



## RV Life Means Never Having to Leave Home (or the Office)

By Christine Negroni  
June 8, 2021

Ownership of recreational vehicles is on the rise and with improved technology, an attractive lure for those who can hit the road to travel, or work, wherever they choose.

Since marrying in 2016, Brittany Garrett has had to live apart from her husband, Isaac, during some of his deployments in the U.S. Navy. After leaving the military in February, however, the couple embarked on a long-discussed plan for nonstop togetherness. They sold their home in Virginia Beach and set out across America towing a 22-foot trailer behind a heavy-duty vehicle (first an SUV, then a pickup truck). Ms. Garrett, 26, described the past few months as an opportunity to catch up with her husband for “all the lost time when he was gone.”

“We are in our mid-20s with no children,” said Ms. Garrett, who works remotely as a recruitment

manager for a child-care agency. “We didn’t need a two-bedroom, three-bathroom house. That was something society makes you think you need at that stage of life. So we downsized.



Even before the Academy Award-winning movie “Nomadland,” about a peripatetic RV owner, got people talking about life on the road, the Garretts joined the growing number of households that own an RV. According to Monika Geraci, a spokeswoman for the RV Industry Association, the number is up to 11.2 million in North America. Over the past decade RV ownership has increased 26 percent and sales of new RVs in March broke all records, with a little more than 54,000 shipped to dealers in North America.

Dealers and online marketplaces report there is

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# PUGET SOUNDERS

Ramblin's from Roxanne

Columbia Riverfront RV, what a great park! Watched large ships pass by during the day, saw the lights from ships at night, and fishermen in small boats during the early morning hours. We had 7 coaches with the Allen's and Wilson's being there for the first time this year. It was great to see them.

We had our meals on the patio but had to put up with the wind coming off the river. After breakfast we caravanned to the Cedar Creek Grist Mill for the afternoon. Unfortunately, there was not enough water in the creek to mill grain, but we did hear the history of the mill and its restoration. We do need to go back in October one year and partake of the apple cider they make at that time.



October is election month and if there is anyone you know who would like to serve the club as an officer, please have them contact me or any other member. If no one steps up the slate as of now stands at:

President – Roxanne Parish

Vice President - Debbie Scherck

Secretary/Treasurer – Elsie Fite

Brad Older has agreed to stay on as Wagon Master with Ken Cameron as Assistant. They are already setting up outings. Mike Parish will continue as National Director.

We will be meeting at the Toutle River RV Park October 20-24. Please try and join us. There are still slots available.

Final note, I have just returned from the planning meeting for next year's NWA rally to be held in Albany, Oregon in June. I will once again oversee Registration and Information and could use help again. Please put the dates of June 7-11, 2023, on your calendar.

## Puget Sounder News

**It's Puget Sounder dues renewal time!**  
It's time to renew your dues. →

**NOTE:** The rally at Midway RV Park in November has been cancelled due to lack of bookings.

**Note for June 2023:** The FMCA NW Area rally will be held in Albany, OR, June 7-11/

Donna Barker has volunteered to be the Sunshine Person for the club. If you know of someone who we should acknowledge with a card or note, please contact Donna. Her email is [bendonabarker@yahoo.com](mailto:bendonabarker@yahoo.com) or her cell number is 360-201-5670.

## Secretary/Treasurer Reminder

Dues for the 2023 Rally season are \$20.00.

Please send your 2023 dues with a check made out to:

Puget Sounders  
4931 Scott Rd. NW  
Olympia, WA 98502

Do you need a new dangle for your nametag? Please let me know ASAP.

If you have any questions, please call me at 360-402-7956.

Thank you, Elsie Fite

# PUGET SOUNDERS

## September Rally Recap Columbia Riverfront RV Park Woodland, WA

Mostly sunny skies, but some pretty strong winds greeted us at Woodland. There were 7 coaches at the rally: Parish, Fite, Barker, Allen, Cameron, Older & Wilson. Wilson's celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary this weekend. Congrats!



