

CAMPING TODAY

THE VOICE OF FAMILY CAMPERS & RVERS

MARCH 2026 ISSUE

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Run for the Wild 2026

This year's WCS Run for the Wild mascot is the red panda.

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**HAPPY
ST. PATRICK'S
DAY**

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Camping Today' Submission Forms

['Camping Today' is currently scheduled for release on the 15th of each month.]

[All content must be submitted by the 1st.]

Contact FCRVOFFICE@gmail.com if you have any questions or problems submitting material.

[Click on the hyperlink below for the type of 'Camping Today' submission you'd liked to send.](#)

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Program Certificates & Membership Dues Updates

Elimination of Program Certificates

By Teresa Walorski, Recording/Corresponding Officer

Hello FCRV Members,

During the February 15, 2026, Trustee Board Meeting, it was decided to eliminate the use of the Program Certificates.

This decision came about because the Certificates are an unknown financial liability as well as a to-do item for all the Program Directors. As you can imagine, if someone saves up their certificates and then uses them as intended to purchase an item from a vendor or towards their Campvention fee, FCRV then pays that vendor those amounts. Since FCRV is watching every penny, we are deciding to eliminate the certificates to avoid those surprising expenses.

Since we seem to have lots of these certificates sitting around, we are issuing this notice to allow you all sufficient time to use those well-deserved certificates. We really hope you use them while attending the 2026 or 2027 Campvention or towards the 2026 / 2027 Campvention registration fees.

The Certificates will no longer be printed and issued effective March 15, 2026.

You will then have until the end of the 2027 Campvention event, which is currently set to end on July 17, 2027, to use up all your Program Certificates.

We all hope you understand the need for this change and hope you enjoy the use of your Certificates!

If you have any questions about this change, please feel free to reach out to any of your Trustees.

Thank you,
Board of Trustees

Important Membership Dues Update

After extensive discussion among the Executive Board and Advisory Council, FCRV has approved an increase in annual dues. For at least the past 15 years, reserve funds have been used to cover annual operating expenses. While this approach allowed us to avoid increasing dues, it is no longer sustainable.

Even with the adjustment, the new dues rate will not fully cover our operating costs. However, increasing dues at this time is essential to keep FCRV financially solvent and able to continue serving its members. **It has been approximately 15 years since the last dues increase**, and we will continue to regularly evaluate dues and expenses going forward.

In addition to this change, we will actively pursue non-dues revenue opportunities to support long-term financial stability. The trustees are working diligently to ensure the organization's future, and we ask for the same level of commitment from our members.

Effective March 1, 2026:

- Annual dues will be **\$52** (equivalent to **\$1.00 per week**).
- Multiple-year discounts will no longer be offered; however, members may renew for multiple years at the rate of **\$52 per year**.
- Dues payments will be accepted **online only**, as part of a cost-saving and streamlining initiative.
- The six-month free bonus for new members is being discontinued; however, this change does not preclude the development and implementation of new, more tailored incentives or promotional offerings in the future as part of a more strategic and targeted membership approach.

We continue to evaluate every expense carefully. We appreciate your ongoing support, trust your commitment to FCRV, and welcome your input as we move forward together.

Note: Current dues rates will remain available for renewal until **February 28, 2026**.

What Constitutes a Healthy Nonprofit Organization?

What Constitutes a Healthy Nonprofit Organization?

By Linda English, Vice President Operations

A healthy nonprofit is not built on good intentions alone. It is built on strong structure, transparency, and people working together with purpose. As members of Family Campers & RVers, we share a responsibility to support one another and grow our chapters. Let's reflect on what this means.

Our Mission reminds us why we gather: To share with all campers / RVers, the Family Campers & RVers fun, friendship, fellowship and family feelings of camping together and to promote and enhance the experience and enjoyment of recreational family type camping/ RVing.

Our Purpose calls us to something even greater: To encourage the people of North America and elsewhere to participate in recreational activities which protect, conserve, and defend the natural resources set aside by the Government of the United States, or any other government, for the purpose of conserving the scenery and wildlife unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

- To promote physical fitness, self-reliance, sound camping and hiking skills, an appreciation of nature, and ecological dependence, and obedience to laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the utilization of natural resources on public and private lands by its membership.
- To carry on educational and charitable purposes directly by application of assets of the Association for such purposes or indirectly by contributing from such assets to the work of other persons, trusts, funds, or foundations whose purposes, objectives and/or operations are exclusively educational, literary, historic, or charitable.
- *To provide scholarship assistance to members and their children who intend to pursue studies in wildlife management, conservation, and/or forestry, related studies, and/or all other fields of study.*

- To provide wildlife grant assistance to members who participate in our wildlife protection, and to award grants to other organizations participating in wildlife conservation.

These priorities are expressed through programs designed to be shared at local, state, and regional gatherings, not only at national events. Are they included in your event schedule?

Our organization thrives when members step forward to lead committees and collaborate as a team. Our Field Manual provides clear policies and procedures to guide our work and keep us aligned.

Strong finances support long-term growth. Campvention remains our primary revenue source, and our newer donation program offers every member an opportunity to invest in our future. Insurance is our largest liability, yet it is an essential safeguard for our organization.

Our communication has many different and unique levels to keep our membership informed. Camping Today is our official means of communication published monthly. Our website is our communication to our members and to potential members. We have an elected seven-member Board of Trustees, an administrator, a leadership team that meets monthly, and email blasts as necessary. These levels of communication provide timely updates and ensure members stay informed and engaged.

A healthy nonprofit actively engages new members. By being welcoming, inclusive, and intentional about connection, we strengthen retention and build lasting memberships. Let's think about implementing a mentorship program to help in this endeavor.

Our leadership remains committed to promoting our organization and supporting every member, so we remain strong for years to come. Together, we ensure our mission and purpose continues to thrive.

Can we count on you?

A Vision for Stronger Commercial Partnerships

Spread the Word

A Vision for Stronger Commercial Partnerships

By Daniel Tinter – VP Planning and Development

After thoroughly researching how the FCRV and peer camping organizations build meaningful commercial relationships, I'm excited to share a new strategic framework I'd like to move forward on that positions us for sustainable growth. I've identified two partnership categories where we can create real value: Rally Relationships and Non-Rally Relationships.

Rally Relationships: Celebrating Our Success

Our rally vendors are invaluable partners who consistently deliver exceptional products and services to our members. I'm deeply grateful to Ken and Betty Andrews for their outstanding vendor recruitment at the Retiree Rally, Ron Cohee for bringing diverse vendors to Campvention, and Carl Fromholzer for his passionate, sustained commitment to making our rally partnerships flourish. These relationships directly strengthen the experience for members at our events, and their efforts deserve recognition.

