



## Popularity of RV vacations, Lifestyle Spreading

METRO DETROIT — After a year of staring at the same four walls, many are looking for a change of scenery. In their search to discover new places and make new memories, some are hitting the road as they've never done before — with their home on wheels traveling behind them.

Derek Kline, the general manager at Kline's RV Center in Warren, said sales and general interest in travel trailers, motorhomes and other recreational vehicles have increased over the past year. He's seeing a lot of first-time campers, as well as people who may have previously owned a camper and are looking to upgrade.

In 2020, when COVID-19 restrictions began to loosen and campgrounds opened up, he said, people who may not have felt comfortable in a hotel found camping to be a vacation that was open, safe and affordable.

Although interest has increased, RV sales have increased only marginally over the past year, said Geoff Radke, the sales director of General RV in Wixom. Instead, he said, the company is seeing constant demand, whereas there used to be seasonal swings in demand.

He agreed that the pandemic brought on the heightened interest in camping.

"Who would have thought that after being stuck (at) home, cooped up amongst family, that the wonderful byproduct would be people choosing to spend more time with their families on the road, creating lifelong memories?" he said in an email interview.

More affordable, family-friendly trailers and motorhomes were the most popular models early on in the pandemic, but as 2021 has progressed, demand has equalized across the range of options.

"Initially, we saw a big jump in first-time buyers entering the market," Radke said. "We still feel that many people that already own RVs are out using their campers and not trading them in as much. We are seeing fewer people trade in their RVs over the last year."

Kline said they had customers buying RVs to use for quarantining, as well as for working remotely.

"Usually, they would use them for maybe five, six weekends a year. Now they're going on extended-stay camps

A lot has changed to make long-term stays more comfortable, he said.

"There's TVs on the inside for rainy days. Most things are

*(Continued on page 8)*



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# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Ramblin's From Roxanne

Another rally is behind us but there are still four more ahead of us. Have you signed up to either be a host or co-host? FMCA runs on volunteers and every member can do a small part.

July's rally was held At North Whidbey and there were six coaches. Three of us arrived on Thursday and 5 of us stayed until Monday. Hors d' oeuvres on Friday night, French toast and sausage on Saturday morning, Chicken Saturday night and doughnuts on Sunday morning. People went many different directions on Saturday to visit friends and family in the area and then we spent a lazy Sunday just visiting.

Oh, one of the things Laurie and I forgot to mention from the National Rally was that we got a new member, Jennifer Rutkowski, from Renton, WA. We hope to see her soon at an upcoming rally, Welcome Jennifer.

On our last leg home, we discovered a long crack in the front windshield. Waiting now for our new window to be delivered, hopefully before the end of the month. I don't think it will be the Safelite guy in his little pickup. Pictures later.

There are only three of us headed to Kennewick and the Columbia Sun RV Park in a few days. We are planning on going to the REACH Museum on Saturday. (Article was written prior to the rally, but I didn't get the newsletter out before leaving for Kennewick. Laurie)

Roxanne

*"Don't make me flip my witch switch."*



## Puget Sounder News

**Note for June 2022:** The FMCA NW Area rally will be held in Coos Bay, OR.

FMCA has lowered their yearly dues to \$50 per year. You can pay your dues for up to three years at this lowered rate.



New member, **Jennifer Rutkowski**, joined the Puget Sounders while at the International Rally in Gillette, WY. We are looking forward to Jennifer joining us at an upcoming rally. Welcome, Jennifer!

## RALLY NOTES:

Remember: Call/text/email your wagon master when you make or cancel reservations  
Bob Fite: 360-402-0820 or  
bob.fite@comcast.net

All parks require you to call individually, to make a reservation with your credit card.

Keep in mind when making your reservations that most attendees arrive at the parks on Thursday and stay till Monday, if they have the availability.

Generally sites will not be held past 30 days prior to the rally. We recommend that you make reservations early.

For members no longer traveling with an RV there are cabins available at the June, July, September, October, and November rallies.

