# CAMPGROUND & RV PARK E-news

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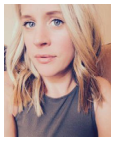

# RVShare.com ranks the best spots to enjoy year-round camping

*THE most googled question this week by would-be campers: what campgrounds are open?*

That one is simple enough, yet hard to answer.

Campgrounds that can keep up with fluctuating COVID-19 health and safety guidelines are open for business. Seasonal campgrounds are in hibernation mode and won't likely reopen till spring.

Other sites around the country are either partially restricted or closed entirely due to pandemic mitigation efforts. For instance, campsites at a dozen national forests in California, including Sequoia National Forest and Sierra National Forest, are closed until Jan. 29).

While camping has not returned to normal, the demand remains high for close-to-nature escapes, where social distancing is less arduous. Even as we head into the cooler months, families are yearning for activities outdoors. They just want to pitch a tent and roast marshmallows with the kids.

So, where do all these would-be travelers want to set up camp? RVshare.com, a recreational vehicle marketplace for renters, compiled a list of the eight most searched destinations for camping enthusiasts this season.

### 8. SAN DIEGO

San Diego ranks no. 8 on the list for top U.S. camping destinations to visit during the winter. Southern California lures campers with warm weather, palm trees, and beachfront campsites. However, under the latest COVID orders, state campgrounds located in counties with regional stay-at-home orders must remain closed at least Jan. 29. Private campgrounds may be technically open, but can only accept reservations for essential travelers while a stay-at-home order remains in effect.

### 7. FORT WORTH, TEXAS

No. 7 is Fort Worth, Texas, home to the region's largest theme park, Six Flags, and offers a variety of nature parks, gardens, and a large zoo. Campers can take in 1.5 miles of sandy beaches on the Brazos River and explore over 350 acres of land from a riverfront campsite at Bee Mountain Ranch Camp. While it's more of a barebones camping experience, modern amenities like firewood, ice, and generators are available to rent or purchase, along with extras for activities like paddle boarding or kayaking. And good news for campers with fur children: your dog is welcome.

### 6. HOUSTON

Campers can find full-service RV sites to visit year-round in Houston, ranked sixth on the list. The area offers plenty of opportunities to bike, hike, camp, or fish. Galveston

Island State Park is about a one-hour drive away. The waterfront park boasts a richly diverse preserve with all kinds of wildlife — from spoonbills to coyotes.

**5. PHOENIX**

Located in the heart of the Sonoran Desert, Phoenix is the fifth most popular destination for would-be campers. Maricopa County has six regional park campgrounds to choose from. Check VisitPhoenix.com for outdoor activity suggestions, like hiking. Arizona offers outdoor enthusiasts six national forests, 31 state parks and millions of acres of public land.

**4. JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA**

While an average high temperature in the mid-60s for January, Jacksonville continues to draw sun seekers during the winter months. The area, dubbed as having the "largest urban park system in the nation" ranks no. 4 for a top camping destination. Check VisitJacksonville.com for a long list of camping options for families. Many, like Flamingo Lake RV Resort, are just a few steps away from the water.

**3. MIAMI**

South Florida may be best known for its vibrant pre-pandemic nightlife and sandy beaches, but there are plenty of camping options, too. The Larry and Penny Thompson Park and Campground is one of the largest. It has 240 separate campsites with full electrical and water hook-ups and is close to Zoo Miami (one-day tickets must be purchased online). Downtown Miami is about a 40-minute drive away, which is surprising given how close to nature you'll feel on their bridle and hiking trails.