Non-Rally Relationships: Learning and Evolving

As we evaluate our non-rally partnerships, I've discovered an important insight: our greatest competitive advantage isn't discounts alone—it's community. FCRV's strength lies in the genuine friendships and social experiences our members value most. While larger clubs like FRVA offer extensive benefits and numerous partners, their membership trends show that discounts alone don't drive loyalty or growth.

This realization means we can be more strategic and intentional about which partnerships we pursue—focusing on those that genuinely enhance member value while promoting our community values.

Why Member Benefits Still Matter

That said, we should continue seeking partners who provide real value to our members. Members appreciate tangible savings on camping supplies, RV services, campground stays, and other relevant products and

services. These benefits enhance the overall member experience and provide practical value alongside our community offerings.

However, rather than just pursuing partnerships primarily to attract new members through discount promotions, we should also focus on partnerships that deliver member referrals.

A Partnership Model Built on Mutual Success

I'm proposing a refreshingly simple approach that incorporates both strategies: partnerships where businesses benefit when their customers join FCRV, and we promote those partners through our social media, newsletters, and rallies—while continuing to offer quality member discounts that enhance retention and satisfaction.

We tested this new concept in Connecticut with a postcard that speaks to both audiences—showing businesses why partnering with FCRV makes sense, and showing campers why joining our community is worthwhile. We distributed this postcard at the RV shows, and the results were positive—every campground and RV dealer we approached expressed genuine interest. This low-cost, straightforward strategy could empower our members nationwide to build partnerships with any camping-related business.

Moving Forward Together

This approach honors what makes FCRV special while creating meaningful opportunities for growth. By focusing on partnerships that strengthen our community, deliver genuine member value, and create mutual business benefits, we're building a sustainable future grounded in our core values.

I'd love to hear your questions or insights about this partnership model. Reach out to me at fcrv.planning.development@gmail.com.

VOTE for Shari Weber - FCRV President



Vote for Shari for International President!

FCRV is at a pivotal moment and needs a leader with proven experience ready to guide us forward from day one. The learning curve of a national officer is time the organization simply does not have in its current state if it is to survive and thrive. Shari's background prepares her to step confidently into leadership immediately. With the dedication and support of Family Campers & RVers members, she is committed to strengthening FCRV's visibility and ensuring its long-term success.

Together, we will explore new promotional platforms and innovative organizational approaches to keep our camping club strong, continuing our mission to encourage personal fitness while promoting the protection of wildlife and the great outdoors, where every member feels at home.

Some of the work ahead of us

- Survival through new funding avenues and partnerships
- Explore new promotional platforms to expand awareness and reach
 - Partnerships with like minded organizations
 - Assure marketing reaches all generations in their spaces
 - Use influencers to improve social media presence
- Implement innovative organizational approaches to strengthen FCRV
 - Make it easier to form a chapter
 - Find new ways for members to participate in a chapter
 - Foster a welcoming environment where every member feels at home
 - Promote intergenerational activities
 - Support and grow a strong, connected camping community
- Encourage personal fitness through camping and outdoor activities
- Promote protection of wildlife and natural spaces
 - Educational programs
 - Hands on restoration and conservation activities
- Review programs for relevance and improvement and eliminate those not needed

VOTE for Linda Hennie - FCRV President

VOTE for
Linda Hennie
FCRV International President



The member/owners of Family Campers and RVers are ready to expand the programs and platforms of our organization. Together I believe we can continue to develop our current projects and programs while encouraging innovative ideas and directions to increase awareness among new and experienced campers. Increasing our membership, and thus our revenue, is paramount at this time.

Linda is the innovative, experienced leadership needed by Family Campers and RVers to lead our organization. Her familiarity with National Campers and Hikers, now Family Campers and RVers, gives her an insight into the issues and programs of FCRV. Linda and her husband David have held many offices in FCRV, serving as State Directors, Regional Directors and currently as National Retiree Directors. In addition, Linda has held many positions of leadership in the Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary, including State and National offices and ten years as National President.

Linda's desire to bring family camping and traveling to the forefront again and to encourage the continued development of programs and events to promote Family Campers and RVers is of great importance to her. She will step into the office with confidence and conviction. We encourage you to vote for new leadership of Family Campers and RVers by electing Linda Hennie as FCRV's International President.

FCRV National Election Bios/Platforms

The positions up for election are President, Vice President of Programs, and Corresponding Recording Officer. All positions are elected by the full FCRV membership.

Candidate bios and platforms are included in this issue of Camping Today.

Electronic Ballots will be distributed after March 15, 2026, to the email address on file with your membership. This is a great time to ensure your email information is current with the national office.

One vote is granted per FCRV membership. The deadline to vote is April 15, 2026. Election results will be published in the May 2026 issue of Camping Today.

Teresa Walorski

Recording/Corresponding Officer



Resume

Teresa and her husband, Rick, have been members of FCRV since 2003. They are in Colorado, members of the OOPS Chapter, and the current Field Directors. She continues to work at Mercy Housing where she has held several positions for over 20 years. Teresa has been the Recording / Corresponding Officer since 2024 where she has done a great job at keeping accurate meeting minutes for the organization.

Platform Statement

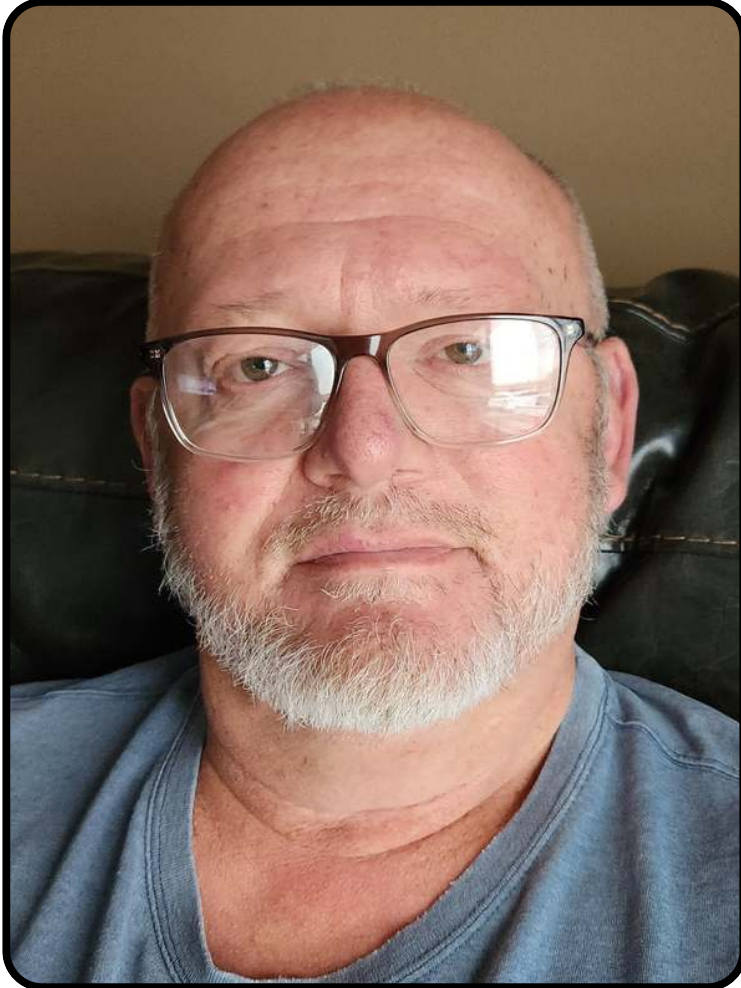
Hello again! I have enjoyed my time as the Recording/Corresponding Officer these last couple of years working directly with some of you and being involved with all the changes that are coming up for our organization. Key word being OUR. FCRV is our organization. We are all in the FCRV family. We all care about what is going on with FCRV and we all just want the best for FCRV. As Trustees, we can't make everyone happy, but we are all doing the best we can. I still see growth in our organization as a goal. More members mean more money coming in and larger numbers mean more vendors and opportunities. We also want you all to be happy with the organization. If you are happy with FCRV, you will renew and you will ask your friends to join. Rick and I joined back in 2003 so that we could have others to camp with. Those members became friends that we still camp with today. We have seen lots of changes, we have gained members and lost members, but we all still enjoy camping together. Isn't that why you all joined in the first place? To camp with others and have a social outlet. Having a social outlet is so important to all of us.