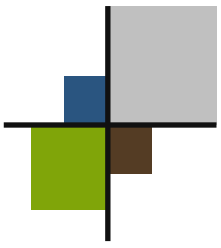
Out to dinner on Thursday night to Los Pepe's for some good Mexican food. Friday and Saturday nights we had a potluck since there was no official host for the weekend. (Thank you, Roxanne, for providing Saturday and Sunday breakfasts.) Sunday night the group went out to dinner again to a local pub where several people had the chicken-fried steak that pretty much covered their plates.



Saturday afternoon we took a field trip to the Cedar Creek Grist Mill. This mill was built in 1876 and has been refurbished to once again be a working mill during the weekends. They mill flour from several types of wheat, corn for cornmeal, and they also make apple cider in October.. Unfortunately, when we were visiting there wasn't enough water in the creek that runs by the mill for the turbines to function. I guess we need to go again after a good rain.







# PUGET SOUNDERS

Upcoming October Rally

**Toutle River RV Resort**

Friday, October 21 — Sunday, October 23

150 Happy Trails, Castle Rock WA 98611

No Host



## *About Toutle River RV Resort*

**Toutle River RV Resort** is located in Castle Rock, WA at the apex of the Toutle and Cowlitz Rivers and is one of the largest RV resorts in the Northwest. Our resort has the only private access to the confluence of the Toutle and Cowlitz River that offers access to the public (resort guests). The confluence of these two rivers is widely revered as one of the finest fishing holes in the state.

## *For The Explorer*

Our resort is a fantastic base camp for the explorer, family vacation, or long-term guest. We offer 306 full hookup RV sites many offering 6,000 sq ft or more and up to 100 feet long. Masonry fire pits and BBQ's are located through out the park and all of our premium sites feature a fire pit, BBQ and park style picnic tables. These are truly beautiful sites. We offer the largest RV sites you are likely to find anywhere.

Other park amenities include our 20,000 square foot pavilion, pickle ball, pool, spa, disk golf, club house, store and much more (see attached list). We are located eight miles from the visitor center for Mt St Helens National Monument and hundreds of other activities on the resort grounds are very close. Both Mt St Helens and Mt Rainier are our neighbors and the Oregon Coast, Astoria, Long Beach, WA (the world's longest beach) Lewis & Clark National Park, and much more all less than two hours drive.



# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Recipe Corner

### Sausage Stuffed Mushrooms

**Servings: 5**

**Prep Time: 15 minutes**

**Cook time: 40 minutes**

#### Ingredients:

1 lb cremini mushrooms (about 20)

1 lb mild Italian sausage

4 large cloves garlic, minced

8 oz cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

A few sprigs Italian flat leaf parsley, Chopped

Sea salt & black pepper, to taste



#### Steps:

De-stem mushrooms and finely chop the stems

To a large skillet, over medium-high heat, add chopped mushroom stems, Italian sausage and garlic. Cook until sausage is browned and cooked through. Remove from heat and let cool.

Preheat oven to 350°.

In a large mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, and parsley. Mix until well incorporated.

Once the sausage has cooled, add it to the cream cheese mixture. Taste and add salt and pepper, if needed.

Spoon heaping mounds of the stuffing mixture into each mushroom cap. Bake on middle rack to 30 minutes

Sprinkle remaining 1/4 cup Parmesan over the top of the mushrooms. Broil on high for 3-5 minutes, or until the Parmesan is a nice golden brown.

Let stand 5-10 minutes before serving.

Recipe submitted by Laurie Cameron





# PUGET SOUNDERS

(Continued from page 1)

also a huge demand for used campers, trailers, buses and vans. And for the new models the innovations just keep on coming, according to Bob Wheeler, president and chief executive of Air-stream Inc. H

is enthusiasm is evident when he talks about what might be the next big things: rollout awnings with embedded solar panels and technology that will allow gray water to be reused.

“The pace of change is accelerating,” Mr. Wheeler said. “All we can do is try and anticipate and design systems that can be flexible.”

Cary Alburn, a retired lawyer from Colorado who has been camping since he was a teenager, notes the progress with wonder. “The explosion of technology in RVs over just a few years is almost shocking, especially to those of us who’ve been RVing for so many years.”