*Full Article:* https://bit.ly/396pPte


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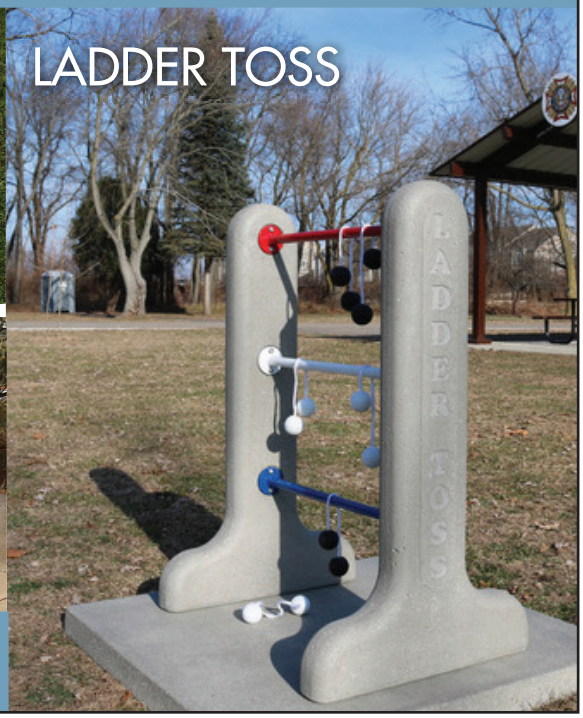


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# Economy 'ready to take off' in 2021

*FANNIE Mae's Economic and Strategic Research (ESR) Group expects the U.S. economy to grow 5.3% in 2021, an upgraded forecast from the 4.5% reported last December. The GSE also issued an improved projection for 2022 at 3.6% growth from 3.2%.*

Fannie's dense "Economic & Housing Outlook" report indicates that economic output likely flatlined or even pulled back during the last two months of 2020. But Fannie Mae's experts expect a reversal of recent softness starting in late spring when growth typically accelerates. Thus, Fannie reported a downgrade to negative 2.7% for forecasted GDP growth as it pushes more recovery further into 2021.

"Expanding vaccination efforts, the emergence of warmer weather, and the passing of greater than previously expected fiscal stimulus point to an economy ready to take off once COVID-19-related effects begin to subside," note the report's authors (Doug Duncan, SVP and Chief Economist; Mark Palim, VP and Deputy Chief Economist; Eric Brescia, Economist; Nick Embrey, Economist; Rebecca Meeker, Financial Economist, and Richard Goyette, Business Analyst).

A successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine will accelerate recovery, the researchers said.

"COVID-19 remains the dominant force altering the path of the economy through the behaviors of people, businesses, and policymakers," Duncan said in a press release. "Therefore, the best policy for economic recovery is the broad distribution of an effective vaccine, which is underway. The sooner this can be successfully accomplished the sooner growth can accelerate, and our thought is that by mid-year vaccine distribution efforts will be well-established, allowing for a strong second half."

While the ESR group expects home sales to rise 3.8% in 2021, the monthly pace is likely to slow through much of the year.

House price appreciation is expected to slow along a similar timeline.

Purchase mortgage originations are expected to rise in 2021 to $1.8 trillion from 2020's projected $1.6 trillion, while refinance origination activity is forecast at $2.2 trillion in 2021, down from the projected all-time high of $2.8 trillion in 2020. With mortgage rates near historic lows, the authors estimate that 67% of outstanding mortgages have at least a half-percentage point incentive to refinance.

The report indicates the housing market will "shift down a gear" after driving the initial phase of economic recovery in latter 2020.

"While we forecast that housing demand will continue to be strong, based on an improving labor market and favorable demographic factors, we believe the pace of activity will likely slow over time toward its underlying trend," the researchers said. "We do not expect mortgage rates to decline further, and inventories of homes for sale remain extremely tight."

The full report is available at www.FannieMae.com.