I sincerely hope that I am given the opportunity to continue to work with the organization in the capacity of Recording/Corresponding Officer. I feel that the work I do is important.

FCRV National Election Bios/Platforms

Ed Shaneyfelt

Vice President of Programs



Resume

Hello, my name is Ed Shaneyfelt. I am running for Vice President of Programs. I have been involved with NCHA/FCRV since my family joined in the fall of 1971. Through my years I participated in the youth and teen program and made a lot of friends along the way. Still today I am still making friends that become like family. In 1987 I married my lovely wife, Angie. We raised two wonderful children who participated in the programs also. Our daughter Paige was an Indiana state queen, and our son Fletcher was the first National Teen King. I have been involved or in charge of teen sports for the last 15 years. At the State level, I have been Northern rep, Vice President, President, Past President, and current President for Indiana over the last 25 years. Also, I have been serving as the National Campvention Director for the past 9 years.

Platform Statement

I am excited to embark on this new journey to make sure FCRV survives for future generations. To do this I believe the focus should be to update our existing programs, to ensure that they are best serving the needs of our existing members as well as benefitting new members as we continue to grow and expand. I am looking forward to working with the Program Directors to get this accomplished, whether it is the CAMP, Conservation, DASAT, Adult, Teen, Youth, or Veterans Programs. I will need to fill some open program director positions that are currently vacant. I understand that I would be responsible for those programs until I can find Directors. With the help of the directors and members, I believe we can create a prosperous future for our organization.

I'm here to represent the membership, please let me know your concerns if I'm elected so your voice will be heard. Your vote would be greatly appreciated.

FCRV National Election Bios/Platforms

Shari Weber

International President



Resume

Shari is Senior Consultant with Campground Consulting Group, helping developers evaluate the viability of new campground projects. She and husband, Craig, previously owned Geneseo Campground for twenty-five years, gaining extensive hands-on experience in park operations. Shari holds Lifetime Park Operator Certification and graduated from the Oglebay School of RV Park and Campground Management. She has served as President and Treasurer of the Illinois Campground Association and was honored with the National ARVC Chairman's Award for her industry contributions.

In her community, Shari chaired the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee and later served as Vice President and President of the board. Before purchasing the campground, she was Vice President of Community Banking at American National Bank.

Shari and Craig have long supported the Illinois State Association, currently support the Florida State Association, and FCRV, launching programs that promote fellowship. Their service has earned multiple honors including Hank Nathan Lifetime Achievement Award.

Platform Statement

FCRV stands at a pivotal time in its 77-year history. Our constitution states we were formed “to encourage people of North America and elsewhere to participate in recreational activities which protect, conserve, and defend natural resources set aside by the Government,” and “to promote physical fitness, self-reliance, sound camping and hiking skills, an appreciation of nature, and ecological dependence.” These founding principles define our purpose, yet over time we have drifted from this focus.

Today's campers are eager to learn sound camping skills while actively protecting and conserving natural resources. Industry surveys by RVIA and KOA reveal a shift in camping culture: campers are diverse in age, ethnicity, and interests. While all generations show interest in camping and RV ownership, Millennials represent the fastest-growing group. Raised with technology, they rely on smartphones for information and inspiration. Growth and relevance depend on FCRV meeting their expectations while continuing to serve existing members.

Younger generations value meaningful experiences but have limited time and busy schedules, requiring efficient, rewarding getaways. Adaptation is necessary for survival but also presents an opportunity to thrive. Our messaging, programs, and policies must evolve to reflect changing family dynamics, time constraints, the role of electronics, and shifting camping priorities.

The commitment and dedication of all FCRV members and my experience in volunteer roles, prepare us to implement the necessary changes. Making our programs relevant, our chapters welcoming, and streamlining organizational processes will bring the fun back to FCRV. Together, we will grow, endure, and ultimately thrive.

FCRV National Election Bios/Platforms

Linda Hennie

International President



Resume

Linda Hennie - joined NCHA in 1961 with parents; became a member with husband upon marriage in 1970, currently lifetime members
Family - husband David, 2 adult children, 7 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild,

Occupation -Legal secretary for 20 years; retired 1999.

NCHA/FCRV involvement - members of Day-Hi-O Trailseekers, Full-timers Retiree Chapter; Quackers
Ohio State Directors - 8 years; Great Lakes Regional Directors - 8 years; National Retiree Directors - 6 years; National Parliamentarian- 6 years

Chairman - 2017 National Campvention;

Team Leaders – 3 additional National Campventions

Chairman of 2013 and 2018 National Retiree Rally;

National Retiree Treasurer - 11 years

Linda and husband David have received several National Awards including Hank Nathan Lifetime Achievement Award in 2023

Additional Leadership Organizations -

Member - Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary since 1972; many leadership positions on local, State and National levels, including 10 years as National President of the Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary.

Platform Statement

Family camping has been a part of my life since 1961 when my parents joined NCHA and we began our yearly vacations to the National Campventions. I met my husband at the 1967 National Campvention and, when we married in 1970, we received a membership to this wonderful family organization. I have seen NCHA/FCRV flourish from it's heyday in the 1980's and 1990's and I have witnessed the decline of not only our organization but many other camping organizations.

My heart is in this organization and I feel I have the ability to lead us back to the family organization I know we could and should be. As you have heard me say many times, ours is a member owned organization and as such I believe the owners should have accessibility and transparency regarding information pertinent to the organization they own. I want us to get back to camping with family and friends. Do I realize we will not be the large expansive group of the 1970s, of course. But I do believe we can co-exist as owners and members that still believe in the outdoors, conservation and family.