Expect rallies to be open air (without clubhouse) weather permitting.

# PUGET SOUNDERS

## *RV Tips & Tricks*

### **Trailer Backing Up:**

When backing up a trailer, put your hand on the bottom of the vehicle's steering wheel and turn it in the direction you want the trailer to go.

### **Duct Tape:**

Carry a roll it's the fix-all.

### **Sewer Hose:**

Have a 10 foot and a 20 foot sewer hose. A 20 footer is too long for the dump station, but perfect for most camp sites.

### **Lug Nuts:**

Check the torque of the wheel lug nuts periodically to insure they are tight.

### **Fresh Water Hose:**

When storing the fresh water hose connect the male and female ends together. This prevents contamination and keeps the hose from unrolling.

### **Foam Noodles:**

Cut a slit down the noodle, then cut in 3 to 4 foot sections and install them around the bottom corners of the slide outs. This will protect someone's head should they bump into the corner. Choose a color that matches the RV or better yet choose a color that will stand out and be noticed.

### **Trick To Keep Mice Out Of The RV:**

NOW Foods – Peppermint Oil – 16 oz.

Peppermint Oil. That's right! Put a generous amount on cotton balls set on small pieces of foil around the RV. Outside mix with water and spray the underside of the RV. The scent keeps the mice away. Guaranteed!



### **Fuel Fill Ups:**

Using [GasBuddy.com](http://GasBuddy.com) is a money saver and helps to see what the best local gas price is and where to get it.

### **Tips To Maintain Slide Out Seals:**

If you've heard a cracking or popping sound when extending your slide outs, especially after it's been sitting for a while, it means your seals are sticking and/or drying out! There are seals on both the inside and the outside of the slide outs. Using a seal conditioner about every 8-12 weeks is recommended to avoid drying and cracking.

### **After Rain Dry Out The Awning:**

Remember to re-open the awning after it has been raining on the awning and let it dry out. This will result in a lot less need to clean the awning and likely increased its overall lifespan.

### **Measure The RV Height:**

Avoid getting into situations where a building canopy or bridge is too low to fit under.

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Rally Recap: July 2021

North Whidbey RV Resort

There were five rigs at the North Whidbey rally...  
Bob & Holly Platz, Bernard & Beck Robinson, Mike & Roxanne Parish, Fred &  
Andrew Austin and Ken & Laurie Cameron.

## RVing the ABCs

**A** Amazing views!



**B** iking and Beaches

Fred and Andrew Austin took advantage of their new electric bikes to wander through the north side of the island and take in all of the beautiful scenery.

Several of the attendees went down to Deception Pass State Park to walk the beaches. We got to watch the fog lift and expose all of the beautiful islands, the boats passing and do some beachcombing.



(Platz, Barker, Cameron)



Honorary Member?



# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Chocolate, chocolate, chocolate

Mike & Roxanne provided some amazing fried chicken for Saturday dinner, and we did have a couple salads, but the rest of the table ended up being more chocolate than any 10 people could possibly eat. There was German chocolate cake, brownies, chocolate cheesecake, Costco chocolate cakes, bowl of chocolate candy,



We need members to volunteer as officers for the next year

We need members to share their favorite RV parks for rallies

We need members to volunteer to host or co-host at  
upcoming rallies,  
especially for the 2022 rally season

# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Upcoming Rally: American Sunset RV & Tent Resort Westport, WA

Friday, September 10— Sunday, September 12

**Westport** is a city in Grays Harbor County, Washington, United States. The city's population was 2,099 at the 2010 census. It is located on a peninsula on the south side of the entrance to Grays Harbor from the Pacific Ocean. The public Westport Marina is the largest marina on the outer coast of the United States's Pacific Northwest. The marina is home to a large commercial fishing fleet and several recreational charter fishing vessels. A summer-only ferry, discontinued in 2008, previously connected the town to Ocean Shores, across the mouth of the harbor to the north.

