

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE PIRECTOR



**Lori Severson, Executive Director of WACO** 

Dear Members:

Hopefully, everyone had a great holiday and is looking forward to 2025. One of the great industry leaders, Mr. Bud Styer, received a kidney on Dec 23rd! A huge surprise Christmas gift. Thanks to Dana for letting us know that he is doing well! I spoke to Diane, and she says he is getting stronger daily. That sounds great already! If you want to send a card, send it to Mr. Bud, PO Box 18, Lodi, WI 53555. We will keep everyone informed on our Facebook page for members!

This year is the year to beef up our marketing right out of the gate. Put your checklist together and get ready for success! Start with your brochure. No matter your size, a great brochure or even a one-page flyer is essential! Your brochure should have these features!

#### **EYE-CATCHING DESIGN**

 Compelling Cover: Use a bold headline, captivating imagery, and prominently display your logo. The cover should immediately convey what your campground is all about. What is unique about your campground?



• Consistent Branding: Use your brand colors, fonts, and style throughout the brochure for a cohesive look.

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showcase your campground, activities, and amenities.

#### **Clear and Organized Content**

- Headline and Subheadings: Guide the reader through the brochure with clear, concise headlines and subheadings that highlight the main points.
- Bite-Sized Information: Use short paragraphs, bullet points, and infographics to make the content easy to digest.
- Call-to-Actions (CTAs): Include specific CTAs like "Book Now," "Visit Us," or "Contact Us Today" to encourage immediate action.

#### **Key Information**

- Overview of Your Business: Briefly describe your campground or resort, emphasizing unique selling points.
- Amenities and Activities: Highlight what makes your location special (e.g., spacious sites, kidfriendly activities, or proximity to attractions).
- Contact Information: Make it easy for readers to reach you with your phone number, email, website, and social media handles.
- Location and Map: Include your address and a map to help people find you easily.

#### Visual Appeal

- Balanced Layout: Use plenty of white space to avoid overwhelming readers. Balance text and images for a clean, professional look.
- Engaging Graphics: Use icons, charts, or other visual elements to break up text and emphasize key points.
- Vivid Colors: Choose colors that match your branding and evoke emotions like relaxation, adventure, or fun.

#### **Practical Features**

- Easy Navigation: Use a table of contents or clear section dividers if your brochure has multiple pages.
- Folding Design: For tri-fold brochures, organize the layout to guide readers naturally through the content.

 Durable Material: Use high-quality paper or a matte/ glossy finish to make the brochure feel professional and long-lasting.

#### A Unique Touch

- Testimonials: Include quotes or stories from happy campers to build credibility and trust.
- Promotions: Add a coupon, discount code, or special offer to incentivize bookings.
- Interactive Features: QR codes linking to virtual tours, videos, or booking pages can add an interactive element.

#### **Proofreading and Polish**

- Error-Free Content: Doublecheck grammar, spelling, and all details to ensure professionalism.
- Consistent Tone: Use language that reflects your brand voice—whether it's fun, adventurous, or relaxing.

A great brochure is not just about delivering information—it's about telling your story, inspiring excitement, and motivating your potential guest to take the next step! RV shows are prime opportunities to fill your seasonal sites and boost your bookings for overnight stays. With the right approach, you can capture the attention of potential guests and set your campground apart.

### HERE'S HOW TO PREPARE, PREMARKET, AND MAKE YOUR BOOTH THE TALK OF THE SHOW.

#### Start by creating some hype before the show gets here!

RV show with teasers like, "Get ready for exclusive offers and a chance to win a free weekend stay!" Use hashtags specific to the event and geotags to reach local attendees. Create contests and giveaways, even if it's simple, like picking up a t-shirt at the booth for contest winners who like, share, and comment on your post. Be sure to use a data collection method like jot form to collect the names and information of guests

- interested in your campground.
- Email Campaigns: Send targeted emails to your past guests and potential campers, inviting them to visit your booth. Include an incentive, such as a gift for becoming a seasonal or making a reservation at the show.
- Partner Promotions: Team up with nearby attractions or local businesses to offer exclusive packages for attendees. Promote these collaborations ahead of time. Use your community partners. You will create interest in your campground by creating interest in your area.
- Interactive RSVP: Create a landing page where attendees can RSVP for an exclusive gift or enter a raffle for a percentage off a seasonal camping site, building excitement and helping you gauge interest.

#### Making Your Booth Irresistible: Stand Out in the Crowd

Design Matters:

words!

- Your booth
  should be visually
  inviting and reflect the unique experience your
  campground offers. Use banners, photos,
  and videos showcasing your best amenities,
  activities, and scenery. Try using a photo board
  or electronic board. Pictures really do say 1000
- Interactive Elements: Set up a spin-thewheel game or a mini cornhole toss where participants can win branded swag, such as t-shirts, water bottles, or campsite discounts.
   Be sure something draws them in, including the person working the booth! Engage and interact, so your potential customers will get excited about coming to spend their vacation time with you!
- Showcase Experiences: Have a small campfire setup, Adirondack chairs, or a mock cabin

- interior to immerse visitors in the camping vibe.
- Exclusive Offers: Offer limited-time discounts for bookings made during the show, such as "Book today and save 20% on your next stay!"

#### Preparing Like a Pro: Setting Up for Success

- Know Your Audience: Research your data what type of seasonals work best in your campground? What are the demographics you are looking for in an overnighter? Are they families, retirees, or adventure seekers? Tailor your messaging to their preferences with what you have to offer.
- Bring Your A-Team: Staff your booth with enthusiastic, knowledgeable employees who can answer questions and share personal stories about your campground. Be sure if you aren't there – the people you send are there in the present! Having someone sit on their computer doing other work without engaging doesn't work!
- Have a Clear Goal: Whether you want to increase seasonal bookings or promote special events, know what success looks like for you at the show. Make a goal for yourself and reward yourself when you get there!
- Stock Up on Materials: Bring plenty of brochures, business cards, and promotional items. Ensure your materials include a QR code linking to your website and booking system.
- Tech-Ready Booth:
   Use a tablet or laptop
   to show videos of your
   campground or allow
   visitors to book on
   the spot. A slideshow
   of happy campers



enjoying your amenities can be a game-changer.

RV shows are your chance to make a lasting impression on potential campers. You can turn curious attendees into lifelong guests with thoughtful premarketing, an engaging booth, and strategic

preparation. Ready to pack your booth? Can't do it yourself because you are on vacation, short-handed, out of budget, or whatever? Be sure you are in the WACO distribution program, and let us give you all the tools you need to do the best job for you. Be sure to send certificates and any special offers or swag to promote your campground!

Finally, watch for information on our new training program and our new zooms to go over each benefit in our benefits bucket!

### Lori

Lori Severson, Executive Director of WACO Champions Riverside Resort

# A Word from the President Scott Kollock, WACO Board President



#### Dear Members:

December is a great time to reflect on what our year looked like in our organization. Just like your own businesses, it's important to look back and see where we have been and where we want to go in 2025. If I were to pick out milestones, I would look at essential areas for us like:

- Membership Growth and Retention,
- Advocacy & Legislation,
- Event Success,
- Resources and Support,
- Community and Industry Impact,
- Infrastructure and Technological Advancements and
- Recognition and Awards.