*Source: https://bit.ly/39XpKHv*

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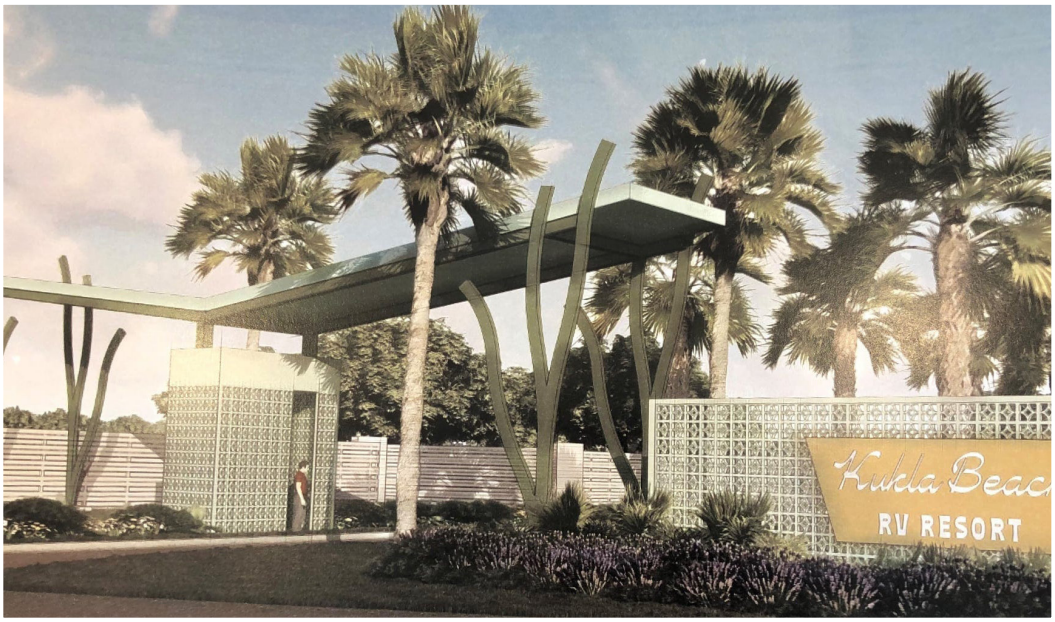
# High-end RV resort to be built in Panama City Beach




*PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. An upscale recreational vehicle park will soon set up shop in Panama City Beach. The city approved a development order Wednesday afternoon for Kukla RV Resort, a high-end RV park, to be built off of Front Beach Road. The 29.2 acre RV park will be located between Hutchinson Boulevard and Front Beach Road adjacent to Clara Avenue.*

"We're just not aware of any facility like this around here and we're just excited to bring that," said Jon LaPlante, the owner's representative.

The RV resort will be geared towards bringing in high-end clientele. It will only offer space for 163 RV's at any given time. The park is designed to be approximately 5.8 units per acre.

"This is not about cramming people into one location like a Walmart parking lot. It's a nice, spread out, high-end type of experience," LaPlante said.

The Kukla RV Resort will offer amenities like a pool, fitness center, restaurant, clubhouse, concierge, and more.

The property will have a 24-hour office attendant on-site and video facility monitoring. It will also be fully gated.

The Panama City Beach planning commission thinks it will encourage visitors to return.

"We want our guests to be able to come and enjoy themselves, when they build those experiences over and over I believe they'll continue to come," said Reggie Johns, a member of the Panama City Beach Planning Commission.

The developer says the RV resort will be heavily landscaped and very separate from surrounding businesses. It will also have walking trails for both walking and biking. They hope these amenities attract many visitors and in turn boost the local economy.

"This development is going to create multiple jobs, the contractor, all the site work, the architectural work," LaPlante said.

To stay at the park, the visiting RV's must be no more than 10 years old and their stay will be capped at 5 days.

"We already have upscale people coming, this is a family atmosphere and we just want to promote that," LaPlante said.

Kukla hopes to start construction in the first quarter and says the entire project could take anywhere from 14 and 16 months to complete.

*Source: https://bit.ly/3iyfrNI*

# 34 partners join with the Buy, Build or Sell Conference

*THE Buy, Build or Sell Conference has amassed 34 partners, so far, to support the event and ongoing communications within Outdoor Business Pros. These suppliers and service providers are providing information, strategy and support to prospective and existing owners and operators.*

"The landscape has changed for obvious reasons and we applaud the support our partners are providing," stated Mark Koep, Founder and CEO of Outdoor Business Pros. He added, "these are the best in the business and they are coming together to help our industry thrive."