With my experience as a legal secretary and the leadership skills I have developed, I am certain I have the qualifications, capabilities and ability to lead this organization into the future. I look forward to joining you in Huron South Dakota.

FCRV National Awards

FCRV National Awards

By Teresa Walorski

Do you know an individual or a Chapter that deserves recognition for outstanding service or for generously volunteering their time and knowledge?

April 15, 2026 is the deadline to submit nomination(s) to the Awards Committee. Our goal is to present these awards at the 2026 FCRV Campvention.

There are several award categories that nominees may qualify for. Nominations may be submitted in the following categories:

- Award of Merit
- Chapter of the Year
- Hank Nathan Lifetime Achievement
- Individual Nomination
- Lifesaving / Humanitarian

We are pleased to once again make the nomination process simple and convenient. Just click the link below, complete the form(s) as thoroughly as possible, and submit, no printing or mailing required!

<https://fcrv.org/awards-forms/>

Once submitted, nominations will be forwarded to a member of the nominating team. The Awards Committee will then review each submission using a points-based system, which is why providing as much detail as possible is extremely helpful.

We are also still in need of Awards Committee members. After the April 15 deadline, the committee will meet to review nominations and apply the points system. This volunteer role typically requires only one or two meetings.

If you are willing to volunteer your time to help recognize the individuals and Chapters who truly support FCRV, please email Teresa Walorski at fcrv.recording.officer@gmail.com to sign up. Your support is greatly appreciated!



Hank Nathan International Scholarship 2026

NCHA/FCRV Hank Nathan International Scholarship 2026 Is Now Open!

Greetings from your Hank Nathan Scholarship Team.

Requests for applications will be posted in the December-April issues of *Camping Today*. The portal submission closes on May 1.

How to Apply:

Applications will only be accepted online at the following address: <https://fcrv.org/hank-nathan-ncha-fcrv-scholarship/>. The application MUST include the FCRV member holder's name, membership number, postal mailing address, and most importantly, an email address at which the applicant can be contacted. Pay special attention to the entire website and follow the directions closely.

Section 1. Must be filled out by all applicants.

Section 2. Is only for applicants graduating from high school this year and applying for a scholarship for the first time.

Section 3. Is only for applicants currently enrolled and continuing their college education.

Section 4. Applies to those returning to school for continuing or advanced education.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Parents, guardians, or applicants must be members of FCRV for 18 full calendar months or longer.
- Applicants must be enrolled, or accepted, into an accredited undergraduate, graduate, or trade school course of study.
- Part-time and trade school students must carry an equivalent of 11 credit hours or less. You will be evaluated accordingly.
- Applicants should have a minimum 2.3 GPA (grade point average) on a 4.0 point scale. All applicants are given equal consideration.
- A current, complete official transcript of grades must display student name, school name, grades, credit hours for each course, and terms in which the courses were taken.

Recommendations:

Two online recommendations are required and must be from a non-relative. Both may come from any FCRV member including trustees, regional director, state director, or non-elected member. Your second recommendation may come from a school official, coach, band director, club supervisor or an immediate supervisor if you are working. Your application will be complete when all required materials are submitted electronically on or before May 1. Scholarships are for one year. Recipients may reapply each year they meet the eligibility requirements. **If you've already submitted four letters of recommendation from 2 previous scholarship applications, those are still on file, and you do not need to submit any additional ones unless you want to include an update to your file.*

Scholarships

Annual Scholarships are non-competitive. That means there is no competition between applicants. Each applicant's score is individually tallied. A scholarship will be awarded to every applicant who meets the standards determined in advance by our rating scale. Scholarship values will range from \$1,000 to \$4,000+ (American). Scholarship values are determined each year by the controller in collaboration with the Scholarship Board of Directors.

Consideration is taken for GPA (Grade Point Average), maturity, leadership, related activities, and goals of the candidate as based on the objectives of FCRV. Special consideration is given to applicants who major, minor or explore elective classes in fields related to forestry, conservation, wildlife, ecology, or outdoor education training.

The Board of Directors will announce the recipients at or after the Annual General Meeting held at Campvention in Huron, South Dakota. All scholarship recipients will be posted in *Camping Today* so that the members who donate to the scholarship fund can see who is getting an FCRV Scholarship.

Applicants will be notified in writing as to the amount they will receive along with further instructions after May 1st.

Welcome New Members

Family Campers & RVers would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest members:

Schaner, Jared	Schaner, Rachel	PA	Referred by: Chapter: Lyken Valley Roamers
Johnson, Jeff	Johnson, Rusti	FL	Referred by: Meet Members While Camping
Book, Dawn	Roger, Meribeth	IL	Referred By: Doug and Connie Black
Massey, Rick	Massey, Linda	MO	Referred by: Paul & Beth Standiford
Wilson, Rosalind	Ellis, Andrew	BC	Referred by: Online: No other reference
Notagiacommo, Chip	Notagiacommo, Joanne	TX	Referred by: Norm & Glenda Treida
Charette, Glenn	Charette, Connie	CT	Referred by: Hartford CT RV show
Garguilo, Marguerite		NY	Referred by: Steven Donner



Trustee Meeting Notes

These notes are now being stored in the Virtual Office by National and sent via email to the executive and advisory boards. These notes can and are encouraged to be shared throughout the organization. The archive and single page notes are set up as a shareable link that is viewable by any 3rd party.

A history of past minutes can be found [HERE](#).



Campvention 2026 - Huron, South Dakota

[More Info](#)

[Register](#)

[Forms](#)



[Click here for event info & registration](#)

[Join in on the discussion at the 2026 Campvention Facebook group](#)

Click the link above or scan the code below.



CAMPVENTION 2026 “Where The Flock Gathers”

The Heartland Region proudly invites you to the 66th Annual FCRV Campvention, to be held at the South Dakota State Fairgrounds in Huron from July 5–11, 2026, with Early Bird days on July 3–4.

Campvention is a time to reconnect with old friends, welcome new ones, and celebrate everything that makes FCRV special. In 2026, we are especially excited to announce a new partnership with the Maga Ta-Hohpi (Huron Wetlands) group, a collaboration that reflects our shared commitment to conservation, education, and stewardship of the natural world. Through this partnership, Campvention 2026 will feature special programs and activities highlighting local wildlife, wetlands preservation, and environmental awareness adding a meaningful and enriching dimension to the Campvention experience for all ages.

Huron and the surrounding area offer a rich blend of cultural heritage, Native American history, pioneer roots, and scenic beauty. The city’s story comes to life through its colorful outdoor murals, historic buildings, and museums. Families will find plenty to enjoy, including a water park, walking trails, fishing, paddle boating, swimming, and other recreational opportunities.

