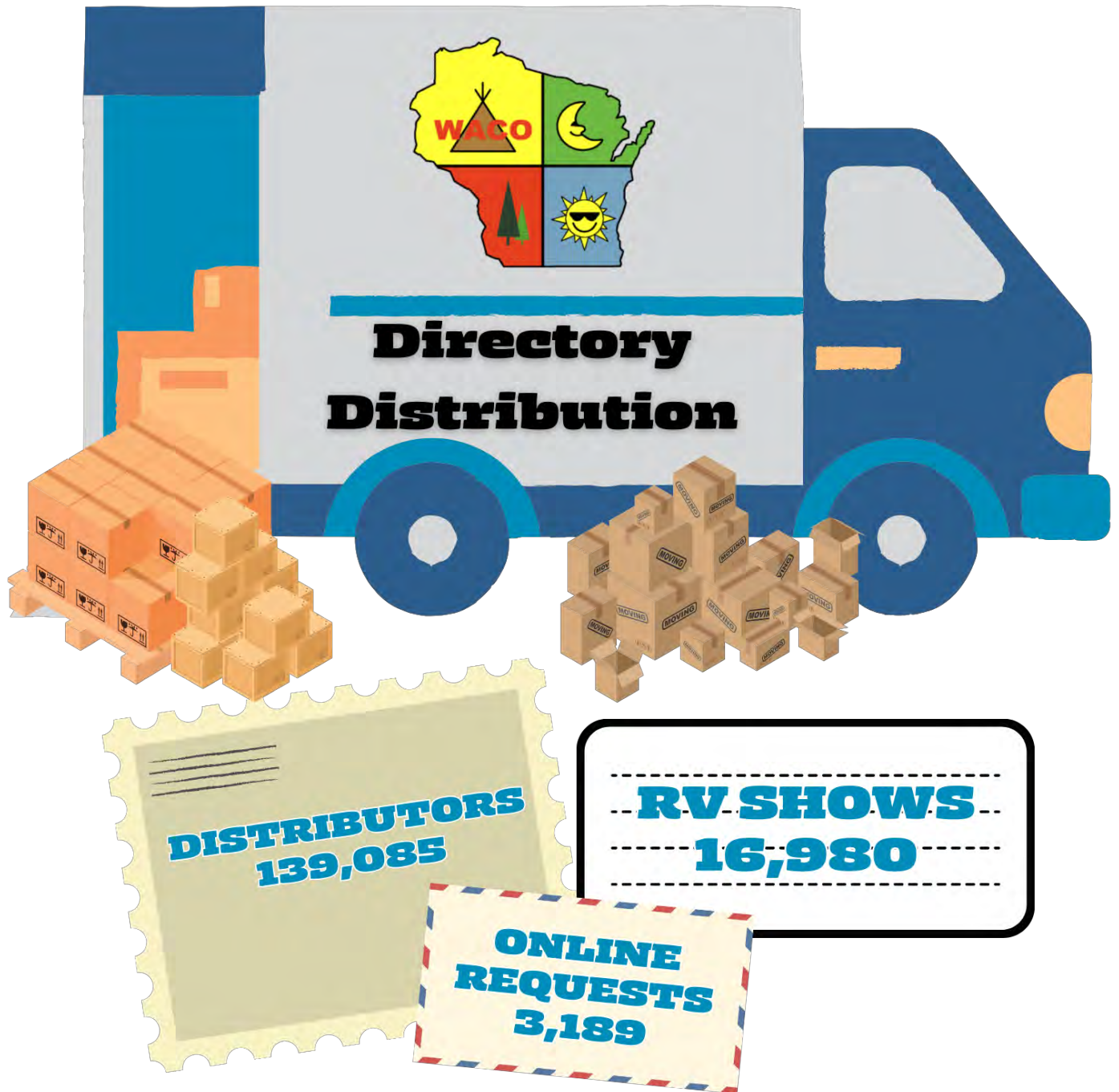
MADISON RV SHOW

**3,420 BAGGED
DIRECTORIES**





DIRECTORY DISTRIBUTION



WACO continues to build partnerships with Travel Centers, Visitor Bureaus, Gas Stations, Dental/Medical Offices, and distribution centers like Wisconsin Travel, Anderson Brochure, Travel Ad Service, and Vector & Ink to distribute the WACO Directory to over 20 states!

**TOTAL DISTRIBUTED in
2024 so far: 159,244**



DIRECTORY UPDATE

Ads from 2024 Directory Brought in **\$17,644** for our Directory

Wisconsin Campgrounds 4 - Sale

looking to purchase your own
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CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



Earn up to \$8000 to spend at this year's Trade Show!



Earn up to \$3000 in WACO Bucks!



Check out the Convention Program here to see how to earn your tickets!

Stevens Point Area CVB SPEAKERS THURSDAY

THE ABCs of SEO:

This beginner's workshop equips you with strategies to improve your SEO ranking to stay ahead in today's competitive digital landscape.

SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS:

Through a hands-on activity, you will leave equipped with a plan to leverage social media effectively for the upcoming season!



MEGAN VRUWINK



TAYLOR GREENHECK



TESSA NIEBERLE

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





CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



CONVENTION SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

THURSDAY

Food Safety:
Keep Your Snack
Shacks Up to Code



JAMES KAPLANEK

**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**

LEGIONALLA:
What you Need to Know!



TED TUCHALSKI



**BRUCE MEINERS,
GUEST FROM DHS**



SCAMS & FRAUD
Targeting Small
Businesses

JEFF KERSTEN



Outreach Specialist
Bureau of Consumer
Protection

DATCP

**Department of
Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection**

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





CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

DSPS **Department of** **Safety &** **Professional** **Services**

WACO knows who you need to connect with for a successful season and many of those contacts are from DSPS! This convention, we've got **FOUR** sessions of seminars presented by DSPS Representatives in Amusement Rides, Camping Units, Electrical and POWTS!

YOU ASKED, WE ARE DELIVERING!

THURSDAY

AMUSEMENT RIDES

Yes, a Jumping Pillow is an "Amusement Ride!"



**ANDREW AMACHER
& TIM CONDON**

POWTS

**KATIE
PETZEL**



**ELECTRICAL
CRAIG MULDER**



**CAMPING UNITS
JACK WORTRUBA**



**ANDERS
HELQUIST**



FRIDAY

**Hot 3 Legal Issues: Zoning,
Waivers, and Reviews**



**JASON
CULOTTA**

THURSDAY

**Legislation Today: What happens
on the hill impacts your business!**



CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



LORI SEVERSON
WACO
Executive Director

WEDNESDAY

PERSONALITY STYLES

CAMPGROUND VICTORY

THURSDAY

FINDING GREAT HELP

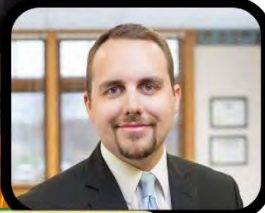
FRIDAY

STRATEGIES OF THE MOUSE

THINGS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO



CONVENTION SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT



CHRISTINE METCALF

(608) 779-2143

couleebbookkeeping@gmail.com



ANDREW METCALF

Great River Harbor
Campground & Marina

Handling Tips and Tip Credits Thursday

CSAW, Anders Hilquist and your own
WACO Members, Chris from Pineland &
Nikki from Great River Harbor

NEW THIS YEAR AT CONVENTION! SET IT, AND FORGET IT!

Stop by the WACO Membership booth at Convention (across from the Lemonade stand) to chat with Danielle or Tina and go through the membership checklist! This list will help to make sure you are taking full advantage of your WACO membership and all of the benefits available to you! Stop by for a quick 10-minute chat to...

- Check your WACO website listing to be sure everything is up-to-date. Be sure to bring photos on a flash drive if you need to update or add photos (up to four) to your listing!
- Sign up for any advertising you want to participate in for the 2025 season.
- Calculate your dues for the 2025 season and schedule your payment date to save you the 3% for the early bird discount!
- Make sure you're in our Members Only Facebook group.
- Be sure you have access to our Members Only section of the website!
- Ask any questions you may have about membership, how certain benefits work, who to contact for certain questions, etc.



DANIELLE TODD



TINA SEVERSON

BRING THE QUESTIONS – WE'LL FIND THE ANSWERS!



CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS - INTERVIEWS

WACO IN THE NEWS!

With Jeff Crider



**Scan this code with
your smartphone to
sign up for an
interview time
online!**



Jeff Crider is a long-time freelance writer and media relations consultant for campground and RV industry associations across the country. He's looking to interview many parks for the following topics – stop at the registration desk or scan the QR code below now to sign up for an interview time!

- Campgrounds that have Packer appearances
- Fundraising – Best practices and most successful events
- Areas that Wisconsin campgrounds give back
- Shoulder season activities that are not just Halloween!
- Water in Wisconsin – Wisconsin campgrounds with fun water activities
- Campgrounds with unique activities
- Wisconsin's New and Expanding campgrounds
- Wisconsin Parks adding new amenities
- WACO Campgrounds that have been owned and operated by the same family for generations



PARTNERING WITH OTHERS



WRVDA - The Wisconsin Recreational Vehicle Dealers Alliance is a newly formed trade association to address the RV industry's business interests. They are advocates for any issues that arise at the Capitol, they hold a convention every winter, provide educational offerings for industry members and are looking into a discount program for insurance. If you have any suggestions or would like to join the WRVDA, contact Amy Bliss at (608) 255-3131.



WACO continues to attend the RVIA conference, work with RV Dealerships to become better partners and explore our legislative synergies.

Both Executive Directors are working together and attending each other's conferences. Data is a powerful thing that allows us to make great decisions.