A large number of the partners are actively participating in the Buy, Build or Sell Conference by submitting educational material. In addition to the event the partners are available to support other industry professionals to improve their businesses through the main Outdoor Business Pros social media platform and the ongoing Mastermind Series.

"In the end our industry succeeds because we work together to make it so," added Mr Koep, "we invite anyone who wants to see more campers, enjoying more camper nights, at more destinations to join in the conference and platform."

Suppliers, service providers, and associations interested in learning more are encouraged to connect with Outdoor Business Pros at https://bit.ly/361sz9e

About the Buy, Build, or Sell Conference: Jan 26-27

Join the event that will empower you to make the best decisions possible whether you are looking to buy, build or sell an outdoor hospitality business. Over 50 sessions led by over 20+ of the top professionals in the market.

Looking to Buy, Build or Sell an RV Park, Campground or Glamping Business? This is the go to resource and event for that information.

*Source: Press Release*

# Turning the tables

***Randy Wagner, Care Camps Ambassador Dave Smith, and Teresa Wagner***

*WHEN Jennifer from the kids cancer charity Care Camps made the call to Randy and Teresa Wagner, she thought she was going to be making their day. Randy and Teresa with Wagner's Outdoor Express RV had just won a $10,000 grand prize from a contest designed to raise funds for kids with cancer. Instead, it was Randy who made Jennifer's day when he inquired "Would it be OK if we donated the money back to Care Camps to help more kids?"*

Last month, Level 5 marketing company issued a year-end charitable giving challenge to RV, marine, and motorsports dealers all over the US and Canada to inspire them to make a charitable gift to help the kids cancer charity Care Camps. To add a little "incentive" to give for the first time, Level 5 ponied up an amazing $10,000 grand prize to be given away to one lucky winner. Fortunately for Care Camps, the family that won the grand prize happened to be a couple with incredibly generous hearts.

Randy and Teresa Wagner are the proprietors of a small, family-owned RV dealership in Falling Waters, West Virginia called Wagner's Outdoor Express RV dealership. The dealership is not large, and the family would not ordinarily have the chance to make a large donation like this, but winning this unexpected prize immediately brought forward their chance to make a difference in the lives of kids who have had their lives turned upside down by cancer, and they did not hesitate. You see, the Wagners family themselves have been impacted by the trauma of childhood cancer, and they know how devastating a cancer diagnosis can be on the entire family.

Teresa said, "Our family has experienced childhood cancer twice, once with a nephew and again with a niece. Fortunately, both survived. Randy lost his father, sister,

grandmother and two aunts to lung cancer. I lost my father to cancer. We know firsthand how terrible this disease is. No kid should have to suffer cancer. The RV industry experienced a tremendous year, and we were all presented with an opportunity to give back. We would love to see all RV dealerships and RV manufacturers match this donation and support Care Camps moving forward. Let's help all kids with cancer experience the healing power of camping."

Care Camps is a non-profit charity that helps kids with cancer experience hope and healing in the great outdoors by sending them to special oncology camps. Thanks to

donations from the camping and RV community, Care Camps financially supports 135 camps, serving kids with cancer and their families in every single community in the US and Canada. At camp, kids get all the medical care they need, along with specialized counseling, and they get to do it while experiencing the healing power of nature. These camps allow kids struggling with cancer to find friendship and healing in the great outdoors setting, all at no cost to their families. Care Camps is funded entirely through private and business donations, which were impacted last year due to COVID. Thanks to the generosity of the Wagner family and Wagner's Outdoor Express RV, 2021 is looking a little brighter for Care Camps.

