

# WACO NEWS



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## FEBRUARY 2025

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INSIGHTS



Lori Severson, WACO Executive Director

Dear Members,

I am writing today as your Executive Director to reaffirm our commitment to unity, effective communication, and shared leadership within our association. As we navigate the evolving landscape of the campground industry, every member must understand the importance of leadership, consistency, and the invaluable role that each of us plays in upholding our shared values. It kills me to watch the States that are suffering from huge divisions because of a difference in opinions. It's popular these days to allow your opinion to create a wall and divide friends and families. WACO has a strong membership with people with diverse personalities and skills. Please look and see what's good in people and their opinions. Do not allow others' opinions to shape yours.

**P. 2** READ MORE

*Are you Ready?*

**ADVENTURE AWAITS FOR YOU  
AT THE 2025 WACO CONVENTION**



We're less than a month away from the 2025 WACO Convention - an exciting gathering of campground owners, industry experts, and outdoor hospitality professionals. This event is all about sharing insights, discovering new trends, and connecting with like-minded individuals who are passionate about creating unforgettable experiences!

**DON'T MISS OUT and be sure to REGISTER TODAY!**

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INSIGHTS, CONT'D

Look at numbers, facts, and where we have come from! I am so proud to see all the new things happening because of our fresh leadership. Tina, Danielle & Carla have a great hold on gathering new benefits, increasing our legislative connections and knowledge, social media, creating excellent educational opportunities, and getting directories in campers' hands! New ideas and ways of thinking keep us on the cutting edge. Mike Dricken and I have this conversation every time he tells me he might be too old to be on the board – HISTORY and cutting edge = huge successes!

**CAN YOU AFFORD NOT TO ATTEND THE CONVENTION? DO YOU WANT TO MAKE THE MOST MONEY AND HAVE THE BEST BUSINESS YOU CAN? YOU CAN NOT DO THIS WITHOUT INVESTING IN YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE.**

## **Valuable Networking Opportunities:**

- Build relationships with fellow campground owners, industry experts, and suppliers.
- Networking can lead to partnerships and collaborations that drive new business opportunities.
- Countless surveys have told us that networking saved them huge dollars or increased their business!



## **Enhanced Learning and Skill Development:**

- Attend educational seminars and workshops to gain insights into industry trends, regulatory updates, and best practices.
- Improve operational strategies through hands-on sessions and case studies.

## **Access to Cutting-Edge Market Trends:**

- Stay abreast of innovations and technological advancements that can transform your business operations.
- Learn how to adapt to shifting market

conditions to maintain a competitive edge.

- Gather the data you need to make stellar decisions.

## **Strengthened Supplier Relationships:**

- Engage directly with key suppliers and vendors to secure exclusive deals and discounts.
- Gain first-hand knowledge of new products and services that can boost efficiency and profitability.
- Talking to suppliers gives you IDEAS – keeping your campground fresh and new is essential!
- Buy at this show! It's so important to use WACO suppliers – these people make sure you can attend the conference at a reasonable rate.

## **Direct Impact on ROI:**

- Studies in related industries have shown that active conference participation can yield an estimated 15–30% increase in revenue by unlocking cost-saving strategies and new business channels.
- Campground owners who attend often report tangible improvements in occupancy rates and operational efficiencies compared to those who don't.
- LORI challenge- I want you to track money saved or additional revenue you can make from things you learned at the convention! Create a list. I challenge you to find at least \$5000 in savings or additional revenue!



## **Leadership and Strategic Vision:**

- Learn from seasoned industry leaders who share success stories and strategic insights. Look at the folks in business 10, 20, 50, and even 60 years - they didn't get there by accident, and they SHARE information!
- Empower your leadership skills by understanding innovative management techniques and decision-making processes.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INSIGHTS, CONT'D

## Benchmarking and Best Practices:

- Compare your current practices against industry standards and identify areas for improvement.
- Use real-life examples and peer success stories to refine your business model.



## Community Building and Emotional Support:

- Foster a sense of belonging by engaging with a community that understands your challenges and celebrates your successes.
- Benefit from the shared experiences and mutual support of like-minded professionals.

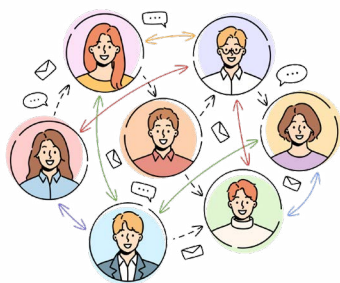
## Problem-Solving and Innovation:

- Participate in interactive discussions and roundtables to tackle common industry challenges.
- Discover new approaches and creative solutions to reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction significantly.

## Long-Term Competitive Advantage:

- Stay ahead of competitors by continuously updating your knowledge and adapting new techniques.
- Leverage the information and connections gained at the convention to drive sustainable growth and profitability.

Overall, campground owners who attend the convention invest in their personal and professional growth and secure a measurable return on investment through improved operations, enhanced supplier deals, and valuable industry connections. Those who forgo these opportunities may miss out on critical insights and networking that can make a significant difference in their bottom line. Come to the convention! I promise you can't afford not to!



## Unity and Communication

The belief that a unified community is our greatest asset is at the heart of our association. Our success depends on transparent and effective communication at every level. Whether through formal meetings, informal discussions, or digital correspondence, every member must stay informed and engaged with our collective vision. This commitment fosters a sense of belonging and ensures that our goals and strategies are clearly understood and executed across the entire organization. WACO staff is committed to communicating in several different ways. Please be sure to ask a staff member or board member if you

have a question before you repeat something you aren't sure of. These are the things I have seen split Strong organizations!

## The Impact of Division

The entire organization suffers when conflicting opinions and unaddressed issues begin to erode our foundation. Divisions can lead to a fragmentation of efforts, diluted innovation, and ultimately a weakened competitive position. History has shown us that organizations that splinter due to internal conflict often struggle to regain momentum, risking not only their market position but also the trust of their members. We safeguard the integrity and vitality of our association through respectful dialogue and a commitment

to shared objectives. We have a board that is COMMITTED to ensure this doesn't happen. I can't express enough how important this is, and it's a thankless job! Please ask your board members if you have any questions or issues!

### **Embracing Diverse Perspectives**

One of our strengths lies in the rich tapestry of perspectives that our members bring to the table. We benefit from our Thinkers' analytical insights and our Feelers' empathetic approaches. Each personality style contributes uniquely to problem-solving and decision-making processes. By recognizing and integrating these diverse viewpoints, we create a balanced approach that allows us to address challenges comprehensively and develop innovative solutions that reflect our association's needs.



### **Conferences, Networking, and Supplier Support**

Investing time in professional development is a critical component of our ongoing success. Attending conferences keeps us informed about the latest industry trends and benefits and provides invaluable networking opportunities. These gatherings are a platform for learning, sharing best practices, and building relationships with peers and industry experts. Equally important is the support of our suppliers at these events. By engaging with the suppliers who play a pivotal role in our ecosystem, we fortify our supply chain and gain insights into emerging technologies and innovations that can enhance our operational efficiency and bottom line.

### **The Vital Role of Dedicated Board Members**

Our Board of Directors is integral to steering our association toward continued success. Board members who care deeply about our mission and actively share their knowledge and experiences play a crucial role in shaping strategic decisions. Their commitment to transparency and open communication sets the tone for the entire organization. When board members are engaged and willing to share information, it builds trust, empowers staff, and encourages active participation from all members. Their leadership and willingness to listen to diverse viewpoints ensure that our association remains adaptive and resilient in the face of industry challenges. We have these people on our board, and we are so fortunate to have people who invest hours and hours to make us a better organization.

### **A Call to Action**

Please embrace the spirit of unity and take every opportunity to further our collective mission. Commit to open dialogue, support one another, and invest in professional development by attending conferences and engaging with our valued suppliers. Let us also acknowledge and support the efforts of our dedicated board members, whose insights and leadership are fundamental to our continued success. Together, we can overcome any challenge, capitalize on emerging opportunities, and ensure that the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners remains a beacon of excellence in our industry.



Thank you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to our shared future. YOU make a difference. We can't do the things we do without your commitment!