Our WACO Executive Director, Lori Severson, attends CAMP annually. These meetings allow Lori to compare our Association to others, keep a pulse on the industry, and gain insight into industry trends. Lori now sits as Vice President on their Board.



The Wisconsin Counties Association is opening up to WACO. As Lori now sits on her own County's Board of Supervisors, and by strengthening our relationship with Mark O'Connell, the ED of the WCA, WACO attended their first WCA Conference in years in Sept of 2023. We look forward to continuing to build this partnership!



WACO attends the Wisconsin Towns Association with Gilbert & other players, along with several Board Members.

- WMC
- Wisconsin Towns Association
- WI Housing Alliance & WI RVDA
- Tavern League
- Wisconsin Counties Association
- ATV Association
- WAA - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- State Inspector Conferences
- Department of Tourism
- Membership Services
- Snowmobilers Association



PARTNERING WITH OTHERS



WADE GOODSSELL

COO and Vice President,
Membership & Partnerships;
Executive Director, WMC
Foundation

Wade serves on the board of the Wisconsin Center for Manufacturing Productivity and has previously been involved in the Industrial Asset Management Council, the National Association of Industrial and Office Professionals and the Wisconsin Economic Development Association. Wade is a Wisconsin native and a graduate of Bethel University.



SCOTT MANLEY

Executive Vice
President, Government
Relations

Scott and his team continue to monitor the proposed and passed legislative changes from local government, particularly those that are more stringent than state guidelines already in place.



SCOTT ROSENOW

Executive Director, WMC
Litigation Center

Scott previously clerked for Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Annette Ziegler, held a fellowship at the Pacific Legal Foundation in California, and served as an Assistant Attorney General at the Wisconsin Department of Justice. He litigated over 200 cases in the Wisconsin Court of Appeals and dozens in federal district court. He also filed briefs in the United States Supreme Court in several cases at the certiorari stage.



KURT BAUER PRESIDENT/CEO

Kurt R. Bauer became the fifth head of Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) in 2011. Bauer has served on multiple state, regional and national committees, councils and boards and is currently a member of the National Association of State Chambers Board and a member of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100 and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Public Affairs Committee. Bauer is a Wisconsin native and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



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EVAN UMPIR

Director of Tax, Transportation
& Legal Affairs

Evan Umpir joined WMC in 2021 as Director of Tax, Transportation & Legal Affairs. He previously worked in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Wisconsin Legislature, and Congress.

Evan is a proud Wisconsin native and part owner of the Green Bay Packers. He earned his law degree from the University of Wisconsin Law School and has a bachelor's degree in political science from Marquette University.

As zoning concerns build at the county levels, along with the glooming potential for assessors to be uneducated with ACT 12 changes and the shift to increased regulation continuing to put pressure on the private business owner in WI, WACO continues conversations to educate city, county, and town officials on what campgrounds contribute to their local communities, as well as how our Seasonal agreements are written and enforced. Part of that education includes a strong relationship that continues to grow with Wisconsin's Chamber (WMC). At this year's convention, we welcome a new partner from WMC, Evan Umpir! See him at Thursday's Leadership Luncheon.



PARTNERING WITH OTHERS



Jason is the President of the Midwest Food Products Association and is a true partner for WACO, guiding our group on Legislative discussions and assisting with connecting us with the right people for every topic! In 2024, Jason will mentor Tina Severson, from our WACO staff to continue her lobbyist journey – our group is fortunate to have him as a resource and partner!

From 2017-2019, Jason was Director of Public Affairs & Industrial Development for Progressive Rail, Incorporated, a Minnesota-based short line railroad holding company operating in eight states. He worked with Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce from 2011-2017, rising to Senior Director of Government Relations.

In 2011, Jason served as a policy advisor to Governor Scott Walker and as a division administrator in the Department of Administration. He had worked in the Legislature for a decade prior, including as a policy advisor to the Assembly Speaker. Currently, Jason serves on the Wisconsin DOT's Freight Advisory Committee and as a board member of the American Fruit & Vegetable Processors & Growers Coalition, the Renk Agribusiness Institute at UW-Madison, the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin Civil Justice Council.

A Racine native, Jason holds a bachelor's degree from UW-Oshkosh and lives in Watertown.



Jason Culotta
President
[Midwest Food Products Association](#)
4600 American Pkwy, Suite 210
Madison, WI 53718
Phone | 608-255-9946



STATE OFFICIALS TO KNOW - DATCP

	<p>James Kaplanek - Chief of Food Safety and Recreational Licensing Section with the State of Wisconsin-- Department of Health and Family Services</p> <p>Currently the Chief of Food Safety and Recreational Licensing Section with the State of Wisconsin--Department of Health and Family Services. In the process of a merger with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection - Will be the Chief of Technical Services for Retail Food and Recreational Businesses - Has been with the State for 15 years. •Before State employment spent 6 years with the Public Health Madison/Dane county - BS Environmental Public Health—University Wisconsin-Eau-Claire - Wisconsin Delegate to the National Conference for Food Protection - Registered Sanitarian</p>	
	<p>Mary Ellen Bruesch - WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection</p> <p>Mary Ellen Bruesch is a Recreational Technical Specialist, responsible for the Public Pools and Water Attractions Program. She has been in this position for about a year, having transitioned from Campgrounds and Recreational and Educational Camps. She has a BS in Biology and a MS in Microbiology, and is a Registered Environmental Health Specialist and Certified Pool Operator. When she's not working, she can be found hanging out with her cats or on a paddle board or skis, or hiking.</p>	
	<p>Reed McRoberts – WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection</p> <p>Reed McRoberts, R.S. is the Program Manager for Campgrounds with Food Safety and Recreational Licensing in the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health, Wisconsin Department of Health Services. As Program Manager for Campgrounds, he provides direction on campground code issues and monitors trends in the camping industry. He has over 20 years' experience working with environmental health programs.</p>	
	<p>Ted Tuchalski - WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection</p> <p>Ted Tuchalski, R.S. is an Environmental Health Technical Specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). His primary focus at DATCP is lodging, which includes: hotels, motels, tourist rooming houses, and bed & breakfast establishments. Ted's environmental health career began as a food inspector in Salt Lake City, Utah and has spanned multiple program areas at the city, county, and state levels here in WI</p>	
<p>Troy Sprecker, Director Bureau of Food and Recreational Businesses (Picture unavailable)</p>	<p>Adam Brock Division Administrator – Food and Recreational Safety</p>	 

Brock recently joined the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection as the Division Administrator for Food and Recreational Safety. In his current role, he oversees the enforcement and development of both state and federal food safety regulations, supports the development of food safety and regulatory staff, develops annual program budgets, and works closely with external partners to protect the brand of Wisconsin Agriculture.

Prior to joining the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection, Brock was the Vice President of Food Safety, Quality & Regulatory Compliance at Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. During his time there he worked closely with Wisconsin dairy industry partners to provide education, training, strategy, and support in the areas of research, food safety, quality, regulatory compliance, sustainability, and crisis communications.

Brock has been actively involved with the food industry for 25 years holding multiple roles at several major food companies. He has extensive product and process knowledge in natural cheese, frozen appetizers, dairy and non-dairy-based sauces, dairy ingredients, seasoning blends, and both fresh and frozen meat products. He is also knowledgeable in the areas of new product development, process improvement, analytical and microbiological laboratory techniques, and supplier management. He is currently on the Board of Directors of the American Cheese Society and the National Institute for Animal Agriculture. He is a past chair of the Wisconsin Dairy Rules Advisory Committee, past President of the Wisconsin Laboratory Association, and outgoing Treasurer for the Wisconsin Association for Food Protection.

He has been married for 18 years, has 4 children, and multiple animals. In his spare time, he coaches youth sports, supports public libraries, and is a Wisconsin Master Gardener.

**INTRODUCING THE NEW DIVISION
ADMINISTRATOR: ADAM BROCK**



STATE OFFICIALS TO KNOW - DATCP

DATCP BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Chair: Doug Rebout (Term May 1, 2021 - May 1, 2027)

Doug Rebout is a partner in Roger Rebout & Sons Farms near Janesville. The farm includes over 4200 acres of mainly corn and soybeans. They raise around 200 Holstein steers and custom raise 400 heifers for a neighbor farm. Mr. Rebout is actively engaged in public and community service while serving on his town planning and zoning and also on the board of directors for the Wisconsin Corn Growers Association and the Wisconsin Soybean Association.



Vice Chair: Miranda Leis (Term May 1, 2023 – May 1, 2029)

Miranda Leis, is currently serving as the Senior Director of Dairy Handling and Supply for CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley. In her 15 years with the Cooperative she has served in various capacities in business analysis and project management, and is currently serving in the Dairy Pool. In 2000 she received a Bachelor of Science degree from UW-River Falls in Animal Science with a Dairy emphasis. Ms. Leis has been involved in the Wisconsin Farm Bureau at the state and local levels since 2005. She is actively involved as a volunteer in various youth development and athletic clubs in the community of Cashton and surrounding area.

She is also involved in her family's 350 cow dairy operation in Cashton, Wisconsin where she lives with her husband and three active children.