Westport was officially incorporated on June 26, 1914. Names for the area in the past include Peterson's Point, Chehalis City, and Fort Chehalis. The latter name is for a U.S. Army fort established in 1860 before the town was founded, "ts-a-lis" is the Lower Chehalis word for Westport, meaning "place of sand". Early explorers pronounced the word "Chehalis" and gave this name to the river and the people living up river who later became the Chehalis people or "People of the Sands". The area was used regularly during the summer by local Native American tribes (most likely the Shoalwater Bay Tribe, comprising Willapa Chinook and Lower Chehalis people) before Thomas Barker Speake and his family arrived early in the summer of 1857. Westport is also the home to a station for the US Coast Guard. In 2015, the Ocosta School District became the first to build a publicly funded vertical tsunami shelter, located at Ocosta Elementary School.

### Things to do in Westport

#### Grays Harbor Lighthouse

Get a 360-degree view of the ocean and the surrounding area from Grays Harbor Lighthouse, the tallest lighthouse in the state. Standing 32.6 m (107 ft) tall, this towering red brick octagonal structure with 1.2 m (4 ft) thick walls was built in 1898. Following the original 135 cast-iron steps, you will reach the lantern room underneath a green metal structure on the top. Admire the artfully wrought landing brackets of this self-supporting staircase cast in San Francisco and get your camera ready for some fabulous panoramas.



#### Westport Maritime Museum

The Westport Maritime Museum is located in a five building complex in the Marina District of Westport. The complex is the former U.S. Coast Guard station, which was completed in 1940 and operated as Station Grays Harbor until 1972 when a new facility was built several blocks south. Designed in accordance with the Nantucket architecture standard for the Coast Guard, the 18-room Station has three stories, six gables, a watchtower with widow's walk, and two foot thick basement walls. The property was acquired by the City of Westport in 1976, and after restoration was completed, it was leased to the Westport South Beach Historical Society for use as a museum in 1985.



# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Things to do in Westport

### Westport Aquarium

The Westport Aquarium is Washington state's oldest public aquarium, built in 1955, has a year round display of fish from the local pacific waters, including a touch tank, hands on interpretive exhibits and much more. The aquarium always has free crafts at a craft table for all ages to enjoy in the gift shop too. Come spend some time with your fish today!!!



### Granny Hazel's Candy and Gifts

Granny Hazel's Candy and Gifts has something for everyone. Located in the Marina District of beautiful Westport, Washington, we have an assortment of candy, apparel and gifts for all ages. Sweet treats include a boat full of salt water taffy, fresh fudge made in-house and gourmet chocolates, including sugar-free varieties. Our family-friendly store even has a resident Velociraptor – perfect for photo-ops with the kids.

New owners, Randy and Janene Dixon, hope you'll stop by during your next visit to the Washington coast.



### Cranberry Road Winery & Bog Water Brewing Company

Their Story...

Born out of our love of fine wines and delicious food, cranberry road winery has become the premiere location for fine dining in Grays Harbor County. After traveling the world and sampling different cuisines, we decided to make our way back home and bring the world to us.

Our biggest challenge was finding the right, high-quality ingredients for the dishes we wanted to serve. We are dedicated to offering only the finest and freshest foods. We have also taken great care in assembling a team of only the best chef and experienced kitchen and dining staff.

Come and taste the experience for yourself.



# PUGET SOUNDERS

(Continued from page 1)

power now, so you don't have to struggle with (manually) putting awnings in and out," he said. Newer models may offer the option to extend or retract an awning with the touch of a button.

Many recreational vehicles and travel trailers also have the option of slide-outs, which increase the width of the vehicle once it is parked to provide more living space. With optional bunk houses where children can sleep, and couches and tables that can convert to beds, "you can sleep a lot of people" in a camper, Kline said.

First-time buyers are showing a lot of interest in smaller, single-axle units that are around 20 feet long and can be pulled by a midsize SUV, he said.

"That's that first-time buyer who's looking to get their feet wet," he said. "Usually what happens is they use it for a couple years and they come back (and) say, 'I got a truck. I want to upgrade.'"