It would be great for all of you to look at these areas, add your own, and take a few minutes to think about where you feel we are as an organization. Thinking about these milestones can assist our office and board in budgeting and resources for the year. Your ideas and input make us stronger. Here is how I would evaluate these areas.

#### Membership Growth & Retention

Industry-wide membership numbers have dropped consistently over the last 5 years in most state organizations, according to numbers revealed at the CAMP(Campground Association Management Professionals) meetings Lori has attended. Most states are flat, with 20% having lost 13% or more members on average based on numbers reported. Our membership has been stable, with a small amount of growth each year; including 2025, we currently have 229 members. Our membership has been high, at 230 over the last 20 years, so we have been relatively stable. Most of the other states have experienced lost members due to sales

and corporate buyouts. I think training our relators and insurance group, along with our WACO staff, helps us stay on top of changing ownership. Having DATCP assist with updating Lori on campgrounds that need WACO or newly licensed campgrounds also helps. I would love to see us continue to grow the members, even by a couple each year, with a 5-year plan to get to 250. I think we are doing well in this area overall. As far as member engagement, I think the communication has really increased with the Facebook member area, the increase in fall workshop attendance, and continuing a successful convention, in the face of individual states struggling with conventions. Our surveys

tell us we have a convention with great speakers, relevant vendors, great value, and good networking.

If I look at Advocacy and Legislation, we have had some great wins in terms of partnerships. We have a lot of organization resources our WACO staff can use, including OHI, RVIA, RVDA, and WMC. Tina has developed a team of individual advisors who also can help direct us, like Bill Cosh from Senator Jaques' office, who assists in the introduction of bills, and Jason Culotta, who has worked at the capital for years and has a great relationship with people on both sides of the aisle. Mark Hazelbaker has ears to the ground and can assist with a legal viewpoint. We have invested in several pieces of software that alert us to any legislative issues that are currently happening, such as the Wheeler report. New to this is a benefit from Hospitality Connections, a company called State Affairs that offers far more insight to any legislation. This software allows users to track keywords, listen to committee meeting minutes, track bills, and generate reports of bills WACO watches in a given time. We have increased our interaction with Wisconsin Tourism and DATCP and have begun the interesting communication with DSPS. The Restaurant Association and the Tavern League of Wisconsin are both invited to our convention and we attend theirs. We have started looking for a lobbyist to assist us in making things happen legislatively. Resources and Support - We have upped our game in this area with new benefits, a list of forms, seasonal agreements, legal assistance, marketing ideas, and a new online training option. Our ability to access new data on economic impacts by city is simply amazing. We can thank our partners at RVIA for access to this. This information gives us valuable insights into the campground industry and the habits of our customers.

Community and Industry Impact - Our partnerships with nonprofits like RVTI and the RV technical training group are helping our industry create a better guest experience. Charitable contributions and great press related to that are available

through the Gilbert Brown Foundation, and it's a subset of the benefit buckets.

Infrastructure and Technological Advancements - We have improved our communication methods and created various ways members can gather information, like more data-driven newsletters, improved member portals, and ways for board members to share their talents.

Recognition and Awards - Jim Button has received many national awards not only this year but the last couple of years. Lori received the Trailblazer Award from RVWA this year, along with many members who participated in the media program with Jeff Crider and received notable media mentions.

We talk about the buckets of membership or why campground owners benefit from joining WACO. We outline them reasonably well. We will continue to grow the benefits and reasons to help campground owners see the ROI of belonging to a fabulous association. I am proud to say we are financially stable and not in the rebuilding mode like many other states. We have a year's reserve, which would be enough to fund us and keep us afloat in the case of a major disaster. We conduct strategic planning every 2 years to be sure we are constantly looking at continuous improvement and have implemented many ideas and used resources to get the benefits our membership wants.

Focusing on these milestones demonstrates the association's value to members and reinforces its role as a key industry leader. Let me, the staff, or any Board member know if you have ideas or want to contribute.

Thanks for a great year!

Scott

Scott Kollock, Board President of WACO, Vista Royalle Campground



# IMPORTANT LINKS & FEEDBACK REQUESTED FROM DATCP

Based on feedback from the October Fall Workshop, the DATCP wants to know how they can help MOST with your upcoming season! What questions keep you up at night related to food saftey, lodging codes, pool requirements and more? Ok, maybe they aren't keeping you up at night, but the fines if you're not up to code certainly could! Compelte this survey to tell the WACO office what you want to see from DATCP at this year's Convention. Our speakers are only as amazing as the information they provide our membership, so help us, help you!



### **LINKS FOR YOU**

BELOW ARE LINKS GIVEN AT THE OCTOBER FALL WORKSHOP FROM DATCP:

DRAFT RULES FOR NEW LODGING CODES ARE LISTED HERE:

HTTPS://DATCP.WI.GOV/DOCUMENTS2/ATCP72RRACREVIEWEDDRAFTLANGUAGE92623-22724.PDF

POOL CODE UPDATES FOR CHLORINE AND MANY OTHER RESOURCES ONLINE HERE: HTTPS://DATCP.WI.GOV/PAGES/PROGRAMS SERVICES/WATERRECREATION.ASPX

### Madison Camper and RV Show & Sale January 31 - February 2, 2025





#### WACO MEMBER BENEFIT: Early Bird Booth Price - \$350.00

All campground booths will be in space in lobby. WACO members will be eligible for the early bird price of \$350.

(Non-WACO members fee will be \$675.)

Must secure your booth via the online form or postmarked to WACO Office by deadline of January 2, 2025.

After January 2, 2025, the booth price is \$675!



REGISTER ONLINE NOW and opt to pay with CC, check or request invoice.

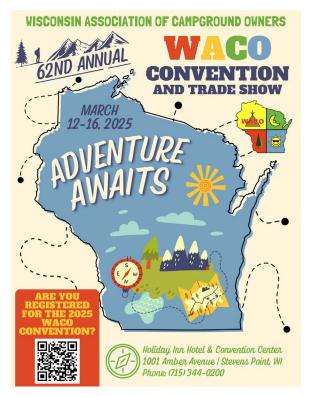
We are still working with hotel to secure booking link & will update you when its available!



WED
JAN 22
10 AM

Bar & Grill
33 HILLMAN RD,
LAKE DELTON, WI

53940







CLICK HERE TO SEE: "SAVINGS 4 MEMBERS" MEMBER SAVINGS PROGRAM (MSP)

Find direct access to benefits for cell service, check guarantee, credit card processing, fuel, payment collections, rental vehicles, shipping, waste & recycling and more.

These discounts are made available through your WACO membership and are in addition to the programs on this webpage.



#### DO I NEED BACKGROUND CHECKS AT MY PARK?

Camping can be a fun and enriching way to enjoy time in the great outdoors and operating a successful campground is dependent on keeping things safe. You want every camper to have a great experience at your campground, which is why it's crucial to consider the safety and security of your guests and staff above all else. You're doing your best to protect your campers and your business. You have a well-trained staff. You have emergency procedures in place. But there may be a gap in your business plan! *READ FULL ARTICLE HERE*.