*Lori*

Lori Severson

Executive Director of WACO, Severson & Associates | Champions Riverside Resort

## A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Scott Kollock, WACO Board President



Dear Members:

As President of WACO, I am proud to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to excellence and the power of collaboration that sets our association apart. At WACO, sharing information openly and learning from our collective experiences prevents us from repeating past mistakes and drives innovation and growth within our industry. We

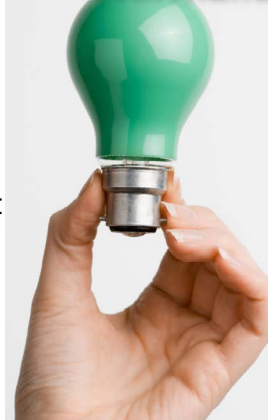
need all of you to help us continue to be one of the best organizations in the nation! I can't tell you how many tragic stories Lori tells about great organizations that falter because of opinions. We cannot afford to do that. We need this organization for many reasons—legislative, regulatory, industry data, banking relationships, knowledge, and just plain networking. When you repeat something you hear, be sure it's verified information. I think just making sure each of you truly knows the background and information is essential. My motto is if you don't know, ask! I will always give you the answer – it might not be the answer you want, but it will be the information you need to understand it! I have attended CAMP many times (Campground Association Management Professionals), and Wisconsin has it going on! We are working hard to create a legislative team that will help us watch and be aware of everything happening in our government that matters in our business. Tina utilizes various programs and sources that alert her of any legislative issue that could impact our industry. She uses keywords that alert her to conversations that could be an issue for us. She is constantly talking to Jason Culotta who has been very involved with legislators, developed a relationship with Bill from Andre Jaques' office to gain assistance with writing legislation, works with WMC, has solicited information from the Tavern League of Wisconsin, is attending a national lobbying event with RVIA and is planning a trip to the capital with Mr. Bud. WACO is currently working to contract with a lobbyist.

We were the first state to set up a legal hotline, that is now used regularly and copied by many other states. We have a solid showing of suppliers coming to the convention and can boast of being sold out every year, while other conventions struggle to get enough suppliers. Our campground owner's attendance is 27% higher than other state associations. We have kept our costs down for attendees through sponsorships and the auctions. We appreciate all your contributions.



We have created a balanced budget while introducing additional marketing initiatives and creating partnerships that make sense, such as working with Scheels and RV dealers. Each year, we have worked hard to create extra money to keep in CDs and keep us solvent for future years should a disaster occur. We are working towards having a one-year expense savings and then will be able to do even more marketing for our owners. Last year, due to a special promotion from a member bank, we were able to generate 9k in additional revenue.

### PARTNERS & RESOURCES FOR WACO



**Wheeler Reports, Inc.**

**STATE AFFAIRS**



**WMC**  
WISCONSIN MANUFACTURERS  
& COMMERCE

**RV INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**



# A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT, CONT'D

I am very proud of WACO's work and believe in this organization. It has built strong owners and a strong industry.

Our association thrives on the dedication and positive contributions of every member. Your active participation, whether attending conferences, engaging in workshops, or sharing your insights during meetings, enhances our collective knowledge and strengthens our community. Unlike other associations, WACO is built on transparency and open communication. We freely share best practices, challenges, and successes so that each of us can benefit from the wisdom and experience of our peers.

I encourage you to connect with our board members—they are here to lead and listen. Whether you have questions, innovative ideas, or need advice on addressing negative feedback from within the organization, our board is eager to engage in open dialogue. Constructive communication is essential in transforming challenges into opportunities, and your input is crucial in shaping the future of WACO.

Your dedication and positive contributions are the heartbeat of our association. Let us continue to work together, support one another, and uphold the high standards that distinguish WACO. By actively engaging in our community, you are investing in your own success and ensuring that our association remains a beacon of excellence and innovation in the campground industry.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and for being a vital part of our shared journey toward continued success.

*Scott*

Scott Kollock,  
Board President of WACO,  
Vista Royale Campground

## **DNR IS AGAIN ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR ARPA WELL COMPENSATION AND WELL ABANDONMENT GRANT PROGRAMS**

Governor Evers recently announced an additional round of federal grant funding of up to \$5 million to support the replacement, reconstruction, treatment or abandonment of contaminated private wells.

The expanded grant programs provide more support to private well owners and increase access to clean drinking water, including expanding eligibility to those facing PFAS contamination in their wells.

Many previously ineligible individuals will now be eligible to apply, including some small Wisconsin businesses with a non-community well, such as daycare centers, rural restaurants and churches, among others.

The DNR began accepting applications for grants under the reinstated program on Feb. 3, 2025. The eligibility criteria was expanded from last year. [Read the full article to see dates and more information!](#)





# BOARD NOMINATIONS

If you (or someone you know) are passionate about the industry and want to make a difference in our Association, submit reasons why you feel you'd be a great director, along with a brief bio & your picture, to [office@wisconsincampgrounds.com](mailto:office@wisconsincampgrounds.com)! We have an open board position that will be voted on at our Annual Meeting, Sat., March 14th, along with the 2nd terms for the directors listed below!



*Scenic Ridge*  
campground

## **JULIE MICHAELS - SCENIC RIDGE CAMPGROUND** ***RUNNING FOR SECOND 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.



## **TIFFANY PARGMAN - INDIAN TRAILS CAMPGROUND** ***RUNNING FOR SECOND TERM***

Greetings WACO! My name is Tiffany and Indian Trails Campground and the camping industry has been my heart and passion my entire life. My grandparents Chuck & Betty Meierdick founded Indian Trails Campground in 1965 and I am a 3rd Generation Owner. My husband Matt and I fulfilled my childhood dream & bought Indian Trails from my mom Myrna & her husband Dave in January 2021. 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 fulltime campground owner and working together is challenging and rewarding at the same time. This year will be our 25th Anniversary and we have two boys who have been fortunate to grow up at the campground, just as I did. I attended Kids Kamp when I was little and going booth to booth at the trade show is a fond memory of my childhood. Both of my boys attended Kids Kamp throughout their childhood and hold the same memories I do. 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. As a campground owner, we wear many hats, but my favorite and specialty is our gift shop. I am running for the WACO board for many reasons; to gain more knowledge and insight of our industry, expand networking while helping to grow my campground as well as my peers and to help support and give back to an organization I believe in. I served as VP on our local Boys Club board and ran the basketball program while Matt coached for 7 years when my boys were younger. That was a full-time job during the winter/off season. Throughout those 7 years, our club became very successful and made a 100% turnaround from almost being shut down the year I joined. We were able to purchase new uniforms, equipment and gear for every sport as well as all new tables and equipment for concessions and fundraisers. I recently have been asked by several teachers, administrators and community members to run for our local School Board, which I respectfully declined due to the commitment of 2 meetings a month and having a business to operate. I was very grateful and appreciative to be considered and thought about for that role. What I am passionate about is our industry and will give 110% to the WACO board, just as I do my own business. I want each and every campground to be successful and I wish you all the best.



# BOARD NOMINATIONS



## Joe Ledger – Lakeside Fire Campground

*Running for new 2-year term*

Joe Ledger and his wife, Kristen, own and operate Lakeside Fire Campground, which they purchased in 2020. Now entering their fifth season in 2025, they are thrilled to continue growing a family-friendly destination where guests return year after year, creating lasting memories with loved ones.

In addition to running the campground, Joe has had the honor of serving as an Army Chaplain for the past 23 years. His goal is to reach at least 30 years of service before retirement, continuing his mission of mentoring and leading others. A firm believer in helping people discover and pursue their passions, he finds great fulfillment in coaching, guiding, and equipping others for success.

A self-proclaimed data junkie, Joe enjoys analyzing information to enhance processes, programs, and organizations. In his free time, he and Kristen love woodworking and scuba diving, embracing both creativity and adventure.

Their vision for Lakeside Fire Campground goes beyond just providing a place to stay. They aim to create a fun, welcoming environment where guests enjoy quality time with friends and family. For their employees, they hope to teach, guide, and prepare them not only for their roles at the campground but also for future opportunities in any career path they choose.