Secretary: Paul Palmby (Term May 1, 2021 - May 1, 2027)

Paul Palmby is currently President and CEO of Seneca Foods Corporation. He grew up on a farm in Southeastern Minnesota and is a 1985 graduate of Iowa State University with a degree in Agricultural Business. In his more than 35 years with Seneca, he has served in various management roles in the company, beginning in the agricultural department, and progressing through various operations responsibilities to his current role. Mr. Palmby has served on the Board of Directors of the Northwest Food Processors Association, the Midwest

Food Processors Association, the American Frozen Food Institute, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce and the Wisconsin FFA Foundation. He has also served as board member and Chairman of the Board for the Wisconsin FFA Sponsor's Board as well as the Produce for Better Health Foundation. He served three appointments by Secretary of Agriculture Ann Venneman, Secretary Mike Johanns and Secretary Sonny Purdue to USDA's Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee and currently serves on the Boards of Blackhawk Bank and the Farming For The Future Foundation.



STATE OFFICIALS TO KNOW - DATCP

DATCP BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Paul Bauer (Term May 1, 2023 - May 1, 2029)

Paul Bauer has been the CEO of Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery in Ellsworth, Wisconsin, since 2008. He grew up on a farm in Wausau, Wisconsin and received his Agricultural Business degree from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Over the course of his career he has held positions with the Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Antigo Cheese, Blackfoot Cheese, and Kraft Foods. Mr. Bauer is active in national milk policy related to National Milk Marketing Order reform, both with the Wisconsin Cheesemakers Association and National Milk

Producers Federation. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the American Dairy

Product Institute and is a member of the National Milk Producers Federation Cheese Market Task Force. In addition, Mr. Bauer is active in the Ellsworth community serving as a member of the Village of Ellsworth Community Development Authority, as President of the Ellsworth Area Chamber of Commerce, and as Chair of the Ellsworth Library Building Committee. He is a past President of the Chippewa Valley Technical College Board.



Cindy Brown (Term May 1, 2023 - May 1, 2025)

Cindy Brown is the President of Chippewa Valley Bean, North America's largest exporter of kidney beans and the largest processor of dark red kidney beans in the world. She has also served in varying leadership capacities on national and international trade boards and councils.



Tina Hinchley (Term May 1, 2023 –May 1, 2029)

Tina Hinchley is the owner and operator of Hinchley's Dairy Farm, where they have over 400 registered dairy cattle. On the farm, they robotically milk about 240 cows. Hinchley's Dairy Farm has hosted many school groups, international delegations, industry visits and community events, which allows Ms. Hinchley to share her passion and educate people about where their food comes from.



STATE OFFICIALS TO KNOW - DATCP

DATCP BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr. Clare Hintz (Term May 1, 2021 - May 1, 2027)

Dr. Clare Hintz runs Elsewhere Farm, a perennial polyculture farm near the south shore of Lake Superior in Herbster, Wisconsin. The solar-powered farm features perennial fruits and nuts interplanted on five acres, intensive market gardens, and rare-breed pigs and chickens: most marketed through winter and summer CSAs. She is also the editor of the Journal of Sustainability Education. Dr. Hintz holds a bachelor's degree in biology and writing, a master's in sustainable systems, and a Ph.D. in sustainability education with a focus on regenerative agriculture.



Dan Smith (Term May 21, 2019 – May 1, 2025)

Dan Smith is currently the President and CEO of Cooperative Network. In his years of experience working with farmers, cooperatives, and rural communities, he has also served as the Administrator for DATCP's Division of Agricultural Development and the Chief Executive Officer of Midwestern BioAg. He is a graduate of UW-Madison and was a dairy producer for 30 years on his home farm in Freeport, IL.



Carla Washington (Term August 9, 2019 – May 1, 2025)

Carla Washington currently serves as the Vice President of Operation, at Vivent Health, headquartered in Milwaukee. She earned her Bachelors of Science in business and marketing from Marquette University and holds an MBA in management from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. Ms. Washington has over 25 years of experience in program development and coalition building in the human services field, serving as a valuable advocacy voice to ensure healthcare access to the underinsured and uninsured.'



No License for a Farm Campground?



Between the September Fall Workshop and our October Fall Workshop, the WACO office, including a newly licensed lobbyist in our office, Tina Severson, and WACO Members Jim Button and Adam Malsack, attended a public hearing in Madison to discuss [Assembly Bill 328](#).

[Assembly Bill 328:](#)

Relating to: exempting certain farm owners from campground licensing.

By Representatives Magnafici, Behnke, Bodden, Brooks, Penterman, Plumer, Rozar and Tittl; cosponsored by Senators Stafsholt, Ballweg, Quinn, Stroebel and Tomczyk.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE!

The initial testimony came from a concerned grass-fed beef farm owner in Polk County, WI. Her

**Big thanks to
Jim Button &
Adam Malsack
for helping
with this
hearing!**





LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – AB328

business plan, which involved educational sessions for breadmaking, where our food comes from, plant discovery on nature walks, and, in general, getting back to farm life, is a beautiful one. Her hopes involved offering these courses while guests camped onsite in primitive sites. However, due to her issues with Polk County zoning approval and her misinformed expectation of licensing costs, she pleaded her case to local representatives, and in turn, the group co-authored her proposed bill, which essentially states certain farm owners would NOT be required to be licensed as a campground.

I'm sure many of you can think of five reasons off the top of your head why having private campgrounds operating without a license in our state would be a bad idea!



**Adam Malsack, Tina Severson
& Jim Button**

When WACO testified, we educated the room on who we are, who makes up our membership, and what we offer regarding resources to current and potential private campground owners. We openly embraced the business plan presented in the previous testimony. We offered the guest information on membership, as well as any resources we could provide in terms of initial licensing and navigating the zoning roadmap.

We then reviewed our Association and current park owner concerns, with having campground owners in the state that would not be adhering to the [Chapter ATPC 79 - Wisconsin Legislature](#). Our testimonies included several concerns - some of which are regulated and outlined in ATPC 79 and others from DSPS - but overall, our biggest problems circled back to safety and health. Jim nicely tied back his volunteer firefighter experience to mention that agricultural buildings aren't inspected like other businesses and, therefore, aren't held to the same standard as our licensed campgrounds. Adam explained the licensing fee structure and a brief overview/note on the initial inspection process, as well as concerns regarding the "self-contained units" discussed in the initial testimony. Both brought in real-world examples of how things can quickly go wrong without some regulation being in place. Our group also discussed our relationship with DATCP, the growing relationship with DSPS, and how we're generally here as a resource for the beef farmer.

Questions from the floor led our group to believe there needed to be more education on the structure provided by Chapter ATPC 79. Luckily, legislative counsel was there to explain if a business wants to advertise campsites, they DO need to be licensed per the current legislation. And our WACO Association and Members were there to answer additional questions from the Chair and attending Representatives.

While we don't feel this bill will go away, our group did consider this a positive interaction and will continue to monitor this situation, as there has been no further movement since the hearing on 10/3/23. Watch for more updates on AB328 in future Facebook posts and emails to members.





LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – AB304



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE WHAT'S THE STORY WITH AB304 AND HOW WILL IT IMPACT MY 2024 SEASON?

An update from the WACO Board, Office & Partners

At the Wednesday session of the October Fall workshop, a representative from the DOR joined us to discuss a current bill in the proposal. Based on his responses, we thought he might get tossed out of the pavilion at Holiday Shores.

While I joke (only because I'm less than a month into being a lobbyist and rethinking my commitment lol), the implications for our membership with the proposed bill AB 304, may not be positive – which is no joke – or may not directly impact us. **That's the point – it's not clear.**

The WACO office is doing everything possible to understand the proposed law changes. We met with Scott Stenger and continue to connect with those who may provide insight and pass our concerns on if warranted.

Additional conversations are happening with Cathy Vales, EVP of the Tavern League of Wisconsin and our members Bob Weiss, Adam Malsack, our attorney, Mark Hazelbacher, Jason Culotta, our legislative lobbying contact, and the TLW Lobbyist, Scott Stenger.

A link to the bill language can be found here:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/ab304>

On the following page, please review the letter we've sent to Scott Stenger, crafted by the incredibly talented Adam Malsack and reviewed by Jason Culotta and Mark, as well as those mentioned above.

While we received a response from Scott Stenger, our group is connecting with the Tavern League of Wisconsin's President and EVP to ensure our interpretation of the proposed AB304 is something the TLW can get behind.

At this time, we need to understand how the law will be interpreted and how the DOR will regulate the law should it pass to know our next moves. We will keep you informed and may need your assistance in calling your local representatives, but FOR NOW, PLEASE sit tight and watch for updates!

We wanted to ensure the membership is aware, as many had questions during the DOR presentation, and as always, your WACO office is doing our best to provide answers!