FOR GUEST SCREENING: visit TenantAlert.com/hospitality
FOR EMPLOYEE SCREENING: visit aGoodEmployee.com/
Hospitality

- Background Check Info Flyer
- Employee Background Checks Are Essential
- Should Campgrounds Require a Background Check?
- Why Should I Run a Background Check on a camper?
- About Background Checks (info article)





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| Ettrick, WI 54627 (608) 525–2323 | tina@seversonandassociates.com









#### MEMBER BENEFITS & DISCOUNTS WITH HOSPITALITY CONNECTIONS

Members of the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners, your association is working for YOU!

Saving on products and services from a variety of companies are available for you through **WACO**'s affiliation with **Hospitality Connections**. See the participating providers below and click the links for more information or enrollment.

Here are direct links to learn and directly enroll in a few of the more popular companies and programs including the HC Member Savings Program.

Click here for ALL participating companies!

#### AT A GLANCE:

Ferrellgas
Batteries Plus
Exxon
Discount Tire
Ace Hardware
UPS
Waste Focus
Staples
Alliant Business Insurance
Credit Card Processing





We all need to send our guests emails, social ads, & use SMS marketing. Why not collect the data in one location that gives you reporting information, open stats and gives your campers the option to opt-out, keeping you in line with the CAN-SPAM act?

### Constant Contact is available to our WACO members at a 25% discount!

### CLICK THE LINKS BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Constant Contact Info Flyer
- Constant Contact Services at a Glance
- <u>Info for learning about Constant Contact (with link to webinar)</u>
- Info on Plan Offerings
- Return on Investment (ROI) with links to product tours, how to create an email, and how to grow your email list





### Keepin' it Legal

Let's be honest. No one loves legal concerns, but we sure do love having access to a 27-year veteran like Mark Hazelbaker, our WACO Attorney, when those pesky legal troubles rear their head.

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

# Winter is a Good Time to Think Ahead About Employment Issues

Respectfully Submitted By Attorney Mark Hazelbaker, WACO Legal Counsel

uring the "off-season" (to the degree you have one), you can ensure you're ready for a new season of hiring, paying, and managing employees. This article provides an overview of several significant issues campgrounds face.

#### DO NOT FORFEIT "AT WILL" STATUS - IT GIVES YOU A GREAT DEAL OF CONTROL.

Wisconsin allows employers to hire, manage, and fire employees flexibly. The general rule in Wisconsin is that employers do not need cause to fire an employee. You can change wages, hours, qualifications, training requirements, or other employment details without permission, "grounds," and without advance notice. You do not have to give employees "two weeks' notice" to fire them; they don't have to provide you with two weeks' notice to quit.

But, even though you can change working conditions, you should have some written documents that inform your employees of their duties and your expectations. Personnel handbooks, job descriptions, rules, and other employment details do not create a contract of employment or require cause for termination unless explicit language makes some binding employment contract.

So – please develop at least simple job descriptions, a summary of your workplace policies and procedures, and a wage schedule. Keep records.

#### WHAT THE LAW GIVETH, IT TAKETH AWAY - BE AWARE OF THE MANY EMPLOYMENT LAWS.

Although you are still in control, the Legislature and Congress have imposed thousands of regulations on the employment relationship. These laws do not control the fundamental nature of employment. They do, however, create consequences if they are violated.

The Government mandates that you inform your employees of many of the major labor laws that have been adopted. You have to put up various posters in your workplace. These posters tell your employees how to sue you if you make a mistake. You should know what your employees know! Take a few minutes and read those posters before you put them up.

#### MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE RECORDS YOU NEED.

The Government can show up at your workplace and demand that you show them the records you keep on your employees. There are at least 14 basic records you MUST maintain:

- 1. Employee's full name and social security number.
- 2. Address, including zip code.
- 3. Birth date, if younger than 19.
- 4. Sex and occupation.
- 5. Time and day of week when employee's workweek begins.
- 6. Hours worked each day.
- 7. Total hours worked each workweek.
- 8. Basis on which employee's wages are paid (e.g., "\$9 per hour", "\$440 a week", "piecework")
- 9. Regular hourly pay rate.
- 10. Total daily or weekly straight-time earnings.
- 11. Total overtime earnings for the workweek.
- 12. All additions to or deductions from the employee's wages.
- 13. Total wages paid each pay period.
- 14. Date of payment and the pay period covered by the payment.

You must save all employment records for at least three years. I recommend keeping them for seven years. That includes payroll records and other documents. Records on which wage computations are based should be retained for four years, i.e., time cards and piecework tickets, wage rate tables, work and time schedules, and records of additions to or deductions from wages. These records must be inspected by the government's representatives, who may ask the employer to make extensions, computations, or transcriptions. The records may be kept at the place of employment or in a central records office.

You are allowed to maintain these records electronically using payroll programs or services. Just be sure you can always access the information when you need it.

#### **USE PAYROLL SERVICES – BUT KNOW THEIR LIMITS**

There are many services out there that use online programs to track payroll information and employee data. These services are essential. Payroll taxes and accounting today are so complex that even lawyers cannot keep up.

Some of the payroll services also offer "human resource" services. Be warned: these services provide advice, but they almost always have disclaimers in the service agreements that tell you that if they are wrong, they are not responsible for the errors. These companies have given incorrect advice on overtime, salaried status, or other issues. When the government targets the employer, they do not stand behind their advice. They won't defend you, and they won't pay the cost of their mistake. If you try to challenge them, you'll probably discover your only remedy is to take them to arbitration, usually in some place that's far away and inconvenient.

For most small employers, payroll services are the only real alternative. But understand the limits of what they can do for you.

### IF YOU DO NOT DEFINE WHAT YOUR JOBS ARE, SOMEONE ELSE WILL

You probably know I regularly urge campgrounds to have at least basic and straightforward job descriptions.

I urge that because if you get into any dispute, the requirements you impose for each job are critical.

An employee might, for example, say they should be allowed to keep working but get an accommodation relieving them of some of their duties. They may insist they can work as a maintenance worker but can't lift more than 10 pounds. Suppose you don't have a job description establishing that the employee needs to lift 50 pounds. In that case, it will be much harder to prove the lifting requirement is a "bona fide occupational qualification."

Yes, developing job descriptions can be a pain. WACO has recommended descriptions you can use as starting points, and we can help review your descriptions.

It is also essential to inform your employees of your expectations of them. Employers who do not have a policy on sexual harassment, for example, are more vulnerable to damages than those who have adopted a policy and communicated it to their employees. State your requirements of employees in advance to protect yourself from claims for discrimination and violation of employment laws. Again, WACO has a model document you can use to move forward.

If you don't have job descriptions or policies and you are targeted with a complaint, you will have to prove your policies by explaining them through testimony. That's much harder and much more uncomfortable.

#### HIRE CAREFULLY.

It is hard to find good employees. Don't let that force you to make a mistake and hire someone who isn't qualified, which might cause enormous problems. One of the main reasons for having some job descriptions is to communicate to potential employees what you expect. If you have a list of qualifications and duties, you can show it to potential employees and ask them if they meet those criteria. If they say they do and they lie, you will win any case they bring against you later. If you don't screen employees carefully, the agencies investigating a complaint will not have your version of the job requirements. They will have to listen to the employee's version of the job.

Use care. Check references. Explain what the work is about. Most firings are the result of mistakes in hiring.

#### HIRING WORKAMPERS MAKES SENSE - IF THEY ARE GOOD EMPLOYEES.

Many campgrounds hire workampers because it reduces the amount of cash you have to expend. There is something to be gained from having an employee living at the campground during the season and being available. But – it isn't so great an advantage that you should hire someone who is not otherwise qualified.