**Lakeside Fire**  
CAMPGROUND

## DIRECTORIES AT CONVENTION

**NEW THIS YEAR! ANY MEMBER REGISTERED TO ATTEND CONVENTION WILL HAVE ONE BOX OF DIRECTORIES THEY ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE BACK TO THEIR COMMUNITY!**

This is a chance to create, and strengthen, partnerships with local businesses in your community. Drop off some directories and ask them to distribute your park brochures as well, or coupons you may have to offer! Plus, this also helps to spread the FREE WACO directory to even more areas in the State!



Stop by the registration desk when you're ready to pick up your box! They will mark off your park name AND give you your passport stamp! Let us know if you'd like assistance getting it to your vehicle! Pick-up can be done any time throughout the tradeshow. (Daytime hours only please.) Don't forget to leave a few in your park office too and get them in the hands of your own guests!



**Pick up MORE than one box to earn a stamp on the bonus page of your WACO Passport, which of course gets you MORE tickets to try and win the \$3,000 WACO bucks on Sunday!**



# 2025 Speaker Spotlight



**Joe Walter**  
*O'Neil Creek Campground*

## FOUNDATIONS OF BUSINESS FINANCE

Master the financial foundation of running a successful campground in this practical session. Learn how to manage seasonal cash flow, decode your business numbers, and identify the key metrics you need to track for long-term success. Whether you're a seasoned owner or new to the business, this session will provide actionable insights to help you make confident, informed financial decisions and keep your campground thriving year-round.

## ELEVATE YOUR BUSINESS: USING CANVA 2.0

Learn how to create amazing, beautiful, professional graphic designs inside Canva, one of the world's leading free graphic design applications. Although this program has a lot to offer, after taking a quick look around, we will create some professional and attention-grabbing designs that you can use on your websites or social media pages that day! Bring your laptop to work right along with me! Even if you took this course last year, please plan to attend as I will dive deeper into creating designs with the use of videos!



**Taylor Ward**  
*Holiday Shores  
Campground & Resort*

**REGISTER FOR  
CONVENTION  
TODAY!**



**We're thrilled to have you join us for this exciting gathering of campground owners, industry experts, and outdoor hospitality professionals. This event is all about sharing insights, discovering new trends, and connecting with like-minded individuals who are passionate about creating unforgettable experiences!**

**DON'T MISS OUT and be sure to REGISTER TODAY!**

# BACKGROUND *checks*

tenantAlert!

\$34.95

\$24.95

AGoodEmployee.com

## 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](https://tenantalert.com/hospitality)

FOR EMPLOYEE SCREENING: [visit aGoodEmployee.com/Hospitality](https://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 \(info article\)](#)

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WOW  
GUESTS  
WITH YOUR  
WATERFRONT!



COMMERCIAL  
RECREATION  
SPECIALISTS

Ask us  
"What's New?"  
at WACO



## 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](#)
- [Info for learning about Constant Contact \(with link to webinar\)](#)
- [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](#)

**Congratulations to our  
2025 Hall of Fame Inductees**

**O'NEIL CREEK**  
CAMPGROUND



**The Walter Family**

**Congratulations to our  
2025 Volunteer of the Year**

**Bob  
Weiss**



# 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 [office@wisconsincampgrounds.com](mailto:office@wisconsincampgrounds.com). Give the WACO office a call first to vet your question, and Lori can provide direction on the next steps.

## THE CONTINUING SAGA OF PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES

Respectfully Submitted By Attorney Mark Hazelbaker, WACO Legal Counsel

**A** long – very long – effort to repeal property taxes on personal property resulted in adoption of legislation on June 23, 2023. A debate that began before the Packers and Bears rivalry started in 1921 was supposedly resolved. Unfortunately, though, the issue is far from over for campgrounds. WACO continues to work to stop efforts by state and local officials which seem to be determined to turn the repeal of personal property taxes into a tax increase on campers.

The issue arose because no one liked personal property taxes. "Personal property" is anything of value that's not part of, or attached to, land. It includes things like tools, clothing, trailers, farm equipment, livestock, computers or books. Wisconsin and other states imposed the same property tax on personal property which was levied on real estate.

But from the founding of Wisconsin, taxes on personal property were unpopular. No one liked assessors inspecting buildings to make a list of the owner's possessions and then, collecting small amounts of tax on those things. Because some personal property can be moved, some people hid assets from the assessor – moving cows to the next farm, for example.

Every unpopular thing becomes a political issue. Personal property taxes did too. There were efforts to repeal these taxes for decades. Every proposal ran into the most serious obstacle of all – money. Legislators who proposed to eliminate personal property taxes were challenged to come up with the millions of dollars required to replace the lost revenues. No one could or would. The Legislature adopted piecemeal exemptions from taxes over the years. But it was not until the past four years, when Wisconsin had a substantial cash balance, that complete repeal became possible.

As part of 2023 Wisconsin Act 12, the Legislature enacted what seems like a complete

repeal. Section 70.015 states "Beginning with the property tax assessments as of January 1, 2024, no tax shall be levied under this chapter on personal property." That sounds like a door slamming shut. Events since then have shown otherwise.

This repeal legislation had to be implemented. And there the problems arose. We are seeing guidance from state officials gradually move toward pushing local officials to classify many RV trailers and accessories as real estate, making property which was exempted taxable. In this article, I'll try to relate how this happened. In doing so, I am drawing on decades of experience working in property taxation as a local government lawyer.

### PRELIMINARY NOTE – WACO'S MODEL SEASONAL AGREEMENT PROTECTS CAMPGROUNDS

Before getting into the weeds of this issue, please be aware that if you use the WACO model seasonal agreement, you can pass any taxes imposed on to your guests. There is a provision in the model agreement which I inserted years ago that allows you to pass through any taxes or fees imposed on you because of your campers. That's not a perfect answer, though. If the government charges your campers \$50, that's \$50 they don't have to spend on the campground. So, the issue does matter. But you should review your seasonal agreement and make sure it has this pass through language.

## STATE LAWS BUT LOCAL ACTION

Property taxes are created and regulated by state law. But the assessments are imposed and administered by local assessors of each town, village and city. Assessors get their directions from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR). The DOR issues guidance through a thick document called the Wisconsin Property Assessment Manual [it is available online at <https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/SLF/Assessor-News/2023-12-15.aspx>]. As DOR and assessors moved to implement Act 12, issues arose. As events have unfolded since the repeal of personal property taxes, state guidance has influenced local actions. Since personal property is now exempt from taxation, there has been considerable controversy over what is or is not personal property. These efforts seem to be a slow walk toward taxing more than ever.

## ASSESSORS STRUGGLED TO CATEGORIZE PERSONAL PROPERTY

Drawing the line between personal and real property isn't always easy. A new park model RV coming into a campground on its own tires is clearly personal property. At the opposite end of the spectrum though, imagine that the campground allows the park model owner to set it on a block foundation, connect it through hard wiring to electricity and to its own well. The installation is finished with a beautiful covered porch attached to the park model and anchored into the ground. With all those attachments to the land, it seems clear the park model has become real property. Of course, most situations fall between these extremes. And that's where the assessors struggled to decide what to do, and ultimately, took action. They had to decide at what point the property on a campsite became real property.

Suppose a campsite features an RV trailer which remains on its wheels and has the tow bar stored under it. The RV is connected to the campground well and septic and plugged in to the power pedestal. So far, it's clearly personal property because there's no permanent attachment to the land.

What happens, though, if the campground guest decides to build a deck? They might do something modest – a 10 foot square box of wood which just sits on the ground, placed next to the trailer. The deck isn't attached to the ground or the trailer. It should be treated as personal property.

The situation changes, though, when campers get ambitious. They want a level and steady deck, so they anchor it into the ground. They want to sit outside when it's sunny or raining, so they put a canopy or even

a roof over the deck. They want to sit on the deck when it's cooler out, so they may wind up enclosing the porch, adding a heater or lighting. Soon, it has become an addition.

At some point in the process of these accessories becoming more permanent, the accessories become a "fixture" to real estate, and therefore, real property. And as fixtures to real estate, they become taxable.