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – AB304

AB304:

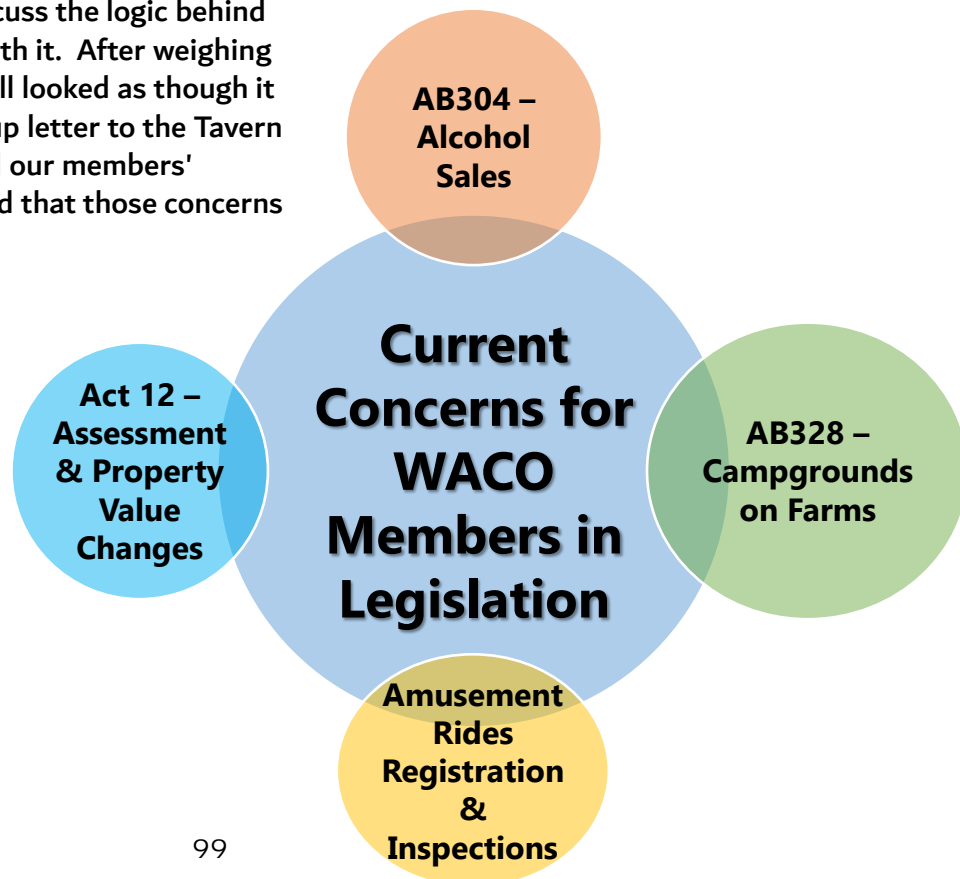
As wineries and wedding barn businesses continued to boom, so did the concerns of those more regulated by liquor-related legislation. The Tavern League of Wisconsin, in particular, lobbied hard for some changes to the regulations outlined in AB304. In their attempt to make things easier for campground owners, some language involving "campsites" was included as a safe space for folks to consume alcohol. Or so they thought that's how it should be interpreted.

With AB328 (a Bill related to Farms being exempt from licensed campground regulations) heating up and more regulatory concerns for our membership, the WACO Board determined it was time to focus more energy and resources on legislation. The AB328 public hearing was approaching fast, and we needed to show our opposition online. Tina Severson's understanding of the campground industry and her willingness to learn more encouraged the board to register the WACO organization as the principal agent, with Tina Severson as the licensed lobbyist at lobbying.wi.gov.

With our registered lobbying position, WACO could focus on the AB328 and the AB304 alcohol bill with more resources. After reviewing the AB304 verbiage, WACO set up a meeting with Scott Kollock, Mark Hazelbaker, Adam Malsack, Jason Culotta, Lori Severson & Tina Severson, and the Tavern League's lobbyist (the bill's most prominent supporter that included a coalition of several other

organizations), Mr. Stenger to discuss the logic behind the bill reform and our position with it. After weighing all our options and knowing the bill looked as though it would pass, WACO sent a follow-up letter to the Tavern League to ensure our position and our members' concerns were noted in writing and that those concerns were heard and

supported by the Tavern League. See that letter and additional follow-up regarding this bill that was sent out in our monthly Newsletter on the following pages. A huge shout-out to Adam Malsack for assisting with this situation!!





LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – AB304

Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners

P.O. Box 228 | Ettrick, WI 54627

(608) 525-2327

October 17, 2023

Tavern League of Wisconsin

11801 W. Silver Spring Dr #200

Milwaukee, WI 53225

Regarding Assembly Bill 304 2023-2024

The Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO) is seeking to reassure our Membership that the currently proposed Assembly Bill 304 will have a positive impact on our Membership (campground Owners and Operators) as well as on our Patrons (guests staying at our campgrounds).

WACO sincerely appreciates the hard work and forethought that the Tavern League of Wisconsin, the Legislature, and others have put into the proposed bill. This update to statute was much needed and will serve the people of Wisconsin for years to come.

CURRENT LAW

Current law prohibits an owner or other person in charge of a “public place” from allowing “the consumption of alcohol beverages on the premises of the public place, unless the person has an appropriate retail license or permit.” “Public place” is not clearly defined in statute and may lead to the possibility that an entire campground will be required to hold a retail alcohol beverage license to sell *or allow* the consumption of alcohol beverages on the campground premises. This interpretation has not been enforced within campgrounds.

AB304 EXCLUDES “CAMPSITES”

When defining a “public place”, AB304 generally includes any venue, location, open space, room, or establishment which is available for rent or held out/made available for rent for an event or social gathering.

Campsites are clearly available for rent to the public, and thus for clarity need to be specifically exempted from the definition of “public place.”



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – AB304

MEMBERSHIP CONCERNS

It has come to our attention that our Membership is expressing concerns over the impact this bill will have on the common areas within the campground.

We present the following scenarios as clearly *intended* to be restricted by AB304:

A. Any situation wherein a campground decides to rent out any space for an event or social gathering. An example would be if the campground were to rent its pavilion for a wedding event.

We present the following scenarios as clearly *not intended* to be restricted by AB304:

B. Jane and her family rent a campsite. Jane opens a beer and begins consuming it on her campsite, which is allowed per the exemption. Jane's friend Beth and her family also have a campsite. Jane chooses to leave her campsite and walk over to her friend Beth's campsite with a beer in hand. To do so Jane necessarily will exit her campsite, use a common area of the campground (the interior roadway) before arriving back in Beth's campsite.

C. Bob decides to take his kids down to the campground beach. Bob brings a cooler with him which contains some alcoholic beverages. Bob opens a beverage within the beach area.

D. Brenda and Evan are camping with a group of friends. They decide to head over to the picnic shelter/pavilion and bring a picnic lunch, including some alcoholic beverages. After lunch is complete they head out into the grassy field rec area near the pavilion to have a bag competition, and continue to consume their beverages.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – AB304

UNDERSTANDING OF TEXT

WACO contends that the bill as written already addresses these concerns.

Quite simply, within scenarios B, C, and D these areas are not held for rent for an event or social gathering. Much like in the vacation rental property exemption described below, a campground patron is renting a campsite, and they may have access to certain other common areas within a campground.

This understanding will still maintain parity with Tavern League members and other non-members such as wedding barns which the bill seeks to regulate. Some Campgrounds may hold out certain portions of their common areas for rent for events or social gathering, such as described in scenario A above. The moment this takes place those areas would be subject to the restrictions of the bill, so as to have parity with any other venue providing the same, such as a wedding barn, bar and restaurant, or other event space.

Furthermore, scenarios B, C, and D are also exempted on vacation rental properties. Similar to campgrounds, vacation rental properties are renting the accommodation/lodging and may provide access to common areas such as grassy fields, pools, gazebos or pavilions, beaches, ponds, etc. Consumption of alcohol in these common areas is clearly not prohibited by the bill.

Consuming an alcoholic beverage at the beaches, recreation fields, pools, pavilions and the like within campgrounds has become a part of the culture in the state of Wisconsin. The above understanding of the text should go a long way toward calming the concerns of both the hundreds of private campgrounds throughout the state, as well as the tens of thousands of campground patrons who have been consuming and expect to continue to be able to consume alcoholic beverages throughout common areas within a campground property.

AB304: Relating to: creating the Division of Alcohol Beverages attached to the Department of Revenue; the regulation of alcohol beverages and enforcement of alcohol beverage laws; interest restrictions relating to, and authorized activities of, brewers, brewpubs, wineries, manufacturers, rectifiers, wholesalers, and retailers; shipping alcohol beverages by means of fulfillment houses and common carriers; the consumption of alcohol beverages in a public place; creating a no-sale event venue permit; creating an operator's permit; liquor licenses transferred from one municipality to another; retailers' authorized activities; liquor license quotas; the safe ride program; the presence of underage persons and conduct of other business on licensed premises; the occupational tax on alcohol beverages; repealing a rule promulgated by the Department of Revenue; granting rule-making authority; and providing a penalty. (FE)



LEGISLATION CONTACTS TO KNOW



Madison Office:
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State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

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Phil Curry Phil.Curry@legis.wisconsin.gov
Matthew Tompach Matthew.Tompach@legis.wisconsin.gov



Current Committees

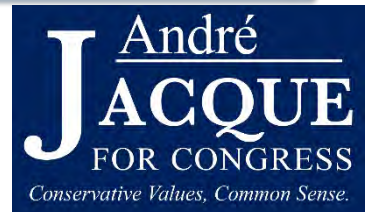
- Committee on Health
- Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety (Vice-Chair)
- Committee on Licensing, Constitution and Federalism (Chair)

Sen. Jacques has been a true friend to WACO and campgrounds in WI—be sure to support him in his congressional race!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, March 4, 2024

CONTACT: info@Jacques4WI.com

André Jacques Kicks Off Campaign for Open WI-08 Seat



GREEN BAY, WI – State Senator André Jacques announced his campaign for Congress this morning on the Regular Joe Show.

“I’m excited to launch my campaign to fight for the people of Wisconsin’s 8th Congressional District. Living in and representing the Northeast portion of the state has afforded me the opportunity to meet many neighbors who have become friends,” said Jacques. “I’ve worked tirelessly in the Senate to serve them and make the lives of their families, and mine, better. I’m proud of my record delivering conservative wins and fighting back against liberal policies that would harm our state. I’d be honored to earn your vote and bring our Wisconsin conservative values and common sense to Washington.”

Sen. Jacques has authored landmark laws cracking down on violent crime and sex trafficking; protecting victims’ rights; reining in government and saving taxpayer dollars through various regulatory reforms; protecting life and preventing taxpayer abortion subsidies; eliminating various taxes, including the income tax on active duty military pay; expanding school choice and opportunities for youth apprenticeship; and increasing employment pathways.