#### LOOK AT THE WACO WEBSITE.

We have prepared many forms for you to review. For example, there is a form for the agreement you should have with Workampers. Forms are a starting point, not the final document you should use. You need to read them and think about them before you start using them. Every campground is just a bit different.

And don't hesitate to contact the WACO Hotline. We're here to help.

Mark Hazelbaker





ALL LEGAL HOTLINE QUESTIONS SHOULD COME TO: 608-525-2327 or

tina@seversonandassociates.com

email the office and we will route all requists! The waco office also set up a hours for easier information gathering - check it out:

https://form.jotform.com/240223765436051

## **MUSIC LICENSE**



The discounted music licensing program offers WACO members music licensing. The open enrollment period for Hospitality Connection's 2025 discounted music licensing program will begin on October 1, 2024 and end on January 24, 2025. **No license can be secured outside of the license period.** Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to secure your music licenses – at our exclusive discounted rates – and help protect your park from liability and costly fines.



CLICK HERE FOR BMI FREQUENTLY
ASKED QUESTIONS

Why license BMI through WACO/Hospitality Connections? The roster of enrollees we build now strengthens our leveraging position to obtain even deeper discounts in 2026 and beyond. So, it is a win for us all now...and later.

There are two categories for BMI licensing. First category: Recorded music.

Second category: Live music. Select one or both categories when enrolling. Consider when licensing what needs you have and what makes the most sense for your park for your operating season.

If you have been licensed with BMI before, check your enrollment options against what your current number of campsites are and if applicable, your current entertainment expenditures to ensure you are licensed properly.

Schedule A – Recorded Music Fee					
			Hospitality		
Numbe	er of Campsites	Standard Fee	Connections		
			Discounted Fee		
1	50	\$325.00	\$276.00		
51	100	\$384.00	\$326.00		
01	200	\$544.00	\$462.00		
201	350 \$758.0		\$644.00		
351	1 500 \$1,083.00		\$921.00		
	Over 500	\$1,408.00	\$1,197.00		

Schedule B – Live Music and Entertainment Fee						
Annual Entertainment Costs		Standard Fee	Hospitality Connections Discounted Fee			
\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$330.00	\$281.00			
\$5,001.00	\$7,999.00	\$425.00	\$361.00			
\$8,000.00	\$9,999.00	\$500.00	\$425.00			
\$10,000.00	\$14,999.00	\$645.00	\$548.00			
\$15,000.00	\$24,999.00	\$866.00	\$736.00			
\$25,000.00	\$34,999.00	\$1,033.00	\$878.00			
\$35,000.00	\$49,000.00	\$1,184.00	\$1,006.00			
\$50,00	0.00 or more	You will be contacted				



# MUSIC LICENSE



The discounted music licensing program offers WACO members music licensing. The open enrollment period for Hospitality Connection's 2025 discounted music licensing program will begin on October 1, 2024 and end on January 15, 2025. No license can be secured outside of the license period. Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to secure your music licenses – at our exclusive discounted rates – and help protect your park from liability and costly fines.



# UP TO 50% DISCOUNT

Annual Spend on Live and Mechanical Entertainment Costs	Annual Cost of License:			
\$0-\$4,999.99	\$325.00			
\$5,000.00-\$12,499.99	\$650.00			
\$12,500.00-\$24,299.00	\$1,075.00			
\$25,000.00+	\$1,575.00			

ASCAP Music License Discounts up to 50%. 975,000 songwriters, composers & music publishers.

View their catalog here.

BMI IS ALSO AVAILABLE! CALL OR EMAIL OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION!



# UP TO 20% DISCOUNT

SESCAC Music License Discounts up to 20% and access to over 1,000,000 songwriters, composers, and music publishers!

Repertory available here.

# UP TO 20% DISCOUNT



Global Music Rights Discounts up to 20%.

Represents today's greatest and most popular music creators. 115,000 works. 100 + Billboard Top 100 #1s

Catalog of songs available here.

### **ANNUALLY - \$1.50 PER SITE**



Worry-free ability to play all of our music on an unlimited basis with one convenient annual blanket license.

Catalog of songs available here.

Annual Spend on Live and Mechanical Entertainment Costs	Annual Cost of License:			
\$O-\$4,999.99	\$150.00			
\$5,000.00-\$12,499.99	\$275.00			
\$12,500.00-\$24,299.00	\$475.00			

SITES	MONTHLY	ANNUAL
Less than 100	\$69	\$207
100-200	\$99	\$297
200+	\$139	\$417



### **Music License Facts At a Glance**



#### We don't have live music in our park, so we don't need a license.

If you play recorded music for your guests, you need a music license. But there are many ways to obtain a license that fits the needs of your park.





#### We have to be licensed through all music agencies if we provide live music.

You can control the music your musicians play by letting them know the companies you are licensed with so they can design their set lists accordingly.

### The only way I can be licensed to play music is

urrough an association.

If you are only playing music in your camp store, club room, or office you can utilize a music subscription service. The business version of these contributions. license and is typically less costly than a standard license.





Your membership with Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners offers a discounted license for live music and recorded music, i.e. karaoke, 80's nights, luaus, special events, but you can also go direct to the music organization for a license.

### There are many misconceptions surrounding the licensing requirements for music.

Hospitality Connections and Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners are here to help you make the proper licensing decisions to meet your needs. Email or give us a call to-day to renew your license or discover the right one for your park!

Check out the amazing options WACO is able to offer our members in terms of music licensing! RENEW BY JAN 24th to get 2025 coverage!

#### **Hospitality Connections**

care@hospitalityconnections.net | 610-767-5026

#### **Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners**

tina@seversonandassociates.com | danielle@seversonandassociates.com lori@seversonandassociates.com

608-525-2327









# OCT FALL WORKSHOP THANK YOU TO OUR HOSTS! Grand Valley Campground











### FOR BEING SUCH AMAZING HOSTS!

Thank you for providing space for our lunch and speakers and for your assistance on the Membership Committee this year! We are fortunate to have Ben step in with Mark leaving the board - thank you so much for your continued support. Your 20-year-old park and three families' cooperation is a testament to multi-generational business operations. Also insightful to learn you don't allow golf carts other than staff - it might save some of us headaches if it makes sense in our parks!







THANK YOU TO OUR ADDITIONAL HOST & TOUR HOSTS!

Glacier Valley Campground



### FOR BEING SUCH AMAZING HOSTS!



breakfast treats, and a space for our Tuesday morning speakers! Your long-time ownership while one of you continues to work a full-time job shows real dedication. It sounds like your music festival is truly legendary, and we'll have to get tips on how you negotiate rates for the multistage event!