The pandemic gave a lot of people time to reflect on what is most important to them and what they want to do in life, said Paul Domish, the owner of Drifter Vans in Southfield.

"Most of the people I work with are between the ages of 50 and 70," he said. "People, they're living in them or they're at least spending months traveling. This isn't retired people — (it's) people who can work remotely."

Domish also owns a tour and activity company in South America. He sold his house and car and was getting ready to move to Bolivia full-time when the pandemic hit and he was forced to stay in the United States. A cousin in Colorado invited him to come with him to Yellowstone National Park, and that's where he was inspired to start Drifter Vans, which custom-builds camper vans. With a background as a general contractor building food trucks, he saw an opportunity to help people realize their dreams.

Owning a camper van isn't for everyone, but for those who are adaptable and want to see more of the country than their own backyard, it can be a great investment, he said

"A lot of people are like, 'It's smaller than I thought,'" he said. He added that sometimes people think all of camping is getting off the grid, but, "the reality is, you're going to be around civilization to some degree."

Domish said if someone is considering the camping lifestyle, they should just grab the bull by the horns.

He pursues "the same dream I'm selling to people," he said. "I can work remotely.

"Just do it. If you're thinking about it, just do it. There's always a reason why not to."

One factor to be cognizant of is storage.

"A lot of cities in the area won't let you store your camper in your yard, so call around and think about storage before you purchase," Kline said.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 manufacturing delays are having an impact on the recreational vehicle market, Kline said.

"The issue we are having is that the inventory is really low due to COVID. There was COVID issues that happened in a lot of the plants. The plants got behind," he said. Because of that, there are thousands of units sitting at the main manufacturing plant "waiting for all kinds of random components. They're essentially done. They can't ship it because they're missing one component.

"The demand is crazy, but the supply really can't account for it."

Prices have gone up, as well.

"We get price increases from different manufacturers every week, so the prices have gone up," he said.

Inventories were depleted with large numbers of sales in the summer of

2020, and supply chain issues have caused manufacturers to remain behind in getting products to dealers. Radke said he thinks that trend will continue through at least the end of 2021.

What's the best RV for each customer? Several factors play into that decision, Radke said.

"Who are you going to camp with? Where do you want to go while camping? What do you plan to do when you're camping? Do you want an RV that you drive or one that you tow? If you're choosing a towable RV, like a travel trailer or fifth wheel, do you have the towing capacity for it?" he said. "And of course, what's your budget?"

"All these questions will help you figure out what type of RV is right for you and prioritize which features are most important."

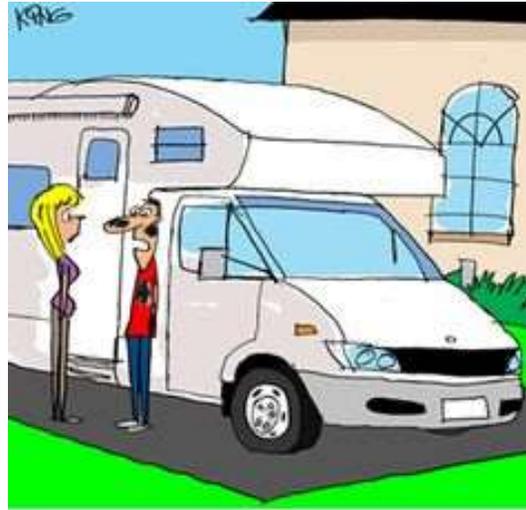
With so many great campsites to explore, even just in the state of Michigan, and so many benefits to the camping lifestyle, Kline said, it's a great time to get started.

"It's yours. It's your bed that you lay your head down on every night, as opposed to a hotel room, so you can make it as comfortable as you want it to be, and you can take that bed anywhere you want to go," he said. "You just have to get out there and see it."