Located in east-central South Dakota, Huron also makes an ideal hub for extended travel. Consider arriving early or staying late to explore some of the region’s iconic destinations, including Mount Rushmore, the Crazy Horse Memorial, the stunning “Dignity of Earth and Sky” sculpture near Chamberlain, De Smet—home of Laura Ingalls Wilder—and the world-famous Corn Palace in Mitchell. South Dakota offers endless opportunities for discovery.

Heartland Region 3 FCRVers are hard at work planning the Campvention traditions you know and love, along with new adventures and special programming made possible through our local partnerships. We invite you to join us in Huron and experience everything Campvention 2026, South Dakota, and the spirit of FCRV have to offer.

Retiree Rally 2026 - Mineola, Texas

[More Info](#)

[Register](#)



[Click here for event info & registration](#)

[Join in on the discussion at the 2026 Retiree Rally Facebook group](#)

Click the link above or scan the code below.



Retiree Rally 2026 "Circle The Wagons"

Are you ready to join us to CIRCLE THE WAGONS next March? This rally is open to all members of FCRV, not just to retirees! There is so much fun awaiting you, so invite your camping friends and introduce them to our FCRV family. There is so much to see and do while you are there, and the amenities are 1st class! We will be updating you each month. The RV sites are very special as they are in front of the Center where we meet and form a double round ring that allows for SHORT WALKS. The sites have FULL HOOKUPS with BOTH 30 AND 50AMP, as we will CIRCLE THE WAGONS!

The 54th FCRV INTERNATIONAL RETIREE RALLY will be held at the Mineola Civic Center, 1150 N Newsom Street, Mineola, TX 75773.

Rally Dates: March 23 – March 29, 2026

Early Days: March 20th - March 22nd

Come early, as this is a fun place to explore!

We are excited to have Harlan Nigh and Lori Springer co-hosting with us. We are working on the details, and we have a good group of people who have offered to chair the committees. We need more volunteers to help make this a success. Please feel free to contact us with any help or suggestions.

Ken: ken.andrews1348@gmail.com

Betty: UBetUKen2@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you in Mineola, in March of 2026

Event Schedule & Recaps



[\[Click Here For Full Event Calendar\]](#)

Family Campers & RVers - FCRV
Published by Forrest Camperson · February 26 at 5:00 AM · 🌐

The Co Trailblazers met at the Golden Corral in Colo. Spgs., for our Christmas luncheon and card/goodie exchange. We had a wonderful turnout. We all had a great time se... [See more](#)

[See insights and ads](#) [Boost post](#)

FCRV Southeast Region and 4 others · 1 share

Like Comment Share

Comment as Family Campers & RVers - FCRV



Larry Scott
Top contributor · February 18 at 11:21 PM · 🌐

The Camp Stars had their February event on Valentines Day. It was a combination of Glow-in-the-Dark mini golf, Valentines celebration, and dessert snacks. the mini golf venue was really dark, and it was difficult to see who was putting just one hole ahead. But everyone had a great time.

12 · 3 comments

Run for the Wild 2026

Run for the Wild 2026

By Pat & Amy Wittmeyer

Not too long ago, Amy Wittmeyer of New York State was writing articles under the headline “Stories from the Field: The Adventures of a Wildlife Technician,” detailing adventures (and misadventures) from her work in wildlife field research. In late 2023, she started a new job with the US Fish and Wildlife Service that is law enforcement adjacent, so she can’t share her work stories with us anymore. But while Amy may not be scaling mountains in California, counting loons in Wyoming’s national parks, or baiting critters with peanut butter in the Adirondack Mountains of New York anymore, she’s still finding ways to incorporate her passion for wildlife conservation into her recreational activities.

This spring, Amy will participate in The Bronx Zoo’s Run for the Wild 3k walk on April 25th. This annual activity raises funds for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), a global non-governmental conservation organization that is based out of The Bronx Zoo in NY. Their mission? To “save wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature.”

WCS is best known for running four zoos and an aquarium in the greater NYC area, but they also fund wildlife research, education, and conservation programs in over 50 countries around the world. WCS partners with indigenous people and local communities to protect nature strongholds and aid in local research activities. This year’s WCS Run for the Wild mascot is the red panda.

Despite their name, red pandas are not related to giant pandas at all! While giant pandas are a species of bear, red pandas are in their own,

separate taxonomic family. They are more closely related to raccoons and skunks than bears! Red pandas live in high-altitude temperate forests of the Himalayan mountains. Their thick, fluffy coats help keep them warm, and their long tails aid in balance while climbing trees.

Red pandas are listed as endangered by the IUCN Red List. Threats to red pandas include habitat loss due to human development and deforestation, poaching and illegal wildlife trade, and climate change affecting the distribution of the bamboo forests they call home. WCS works with local communities in China and Myanmar to create protected areas and combat illegal wildlife trade. They also breed red pandas under the Species Survival Plan (SSP) at the Bronx, Central Park, and Prospect Park Zoos. The SSP is a scientifically guided breeding program that protects genetic diversity and demographic stability in captive populations across participating accredited zoos.

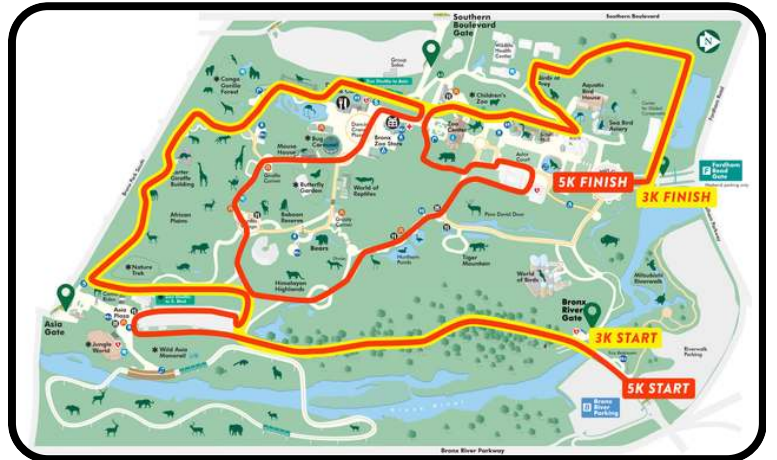


Run for the Wild 2026

If you'd like more information about WCS in support of Amy's 3k walk, simply contact Pat Wittmeyer or go to the following webpage: <https://p2p.onecause.com/run-for-the-wild/amy-wittmeyer> (no period at the end). It should be noted that WCS is a highly reputable organization, with 4 out of 4 stars on Charity Navigator, which is a charity assessment organization that evaluates more than 200,000 charitable organizations based in the United States, operating as a 501 organization. WCS also has a Grade "A" score on Charity Watch, an oversight organization for various charities. Amy thanks you in advance for any donation you can provide, and will be sharing pictures from her walk in a future issue!