Thank you for providing coffee,



THANK YOU TO MARY-ELLEN BRUESCH, JIM KAPLANEK, AND TED TUCHALSKI FROM DATCP FOR BRINGING US **INFORMATION ON THE CAMPGROUND CODE!** 

#### **ESSENTIAL NOTES FOR 2025 AND BEYOND:**

- As a reminder, the pool code did change! Most significant adjustment: How will you manage combined chlorine? Available on the DATCP website and linked in the DATCP update in this newsletter! Mary-Ellen also provided stickers with contact information at the workshop. If you're concerned about the interlock checklist, seek further quidance!
- Ted has been touring the state and seeing more campgrounds spraying backflow preventers with fluorescent paint for easier identification. The lodging code rewrite has been fairly straightforward, but as the last code rewrite was in 1985, a lot has changed as vacation rentals are booming. The draft has gone through the committee, which WACO was part of, and is now in internal legal reviews. DATCP is hoping to have public comment by January. The current draft rule is available online. Specialty lodging is something to watch as a new subcategory of tourist rooming houses. If you have a 500 sq ft cabin with no water, you can't license it currently. The latest revision of the code would let you license that!
- Jim let everyone know that Reed is retiring, and we will all definitely miss him! Lori previously asked about a checklist for all programs, and Jim is working on that for the pool, kitchen, retail store, lodging, etc. He's asked all the heads of programs to develop a checklist specific to their area and hopes to have it available at the Convention in March. These checklists will guide you on where to put your focus and what's most important to focus on to avoid them returning for inspections.

The DATCP is looking for ideas for the convention - if anyone has ideas, send them to the Waco office so they have time to put together ideas/presentations for the convention.



### **OCT:TUES**

**Fun at Breezy Hollow Farms** 







Our group visited Breezy
Hollow Farms on Tuesday
afternoon - a local agribusiness
with a pumpkin patch,
haywagon rides, and a corn
maze. Visiting community
spots like these can give you
great ideas for your upcoming
season and opportunities to
partner with local businesses,
such as cross-promotional
events, coupons, and
advertising. Don't forget to
connect with the folks in your
backyard!





Lake Arrowhead & Lakeside Campground





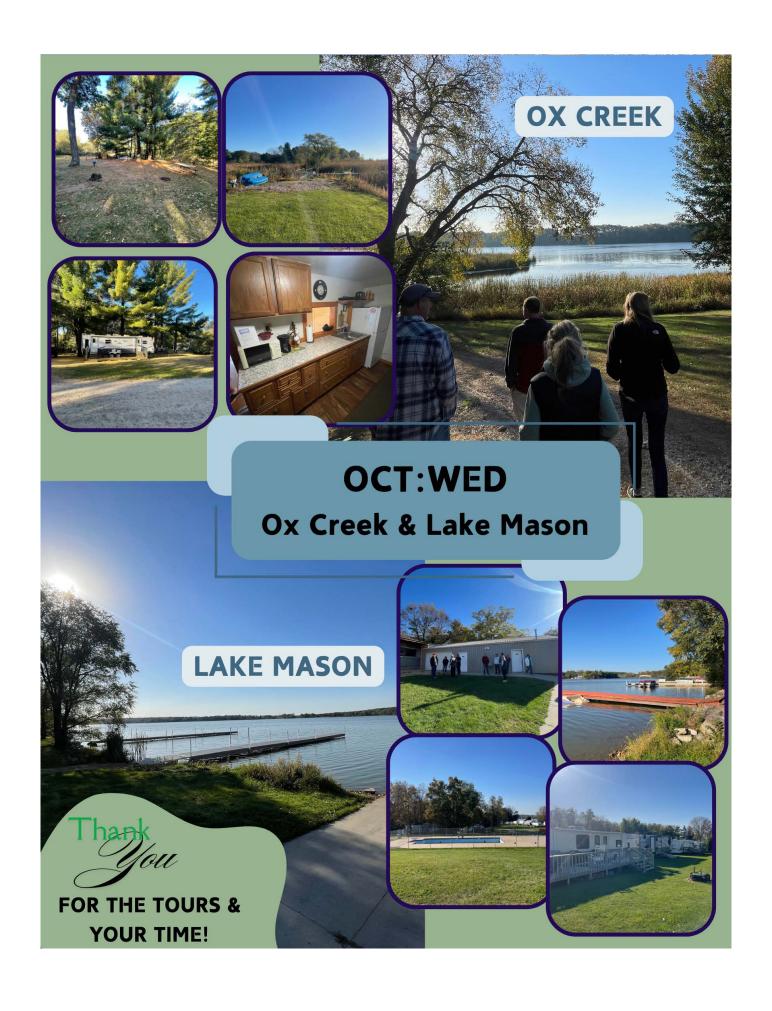
















#### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATES FROM OCT FALL WORKSHOP**

#### & LOOKING AHEAD



JASON CULOTTA,
MWFA PRESIDENT



JASON CULOTTA, A LOBBYIST AND PRESIDENT OF THE MIDWEST FOOD PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION, ATTENDED THE OCTOBER FALL WORKSHOP AND PROVIDED AN UPDATE ON WHAT HE AND THE WACO OFFICE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON LEGISLATIVELY FOR THE PAST MONTHS. IN 2025, YOU'LL SEE SEVERAL MORE UPDATES ON LEGISLATION PRESENTED BASED ON THREE MAJOR TOPICS:

- 1. Property tax shifts from personal to real property: What we could present legislatively to assist more of our members seeing this shift If your township did not opt to submit documents to determine the backfill for state aid that was due over the summer (see §79.0965), this will be of particular interest to your campground!
- 2. Abandoned RVs: proposing language similar to adopted language from MI state laws.
- 3. Amusement Rides: As personnel shortages continue to plague DSPS, and knowing several of our members already insure their amusements and conduct maintenance checks, WACO will propose these licenses and inspections cease.

#### **OCT FALL WORKSHOP**

THANK YOU TO JASON CULOTTA FOR THE LEGISLATIVE UPDATES!

#### **ELIMINATION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX**





- Impact on Campground Assessments Range of impacts to WACO members from Little to dramatic
- Challenge filed at local Board of Review be prepared for your open book and review any assessment documentation carefullY!
- · Potential litigation being considered
  - Likely take time to work through changes at the legislative level
  - continue to send your assessment concerns to: tina@seversonandassociates.com





#### **ABANDONED RVS**

- Key is Discarding of Titles
  - Met with WisDOT in May 2023
  - Recommended course of action using landlord law
- Approach does not work for most WACO situations
  - Follow up discussion with DOT planned
  - Need better process than that for landlords
- Depending on DOT discussion, potential for:
  - DOT administrative action; or
  - Legislative solution

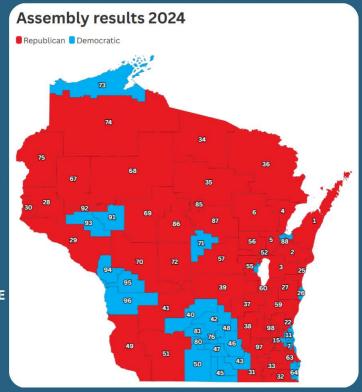


#### **AMUSEMENT RIDES**

- DSPS Registration & Fees on Jumping Pillows, etc.
  - o Imposed Fall 2023
  - Prior Legislative Fix 2023 SB 1001/AB 1070
- 2025 Course of Action
  - Proceed with legislation to repeal the registration & fee
  - Regulators have adjusted internal standards
  - Anticipate less agency objections than last spring

# STATE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

- GOVERNOR EVERS-DRAWN LEGISLATIVE MAPS
  - WILL INCREASE NUMBER OF DEMOCRATS IN THE LEGISLATURE
    - OASSEMBLY GOP MAY REDUCE TO AROUND 55 (OF 99)
    - SENATE GOP SHOULD RETAIN MAJORITY AT 18 (OF 33)
- GOP MAJORITIES SINCE 2010 ELECTION CYCLE
  - ANTICIPATE CHALLENGES FOR SMALLER GOP MARGINS
  - LIKELY CONTINUED STANDOFFS WITH THE GOVERNOR





### **OHI Update-December 2024**

#### OHI's Jeff Sims Announces Retirement Leaving Enduring Legacy on Industry

Jeff Sims, a household name in the industry, having dedicated his life to advancing and advocating for outdoor hospitality, has officially announced his retirement effective in mid-January 2025. Sims has left an indelible mark on the Outdoor Hospitality Industry, tirelessly advocating for policies that support RV parks and campgrounds nationwide.