André has been named the Legislator of the Year by both Pro-Life Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Professional Police Association multiple times, and was the inaugural recipient of Wisconsin Family Council’s Legislator of the Year Award. He has been recognized as State Legislator of the Year by the Wisconsin American Legion, Wisconsin VFW, Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association, Wisconsin District Attorneys’ Association, and Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, among others.

André Jacques is a Republican candidate for U.S. House of Representatives in Wisconsin’s 8th Congressional District. He has served as a member of the Wisconsin Senate since 2019 and is a married father of six.



LEGISLATION CONTACTS TO KNOW

2023 Senate Committee on Agriculture and Tourism



Senator Joan Ballweg

Majority Caucus Vice-Chair

[Senate District 14](#)

(R - Markesan)

Madison Office: Room 409 South
State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

Telephone:
(608) 266-0751

Email:
Sen.Ballweg@legis.wisconsin.gov

Staff:
Bethany Rasmussen Bethany.Rasmussen@legis.wisconsin.gov
Drew Hanstedt Drew.Hanstedt@legis.wisconsin.gov
Leah Peterson Leah.Peterson@legis.wisconsin.gov
David Specht-Boardman David.Specht-Boardman@legis.wisconsin.gov

Current Committees

- Committee on Agriculture and Tourism (Chair)
- Committee on Finance
- Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse Prevention, Children and Families
- Committee on Universities and Revenue
- Joint Committee on Finance



Senator Cory Tomczyk

[Senate District 29](#)

(R - Mosinee)

Madison Office: Room 310 South
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PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

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(608) 266-2502

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Mitch Sands Mitch.Sands@legis.wisconsin.gov
Michael Donatello Michael.Donatello@legis.wisconsin.gov
Timmy Gomez Timmy.Gomez@legis.wisconsin.gov
Adam Peterson Adam.Peterson@legis.wisconsin.gov

Current Committees

- Committee on Agriculture and Tourism (Vice-Chair)
- Committee on Financial Institutions and Sporting Heritage
- Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
- Committee on Transportation and Local Government (Chair)



LEGISLATION CONTACTS TO KNOW

Governor Evers' Proposed 2023-2025

“Break Through Budget”

The Department of Health Services (DHS) is one of the largest state agencies in Wisconsin, with an annual budget of roughly \$15 billion and more than 6,300 employees. DHS is committed to protecting and promoting the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin, making sure everyone can live their best life.

Kirsten Johnson
Secretary-Designee
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Secretary-designee Kirsten Johnson

Kirsten Johnson has over 20 years of experience as a public health leader in complex local, state, national, and international organizations. She joins the administration after previously serving as the health commissioner for the city of Milwaukee following her appointment in January 2021. Prior to serving the city of Milwaukee, Kirsten led the Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department for more than a decade as the director and health officer, overseeing the merger of the two counties' health departments and later leading a multi-county pandemic response as well as various other public health and health equity initiatives. Kirsten has her master's degree in public health from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and holds certifications as a public health professional and certified education specialist.

Deputy Secretary Deb Standridge

Deb Standridge has spent her career working in, improving, and leading health care systems, most recently serving as Regional President of the North Region of Ascension Wisconsin and Chief Executive Officer of Wisconsin's Alternate Care Facility. Her professional focus has been on the strategic direction and operational management of hospitals in a diversity of communities, including her work at Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare's North Market. She is an award-winning advocate for health care systems and served on the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Hospital Association.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Sarah Valencia

Sarah Valencia is a native of Wisconsin. Sarah's professional experience includes working in health care administration, social work, non-profits, higher education, and local government. After graduating with her bachelor's degree from Carroll University, she served two years in the United States Peace Corps in Honduras. After returning, she earned her master's degree in social work from University of Wisconsin Madison, where she is currently a Long-Term Lecturer. Sarah worked as Director of Medical and Patient Services at Access Community Health Centers in Madison and most recently was the Director of Population Health and Addiction Services at UnityPoint Health-Meriter and Vice President of the UW Health Accountable Care Organization. She has served on numerous boards including non-profit and local government.





LEGISLATION CONTACTS TO KNOW

Dan Hereth, Secretary



Dan Hereth was appointed Secretary of the Department of Safety and Professional Services in August 2022. Secretary Hereth has spent his career in public service. He had previously served as the agency assistant deputy secretary since January 2019. Before that, he served as the Deputy District Director for Congresswoman Gwen Moore since 2007.

Hereth is a Watertown, WI native and has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science with a Minor in Public Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, and a Master of Arts degree in Human Resources from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Donna V. Moreland, Deputy Secretary



Donna V. Moreland was appointed Deputy Secretary of the Department of Safety and Professional Services in October 2020. She serves as the chief operating officer for the agency, providing managerial oversight across the agency's divisions.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Chicago State University and an MBA from the University of Phoenix. Prior to joining state service, she worked in law firm administration for more than 15 years at several firms, most recently at Perkins Coie, LLP, and before that at Boardman & Clark, LLP, and Quarles & Brady, LLP.

Deputy Secretary Moreland also served as alderperson for District 7 on the Madison Common Council from April 2019 until her appointment as DSPS deputy secretary.

She has also served on various city committees and commissions as well as in leadership roles for several non-profit boards since arriving in Madison in 2002.

Jennifer Garrett, Assistant Deputy Secretary



Jennifer Garrett was appointed Assistant Deputy Secretary of the Department of Safety and Professional Services in August 2022. She serves as the chief of staff for the Secretary, managing external affairs for the agency including media, legislative, and external stakeholders. Additionally, she serves as the liaison with the governor's staff and other agencies. Before that, she served as director of public affairs. She joined the agency in July 2019 as communications director.

Garrett is an Indiana native. She has a bachelor degree in communications and English from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. She also earned her J.D. from the Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington, Indiana.

Branden Piper / *Division Administrator for the Division of Industry Services*

Branden Piper was appointed as the Division Administrator for the Division of Industry Services, effective March, 2020.

He was a bureau director for the Division of Industry Services for nearly three years before accepting the division administrator position. Prior to that, he had extensive management experience in private sector telecommunications, including TDS Telecom and Frontier Communications. The Janesville native also served eight years as an infantryman in the U.S. Army.

Branden has an MBA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a bachelor's degree from Herzing University. He is currently pursuing a second graduate degree, a master's in engineering management from UW-Madison.



SUPPORT FROM WACO MEMBERS

<div>  GBF Member Donations 2023 TOTALS FOR YEAR <i>(as of 2/28/24 for 2023 Calendar Year)</i> </div> <div>  </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
Lake Arrowhead	\$1,904
Jellystone Park Warrens	\$1,840
Badgerland Campground	\$1,800
Maple View Campsites	\$1,731
Snug Harbor	\$800
Rock Lake Resort & Campground	\$585
Oakdale KOA	\$450
Camping in the Clouds	\$365
Neshonoc Lake / ELS	\$358
McSweet RV Resort	\$300
River's Edge Campground (Birchwood)	\$295
Evergreen Campsites	\$255
Lake Lenwood Beach and Campground	\$250
Blue Bird Family Campground	\$175
Whiskey Creek Family RV Park	\$126
Grand Total	\$272,098



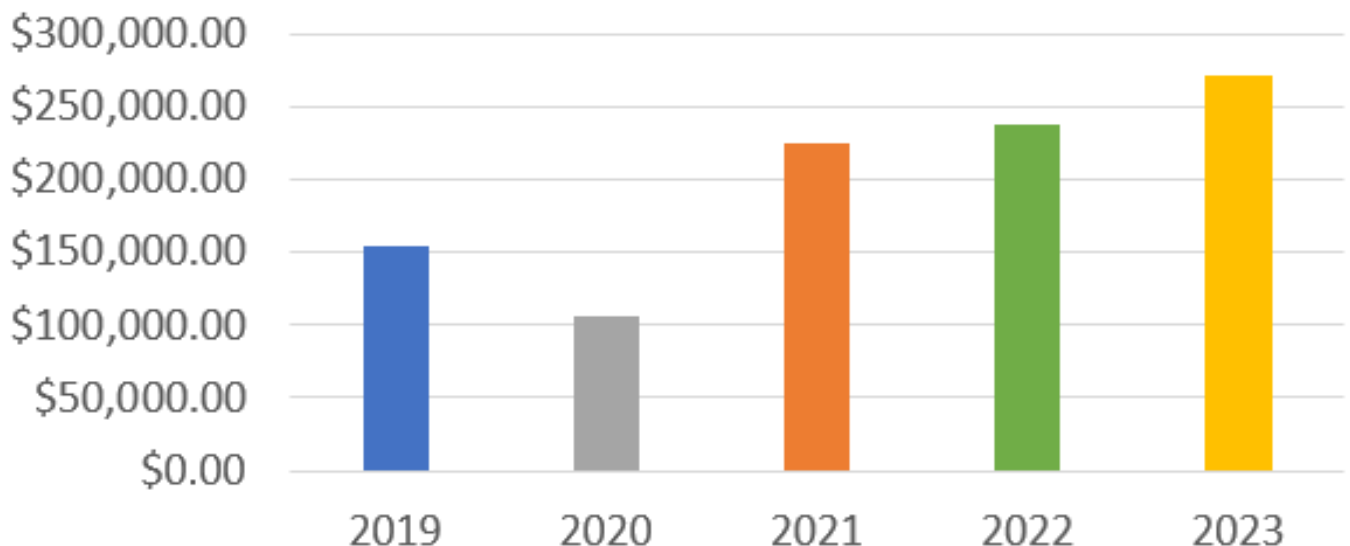


SUPPORT FROM WACO MEMBERS

Year	Total WACO Membership Contributions
2019	\$154,199.44
2020	\$105,524.97
2021	\$224,557.00
2022	\$238,668.36
2023	\$272,097.50

76% increase
in donations to
**GBF from WACO
Members since 2019**

Total WACO Membership Contributions to GBF





“Supporting over 156 children’s charities in Wisconsin”



The Gilbert Brown Foundation’s mission is to service youth in an environment that promotes structure and life skills awareness by introducing team-building skills and promoting diversity in the community.

The Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization supporting over 156 children’s charities throughout Wisconsin.

Gilbert is partnering with the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners and making appearances throughout the summer to raise funds for kids with cancer and other illnesses. Campers truly enjoy talking with the former Super Bowl Champion while raising money.

The Gilbert Brown Foundation has events each quarter and works with organizations like Make-a-Wish and St. Jude’s. The Foundation puts on a free football camp for inner-city youth, hosts a turkey giveaway, and supplies coats and toys for children during the holidays. The Foundation has provided necessary school supplies for kids, sends footballs to the troops, and has a passion for taking the anti-bullying message to schools.

WHAT DOES GILBERT DO FOR WACO?

- Madison Show pricing
- Green Bay Show
- Special event networking
- New campground memberships
- WACO Brand Awareness
- Youth Development within Campgrounds
- Continued link between WACO and Green Bay Packers
- Community & School outreach
- Other player connections
- Use of his social media reach
- Attends conventions at no charge and is a sponsor
- Anti-bullying awareness
- Presenter for convention
- Assists with the Auction
- Creates an avenue to fundraise & raffle with 501C3

Catch Green Bay legend Gilbert Brown & Friends at WACO Campgrounds all summer long, raising money for 156+ children's charities!

FOR FULL LIST OF EVENTS, VISIT US AT
[FACEBOOK.COM/OFFICIALGBFOUNDATION93](https://www.facebook.com/officialgbfoundation93)
WWW.GILBERTBROWNFUNDATION.ORG



GBF RELATIONSHIP WITH WACO

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

- Gilbert Brown works with WACO and does fundraising events in various campgrounds to raise money for his foundation.
- Prior to working with WACO Gilbert personally funded his foundation and did one large event – a free football camp for intercity kids. This was a huge undertaking and required over \$100,000.00 of funding. He funded other charities but to a lesser degree.
- Today, with WACO & other partners, he runs a yearly free football camp and contributes to over 156 Children's Charities throughout Wisconsin.

Gilbert's Foundation works hard to support its efforts, using a team of volunteers to manage the association. The following is a listing of projects the Foundation is currently supporting.

- **Brett Favre's Fourward**
- **The Foundation funds Scholarship programs for schools in Wisconsin.**
- **We provide gas cards for kids with cancer, enabling them to get necessary medical care.**
- **We provide gas cards for breast cancer patients.**
- **School supplies are purchased and delivered to inner-city children.**
- **St. Jude's Hospital**
- **Ronald McDonald House in Madison**
- **Donate auction items for various charities, raising over \$40,000 annually for youth sports groups, individual cancer kids and families, memorials, area golf tournaments, breast cancer walks and runs, area football camps, and scholarship fundraisers.**
- **Teddy Bear Fund: This fund provides supplies for inmates to create items that can be used within the Foundation. Gilbert himself visits the institutions and speaks about respect and mistakes.**
- **The Foundation makes donations to area Churches and provides meals for those in need. Gilbert and his friends have attended and promoted these events.**
- **Donations to The American Red Cross.**
- **Gilbert puts on FREE football camps for inner-city youth.**
- **Over 200 Autographed footballs are sent to the troops on a semi-annual basis.**
- **Supports Make-a-Wish Foundation on a yearly basis.**
- **The Foundation contributes to the MS organization.**
- **Gilbert and other former NFL players have delivered speeches, worked with the Boys and Girls Clubs, and contributed funds.**
- **Along with Bart Starr, The Foundation supports Raw Hide Boys Ranch.**
- **The Foundation provides funds to the Children's Hospital In Milwaukee.**
- **Gilbert has taken on an Anti-bullying program to deliver to schools.**



GBF RELATIONSHIP WITH WACO

FOR ALL GILBERT BROWN FOUNDATION EVENTS

The Foundation's Responsibility:

- Players will conduct phone press interviews for you prior to the event. Contact Lori for details.
- Collect funds at the event.
- Supply merchandise prior to the event and during the event.
- Be sure WACO and campground are named in all press conducted prior to, during, and after the event.
- Use the campground's name and logo whenever possible.
- Assist with compiling press releases.
- Provide tickets for events as needed.
- Provide a likeness to use at your event. All other uses of likeness must be pre-approved. All pictures used in any advertising must be approved.

The Campground Responsibilities:

- Provide the Foundation with flyers and proof of advertising efforts, including a listing of where posters are placed and media variations.
- Create a fundraising outline to be approved prior to any advertising of the event.
- Display the raffle license and follow State of Wisconsin Rules.
- Submit a copy of your advertising plan and the flyer you plan to use.
- Appearance requirements are \$2500.00 raised per player per activity. (A deal or no deal, football camp is an activity)
- Gilbert has waived this in many cases if you do a weekly raffle etc.
- Gather as many donated items as you can.
- Have any pre-sale money collected at the end of the event and turned into the foundation at the event? All money should be calculated with your total no later than the end of the weekend.

How much does WACO pay for this?

The WACO organization does not pay for any appearances or fund the Foundation's work as an Association. In fact, for 5 years running, Gilbert Brown has personally been a \$2500.00 sponsor at our convention. No appearance fee is paid to any of the players.

How about the Executive Directors' time?

Severson & Associates donates office space and answers the phone for the foundation. No fee of any kind is paid to them. S&H Ad Specialties has the clothing contract for the foundation, and Severson & Associates has benefited through business relationships that Gilbert Brown himself has introduced us to. Severson & Associates has a database that tracks time and projects, so this can easily be identified. Just as the Campground Owners do not get paid for putting on fundraisers, never does Severson & Associates.



SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES STAFF



Lori Severson – President & Owner



Lori Severson is a management-training consultant who has inspired thousands to pursue success in their organizations. Lori's motivational presentation style brings phenomenal energy and inspires participants to be the best they can be. Her passion for success and management excellence will inspire, challenge

and encourage you to continuously improve yourself and your organization. Speaking from proven knowledge gained as a success in the sales, training, operations, and marketing arena, she will leave you with ideas that will remain with you long after her thought-provoking sessions end.

Lori works closely with the campground industry as the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners (WACO) and owns Champions Riverside Resort and Bar & Grill in Galesville, Wisconsin.

Lori has also worked with companies like Disney, Jellystone Parks, Camp Snoopy, IBM, TRW, Ho-Chunk Nation, over 200 Manufacturing companies, trade associations, and Foundations, including acting as the Executive Director for the Gilbert Brown Foundation.

YOUR WACO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BRINGS THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCE:

- Corporate experience working for Heileman Brewery & WinCraft
- Director of sales at Heileman – 550 thrift stores – large convention arrangements – responsible for 55 million in sales
- WinCraft responsible for negotiating contracts with licensed properties, Director of sales & training.
- 27+ years experience in the camping industry
- 19 years as WACO Executive Director
- Conducted strategic planning sessions for 11 other State Associations
- VP of CAMP – Campground Association Management Professionals
- Voted OHI Director of the Year twice
- 19 years Association Management – Apple & Berry Growers
- Board of Directors positions at 3 Banks and a Credit Union
- Board member on the Red Cross for 7 years.
- 27 years in professional fundraising
- VP of Gilbert Brown Foundation - responsible for raising 400K a year
- Avid camper all her life
- Wisconsin campground owner, along with her husband, Rick, for the past 12 years



SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES STAFF



**Contacts During CONVENTION
are listed below – have a
question, give us a call!**

WACO Executive Director

Lori Severson 608-792-5915

WACO Staff

Danielle Todd 608-386-0752

Tina Severson 608-386-3673

Lisa Black 608-317-9238

Vendor Set-up And Direction

Ryan Lipke 608-484-1045

Kids Kamp

Becky Black 608-317-9237

General Convention Questions

WACO Office 608-525-2327

Registration

Laurie Smith
608-399-4817

General Convention Questions

WACO Office
608-525-2327



Danielle
Todd



Tina
Severson



Lisa Black



Laurie
Smith



Ryan Lipke



Becky Lipke



Carla Brown



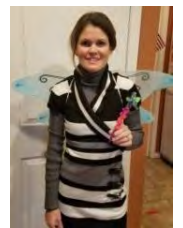
Bonnie & Mickey Wood



Mary
Zeigler



Kiley Smith



Michelle Forsyth



SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES

What do you get?

A Team, not a person. Severson & Associates has the equivalent of 7 full-time employees and 29 volunteers. WACO pays no payroll and has no employee expenses.