# PUGET SOUNDERS

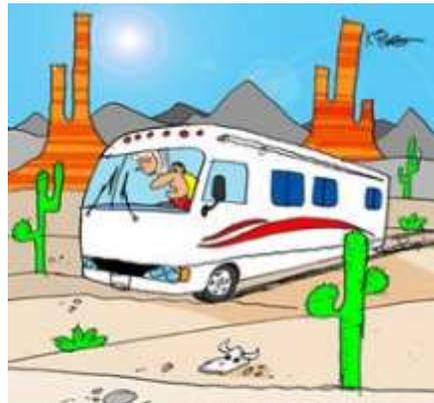
On the Lighter Side



*"I gave the RV a tune-up...and as soon as a professional fixes all the damage I caused, we can go on our trip."*



*"Have you ever considered an automatic leveling system?"*



*"You were right. Maybe I should've checked to see if the GPS was working before we left, because this doesn't look like the Florida Keys."*



*"How sweet, he's smiling. He must be dreaming about me."*

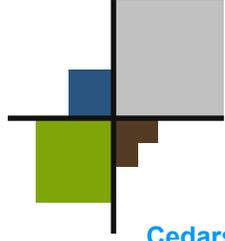


WHEN YOUR DREAMS ARE THIS



BUT YOUR BUDGET IS THIS





# PUGET SOUNDERS

## 2021 Rally Schedule

### **Cedars RV Resort**

Friday, April 23 — Sunday, April 25  
6335 Portal Way, Ferndale, WA 98248  
360-384-2622  
Host: Ken & Laurie Cameron

### **Icicle River RV Park**

Friday, May 21 — Sunday, May 23  
7305 Icicle Rd, Leavenworth, WA 98826  
509-548-5420  
Host: Mike & Roxanne Parish

### **Riverbend RV Park**

Friday, June 18 — Sunday, June 20  
19961 Hwy 20, Twisp, WA 98856  
800-686-4498, 509-997-3500  
Host: Ben & Donna Barker  
Co-Host: Volunteer needed

### **North Whidbey RV Park**

Friday, July 23 — Sunday, July 25  
565 Cornet Bay Rd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277  
360-675-9597  
Host: Mike & Roxanne Parish  
Co-Host: Volunteer needed

### **Columbia Sun RV Resort**

Friday, August 20—Sunday August 22  
103907 Wiser Pkwy, Kennewick, WA 99338  
509-420-4880  
Host: No Host

### **American Sunset RV & Tent Resort**

Friday, September 10— Sunday, September 12  
1209 N Montesano St, Westport, WA 98595-1878  
800-569-2267, 360-268-0207  
Host: Ken & Laurie Cameron  
Co-Host: Bernard & Becky Robinson

### **Elwha Dam RV Park**

Friday, October 15 — Sunday, October 17  
47 Lower Dam Rd, Port Angeles, WA 98363  
360-452-7054  
Host: Brad & Sandra Older  
Co-Host: Volunteer needed

### **Silver Cove RV Resort**

Friday, November 12 — Sunday, November 14  
351 Hall Rd, Silverlake, WA 98645  
877-380-7278, 360-967-2057  
Host: Bob & Elsie Fite  
Co-Host: Volunteer needed

## 2021 Officers and Staff

**President: Roxanne Parish**  
**Vice President: Bob Fite**  
**Secretary/Treasurer: Elsie Fite**  
**National Director: Mike Parish**  
**Alt. National Director: Sandra Older**  
**Wagon Master: Bob Fite**  
**Asst. Wagon Master: TBD**  
**Sheriff: Sandra Older**  
**Sunshine Person: Sandi Hersh**  
**Newsletter/Historian: Laurie Cameron**  
**Merchandise: Elsie Fite**  
**Webmaster: Gene Kenney**



Visit us on the web at  
[www.pugetsoundersrv.net](http://www.pugetsoundersrv.net)



### Hosts & Co-hosts Needed:

Hi all, If you look at the Rally Schedule to the left, you'll notice that we have very few co-hosts signed up for the upcoming rallies. Please consider throwing your hat into the ring for one of these dates. Also, get those reservations in for the upcoming rallies. Our numbers have been low. We'd love to see more of you!

Laurie  
Newsletter Editor