In recognition of his legacy, OHI is proud to announce the creation of the Jeff Sims Advocacy in Action Award, which will be awarded annually at OHI's annual Outdoor Hospitality Conference and Expo® (OHCE®) starting next year. The award will honor an industry member who demonstrates the same dedication and commitment to advocacy that Jeff has exemplified throughout his career. "Jeff's impact on the Outdoor Hospitality Industry is beyond measure. He's not only been a pillar of knowledge and integrity but also a friend and mentor to so many of us." says Paul Bambei, President and CEO of OHI. "Jeff's dedication runs deep. His work, his wisdom, and his passion have left an indelible mark on our industry and on all who've had the privilege to know him. We're grateful for every moment he's given, and while we'll miss him greatly, we celebrate the legacy he leaves behind." To ensure a smooth transition, Sims has handpicked his successor, Julia Canady King, who joined OHI as Government Affairs Manager in October. Based in DC, King brings with her extensive knowledge of federal and state relations. With a passion for camping and commitment to advocacy, King will continue Sims' legacy of advancing OHI's legislative agenda. For more on this story, read here.

#### OHI Government Affairs Team and Campground Members in DC in December

The OHI Government Affairs Team will be participating in a DC "Fly-In" on December 16-17, 2024, to specifically meet with US Senators about how credit card fees are negatively impacting the Outdoor Hospitality Industry.

Members from 12 different campgrounds will be traveling with OHI to tell their stories. Expect updates on social and via email during this OHI member Hill Day as well as more results on OHI's efforts to support your small business.

For more information on the Credit Card Competition Act and OHI's other advocacy focuses benefiting RV parks and campgrounds, visit OHI.org/advocacy or OHI's Advocacy Action Center.

#### Be Sure to Pay Your OHI® Dues by December 31 so You Don't Lose Benefits!

For Wisconsin members interested in retaining their OHI® national membership benefits, your dues are due no later than December 31 and are payable directly to OHI.

Benefits that come with OHI membership include best-in-industry pricing on products and services such as music licensing, propane and more, along with numerous professional development

and networking opportunities. OHI also leads advocacy efforts in Washington DC for RV parks and campgrounds.

Invoices have been sent electronically (via email) and via USPS and can be paid electronically via your member portal on OHLorg or by sending a check or ACH to OHI directly. For questions about your membership and the benefits you receive, contact the OHI membership team at ohi-membership@ohi.org.

Wisconsin RV parks and campgrounds have a choice this year to join the state association (WACO), the national association (OHI) or both. Your business and the industry are stronger when you choose both.

#### Not Even Santa Could Deliver Music Licenses at Discounts This Deep!

There are lots of ways you can purchase music licenses for your campground these days, but if you want the most comprehensive licenses at the deepest discounts, look no further than OHI's music license program.

OHI is the only music license program offering all four major licenses—BMI, ASCAP, SESAC and GMR—and our rates are the lowest in the industry. Do the math or give the reps at the PROs a call and they'll tell you the OHI license is the best.

If you've had a license in the past and you need to renew, your 2025 licenses are available to renew in your OHI member portal and must be paid by January 12, 2025. If you need a new license, let us know, we're happy to help. Contact us at <a href="mailto:ohi-membership@ohi.org">ohi-membership@ohi.org</a> or give us a call at 303-681-0401.

### Economic Impact Report Shows Outdoor Hospitality is Significant Part of the \$1.2 Trillion Outdoor Recreation Economy

In late November, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, released national and state economic data for 2023, revealing that outdoor recreation, including the outdoor hospitality sector, continues to be a major driver of the U.S. economy, jobs, and local communities. This is the seventh consecutive year that the BEA has released government data on this critical industry sector.

OHI's Government Affairs team has been actively meeting with members of Congress in Washington advocating for the value that small businesses in the Outdoor Hospitality Industry, including RV parks, campgrounds, glamping and supplier businesses, provide for our nation's overall outdoor recreation economy, as well as partnering with the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, a coalition of more than 40 outdoor recreation organizations.

"The Outdoor Hospitality Industry, including private RV parks, campgrounds and glamping businesses, undoubtedly plays a vital and growing role in the outdoor recreation economy and this is evident in this latest BEA data," said Paul Bambei, President and CEO of OHI.

"Camping is often the catalyst for other outdoor recreation activities, including fishing, boating, hiking, biking, and many more," Bambei continues. "And a growing number of younger generations, families and diverse campers are creating lasting memories together while on these adventures. These campers are spending an average of \$50 per person, per day in communities where they are camping, which helps fuel economic growth locally and nationwide.".

Specifically, RVing and camping was the second-largest conventional activity for the nation at \$26.3 billion in current-dollar value added and was the largest conventional activity in 11 states. The states with the largest contributions were Indiana (\$4.7 billion), Texas (\$2.5 billion), and California (\$2.0 billion). For more information on this Economic Impact Report, read here.

### **Determining Commercial Liability Insurance Limits**

Commercial Liability insurance is a significant part of managing the risks associated with operating a commercial business. It protects against financial losses resulting from claims of bodily injury, property damage, and other liabilities. However, determining appropriate coverage limits can be complex. Below, we will outline factors to consider when setting commercial liability insurance limits.

#### 1. Understand Your Business Risks

Your business type plays a significant role in determining your liability exposure. For example:

- A construction company faces higher risks of bodily injury and property damage than a consulting firm.
- Campgrounds face various risks, and those with more amenities likely face more potential exposure than those with limited amenities. What conversations are you and your agent having to uncover your unique risks?

#### 2. Consider Contractual Requirements

Many contracts require businesses to carry specific liability insurance limits. These requirements are common in agreements with landlords, clients, or vendors. Reviewing these contracts with your insurance agent will help to ensure your coverage meets or exceeds the minimum insuring requirements.

#### 3. Evaluate Industry Standards

Researching industry norms can provide valuable insights into typical coverage limits for businesses like yours. Trade associations or industry groups may offer benchmarks or guidance. Working with an insurance professional familiar with and focused on your industry will allow you to benchmark against your peers with whom they also work.

#### 4. Assess Potential Claim Costs

Analyze the potential costs of claims your business could face. This includes:

- Medical Expenses: For injuries sustained by third parties on your premises.
- Legal Fees: Defense costs can accumulate quickly, even for groundless claims.
- Settlement Amounts: Some claims may

result in significant settlements or judgments. Higher coverage limits can provide a financial safety net in case of large claims.

#### 5. Factor in Business Assets and Revenue

Your insurance limits should align with your business's financial profile:

- Assets: Higher coverage protects assets from being seized to satisfy judgments.
- Revenue: Larger companies may be more likely to face high-dollar claims due to their perceived ability to pay.