Mr. Alburn, 77, remembers a time when batteries provided little more than a trickle of power and bathing and dishwashing water was dumped into the woods as a matter of course.

“We’ve evolved so much on the coaches,” said Dave Simso, owner of Dave’s RV Center in Danbury, Conn. “You are never anywhere where you don’t have everything you need.”

That may be the case for the ultra-luxurious Newmar brand RVs which start at just under \$200,000 and can go up to \$1.3 million. But Mr. Simso’s son, Dave Jr., the company’s general manager, says even manufacturers of moderately priced RVs have always tried to keep up with new products — even when “new” meant microwave ovens and DVD players.

A robust aftermarket allows buyers of older models to update their units. Interest is largely focused on three areas; internet, portable power and what John Tinghitella, president and owner of RV Designer, which supplies replacement hardware for RVs, calls the “icky” subject of toilets.

“At home you never think about it,” said Mr. Tin-

ghitella, who is also a member of the RV Industry Association. “We hit flush and have been doing that all our lives. We have zero expectations of seeing it again.” This is not the case while on the road — giving rise to an array of toilet innovations.

For the most part, the Garretts park their trailer in campgrounds and hook up to a sewer connection for their gravity flush toilet. Otherwise, a holding tank must be emptied at a dump station. “That’s my job,” Mr. Garrett said; his wife finds the process “gross,” as do many others.

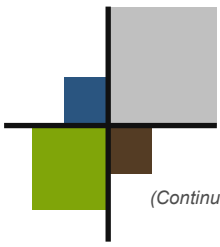
The couple is considering switching to a compostable toilet that requires keeping liquids separate from solids. Other options include a cassette toilet that captures everything in a container that is removed, emptied and put back in place, and incinerating toilets that burn the waste in a metal container just below the seat.

Owners of older RVs are also looking for robust portable power. Many campgrounds have power outlets at each site. But for “boondocking” — staying in places without electricity — some sort of power supply is needed for lights, heat and charging electronic devices. Gas-powered generators can do this but make noise and emissions so upgrading from older technology batteries to lithium-ion is a popular alternative.

Grant Walters, regional sales representative for Pleasure-Way Industries, a Canadian manufacturer of the smallest category of RV known as Class B, said his company began installing these quick-charging and long-lasting batteries in 2016. There is more involved in making the switch than swapping old lead acid batteries for new lithium batteries, though. Specific chargers are recommended for lithium both for charging by 120-volt AC power and also when they will be charged by the vehicle’s alternator, according to guidance issued by the Seattle-based manufacturer Dakota Lithium.

“Not all the onboard chargers on RVs or tow-behind trailers are capable of charging a lithium product,” said Jeff Barron, lab manager at Interstate Batteries. Then there is the cost. Lithium bat-

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teries are four times the price of lead acid ones and charge controllers can cost an additional \$2,000, Mr. Barron said. Dakota Lithium's chief executive, Andrew Jay, estimates a small system would cost about \$1,500, and its most popular, which includes solar panels, is \$3,000.

The pandemic is widely considered to be fueling the present popularity of RVs, but even before the global shutdowns, digital nomads were taking their work on the road and not just young professionals. The Abramsons — he's a C.P.A., she's a tutor — are in their 60s. When they got their camper van, they promptly added a second desk behind the driver's seat so both could work while traveling.

"There are many people who want to keep it simple and get away from the complexity of their home lives, but everyone wants connectivity," Mr. Wheeler said.

Airstream's higher-end campers and trailers, like those from other manufacturers, come with Wi-Fi and cellular antennas and there are several companies active in the aftermarket. These antennas boost reception from a cellphone tower or Wi-Fi access point, whether it's a campground or a local Starbucks. But they can't improve slow speeds. That's an infrastructure problem and it has been exacerbated by the "exponential increase" in the number of people taking to the road and expecting home quality internet, said Andy Mikesell, who works in dealer services at Winegard Company, which makes and sells RV antennas to dealers and consumers.

"The real trick to the whole thing is to get all the different parties to work together, and campgrounds have to put in better network capa-

bilities and install better servers," he said.