IN-HOUSE SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Graphic Artist Services
- Web Design & Development – Content Creation
- Client Liaison
- IT services
- On site server & back-up data
- Social Media Maintenance and Content Creation
- Develop Social Media Platforms - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, and Pinterest
- Crexendo answering service – 24-hour cell access-independent WACO line – Credit Card Machine
- Shipping Facilities
- Office Management and Equipment
- Warehousing Services, including forklift and loading dock
- Sales Department
- Database Management – allows us to backup onsite and not pay for offsite servers
- Convention setup, preparation, and execution
 - Food, Space, Contracts, Donations, Registrations, Speakers, Sponsorships, Programing, Hotel rooms, Trade Member Sales, Communication & Trades our own Speakers at \$0
- Member Benefit connections
- Attendance of all Board Meetings and Membership Meetings
- Membership outreach
 - Private Facebook Group
 - Member Section on Website- Constant Contact Email
 - Survey
 - Newsletter
- Bulk Mailing program
- Media Connections
- Emergency action plan
- Coordinate Bulk Purchasing Programs
- Printing Program: coordination, printing, & storage
- Manage consumer requests for directories and piggyback program
- Assist Membership Committee in Fall workshops for speakers, route, host campground, meals, etc.
- Create a prominent role in RV shows – Madison – Green Bay – Wausau (speaking opportunities)
- Soft skills seminar training
- Attending Legislative educational meetings and fundraisers.
- Personal visits to campgrounds – Joint OHI when possible
- Google calendar events for consumers and WACO members
- Vice President of CAMP – Campground Association Management Professionals
- Attend Tourism meetings and events
- Attend State Tavern League Conventions – 2x year
- Attend NBA every other year
- Work with RVIA & Wisconsin RVIA
- Attend OHI Meetings
- Attend WMC Golf Tournament
- Attend IAAPA - International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions
- Attend other State Association Meetings.
- Share Severson & Associates networking connections



SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES STAFF

Severson's Team Proficiency's

TOGETHER OUR TEAM IS PROFICIENT IN:

- QuickBooks
- Record keeping
- Data-base management
- Meeting management
- Communication methods
- Financial preparation
- Cash management
- Meeting Coordination
- Office skills
- Fundraising
- Membership support
- Conference planning
- Administrative Support
- Board Support Services
- Strategic planning experience
- Training creating
- Industry connections
- Celebrity Connections
- Social Media Services
- Marketing Plan Development and Execution



Severson's Facility

- Crexendo Mobile App and Online Phone system offering quicker connection to the proper WACO staff contact
- Cell phone system
- 12 Computers
- 2 professional copy/print/fax machines
- 20,000 square foot facility
- Office space
- Warehouse space with loading dock & fork lift



SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES DUTIES

- Perform all administrative duties such as providing a PO Box, record keeping, e-mail services, fax service, automated answering system, etc..
- Attend all Board Meetings and Membership meetings:
 - Create agendas, provide minutes and providing reports as needed.
 - Secure meeting space, or prepare virtual space via online options such as Zoom.
- Handle all correspondence and communications typically within one business day.
- Assist officers, directors, and committees with association activities.
- Develop all print materials, promotional materials, and communication memo's.
- Mail requested literature from campers and press.
- Create and compile a directory of all campground members.
- Organize and execute Fall Workshops in coordination with Membership Committee.
- Utilize database specifically created for WACO that tracks communication for efficiency and record keeping.
- Utilize email communication software to track email statistics including open rate, bounce rate and click rates.
- We have a healthy track record educating WACO members on other organization benefits such as OHI, Small Business Association, Score, Wisconsin Fairs, WMC (a legislative group) The Tavern League of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Towns Association, Wisconsin Counties Association, Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty to name a few.
- Build relationships with State officials so we can be a resource to our membership.
- Severson has extensive experience working with both large corporations and small business people. We have a proven track record in navigating the red tape and politics of every organization.
- We study the industry and watch the trends to look for opportunities for our members.
- Personally created & presented over 50 seminars that have been delivered to campground owners on profitability, shoulder season, snack shack, game rooms, customer service, preparing to sell, restaurant, bar, craft rooms, activities, guest services and social media.
- Created and conducted guest services training for campground owners and their team members, they can attend at no charge as part of the membership.
- We attend conferences like IAAPA, Fair Association, State Conferences and OHI to keep on the cutting edge of what's happening in the industry.
- Created bulk printing programs to offer printing solutions to our members with bulk purchase discounts.
- Formed relationships with RV dealers to get booth prices reduced from \$600 to \$350 per booth for our membership.
- Working on a program to bring J1 students to the US already trained for our industry.
- Produce an annual report for the membership.
- Identify, assess, and inform the Board of Directors of internal and external issues that affect the organization
- Act as a professional advisor to the Board of Director on all aspects of the organization's activities
- Act as a spokesperson for the organization
- Represent the organization at community activities to enhance the organization's community profile
- Participate in fundraising activities as appropriate
- Provide IT assistance at convention.



SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES DUTIES

- Build social media platforms for our members to exchange ideas and information. We have included our attorney and accountant to help with the tricky answers!
 - This platform allows members to ask questions day or night and just compare their best practices.
- Created a Kids Kamp that educates our campground owners children at an early age. 7 of our members are now running their own campgrounds!
- We have a Young Professionals group where members can talk about issues that relate very specifically to them, such as raising a family on a campground, advanced social media etc.
- Severson & Associates has compiled more than 1000 ways to raise funds in campgrounds.
 - We understand the relationship between philanthropy, guest satisfaction and creating an experience that becomes valuable to the campground owner.
- Severson & Associates has mastered the art of using celebrities to enhance the experience for the guest and create revenue streams for the campground.
 - We can expand and work with other organizations and their State celebrities. We brought Rocky Bleir to PA for their conference.
- We can source local and National music talent.
- Create sponsorships that are valued by the suppliers and association.
 - Create a successful campground convention event building from 36 vendors to 192
 - We understand how to coach campground owners on getting sponsors during the time they are closed so they have time to develop solid relationships that last for years, grow their community awareness and develop partnerships.
- Vast experience networking with legislators, attending special events and fundraising for PAC money.
- Developed and implemented Media & marketing plans creating additional nonpaid advertising.
 - Created press releases and have a good working relationship with media throughout the State.
 - Use PSA's to create more excitement for the industry.
- Work with employer partners to distribute camping guides and gain interest in the industry.
- Call on partners to distribute camping guides such as gas stations, sporting goods stores, special events and festivals.
- Attend RV shows, creating opportunities to partner and become important to the show.
- Visit member and prospective campground owners.
- Create and send out surveys to members, prospects, & suppliers.
- Create monthly newsletters with information that campground owners can use.
- Create and update member only website information.
- Update and keep a campground owner booklet with valued information.
- Oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of the organization's programs and services.
- Coordinate information to the WACO attorney.
- Ensure that sound bookkeeping and accounting procedures are followed.
- Work the financial committee to prepare a comprehensive budget.
- Work with the Board to secure adequate funding for the operation of the organization.
- Research funding sources, oversee the development of fund-raising plans and write funding proposals to increase the funds of the organization.



STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

WACO ORGANIZATION STRENGTHS:

(This category was not voted on for most important to least important.)

- Creating a convention
- Motivating our members to show up
- Legislative support
- Willingness to share information
- Helping other members
- Dealing with government regulations - combating unreasonable regulations
- Diversity of all of the members as well as the board - old, new, young, big, small, etc.
- Mutual respect among members
- Love of the industry
- Connections with the right people
- Everyone seems like family
- Providing educational opportunities
- Advocacy for the support of the industry
- The ability to maintain good leadership - ie and Exec. Director
- Longevity of our organization - willingness to adapt
- Educating consumers/non-campers on the industry
- Mentoring between members
- Communication
- Fundraising
- Providing an effective advertising platform
- Family run businesses supporting each other
- Connecting with vendors
- Consistency (board, etc)
- Helping each other to grow in the industry
- From one generation/administration continuity - learn from the past - history
- We're the recognized authority in the industry
- Financially solid - loan free

OUR OFFICE WILL GO OVER THESE WITH THE NEW FULL BOARD AFTER CONVENTION From that conversation we will make adjustments, review completed items and determine what successes we've seen – and where we can improve and keep moving forward!



STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

WACO ORGANIZATION WEAKNESSES:

(Listed from most important to keep focusing on to least important)

- Getting people to understand what WACO is (general public)
- Communication with the membership
- A lot of understanding on the board but not necessarily conveyed to membership
- Lack of a plan to transition from the directory - eventually paper will be less important
- How to find the validity of the complaints from members
- Demonstrating the value proposition
- Outgrown our “fish tank” at Convention
- Hard to talk to some owners - seems to be some cliques
- Too busy
- Major pride in our organization - sometimes you're not willing to see the weaknesses
- We try to please everyone and that's not always possible and sometimes hinders our growth
- Because we are so close, sensitivity can happen

WACO ORGANIZATION OPPORTUNITIES:

(Listed from most important to keep focusing on to least important)

- Finding free money/grants
- App for finding campgrounds in Wisconsin (WACO App)
- Opportunities of education for prospective new owners
- Potential vendor education on who we are
- Outreach to higher education to address labor
- Change over in Government - PAC Fund
- Continuing to grow membership
- Partnership for labor with southern states/Internship program
- Creating peer review groups (20 groups but local)
- More cost-effective advertising options (low / no-cost)
- Generational succession
- Opportunity for mid-year networking/cracker barrel
- Lifestyle changes - people selling houses and going to RVs full time
- Growth of new vehicles - what will we do?
- Growth within campgrounds and campers
- Opportunities for new board members

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STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

WACO ORGANIZATION THREATS:

(Listed from most important to keep focusing on to least important)

- Local Government
- Government regulations – things like property tax and assessment changes
- Work ethic in the up-and-coming generations - Lack of employees
- Electric vehicles
- Public - local public relations - neighbors
- Supply chain - Rising costs of everything
- Corporate consolidation of the industry - Growth of mega resorts competition
- Surge of new and unfamiliar campers
- Negativity - Members wanting to stay stuck - how can we help?
- Lack of high-level general manager pool
- Changing demographics
- Lack of campsites versus campers
- Taxes - always new ones
- Viable financial opportunities

Important Changes to Wisconsin Real Property Classification

Respectfully Submitted by Holly Hoffman, MSA, Speaker at our October Fall Workshop

Wisconsin contractors and campground owners, take note! There have been recent changes that will impact the classification of real property construction activities in the state. These amendments, outlined in the [Wisconsin Tax Bulletin 222-07-23](#), aim to clarify the determination of real property construction activities and provide guidelines for classification. In this article, we will discuss the key points from the bulletin and explain how these changes will affect contractors and construction at businesses in Wisconsin.