#### 6. Balance Cost and Coverage

While higher coverage limits offer better protection, they come with increased premiums. Work with your insurance agent to balance adequate coverage and affordability.

#### 7. Consider Umbrella or Excess Liability Policies

If your primary liability policy's limits are insufficient, Umbrella or Excess Liability policies can provide additional coverage. These policies are available in \$1,000,000 limit increments. As additional layers of coverage are added, the cost per \$1,000,000 tends to drop, making it more affordable for those who desire higher liability limits.

#### CONCLUSION

Determining the proper commercial liability insurance limits requires careful consideration of your business's unique needs and risks. By evaluating factors such as business risks, contractual obligations, and potential claim costs, you can make informed decisions to safeguard your company's financial health. For the most relevant advisement on competitive prices and comprehensive coverage, consider partnering

with an agency focusing on your industry.



1-800-947-1075

#### **Eric Haun**

VP of Leisure & Hospitality ehaun@coverrainsurance.com

#### **Crystal Erickson**

**Commercial Insurance Agent** 

cerickson@coverrainsurance.com

### **Investment Talk with John**

# IF IT'S TIME TO INVEST AND YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT INTEREST RATES – STOP IT!

Yup – interest rates are up and may never get to the historic lows we saw during COVID. So what? Either it makes sense AND cash flows, or it doesn't. If it does, then do it!

Remember, all debt can be described simply in two ways:

#### **GOOD DEBT - BAD DEBT**

cabin per year.

Most of you have heard me spout this a time or two, but it's worth repeating.

**Good Debt** – Goes UP in value, and someone else is paying for it (your customers).

**Bad Debt** – Goes DOWN in value and YOU are paying for it! Never take on any bad debt unless your good debt can pay for it!

Think of it this way – if you continuously turn away people because your cabins are full every weekend of the season, then two things are likely true: You don't have enough cabins, and Your rates are NOT quite high enough. Look at the income you can make (based on your data from your existing cabin or whatever lodging you're promoting) and the mortgage cost of the

LET'S SAY THE CABIN PERFORMS IN THIS WAY:

\$60,000 – the cost of the cabin initially (talk to your banker – but if you use First Mid – Phil Whitehead will loan you 90-100% of the money if you already have your loan with them!)



\$15,000 – income per year -\$ 2,250 – 15% of income is the industry standard for clean up and prep for the next guest

\$12,750 - NOI in year one! Based on a 10% CAP rate (X 10) = \$127,500 of value added to your park in year 1!!!

-\$ 8,000 - the cost of the mortgage per year

\$ 4,750 – Profit in your pocket after the mortgage is paid.

You must gauge your business, but you know when you're saying NO too often. As soon as you are NOT saying NO, the marketing campaign needs to start again to promote cabins (or whatever you're trying to fill).

Remember, the days of the post-COVID boom are ending, and you will have to start doing some marketing again to fill your parks!

I'm here to help you analyze this or any other improvement you'd like to discuss! And remember, I will help you analyze the value of your park for FREE as a paid WACO member!



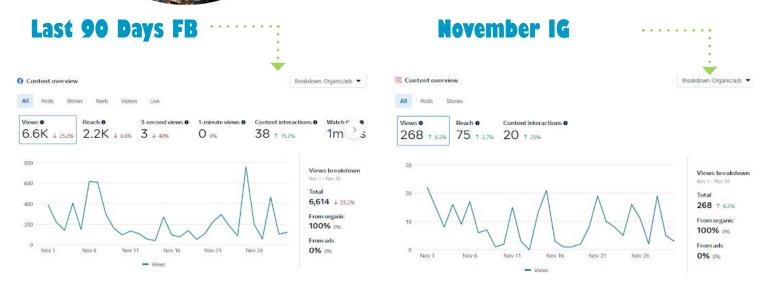


John Jaszewski | Owner/Broker - MN & WI Campgrounds4Sale.com 724 E. Broadway | Winona, MN 55987 507-450-5626

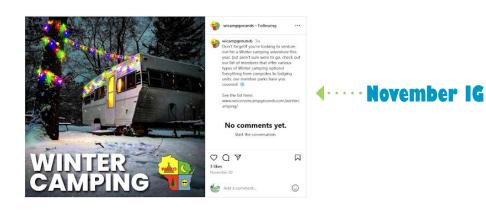
john@campgrounds4sale.com | www.campgrounds4sale.com

WACO Web States & Social Media Trends

Facebook/Instagram Insights - November
FB Lifetime Followers: 10,360 (-28 from October)
IG Lifetime Followers: 604 (-2 from October)



### **Top Posts in November 2024**



Abolity, noon that we're almost a week into Rovember, it's time for one of the great disbases of the foliality secared. 

While there's no true right anower, we're curious, when do you put up your Christmass tree! 

WHEN DOES YOUR TREE GO UP?!

A - November 1st

B - Thanksgiving Weekend

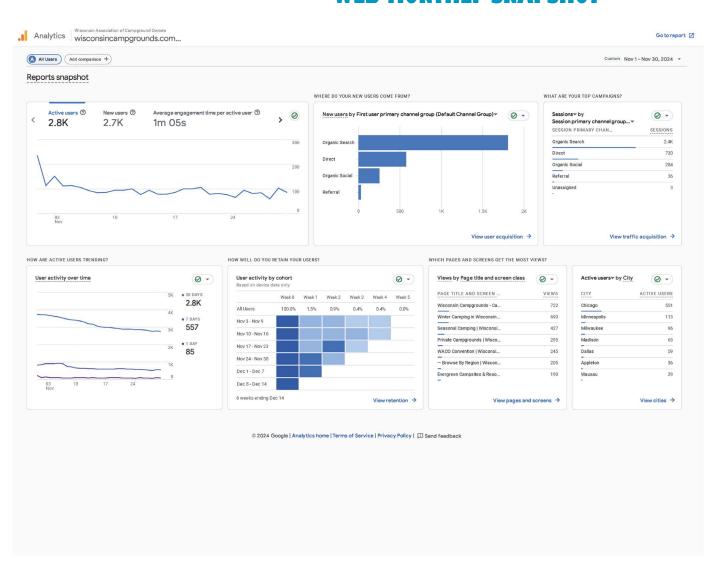
C - Sometime in December!

D - Christmas Eve E - What tree?

November FB.....