## ASSESSORS MOVE TO TAX CAMPGROUND ACCESSORIES

Any given campground with a number of campsites probably has a wide range of modifications or accessories installed by campers. These variable and complex situations created apparently irresistible opportunities for local assessors. Some of them responded in the months after adoption of Act 12 by adding property to the tax rolls.

### Here's why.

- Assessors are directed by the law to tax everything. There's no exemption for small additions to real estate. The legal rule guiding assessors is "taxation is the rule and exemption is the exception."
- Assessors may make a single property owner unhappy by assessing a deck or porch as real estate. But they will be fiercely criticized for granting favors if they don't assess taxable property.
- The Legislature appropriated a large amount of money to replace the millions of dollars of lost personal property tax revenue. That appropriation was not enough to meet the requests of local government for more revenue. Finding tax revenue is usually popular with local officials.
- Taxing campground guests is politically safe. Campground guests don't vote in the local elections. Many are from cities or even – Illinois. Also, local officials may feel that someone who can afford a campground trailer can afford to pay a small amount of personal property taxes.

Our local tax collectors weren't sitting by silently while the legislative debate happened. They have a professional group too – the Wisconsin Association of Assessing Officers, and they monitor legislation. Along with local officials, taxpayer representatives, and state agency staff, they guided implementation of Act 12.

WACO, working with other business association representatives, strongly supported personal property tax repeal. After the law passed, we remained involved in statewide efforts and, as requested, in individual situations. We have seen a range of local actions in response. Assessors confronting these muddy situations asked for guidance from the DOR. DOR has tried to provide guidance – guidance which may have major impact on campgrounds.

In the first months after Act 12 was adopted, some assessors examined campgrounds and concluded that decks, porches and structures were fixtures to the land, and therefore, taxable. In some instances, property which had been taxed as personal property transmuted into real property so that it could be taxed. Those actions happened at the local, not state level. So WACO worked with individual campgrounds to provide information they could use to question the assessment. There are more than 1,200 towns in Wisconsin, though, each of which has an assessor. Even if we heard from every campground about what was happening – which did not happen – there are limits to what can be done. Somehow, the assessment system pulled taxation from the jaws of exemption.

WACO members should be aware that WACO staff and I spent many hours and many numerous contacts to help campgrounds dealing with local situations. Those efforts have had mixed results, of course.

In many instances, the assessors were valuing the additions at figures that did not generate large increases in taxes. That wasn't always true; some campgrounds were hit with bug tax increases. WACO staff was in contact with the DOR throughout this period, urging changes to the Property Assessment Manual. We felt the Manual should do what the Legislature directed – exempt personal property.

The DOR is reportedly considering further changes to the Manual which will continue to direct assessors to tax decks, porches and additions as real estate. WACO staff has continued to object. We continue to question how property which was deemed personal property could somehow become real property when it has not changed. WACO staff has

again devoted substantial amounts of time to meetings with DOR staff on these issues. Those efforts have helped, but we are concerned with the direction of DOR policies.

More recently, DOR is discussing revising the Property Assessment Manual in a manner which could result in camping trailers being taxed. There is a statutory exemption from property taxes for recreational vehicles. It applies to RVs "... equipped and used, or intended to be used, primarily for temporary or recreational human habitation..." DOR has been suggesting that camping trailers which remain on a campground year-round are not truly temporary habitation. WACO has strongly disagreed.

We continue to work with the DOR to request that their policy conform to the statutes. Of course, the possibility of going back to the Legislature has been discussed. It may come to that. But Legislative action is never easy, predictable or a slam-dunk. Legislation always carries risks.

Keep in mind that we have divided government in Wisconsin. Legislation which clears the Assembly and Senate only to be vetoed is pointless. It appears that, for now, the DOR would be opposed to proposals we might advance. The DOR is the Governor's agency; he can be expected to listen closely to their counsel.

WACO is not the only interest group concerned about Act 12 and its implementation. Any effort to revisit Act 12 will be part of a broader discussion about clarifying that law. It is quite common for there to be such legislation. Ironically, legislation aimed at fixing earlier laws is known as a "trailer bill." There may be a trailer bill in this session. We have legislative consultants who monitor developments and will help us to be part of any such effort.

But, there is also a strong tendency to resist revisiting an issue like this. As noted, the process of repealing personal property taxes extended over not years but decades. The Legislature devoted enormous amounts of time and money to the issue. It is hard to get them to pay attention to it again.

**Any suggestion that we can easily and quickly get legislation passed to fix this issue is unrealistic. This issue will require a great deal of engagement with the DOR and local assessors. WACO will be working hard on this and many other issues.**



**Use our online form to send legal questions to Mark!** Our legal hotline is one of your best WACO member benefits! By submitting your questions to the WACO office first, we are best able to track and report on Mark's answers to questions that may be an issue for many members and put that data in one central place for you to refer to anytime! **Should you choose to NOT use the hotline and contact Mark Hazelbaker directly, you will incur costs to your campground.**



SCAN ME

# SALES TAX SNIPPETS

Navigating sales tax with Holly Hoffman,  
Owner of Sales Tax Advisory Network



## THEY ARE ALL RV's!

This article is a reminder about the effects of the changes to the definition of a recreational vehicle. Much of this information is repeated from Wisconsin Department of Revenue's April 2024 Wisconsin Tax Bulletin [#225](#). However, I also included other helpful information that you will need to know related to this change and I included a chart that will make the county tax determinations easier.

Effective October 1, 2024, sec. 340.01(48r), Wis. Stats., was amended to expand the definition of a recreational vehicle to mean a vehicle that is designed to be towed upon a highway by a motor vehicle, that is equipped and used, or intended to be used, primarily for temporary or recreational human habitation that does not exceed 46 feet in length.

"Recreational vehicle" includes a camping trailer, 5th-wheel recreational vehicle, park model recreational vehicle, and travel trailer. This amended definition increases the maximum length of a recreational vehicle (RV) from 45 to 46 feet and removes the need for walls of rigid construction.

What is not an RV is a motor home that is the same as a motor vehicle. Motor vehicles are taxed based on where they are customarily kept. Motor vehicles are tangible personal property.

RVs are subject to Wisconsin sales and use tax. Retailers/dealers are required to collect and remit the 5-percent state sales tax if the customer takes possession in Wisconsin, unless an exemption applies.

### County and city tax is based on the type of item sold.

- If the sale is of an RV, county and city tax is based on where the RV is customarily kept.

**Note:** As stated above, camping trailers are RVs.

Therefore, effective October 1, 2024, the county and city tax of camping trailers, including pop-up campers and tent campers are based on where the camping trailer is customarily kept. This is a change from prior law.

- If the sale is of a motor home (motor vehicle), it does not meet the definition of an RV and the tax treatment is the same as a motor vehicle ([sec. Tax 11.83\(1\)\(b\), Wis. Adm. Code](#)). The county and city tax are based on where the motor home is customarily kept by the purchaser.
- If the sale is of a truck camper (slide-in truck camper), county and city tax is based on where the purchaser takes possession of the trailer or camper.

**Chart:** [Refer to the attached Appendix B chart from Wisconsin Publication 202, Sales and Use Tax Information for Motor Vehicle Sales, Leases, and Repairs.](#)

This chart is helpful in showing when county or city tax is owed based on type of purchase, location of sale, and buyer's behavior.

### Sales to Nonresidents:

If a nonresident purchases an RV and takes possession in Wisconsin, the retailer is required to collect the state tax and also remit county and city tax based on where the RV is customarily kept in Wisconsin. If the

P.16

READ MORE

# SALES TAX SNIPPETS, CONT'D

RV is customarily kept outside Wisconsin, the retailer is only required to collect the 5-percent Wisconsin state tax.

Sales of motor vehicles (i.e., motor homes) to nonresidents are exempt from tax (state, county, and city tax) if the use in Wisconsin is only to remove the motor vehicle from Wisconsin as provided in [sec. 77.54\(5\)\(a\)4.](#), Wis. Stats. ***This exemption does not apply to sales of RVs to nonresidents.***

See [Fact Sheet 2113](#), *Sales and Use Tax on Sales of Used Motor Vehicles, Boats, Snowmobiles, RVs, Trailers, Semitrailers, ATVs, UTVs, Off-Highway Motorcycles, and Aircraft*, for additional information about when county and city taxes apply.