AMENDMENT DETAILS:

The [2023 Wis. Act 12](#) has amended section 77.51(12t) of the statutes, which pertains to the definition of "real property construction activities." The revised definition states that these activities refer to actions performed at a site where tangible personal property or goods that are applied or adapted to the use or purpose of real property are permanently affixed to it. Importantly, the person who affixes the property must have the intention of making a permanent accession to the real property.

EXCLUSIONS AND RULES:

The amended definition of real property construction activities excludes certain cases. Affixing property subject to tax under s. 77.52(1)(c) to real property is not considered a real property construction activity. Similarly, attaching tangible personal property to real property that remains as tangible personal property after being affixed is not classified as a real property construction activity.

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue is empowered to establish rules that determine whether activities involving the attachment of tangible personal property to real property should be classified as real property construction activities. In cases where specific rules have not been defined, the department will utilize the following criteria to make determinations:

1. Actual physical annexation to the real property.
2. Application or adaptation to the use or purpose of the real property.
3. An intention on the part of the person making the annexation to make a permanent accession to the real property.

IMPACT AND CLARITY:

The changes made through the 2023 Wis. Act 12 provide much-needed clarity for contractors regarding the classification of real property construction activities. The amendments establish that the permanence of tangible property affixed to real property is the primary factor for classification, regardless of

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OUR OFFICE WILL GO OVER THESE WITH THE NEW FULL BOARD AFTER CONVENTION From that conversation we will make adjustments, review completed items and determine what successes we've seen – and where we can improve and keep moving forward!



STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES STRENGTHS:

(Listed from most important to keep focusing on to least important)

- Expertise - Having the #1 Exec. Dir. - getting on RVAI was a homerun
- Relationships with KOA, COE, CAMP, GBF etc. brings a lot to the table
- Unity you have with the campgrounds
- Directory - Advertising options - Free pens
- Government relationships
- Conscious behavior - thinking through everyone's feelings/views when making decisions
- Newsletter

(These items were not voted on for most important to least important.)

- Convention - Fall Tours
- Teamwork - Everyone is very diverse in their own skill sets - All the girls - Lori's large family
- All the time put in for WACO
- Vision and collaboration

SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES WEAKNESSES:

(Listed from most important to keep focusing on to least important)

- Could be hindered by the same things as WACO (negativity, etc.)
- Lack of lower-level task do-ers
- Too much paper
- Too many tasks to do
- Too nice

One area we have focused on in the past year is working with the government and our ability to expand. Your WACO team is helping provide tools that allow you to make great presentations to your local city/town/county boards as needed. We have joined RVIA's campground team to create an advocacy toolbox that should be ready to go in its entirety by next year. However, you will still be able to use data from this in the meantime. We will have a WACO representative on this committee and will report back on what's happening. We have a talented team member, Tina, who will be shadowing some of the best lobbyists to learn more about that system and get involved with the decisions made in your legislation. A WACO member will advocate daily with the Tavern League of Wisconsin and RIVA whenever possible to learn more about the process, talk to leaders on both sides of the aisle, and educate them about camping. We aim to have this expertise and knowledge in-house so our legislation all infer who WACO is.



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

- Membership is retained once members come to “something”. Our goal is to help new members discover the benefits of belonging to WACO.
- With this, WACO has created a binder full of information to help a campground member succeed. This binder will be available to all new members of WACO. Information included in the binder covers all aspects of the campground world including:
 - Legal Topics (New campground code, service animals, shore land zoning, personal property tax, etc..)
 - Job Description examples
 - Campground forms (rental agreement, seasonal agreement, termination letter, check-in and out slips, necessary new hire documents, etc..)
 - Creating your mission
 - Themed Weekends
 - Advertising opportunities
 - Branding
 - Online presence (Website, social media, reviews, etc..)
 - And much more!
- Leaders and membership are helpful to other members when they have issues. The concept is that many times a member will be forced to become the “expert” because of a problem they have. The goal is to share the information and be able to give that information to other campground owners who have the same issues.
- WACO has developed several ways to keep all campground members informed and able to ask each other questions. Tools such as email blasts, private Facebook groups, convention round tables, cracker barrels, fall workshops are a perfect example of giving campground members the opportunities to ask other owners for opinions or ideas.
- Board Members who are willing to donate their time and energy to make things work.



Owners Meet Up: 15 minutes prior to each meal time!
Location: New Owners Table in the Banquet Room

Calling all rookies and newcomers! This quick meet up is hosted by the WACO Young Professionals group. Meet, greet and network with others in the same new position as you are! Find a mentor and see who knows what, and how you can get the most out of your WACO convention experience! Chat about what you’ve learned so far and what’s up next for the day!



WACO ATTORNEY | MARK HAZELBAKER



NEW THIS YEAR...

WACO introduced a new JotForm and process to collect our members' legal concerns. We can't stress enough the importance of using this form to submit your legal questions! As a reminder, going directly to Mark will be at your own cost.



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, available for 15-min free consultations once we've gathered your information.

We've created a form specific to legal questions:

<https://form.jotform.com/240223765436051> to help gather the information and upload any documents related to the question!

SEASONAL SITUATIONS & EMPLOYEE LAW YOU SHOULD KNOW

Watch for these Topics & More at Convention!



MARK HAZELBAKER
WACO ATTORNEY

THURSDAY

FOR THE LOVE OF ALL THINGS SEASONAL:

Everything you need to get through your season, with the Seasonals!

FRIDAY

HOW UP TO DATE IS YOUR HIRING PROCESS?

Resident Managers, employee agreements, job descriptions, onsite housing and the new Verification forms



CONVENTION SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

ALL LEGAL QUESTIONS SHOULD COME TO THE OFFICE FIRST!

This step ensures we're capturing data for ALL OUR MEMBERS to benefit from and the point of having a legal hotline. If you go to Mark directly, YOU WILL BE CHARGED accordingly! Even anonymous information is still fantastic information to help your fellow members, so please use the

NEW LEGAL HOTLINE JOTFORM

LEGAL HOTLINE JOTFORM

As a member, once you've submitted your information, you're entitled to a 15-minute free consultation with Mark if we don't have the answer in our files - but in most cases, your questions are similar to those from other members!

Want to talk through your question before completing the form? Call us at 608-525-2327 or email



tina@seversonandassociates.com!

WE ARE HERE TO HELP





WACO HALL OF FAME MEMBERS

- Spike Horn Camps
- Benson's Resort
- Evergreen Park & Campsites
- Conroys Bear Lake
- Lake Lenwood Beach & Campground
- Lynn Ann's Campground
- Safari Downs
- Springstead Family Campground
- Dells Camping Resort
- Shady Oaks Travel - Trailer & Camping Resort
- Klondike Campground
- Pleasant Lake Lodge
- Leesome Pine Lake Campground
- Weavers Campsites
- Holiday Shores Camp Resort
- Wilderness Campgrounds
- Lake Arrowhead Campgrounds
- Vista Royale Campground
- Maple View Campsites
- Lake Chippewa Campground

2012 HALL OF FAME

- Silver Springs
- Indian Trails

2013 HALL OF FAME

- Pride of America

2014 HALL OF FAME

- Sky High Camping

2015 HALL OF FAME

- Vista Royale Campground

2016 HALL OF FAME

- Buffalo Lake Campground

2017 HALL OF FAME

- Evergreen Campsites

2018 HALL OF FAME

- Smokey Hollow Campground

2019 HALL OF FAME

- Scenic Ridge Campground

2020 HALL OF FAME

- Milton KOA

2021 HALL OF FAME

- Crazy Horse Campground

2022 HALL OF FAME

- Beantown Campground

2023 HALL OF FAME

- Yogi Bear Jellystone - Calendonia





WACO CHARTER MEMBERS

CHARTER MEMBERS

- **Mr. & Mrs. Edward C. Augustine**
 - **Spike Horn Campground**
 - **Mr. & Mrs. Keith Kindschi**
 - **Wallace Plzak**
 - **Mr. & Mrs. Lynden E. Duescher**
 - **Fred Becker**
 - **Pleasant Lake Lodge John Kaishian**
 - **Safari Downs**
 - **Springstead Family Campground**
 - **John J. Sciacco**
 - **Mrs. WM. J. Benson**
 - **Mr. Philip H. Chase**
 - **Mr. Robert R. Conroy**
 - **Mr. & Mrs. Dricken**
 - **Mr. and Mrs. R. Helpap**
 - **Leesome (Pine) Lake Campground**
 - **Mr. Vernon Gruenwald**
 - **Mr. & Mrs. H. Weaver**
 - **Lynn Ann's Campground**
- Milwaukee**
 - Baileys Harbor**
 - Klondike Campground**
 - McHenry Ill.**
 - Brookfield**
 - Frankline**
 - Lac Du Flambeau**
 - Park Falls**
 - Harvard, Ill.**
 - Century Camping Resort, Inc**
 - Evergreen Park and Campsite**
 - Bear Lake Campground**
 - Lake Lenwood Beach Campground**
 - Shady Oaks Campground**
 - Spooner**
 - Dells Camping Resort**
 - Weaver's Campsites**
 - St. Germain**