For consumers used to on-demand internet at home, without having to give it much thought, getting mobile connectivity can be complicated. In 2019, Leigh and Tom Mundhenk of Ocean Park, Maine, bought a new Leisure Travel Van. Throughout their first nine-week getaway they never fully understood how to use the factory installed cellular booster because it came with several different data plans.

"There are a lot of different options and we are not tech savvy at all," Ms. Mundhenk said. Mr. Mundhenk added that the couple is still trying to figure out what kind of a plan they would need. Connectivity frustration is practically universal, said Neil Balthaser, a retired tech worker who runs Ultramobility, a [YouTube channel](#) for RV owners. That's because mobile internet access relies on cell service that may be hard to get off the beaten track.

"It's a gimmick when you think about it — your coach isn't going to get any different Wi-Fi than your cellphone," he said.

For RVers who find technology is either too old or too new or too icky, Ms. Garrett's first four months of full-time R.V. life suggests there are more upsides than downsides.

"It surprised me that I enjoyed it and it has brought me as much peace as it has," she said from San Diego. "Simpler living, that's the peace I was referring to. Less stuff, more life.



# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Hosts Needed for 2023 Rallies

Hi all,

How about you take a look at the upcoming rallies in 2023 on the last page of this newsletter and consider throwing your hat into the ring for one of those dates. You might consider teaming up with one of your buddies to host together to lighten the load, if you like. If everyone would take one rally to host, then we would have the entire rally season covered easily.

Laurie

Newsletter Editor



Emergency To Go Bag  
NWA Rally Class 2022  
Presented by Glenda Milner



In case of emergency situations, what would you need to sustain living with a trip interruption. This class was about learning what items and documents should be considered to be placed in an Emergency To Go Bag. Ideally this bag would be kept directly behind the driver or passenger seat for easy grabbing if needed. At night it would be best to move the bag to the bedroom.

In the case of a fire, it was noted that you would have approximately 11 seconds to vacate the RV due to the quick nature of these fires and the amount of smoke that would quickly fill the RV. The idea is to have this emergency bag ready to throw out a window or door and then get yourself out safely.

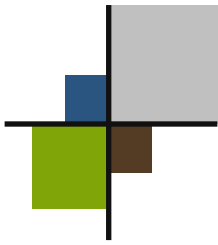
Also, if you should have an accident or break down, and you need to leave your RV for a couple days, this would be a quick and easy bag to grab with most of your essentials.

The list to the right is a suggested list and can be personalized to your own needs. Pack most things in water tight zip-lock baggies. If possible use a waterproof bag for your Go Bag as well so that if you are caught in the rain, nothing will get wet or destroyed.

Happy traveling in your RV. Let's hope that you never have to use this Emergency To Go Bag, but it's like any kind of insurance. When you need it, you really need it.

Thank you to Glenda Milner for the great presentation.





# PUGET SOUNDERS

## Emergency To Go Bag for RV Traveling

### Checklist for "Go Bag" (pick & choose what applies to you)

#### Tools & Safety

- CB radio & extra batteries
- crank flashlight
- regular flashlight + batteries
- emergency flashers
- fluorescent vest
- glow necklace &/or bracelet
- hand fans (for cooling & to keep bugs away)
- spare keys to RV and tow vehicle
- multi tool
- small scissors
- compass
- glass-breaking tool
- spare charger for phone
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Clothes (try on routinely)

- 2 tops & 2 pair of slax or shorts
- underwear
- SPF shirt
- sun hat
- rain apparel
- shoes: sandals + sox in tennis shoes
- sox (can double as gloves)
- windbreaker with hood
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Food & Water (change out every 3-4 months)

- bottles of water
- jerky
- Altoids or Life Savers or peppermints
- trail mix
- nuts
- power bars, Ritz peanut butter crackers
- collapsible glass
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Pets

- food & treats
- water & bowls
- towel or pad to sit on
- pillowcase to secure scared pet
- leash & harness & tags
- chew toys
- records for each pet
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Personal Items