#### Other Helpful Information:

Services to RV's are taxable since the RV is considered tangible personal property. Examples of taxable services to an RV include (not an all-inclusive list):

- Delivery and hookup to utilities.
- Weatherization.
- Installation of a deck.
- Installation of a furnace or water heater.
- Plumbing installation or repairs.

**Much of this information is repeated from Wisconsin Department of Revenue's April 2024 Wisconsin Tax Bulletin #225**

RV's qualify to be purchased for resale if used exclusively for rental and/or for sale. In order for an RV to qualify for rental in a campground, the renter must be able to choose which site to place the rental RV on. A park model that is large will likely not be moved site to site and therefore, not qualify for resale under the rental criteria.

Contact Holly Hoffman for more information about Sales Tax Audit Protection Plan & the WACO discount. [holly@salestaxlady.com](mailto:holly@salestaxlady.com) 1052 Main St, Ste 201, Stevens Point WI 54481 715-883-1299



**Contact Holly Hoffman, Owner of Sales Tax Advisory Network** at our new office: 1052 Main St Ste 201, Stevens Point WI 54481  
Ph: 715-883-1299 | [holly@salestaxlady.com](mailto:holly@salestaxlady.com)





**Win \$3,000 in WACO Bucks!  
Earn your tickets all week!**



**Find your passport book  
inside your event bag to  
start collecting your  
adventure stamps!**

Participants are responsible for collecting tickets. Rip tickets in half, keep one half and the other half goes in the big bucket by Registration. Tickets can be dropped anytime during convention. You must be present on Sunday at 11:00a to win!

### HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

- Check out all the "Must-Do" adventures in your WACO Passport that you must complete.
- Collect your stamps throughout convention for completing various tasks.
- Once your must-do pages are complete with all stamps collected, turn your passport in at the Registration desk and collect your 100 tickets for the \$3,000 WACO Bucks drawing on Sunday!
- Be sure to check the bonus page too for extra side quests you can complete for additional tickets! You can complete these quests in addition to the must-do Quests or on their own!
- **Fully completed passports must be turned in by Saturday at 8pm to collect your 100 tickets!**

### SIDE QUEST DRAWING: SATURDAY FROM 2:00 – 4:00PM

- The side quest drawing pages are part of the required pages for completing your full passport.
- Once you've visited all booths and collected your stamps, come to the Registration desk by 2:00pm to drop in your Side Quest drawing ticket!
- Starting at 2:15pm, we will draw one ticket from all entries, every 15 minutes. That ticket winner will be called by name over the intercom throughout the tradeshow floor (it will be announced in all areas of the floor - main expo room, hallways and hotel hallways/lobby).
- If your name is called, you will have two minutes on the clock to get to the registration desk and claim your \$500 that can be spent with ANY vendor here at the show!
- All money is to be spent at the 2025 trade show (ends at 4:30pm on Saturday)!
- **We will draw EIGHT WINNERS – for a total of \$4,000!**

### HOW ELSE CAN I EARN TICKETS FOR THE \$3,000 WACO BUCKS DRAWING?

#### 5 Tickets for...

- Attending Wednesday and Thursday morning general sessions in the Banquet Room
- Attending an education seminar
- Completing a seminar evaluation
- Every \$20 purchase in raffles by Registration

#### 50 Tickets for...

- Every qualifying live auction item you bring
- Sponsoring at the \$200 or \$500 level
- Every \$100 purchase in raffles by Registration
- Attending the Sunday morning Round Tables

#### 25 Tickets for...

- Registering during the Early Bird (Before 1/31)
- Stopping by the Membership Update Area by Registration to review your membership and update/set-up your renewal for 2026
- Presenting an education seminar
- Any PAC fund donation that you make
- Every vendor you purchase from (Bring your receipts to Registration to collect tickets)

#### 100 Tickets for...

- Completing the WACO Passport

**WATCH FOR BONUS TICKET OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT CONVENTION!**

# Protecting What Matters

*Insurance tips and strategies from Eric Haun & Crystal Erickson*



## Builder's Risk Insurance

Builder's risk insurance is a specialized type of insurance that covers physical damage to structures and property during construction or renovation projects at your campground. Whether the campground is undergoing new development, expansion, or improvements -- builder's risk insurance protects against damage that occurs to structures, equipment, or materials during the project.

### This might cover things like:

1. New building construction
2. Installation of utility infrastructure (water, electricity, septic systems)
3. Upgrades to existing facilities (bathhouses, recreational building, etc.)
4. Temporary structures like event pavilions
5. Materials and equipment used in the construction process

### Builder's risk insurance typically covers:

- Fire, wind, lightning, or hail damage
- Vandalism or theft
- Damage caused by construction-related accidents
- Material damage or loss

### However, it does not usually cover:

- General liability for accidents on-site (this may require additional insurance)
- Injuries to workers (workers' compensation)
- Damage to neighboring properties or environmental damage (this may require additional insurance)

### When securing builder's risk insurance for a campground, it's important to ensure that the policy:

1. Covers the entire scope of the construction project: This includes all structures and infrastructure being built.
2. Is in place before construction begins: Many insurance companies will not offer coverage once construction begins. It is important to discuss with your insurance provider before the construction commences.
3. Covers the specific risks to your property characteristics: Campgrounds may face unique risks, like flooding or damage from wildfires depending on location, so you want a policy tailored to those factors.



Eric Haun  
(608) 269-2127  
VP of Leisure & Hospitality  
[ehaun@coverrainurance.com](mailto:ehaun@coverrainurance.com)



Crystal Erickson  
(715) 563-6281  
Commercial Insurance Agent  
[cerickson@coverrainurance.com](mailto:cerickson@coverrainurance.com)



# UNSURE ABOUT A DATCP EMAIL? HERE'S WHAT TO DO

*By Mary Ellen Bruesch, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection*

Late in 2024 and early in 2025, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) learned of pool operators receiving emails that claim to be from DATCP but are actually not from DATCP. The email messages warned recipients that information was needed to keep their license in effect. A link or file was provided for the recipient to click to prevent this loss of an operating license. DATCP did not send these emails!

In response to those recent fraudulent emails, DATCP sent two mass emails to pool licensees explaining the phishing attempt. We do not know if licensees from other programs, such as Campgrounds, Retail Food, or Lodging, have been targeted as well. Please share the following information with persons from your facility whose email address is used as a contact for DATCP email.

## **What legitimate emails from DATCP will look like:**

- If DATCP Licensing or Support sends you an email, it will not include this type of warning described above or ask for information in this manner; however, DATCP Support may send an email if the wrong fee was submitted. Their email address is [DATCPFRBSupport@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPFRBSupport@wisconsin.gov) if you need to contact them to verify an email sent to you.
- DATCP Compliance or your local Sanitarian might send you an email if there is an enforcement concern. You can verify any email from them by contacting your health inspector as you normally would. You can verify an email from DATCP Compliance by emailing their mailbox, [DATCPCompliance@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPCompliance@wisconsin.gov).
- Annual license Renewal notices currently are sent via US Postal Service in late spring/early summer. We may send an egov ("do not reply"/"no reply") email out beforehand to let you know if anything is different with that process.
- If you've contacted DATCP Support or Licensing to inquire about a new license, the packet they send out does contain requests for information. But they will only send it in response to your inquiry. You can verify an email from Support or Licensing if needed here: [DATCPFRBSupport@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPFRBSupport@wisconsin.gov) (Support); [DATCPDFSLicensing@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDFSLicensing@wisconsin.gov) (Licensing).

If you have an online account and have any questions about your account, please log in through your usual means of accessing account information. Access licensing online accounts here: <https://myhealthdepartment.com/wisconsin-datcp/login>.

If you need help finding contact information for your local inspector, feel free to contact the DATCP Recreation inbox at [DATCPDFRSREC@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDFRSREC@wisconsin.gov) for Campgrounds, Pools Recreational and Educational Camps and Lodging, or [DATCPDFRSRetail@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DATCPDFRSRetail@wisconsin.gov) for Retail Food.