Sources:

1. <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/animals/news/red-panda-bear-and-more-red-panda-facts>
2. <https://www.wcs.org/about-us>
3. <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/714/110023718#threats>
4. <https://p2p.onecause.com/run-for-the-wild/home>



Camping Tips and Recipes FROM YOU!

CAMPFIRE KNOW-HOW

Campfire Know-How is looking for your best camping contributions! Share your favorite recipes, handy tips, activity ideas, or tried-and-true advice for life around the campfire. Got a funny camping story or meme you've created? We'd love to see those too! Submissions are welcome in any form; photos, artwork, videos, or written pieces. Let's hear from you and keep the spirit of camping alive!

Submit here:

<https://fcrv.org/campfire-know-how>

Stop Tent & RV Screen Zippers from Snagging

Few things are more frustrating than a tent zipper that keeps catching on the fabric. Luckily, there's a simple fix that can keep your tent opening and closing smoothly.

How it works

1. Rub a small amount of lip balm, candle wax, or bar soap along the zipper teeth.
2. Slowly zip and unzip the tent a few times to spread the lubricant evenly.
3. Wipe away any excess so dirt doesn't stick.

Why it works

- Wax or soap reduces friction between the zipper teeth.
- It helps the zipper glide smoothly without catching the tent fabric.
- It can extend the life of your tent zipper.

Pro tip

Keep a small tube of lip balm in your camping gear. It works great for zipper fixes, gear maintenance, and dry lips around the campfire.



Boondocking

Boondocking

By Sandi Wingert

I learned something new in January that I would like to pass along to those who might be interested. No, not how to parallel park a 40' motor home – though that would also be newsworthy. I learned all about boondocking with solar panels. You know that boondocking is RV speak for camping in your RV, whether it is a motorhome, 5th wheel trailer, pull behind trailer, truck camper or tent, with no hookups. We use the battery, water and sewer tank, water pump, refrigerator and water heater on propane.

Lots of people camping in tents will totally get this. The thought puts a whole new concept of camping. Some of us have stayed at a Wal-Mart, truck stop, Cracker Barrel, rest areas where it is allowed for an overnight stay. (Nothing says “roughing it” quite like a truck stop parking lot lullaby of idling semis). We get by on our batteries for a night, as we are generally on our way somewhere.

Well, this January we actually planned to go camping out in the desert with no hookups. We went to Quartzsite in Arizona. Lots of people pull their rigs, even big motorhomes, off road and go off-grid, and park wherever they want to stop. Park any direction you would like. There are no lines that you need to park in. You can park off by yourself, if you would like solitude. Or if you are meeting other people or going with several other people, you can “circle the wagons”. You can park anywhere outside near Quartzsite on BLM land. (Bureau of Land Management.)

In January, Quartzsite has a huge gem show and then a large RV show with many manufacturers and a huge tent with all kinds of vendors.

The thought of solar panels was very overwhelming. The prices seemed very expensive, and there seemed to be lots of pieces that were needed to make it work. I believe words like “We need a WHAT, connected to a WHAT, with a WHAT in between?” My husband bought a 100 W folding portable solar panel and controller from Harbor Freight. Short version, he hooked it up to our existing battery on our little 17' trailer. The solar panels charged the battery which was enough to meet our electrical needs. We have a generator which we can use when necessary.

So off we go for a week staying in the desert with no hookups. Scary? Yep!

Every day, we could charge our 2 cell phones, 2 tablets, 2 Kindles and many more things from the inverter. Also, the battery kept the lights and the refrigerator and water heater working. We had 6 days of sunshine. Color me impressed! Never used the generator once. Then on the 7th day, it was cloudy and very overcast. I guess even the sun needed a day off. We had to use the generator in the late afternoon. So, we talked about it and decided to get a second battery first before another solar panel.

The other questions about this trip: we used paper plates and we used filtered water for running through the Coleman coffee maker and iced tea. Also, we used water for the toilet and lavatory sink. We did not even try the TV as we could watch movies or TV shows on our tablets. We also did not use the microwave. Next voyage, maybe. Showers were very fast navy showers 2 times a piece during the week. Think of it as efficiency, not neglect – and we used body wipes. Very little propane, if any, was used for cooking and a Buddy Heater for heat when needed, so propane could keep the refrigerator and water heater running.

We met up with friends, and we parked with doors inward. We cooked outside on grills or the fire. We discussed what works, what didn't and what to do. We spent time shopping in the big tent, toured RVs of all shapes and sizes, and wandered a huge flea market. You could go back many times and not see it all.