- Rx for a week - change out every 3 months
- spare glasses - pack inside shoes
- hearing aids & batteries or charger
- Kleenex
- toilet paper
- brush & comb
- first aid kit
- deodorant
- makeup
- razor
- bar of soap or liquid soap
- plastic gloves
- personal wipes
- toothbrush & toothpaste
- masks
- mirror (also for signaling)
- hand sanitizer bottle or wipes
- sun screen
- fans
- lip gloss
- bandanas (to filter water, use as shade, or use as bandages or sling)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Comfort

- foil blanket
- inflatable pillow
- deck of cards
- book to read
- book of Sudoku or crossword puzzles
- notebook for notes of incident
- pens & pencils
- pallet/blanket/tarp (to sit on or wrap up in)
- paper towels & napkins
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Miscellaneous

- cash (paper & coins) + blank check
- copies of driver's license, credit cards, Chubb (FMCassist) info, military ID, insurance cards, etc.
- backup hard drive for computer data
- book of passwords
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Backpack (packed only if weather alert)

- computer
- jewelry
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# PUGET SOUNDERS

On the Lighter Side

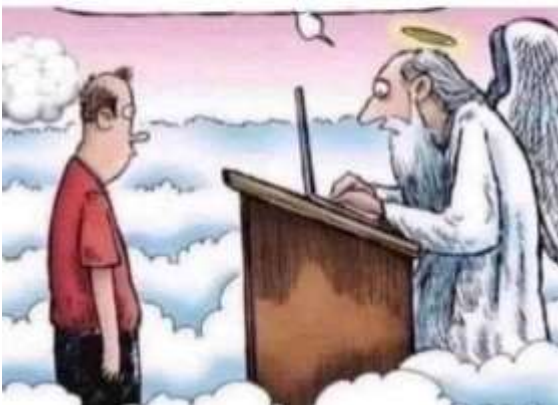
When I was  
eighteen I used  
to touch my toes  
twenty times  
each morning,  
these days  
I have a cup of  
coffee and wave  
☺ at them ☺



Instead of the John I call my  
bathroom the Jim!  
That way it sounds better when I  
say I go to the Jim first thing  
every morning!!!



You almost made it if it weren't  
for your language when you were  
trying to back your RV into a spot.



# PUGET SOUNDERS

## 2023 Rally Schedule

### Tentative

#### **Stargazer RV Resort**

April 21-23  
800 E. Simcoe Dr.  
Goldendale, WA 98620  
509-773-7827  
stargazersrvresort.com  
Host: TBD

#### **Riverbend RV Park**

May 26-30  
19961 Hwy 20  
Twisp, WA 98856  
www.riverbendrv.com  
Hosts: Ben & Donna Barker

#### **NWA Regional Rally**

June 7-11  
Albany, OR

#### **American Sunset RV**

June 28-30  
1209 N. Montesano St.  
Westport, WA 98595  
360-268-0207  
www.americansunsetrv.com  
Host: TBD

#### **Howard Miller**

July 28-30  
52804 Rockport Park Rd.  
Rockport, WA 98283  
360-853-8808  
www.skagitcounty.net  
Host: TBD

#### **FMCA 107th International Convention**

August 23-26  
Cam-PLEX Event Facility  
Gillette, WY

#### **Columbia Riverfront RV Park**

September 16-18  
1881 Dike Rd.  
Woodland, WA 98674  
360-225-2228  
www.columbiariverfrontrvpark.com  
Host: TBD

#### **Wine Country RV Resort**

October 20-22  
330 Merlot Dr.  
Prosser, W 99350  
509-786-5192  
www.winecountryrvpark.com  
Host: TBD

#### **Olde Stone Village**

November 10-12  
4155 NE Three Mile Lane  
McMinnville, OR 97128  
503-472-4315  
Oldstonevillage.com  
Host: TBD

## 2022 Officers and Staff

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



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



### Important Message from your Wagon Master

Please text me at 360-359-6712, or email me at [bradolder@fairpoint.net](mailto:bradolder@fairpoint.net) when you make a reservation so I can provide the hosts with an accurate headcount so they can plan the appropriate amount of food.

Brad Older