Please note that DATCP also contains the Bureau of Consumer Protection; hyperlinks are included for tips about Imposter Scams and Phishing attempts.

Feel free to contact Mary Ellen Bruesch at [maryellen.bruesch@wisconsin.gov](mailto:maryellen.bruesch@wisconsin.gov) with any questions.



TRAVEL  
SNAPSHOT

# AT-A-GLANCE SCHEDULE WACO Kids Kamp



## ADVENTURE AWAITS

**GENERAL DAILY REMINDER:** Bring swimsuits, towels, **SOCKS**, coats/hats & shoes for travel! Plan to sign all waivers and complete any menu choices on the first day of drop off!

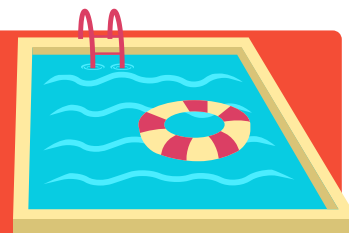
**PICK UP IS 5 PM DAILY** – our volunteers are needed in other areas, so please respect the full Convention with prompt pick up!

WED

**12**

### SWIM AT HOTEL

LUNCH: Pizza provided by Brew Pub & snacks



THURS

**13**

### PALLETS & PLANKS COMES TO KIDS KAMP

#### UW STEVENS POINT CHAMPIONS HALL: 11 AM-2 PM

Marshfield Clinic Champions Hall, 2050 4th Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54481

LEAVE HOTEL at 10:45 am | RETURN by 2:15 pm

LUNCH: Sandwiches w/ chips, veggie tray, & fruit

### SWIM AT HOTEL



University of Wisconsin  
Stevens Point

FRI

**14**

### BOWLING AT SKIPP'S: 10-11 AM

2300 Strongs Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54481

LEAVE HOTEL at 9:45 am | RETURN by 11:15 am

LUNCH: Hotdogs w/ chips, veggie tray, & fruit

### TRADESHOW PREVIEW: 1 PM

### SAWMILL ADVENTURE TRAMPOLINE PARK: 2-4 PM

608 Creske Ave, Rothschild, WI 5447

LEAVE HOTEL at 1:30 pm | RETURN by 4:30 pm



SIGN WAIVER  
HERE



SAT

**15**

### SKATING RINK : 10AM-12PM

2211 36th St N, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

LEAVE HOTEL at 9:30 AM | LUNCH: Pizza at Skate City

LEAVE SKATE CITY for Three Bears Waterpark at 12:00 pm

### THREE BEARS WATERPARK: 1:15 PM-3:15 PM

701 Yogi Cir, Warrens, WI 54666

ARRIVE FROM SKATE CITY at 1:05 pm | RETURN to HOTEL by 4:30 pm



SUN

**16**

## GRADUATION DAY

**NEW**

# Idea Quest

## **WEDNESDAY EVENING**

This event will feature 10 tables with different topics to discuss. Then we will rotate through three rounds of 20-minute conversations, allowing you to connect on three topics of your choosing! Fill your passport page and collect a ticket at each table. At the end we'll draw for two winners of \$500 each to spend with any vendor at the trade show on Friday or Saturday!

### **TOPICS INCLUDE:**

- **Table 1: Strategies for Success – John Jaszewski & Phil Whitehead**
- **Table 2: Guest Communication – Tina Severson**
- **Table 3: Shoulder Season Ideas – Sarah Krause & Kate Mattice**
- **Table 4: Marketing Magic – Mark Koep**
- **Table 5: Employees – Emily Truell**
- **Table 6: Successful Layouts – Lisa Black**
- **Table 7: Activities and Theme Weekends – LeaAnn Gieck**
- **Table 8: Bar & Grill and Snacks – Geri and Claire Walter**
- **Table 9: Family/Team Dynamics – Taylor Ward**
- **Table 10: Importance of Attending Conventions & Shows – Lori Severson, Tiffany Pargman and Jim Button**

5 Tickets



## **Attend the Idea Quest Event**

Attend the Wednesday night Idea Quest event in the Ballroom! Get your stamp from the table moderator after the last round of the event!



**SCAN HERE!**

Wednesday evening, during Convention, our dinner is catered by Bullhead's Bar & Grill and must be pre-ordered! Scan the QR code to the left to place your order! Pre-orders close at 2pm on Wed. 3/12! Dinner includes: 1/2 broasted chicken, (4 pieces), mashed potatoes, coleslaw and a dinner roll.





## **DID YOU KNOW that OHI is regularly advocating for you in Washington DC on multiple issues important to RV parks and campgrounds?**

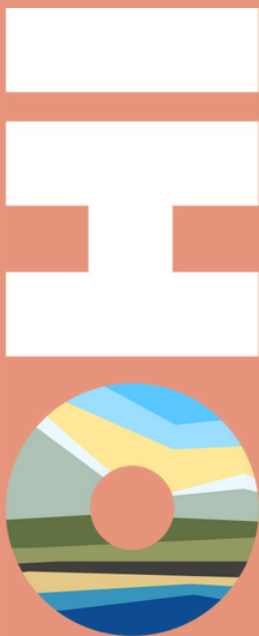
The OHI government affairs team, along with more than 35 campground owners and operators (including two from Wisconsin), have traveled to DC fighting specifically for the Credit Card Competition Act that will save all of us who accept credit cards as a form of payment an average of 15% annually on our credit card swipe fees.

For more information on this, and to express an interest in participating in future DC advocacy trips, [click here](#).

If you've been impacted by Spectrum's new business model that has dramatically increased costs for WiFi at campgrounds across Wisconsin, **DID YOU KNOW that OHI has announced a partnership with AT&T that can save you thousands on your WiFi costs?**

This partnership delivers exclusive tiered pricing, flexible bandwidth options, and the highest discounted pricing available through AT&T's enterprise contracting model, helping RV parks and campgrounds in Wisconsin deliver reliable internet to their guests at reasonable prices.

For more information about this partnership, and how to access OHI exclusive, custom AT&T pricing plans, , [click here](#)



**DID YOU KNOW** that Wisconsin's own Ollie Gauthier of Hickory Hills Campground, was recently featured by OHI as an up-and-coming Young Professional in our industry?

When Ollie Gauthier's parents decided to purchase Hickory Hills Campground in 2022, his life took an unexpected turn. "I never knew that owning or managing a campground could be a career path," Ollie reflects. "I had no clue this industry even existed." Fresh out of his freshman year of college, Ollie decided to set aside his studies to help his family breathe new life into their new property. What began as a crash course in campground management has since grown into reshaping Ollie's career and his outlook on the industry.

To read Ollie's story, [click here](#).

**DID YOU KNOW** that OHI has announced a new event, OHI®Connect, the first regional conference of its kind, designed to bring affordable and industry-leading professional development and networking directly to the industry?

Scheduled to take place March 25–27, 2025, at the beautiful Cherry Hill Park in College Park, Maryland (outside of DC), this event will provide RV park and campground owners and operators with significant opportunities to connect, learn, and grow. Open to owners, operators, and invited business partners, OHI®Connect is ideal for those navigating financial challenges, wanting to sharpen their strategic vision, or those who are just entering the industry.

For more information on OHI®Connect and to register, [click here](#).



**And finally, DID YOU KNOW there are only 10 spots remaining at this year's George O'Leary National School of Outdoor Hospitality Management?**

It's time to register and attend National School! I did it more than a decade ago and I can tell you it was one of the best things I've ever done for the future success of my campground. You will expand your knowledge learning from the industry's best experts, and you'll leave having met dozens of owners and operators just like you passionate about making their businesses better. These friendships will last forever and will be people you contact and share ideas at every turn in your career.

For more information and to register for National School, [click here](#).

I'm looking forward to connecting with everyone in just a few weeks at the WACO Convention! If you have any questions in the meantime, feel free to reach out to me directly at 920-570-0764.

Remember, we're stronger together!