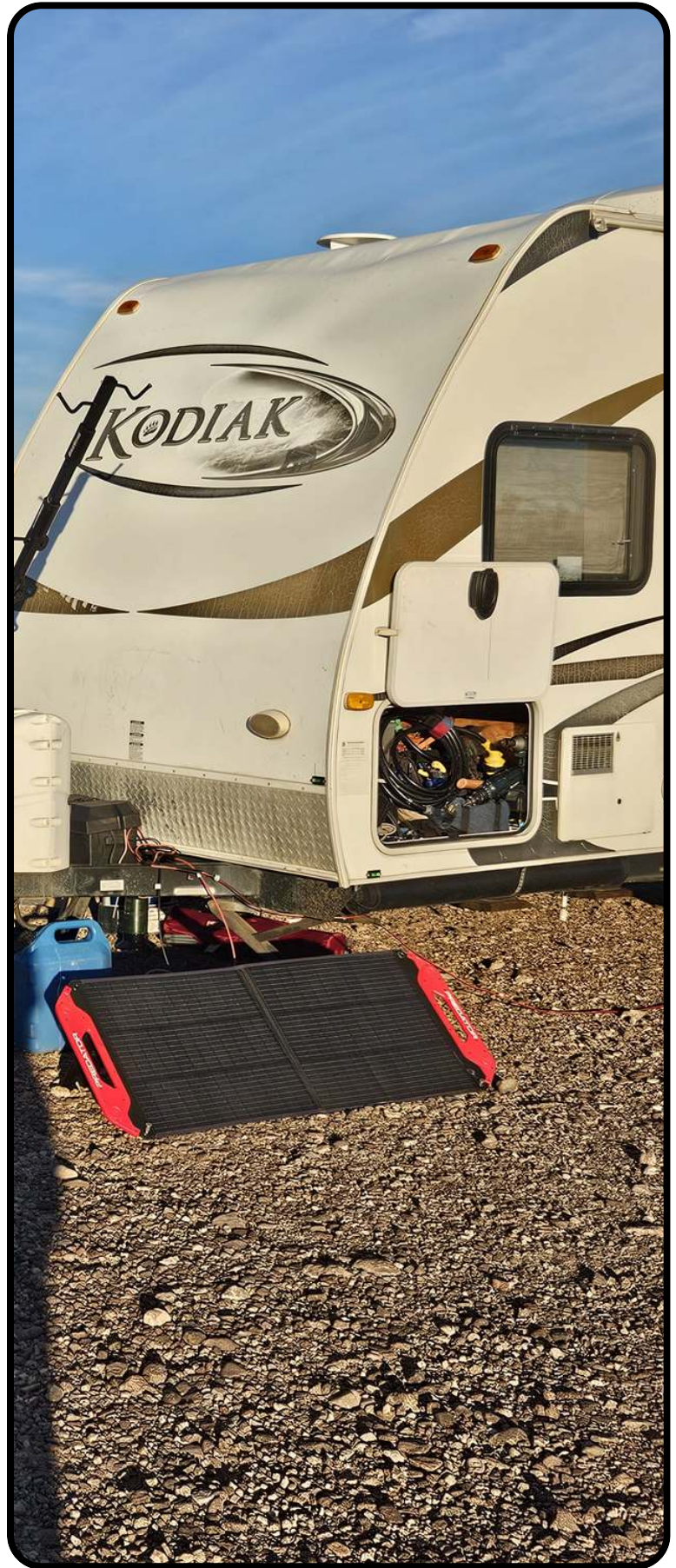
Boondocking

Everyone had a very enjoyable time together. That is what friends do.

When we left our camp spot, we went into town and stopped at the one-stop shop for RVs. We dumped tanks, filled water, filled propane and fuel for the truck all in a row. Just kept moving to get everything handled in one stop.

So, what did we learn from our first true boondocking adventure? That the sun is a pretty reliable power source mostly. That you can live without a microwave for a week and survive. And the friends who “circle the wagons” with you are the best kind of friends to have. We came home with dusty shoes, full hearts, and a shopping list that starts with “one more battery”.

If you’ve been curious about boondocking but thought it sounded too complicated or too rustic, I am here to tell you: Give it a try. Start small, keep your sense of humor, and maybe keep the generator handy, just in case the sun takes the day off. You just might find yourself hooked on the freedom of parking exactly where you please with nothing but the stars.



Hoses, Hoses, Everywhere

Hoses, Hoses, everywhere you may ask. What is one talking about? Continue on, and you will hear of the trauma and do's and don't's about hoses. If you thought this was about RV water hoses all over the place, you are mistaken. It is about another more important water hose(s), Fire Hoses!

When an emergency happens, seconds count! When firefighters arrive the first thing they do is a quick assessment of the situation and then proceed. Many times this means pulling out the fire hoses and attaching them to a water source. They could be directly to the fire department tanker truck or to the street fire hydrant. In either instance, the faster a water line can be established the better. Now comes the obstruction: Did you or did someone else park in front of the fire hydrant? This is against the law and blocks the access to the fire hydrant from the fire department. Seconds are wasted while they figure out what to do next because someone broke the law. Will the fire hose be put under the car, over the car or through the car? Can the car be moved? The fire department will do what it has to do in order to address the fire at your expense. Do not block a fire hydrant.

If you have ever observed the firefighters, they work tirelessly doing their jobs, but sometimes others obstruct their ability to work effectively. They arrive at the scene with heavy equipment including various lengths of fire hose. However, as a result of someone else's stupidity, they are hindered from doing their job adequately. Here is the problem in a nutshell...someone decides to drive over the fire hose that may be in the roadway. Now, we have a problem. First, this is against the law in most states and jurisdictions. Second, your actions now have caused other serious problems. That will be addressed accordingly.

Here are some of the things that occur when you drive over a fire hose. Remember the facts: in most instances a fire hose is between three and four inches in diameter. The water pressure inside of the hose can exceed over one hundred pounds. It is much higher than standard water hoses. Fire hoses have a very heavy and strong water flow. For instance, it can take several firemen to control a fire hose at the scene.

Think of it this way. When you were growing up, it was fun to dance around the end of a water hose as it jumped about. It was also equally fun to bind the water hose and reduce the water pressure. When one drives over a water hose, you reduce the pressure and may even damage the hose and the source from which the water flows.....mainly the hose itself, the fire hydrant, and or the tanker fire truck.

It is critical that fire hoses are not driven over. When you drive over a fire hose, you could damage the hose. Your actions could also pull the fire hose from its attached source, the fire hydrant and or the fire truck. For that matter, you could even damage the hose so that water is now flowing all over the place and not through the fire hose.

When a fire hose is damaged as a result of your actions, a fireman may get hurt. For example: if two fire hoses were connected in tandem, you may have broken this connection or pulled the fire hose from the hydrant or from the fire truck. Now water is going everywhere. The fireman now has to risk being injured in an effort to reconnect the hose to the water source. The ends of the fire hose are dangerous when they are flapping all around.

Hoses, Hoses, Everywhere

This will also reduce the water pressure needed to address the fire. Now everything has been shut down, reassembled and recharged to address the fire. New hoses may have to be put in place, to replace the ones you damaged. When seconds count the most, you have put various individuals in danger, the fireman, the observers, and slowed down the effort of putting out the fire. Lost seconds! Your simple action of running over the fire hoses may have cost lives and/or severely injured others and fire equipment. The replacement costs are out-of-sight. Ever tried to purchase a fire hose or repair a fire truck? Fire truck replacement can be in the millions of dollars.

In many jurisdictions, it is against the law to interfere with the effort of firefighters. It is also unlawful to run over fire hoses. For reference: "Maryland law expressly prohibits vehicles from driving over the fire hoses during an emergency situation." According to the Maryland Transportation Code 21-1119, it is illegal to drive over an unprotected fire hose laid down by a fire department at an emergency scene, whether on the street, private driveway, or highway. The only exception is if the driver receives explicit permission from the fire department official in charge. Violating this statute can result in substantial penalties. Drivers who run over a fire hose may face traffic citations, fines, and liability for any damage caused. In Maryland, fines for this offense can range from \$500-\$1,000, depending on the circumstances and the county or municipality. Additionally, if a damaged hose leads to further property destruction or injury, the driver may be held financially responsible for these damages...in addition they could face criminal charges, including reckless endangerment. The driver could also accumulate points on their driver's license, and maybe higher insurance premiums."

Hoses, hoses everywhere; do not drive over them. Stop, turn around if you are able, and respect the work of our fire departments and emergency personnel as they help others. Remember, the laws in your area may be slightly different than what has been cited in the previous paragraph. In any case, show respect; do not drive over a fire hose.

Source:

<https://smnewsnet.com/archives/539811/dangers-of-running-over-fire-hoses-a-legal-and-safety-reminder-for-Maryland-drivers/>



Iceland Adventure - Northern Lights

Iceland-Adventure-Northern-Lights

By Beth Muschinski

I first saw the Northern Lights while camping as a teen, in the north woods of Wisconsin I have been fascinated with them ever since.