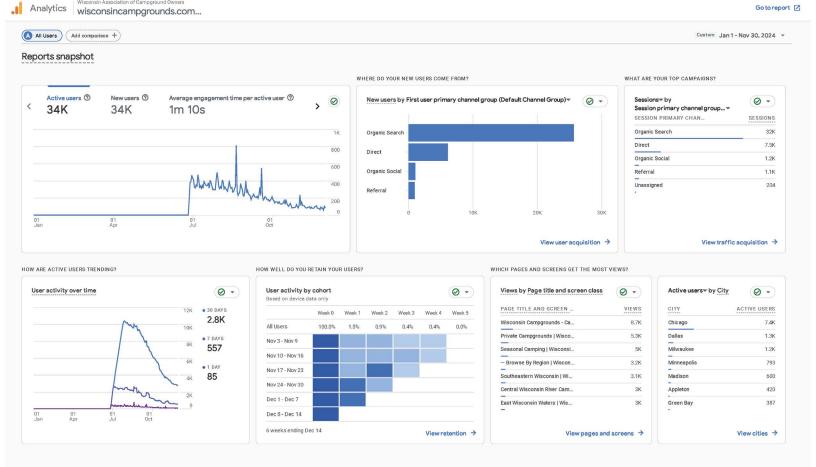
WACO Web States & Social Media Trends

# November 2024 WEB MONTHLY SNAPSHOT

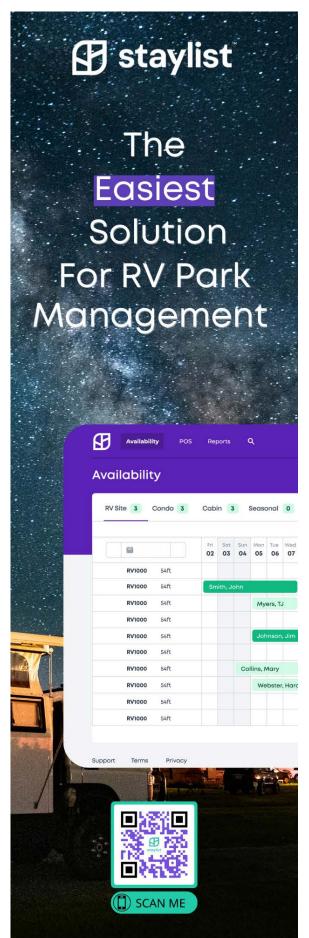


WACO Web Stats & Social Media Trends





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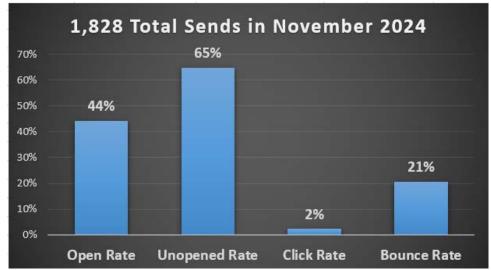


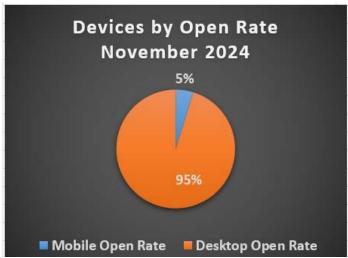


The Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners attends several RV shows in the Midwest every year. Below is a list of known shows we will be attending, or have a presence at, along with attendee information.

- Rockford RV, Camping & Travel Show January 17-19, 2025
- Green Bay RV & Camping Expo January 30 – February 2, 2025
- Madison Camper & RV Show & Sale January 31 – February 2, 2025
- La Crosse Sport Show February 6-9, 2025
- Central Wisconsin RV & Camping Show (Wausau, WI)
   February 7-9, 2025
- The Ultimate RV Show (Minneapolis, MN)
   February 13-16, 2025
- RV & Boat Main Event (Oshkosh, WI)
   February 21-23, 2025
- Milwaukee RV Show
   February 27 March 2, 2025







### Top Emails by Open Rate for November 2024

Campaign Name	Sends	Opens	Open Rate	Mobile Open Rate	Desktop Open Rate	Clicks	Click Rate	Bounces	Bounce Rate
COE Campgrounds - One week to go! '24	151	123	82.00%	24.50%	75.50%	72	48.00%	1	0.70%
November 2024 WACO Newsletter	446	271	66.70%	12.40%	87.60%	86	21.20%	40	9.00%
2024 CRS Eblast 1 of 3	1828	641	44.20%	4.80%	95.20%	34	2.30%	378	20.70%



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#### **GBF Member Donations 2024**



# TOTALS FOR YEAR



(As of 12/31/24)

,	וופוונציבווופפיו
Campground	Total Funds Raised
Great River Harbor	\$43,587
Champions Riverside Resort	\$42,968
Duck Creek	\$24,255
Backyard Campground	\$14,505
Kinney Lake Campground	\$12,272
Rustic Ridge Resort	\$11,665
Wilderness Campground	\$11,425
Hucklberry Acres	\$10,429
Stoney Creek	\$8,435
Grand Valley Campground	\$8,198
Snug Harbor	\$5,685
Buckhorn Campground & Resort	\$5,005
Vista Royalle Campground	\$5,000
Pride of America	\$4,679
Rivers Edge	\$4,185
Emrick Lake Campground	\$3,680
Maple View Campsites	\$3 <i>,</i> 547
Wishing Well Campground	\$3,024
Glacier Valley Campground	\$3,000
Chapparal Campground	\$2,505
Hitts Wildwood Resort	\$2,270
O'Neil Creek Campground	\$2,245
Jellystone Fort Atkinson	\$2,164
Buffalo Lake	\$1,851
Lake Arrowhead	\$1,519
Badgerland Campground	\$1,421
Timber Trail	\$1,400
Green Lake Campground	\$1,385
Rock Lake Lodge & Campground	\$1,357
Evergreen Campsites	\$1,125
Yukon Trails / ELS	\$795
Lake Lenwood Beach and	\$500
Campground	\$500
Arrowhead Campground	\$460
Indian Trails	\$408
Sky High Campground	\$395
Dells Camping Resort	\$355
TOTAL FUND\$ RAI\$ED	\$247,699

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE GILBERT BROWN FOUNDATION!** 

If you still have funds to turn in, please do so ASAP so we can plan accordingly for "Thank you's" at our upcoming **Convention in** March!

**REVIEW THIS LIST AND MAKE SURE WE'VE GOT YOUR TOTAL LISTED CORRECTLY TOO PLEASE!** 



### **Board of Directors**

CONGRATULATIONS to your 2024-2025 Board of Directors! This dedicated group of members spend time and energy making decisions for your Association. If you have ideas, questions, or want to get more involved, reach out to one of them or the WACO office.



Scott Kollock, President Vista Royalle Campground skollock@uniontel.net 715-335-6860 2024-2027 Ist Term



Bud Styer, Past President Red Barn Campground <u>mrbud@budstyerassociates.com</u> 608-592-2128 2024-2025



Rob Brinkmeier, Ist Vice President
Merry Macs Campground

<a href="mailto:camp@merrymacscampground.com">camp@merrymacscampground.com</a>

815-541-4934

2020-2025 2nd Term



Sarah Krause, 2nd Vice President River's Edge Campground <u>camp@riversedgewisconsin.com</u> 715-344-8058 2021-2024 Ist Term



Kristi Mlodzik, 3rd Vice President Duck Creek Campground camp@duckcreekcampground.com 608-429-2425 2021-2024 Ist Term



Julie Michaels, Treasurer Scenic Ridge Campground jmmsrc@gmail.com 608-883-2920 2022-2025 Ist Term



Deneen Pedersen, Secretary
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2021-2024 Ist Term



Patricia Lombardo, Director Jenkins Org/Jellystone Park Warrens <u>Tricia@Jenkinsorg.com</u> 773-294-3364 2022-2025 2<sup>nd</sup> Term



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2023-2025 Ist Term



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2022-2025 Ist Term



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2024-2027 Ist Term



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Adam Malsack, Chair Elect
Legislative
Lake Arrowhead Campground

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Appointed Term 2016-2023



Lori Severson, Executive Director Severson & Associates lori@seversonandassociates.com 608-792-5915