## **WACO Newsletter—OHI Update**

*By Jim Button*



# 2025 Speaker Spotlight



**John Jaszewski**  
Properties Plus &  
Campgrounds4sale.com

## P&L PLAY TIME

If you bring your P&L to WACO, and set up an appointment with me via text, I will build you a great pro forma for you and your bank. This can help you with any expansion you're looking at doing and/or a refinance time with the bank. Furthermore, if you are looking to expand, we can use some of your own historical data to determine which expansion plans will work best for you! My session will touch on this at the convention, but why not go in depth with your OWN numbers to make sure you are maximizing your profits and creating stunning equity growth for you and your family! Put my proven track record to work for you to develop a solid path for the next 3-5 years in your campground/park/resort! You don't have to be a math wizard to get a solid grip on your business and make sure that your on the right path – and if you're not – what's the best and least expensive way to course correct. Let Properties Plus – Campgrounds4sale.com help you help yourself! See you at convention. About a week before text 507-450-5626 to set up your time!



**Lori Severson**  
Executive Director of WACO &  
Owner of COE and Champions  
Riverside Resort

## LOW-COST MARKETING HACKS FOR CAMPGROUNDS

Boost your campground's visibility without breaking the bank! In this session, explore practical, affordable marketing strategies that deliver results. Learn how to attract more campers and grow your business with little to no budget. Perfect for owners looking to make a big impact with small investments!



**Lori Severson**  
Executive Director of WACO &  
Owner of COE and Champions  
Riverside Resort



**Lisa Black**  
Champions  
Riverside Resort  
Seasonal Manager

## Beyond the Stay: Making Seasonal Guests Your Park's Biggest Cheerleaders

Your seasonal campers are more than just long-term guests—they can be your most powerful marketing asset! In this session, we'll explore strategies to turn your loyal seasonals into enthusiastic promoters of your park. Learn how to engage them in a way that encourages word-of-mouth referrals, social media sharing, and positive online reviews. Discover creative incentives, community-building techniques, and communication tactics that will inspire your seasonals to spread the word and bring in new campers. Don't just host them—empower them to help grow your park!



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

john@campgrounds4sale.com | www.campgrounds4sale.com

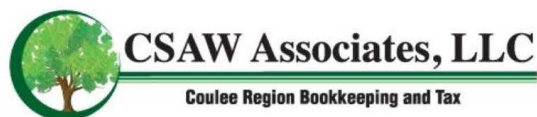


# THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS!

## SHOW SPONSORS – \$7,500 LEVEL



## PRESENTING SPONSORS – \$5,000 LEVEL



## SATURDAY BLOODY MARY BAR SPONSOR



Starts at 9:30am in their  
expo booth! Tips go to the  
Gilbert Brown Foundation!

## SUPPORTING SPONSORS – \$2,500 LEVEL



**CampLife®**

**newbook**



# THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS!

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THURSDAY EVENING MEAL – THANK YOU!

# RESORT FORWARD

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SUPPLIES**



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**good sam.**



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**M&H Customs**





# THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 CAMPGROUND SPONSORS!



## Campground Celebrations



*Join us in congratulating these members  
celebrating milestones this upcoming 2025 season!*



Baraboo, WI

**Celebrating their  
5th season!**



Sparta, WI

**Celebrating their  
5th season!**



Kingston, WI

**Celebrating their  
20th season!**



Pardeeville, WI

**Celebrating their  
60th season!**



Wisconsin Dells, WI

**Celebrating their  
50th season!**



Wild Rose, WI

**Celebrating their  
65th season!**



# The Easiest Solution For RV Park Management

Availability POS Reports

Availability

RV Site 3 Condo 3 Cabin 3 Seasonal 0

		Fri 02	Sat 03	Sun 04	Mon 05	Tue 06	Wed 07
RV1000	54ft						
RV1000	54ft		Smith, John				
RV1000	54ft					Myers, TJ	
RV1000	54ft						
RV1000	54ft					Johnson, Jim	
RV1000	54ft						
RV1000	54ft					Collins, Mary	
RV1000	54ft					Webster, Har	
RV1000	54ft						
RV1000	54ft						

Support Terms Privacy



SCAN ME



Mike Piersch  
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563-513-8438  
228 W Edgewater St  
Portage WI 53901



RECYCLE  
ELECTRICITY



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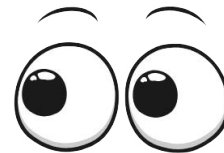


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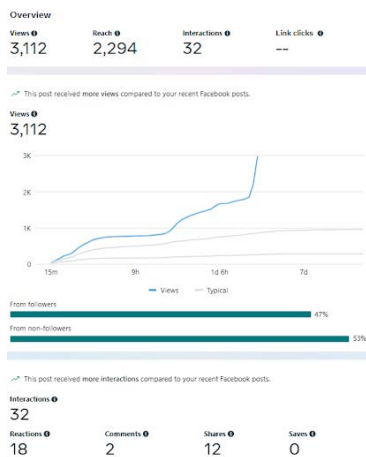
Club Car

# WACO Web Stats & Social Media Trends

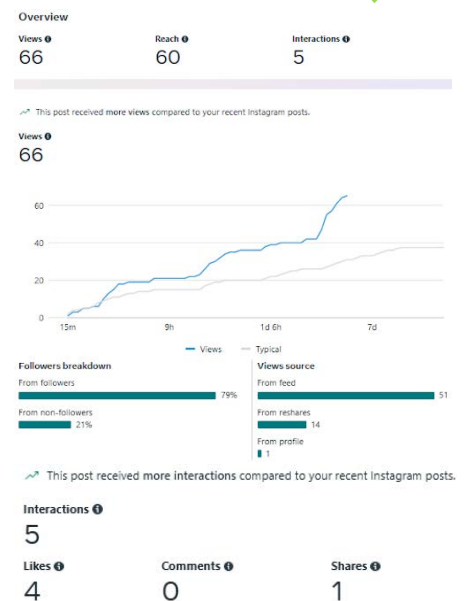


**Facebook/Instagram Insights - December**  
 FB Lifetime Followers: 10,351 (-8 from December)  
 IG Lifetime Followers: 604 (same as December)

## Last 90 Days FB



## January '25 IG



## Top Posts in January 2025

Instagram

wicampgrounds

**COME SEE US THIS WEEKEND!**

VISIT OUR BOOTH TO GRAB YOUR FREE 2025 WISCONSIN CAMPGROUND DIRECTORY!

**JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 2**

FRIDAY 1/31 - 10:00A TO 7:00P  
 SATURDAY 2/1 - 10:00A TO 7:00P  
 SUNDAY 2/2 - 10:00A TO 4:00P

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wicampgrounds Coming to the Madison Camper and RV Show and Sale this weekend? Make sure you st... more

## January IG

## January FB

Wisconsin Campers  
 January 31 at 6:09PM

If you're feeling a little lost, it's ok. We understand. 🤔 But the good news is that in about 9-10 weeks, many Wisconsin campgrounds will be open and ready for camping! Let the countdown begin! 🏕️