The Aurora actually begins with the sun. Solar winds and flares cause particles to be released which then collide with the atmosphere of the earth causing the coloration of the aurora. Geomagnetic storms are rated 1-5, and can predict northern light probability Kp levels (1-9) days before. The higher the Kp index, the better chance of seeing the aurora in all its glory. The aurora can be visualized as green, purple, pink, red and even blue and white depending upon the type of gases (oxygen, nitrogen or a combination) colliding with the solar particles. The colors are produced depending upon the altitude where the particles collide in the atmosphere and which particles are involved. Green is the most common color, caused by oxygen and solar particles colliding between 75-150 miles above the earth. Red is fairly rare because it occurs between 150-250 miles above the earth. We see the aurora as red when it is in Mississippi because of the great distance (and the green is below the horizon). Pink is caused by solar and nitrogen at 60-75 miles altitude. Blue and purple colors are seen when the colliding particles are less than 60 miles above the earth. It is difficult to get a picture of the aurora without blurring as the particles are in constant motion. The lights are fascinating as they dance through the sky. The bulk of the above information was collected at the Aurora Borealis exhibit and movie at Perlan and some was from Google.

There are many Icelandic legends about the lights. They are said to be from the tail of an arctic fox, swishing through the winter sky. Dancing spirits or elves can also cause the lights to appear. The shimmering green is a reflection off the shields and armor of the Valkyries, female warriors, as they carry fallen Viking warriors to Valhalla. There are many other legends and myths from other countries, associated with the lights.

Did you know that there are southern lights, also? They are the Aurora Australis of the southern hemisphere and Antarctica is the best place to view them. My next adventure??



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https://stores.inksoft.com/fc_rv/shop/home

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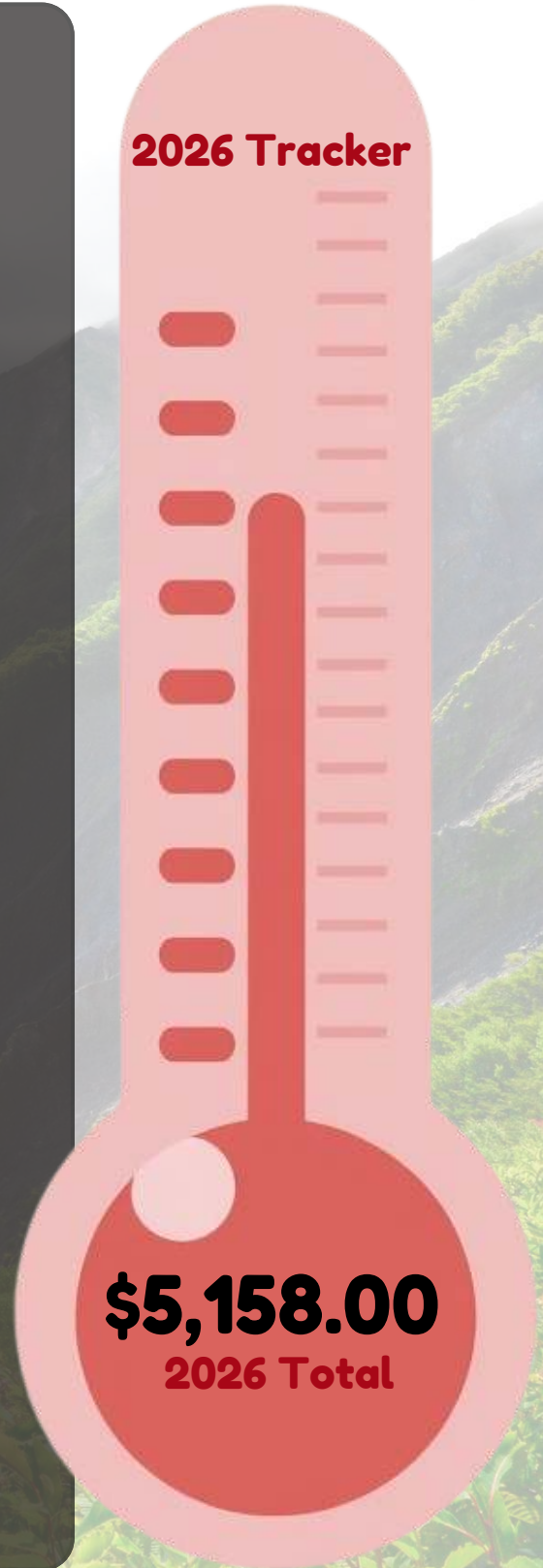
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2026 Tracker



Dear FCRV Member

As a Member of Family Campers & RVers, you're part of the history, heart, and heritage of an organization that has shaped family experiences for generations. When you think back on your years with us, certain moments probably rise to the surface: a campfire that kept everyone talking long after sunset, the kind of laughter that only happens among friends who've become family, the pride of watching our youth grow into capable leaders, and maybe even a few harmless pranks that turned into legendary stories. Above all, there's the steady comfort of knowing that wherever you traveled, you belonged to something special.

These moments define FCRV. They're the threads that tie together our chapters, our states, and our families. Your commitment over the years helped build a community rooted in fellowship, outdoor adventure, conservation, and youth development.

Today, we're at an important moment. Our programs, many of which you helped build, still make a meaningful impact. But like many long-standing volunteer organizations, we're facing rising operating costs, an aging membership, and fewer active supporters carrying the day-to-day load.

We are reaching out with respect for you and for the history you helped create. Our goal is straightforward: to protect FCRV's legacy and keep its programs active and available for as long as possible.

Our Wildlife and Scholarship Funds remain well-positioned to serve their missions. The challenge lies with our General Fund, which supports the everyday work that keeps FCRV running. This fund is now at a critically low level. It's not simply lean. It needs attention from those who understand the value of what FCRV provides.

The General Fund keeps the organization moving. It supports programs, events, communications, and the national structure that holds everything together. It's the quiet backbone of FCRV.

Right now, it needs our collective support.

A gift to FCRV isn't just a contribution. It's a statement that the community you helped build matters. It helps protect the experiences, friendships, and opportunities that shaped so many families, including your own. It ensures the next generation can discover the same sense of belonging and joy that brought all of us together in the first place.

If you're able, a donation of any amount will help strengthen FCRV's foundation and sustain the programs that define who we are. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, your contributions may be tax-deductible. [This link](#) as well as in the back of this 'Camping Today' issue, you'll find a simple donation form.

Thank you for your years of dedication, your membership, and your belief in the values that built this organization. With your support, FCRV can continue to bring families together, encourage conservation and wildlife education, and celebrate the camping lifestyle we all love.

If you prefer, you may also consider including FCRV in your life estate planning. Every form of support helps ensure the organization you helped shape continues to thrive.

Thank you again for all you've given to FCRV and for standing with us as we work to strengthen its future.

Family Campers and RVers Donation Form

Tax ID: 16-0872172
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Donor Information

- Name: _____
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