**I HAVEN'T CAMPED FOR SO LONG,**

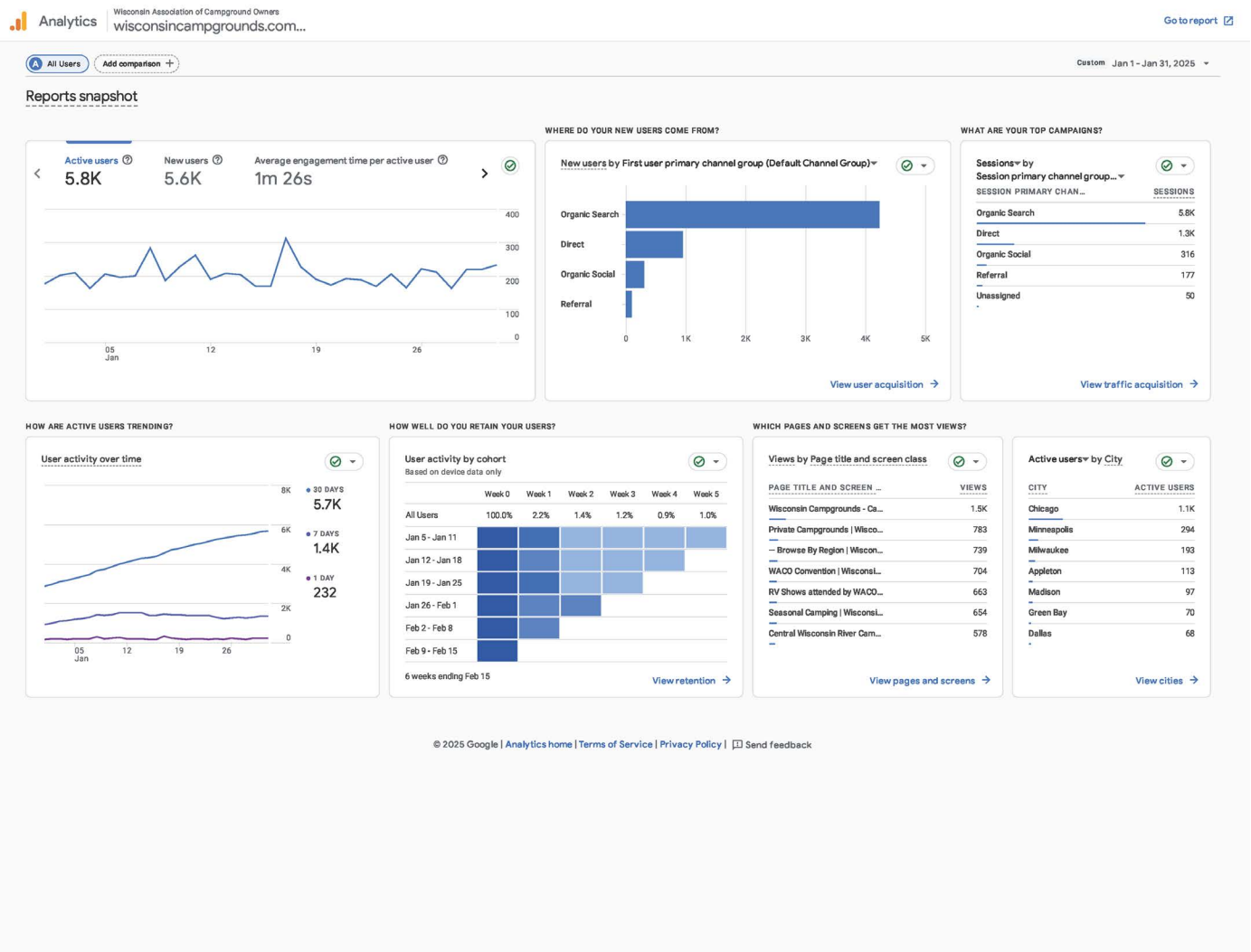
**I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO I AM ANYMORE.**

# WACO Web Stats & Social Media Trends



January 2025

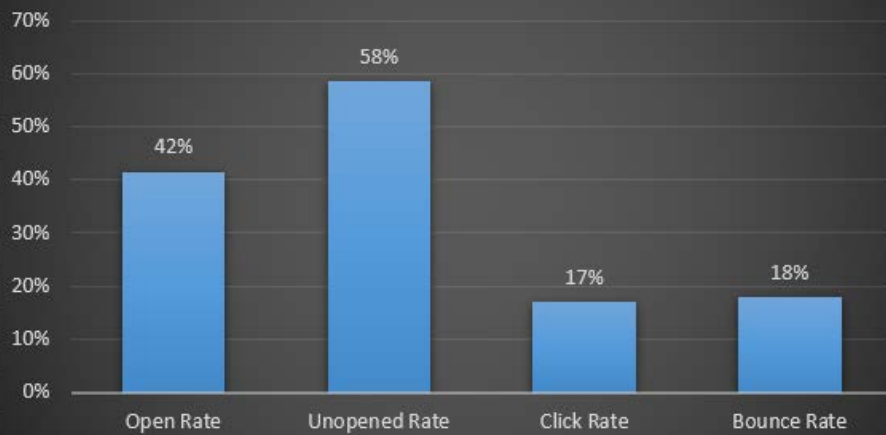
## WEB MONTHLY SNAPSHOT



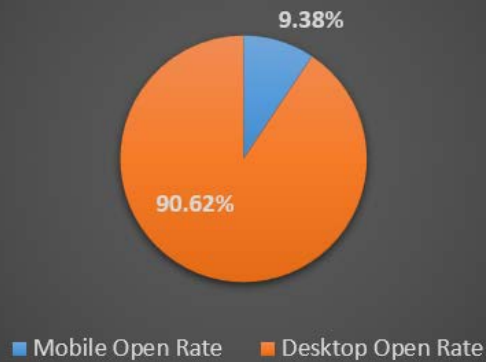
# WACO WEB



## 4,786 Total Sends in January 2025



## Devices by Open Rate January 2025



## Top Emails by Open Rate for January 2025

Campaign Name	Sends	Opens	Open Rate	Mobile Open Rate	Desktop Open Rate	Clicks	Click Rate
WACO - 2025 schedule release	251	179	75.20%	16.50%	83.50%	70	29.40%
January 2025 WACO Newsletter	412	282	73.10%	13.00%	87.00%	99	25.60%
Email Scam - Selling show attendee lists	523	312	65.70%	7.40%	92.60%	10	2.10%
WACO - Member EB Deadline & CPO/ServSafe Reminder	228	138	64.50%	8.50%	91.50%	12	5.60%
DATCP Warning of Email Scam	219	131	63.60%	4.30%	95.70%	1	0.50%



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# GBF Member Donations 2024



## TOTALS FOR YEAR



**As of 2/17/25 and for Convention Recognition!**

Campground	Total Funds Raised
Great River Harbor	\$43,587
Champions Riverside Resort	\$42,968
Duck Creek	\$24,255
Backyard Campground	\$20,000
Kinney Lake Campground	\$12,272
Rustic Ridge Resort	\$11,665
Wilderness Campground	\$11,425
Huckleberry Acres	\$10,429
Stoney Creek	\$8,435
Grand Valley Campground	\$8,198
Snug Harbor	\$5,685
Buckhorn Campground & Resort	\$5,005
Vista Royale Campground	\$5,000
Pride of America	\$4,679
Rivers Edge	\$4,185
Emrick Lake Campground	\$3,680
Maple View Campsites	\$3,547
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
Harbour Village Resort	\$1,100
Yukon Trails / ELS	\$795
Lake Lenwood Beach and Campground	\$500
Arrowhead Campground	\$460
Indian Trails	\$408
Sky High Campground	\$395
Dells Camping Resort	\$355
<b>TOTAL FUNDS RAISED</b>	<b>\$254,294</b>

review  
these totals!

**\*ATTENTION - PLEASE READ\***  
These are the totals that will be presented at this year's WACO Convention! If you feel your total is INCORRECT, please email [office@wisconsincampgrounds.com](mailto:office@wisconsincampgrounds.com)



## 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**

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### **LORI SEVERSON, EXEC DIRECTOR**

SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES  
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608-792-5915



### **JIM BUTTON, OHI REP**

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Submit reasons why you feel you'd be a great director, along with a brief bio & your picture to [office@wisconsincampgrounds.com](mailto:office@wisconsincampgrounds.com)!





## WACO OFFICE

PO Box 228

Ettrick, WI 54627

WACO Phone (608) 525-2327

[wisconsincampgrounds.com](http://wisconsincampgrounds.com)

**SEVERSON & ASSOCIATES**

Phone (608) 525-2323

[office@campgroundowners.com](mailto:office@campgroundowners.com)



*It is with heavy hearts, we share more news on the passing of our beloved fellow WACO Member, Scott Grenon. Scott will forever be in our hearts and minds.*

*You can find the complete obituary and details about his life and legacy here:*

*<https://koepsellfh.com/obituary/scott-a-grenon/>*

If you have any pictures of Scott, please send them to [office@wisconsincampgrounds.com](mailto:office@wisconsincampgrounds.com) as we'd love to put together a memorial for the Convention.

Be sure to give Julie and the kids a big hug when you see them!

***Rest in peace, Scott.  
Your memory will live on!***