For more information on how your dealership can help, contact Jennifer Mercer by phone at 406-671-0447 or by email at: jmercer@carecamps.org

*Source: Press Release*

# Nature vacations surge during pandemic

*HUMANS spent a lot of time outdoors in 2020. After all, it is one of the few places we can safely go during a pandemic. Public lands saw a record number of visits, and interest in "nature vacations" surged.*

TripAdvisor says more than 50% of its consumers are more likely to take an outdoor or nature trip than they were before the pandemic. Booking.com's data shows that 56% of its travelers are searching for "off-the-beaten-track escapes". Pitchup.com, a lodges, cabins, and campsites booking engine, reports that reservations for 2021 are more than six times higher than last year. According to a study by RVshare, 73% of millennials indicated they are likely to rent an RV in 2021.

In the race to lure back travelers, vacations in nature are leading the pack. We have assembled a list of nature-focused vacations, ranging from touring Canyonlands National Park by mountain bike to wrangling cattle on a remote ranch in Wyoming.

**1.** Ride the Rockies and More: With maps and other resources from Adventure Cycling Association, plan a ride on the remote Great Divide Mountain Bike Route crisscrossing the crest of the Rocky Mountains through the U.S. and Canada. Or visit Yellowstone National Park, Devils Tower National Monument, the Black Hills, Mount Rushmore National Memorial and Badlands National Park on the Parks, Peaks, and Prairies route between Montana and Minneapolis. https://bit.ly/3paTLtu

**2.** Channel Your Inner Cowboy: Red Reflet Ranch is a 28,000-acre luxury resort and working ranch on the west slope of the Bighorn Mountains, just three hours from Yellowstone National Park.

*Full Article: https://bit.ly/2LRraLm*

# Girl Camper's annual charity RV raffle

*GIRL Camper is offering a Relic Custom Travel Trailer for their 3rd annual Charity RV Raffle. Tickets can be purchased for $10 each at www.GirlCamper.com/Raffle and will benefit HoldYou Foundation.*

"As mother, I can only imagine the impact it would have on our family if one of my kids were critically ill. I know that this Relic will bring a lot of joy to someone, but more importantly, it will help so many families who are in a real crisis," says Janine Pettit, founder of Girl Camper.

Millions of Americans are choosing camping as a safer and more convenient travel option over traditional travel. One of the fastest growing RV options in camping are lightweight, fiberglass trailers that can be pulled with a family SUV or well-equipped crossovers. Weighing less than 1,500 pounds, it's also sized right for backyard camping, a guest house or a home office. Also included is a custom awning created by Tin Can Awnings.

HoldYou Foundation pays those extra bills that build up when one or more parent is taking care of a catastrophically-ill child such as rent or mortgage payments, groceries, gas, child care, transportation and even insurance premiums. The financial burden facing parents with a sick child can cripple an already devasted family. 76% of the families HoldYou serves fall below the federal poverty line during their child's treatment.

Girl Camper is a multi-platform, national media site with 17 Girl Camper Chapters nationwide, a podcast within the top 15% listenership in the U.S. and the award-winning Girl Camper Magazine. The mission of Girl Camper is to inspire, education and lead women who camp through nationwide events, Camper Colleges at local dealerships, a Facebook group with 280k engagements a month, podcast tutorials and more.

The winner of the 3rd Annual Girl Camper Charity Raffle will be drawn on February 14th and must travel to the RV Museum and Hall of Fame in Elkhart, IN to pick up the trailer. All taxes will be paid for by Girl Camper.

*Source: Press Release*

# Big Rig Media helps BoaVida RV Parks and Resorts with launch

***Mendocino Redwoods RV Resort***

*LA QUINTA, Calif. – Big Rig Media, the recognized leader in providing high-growth modern marketing solutions to the outdoor hospitality industry, provided a complete rebranding and comprehensive modern marketing platform to help BoaVida Parks and Resorts introduce Mendocino Redwoods RV Resort as independent RV property, formerly Wiliits KOA, a franchised location.*

BoaVida RV Parks and Resorts owns and operates 11 properties throughout the Western U.S. including highly regarded The Springs at Borrego RV Resort & Golf Course, Zion River Resort, Emerald Forest Cabins & RV and Hacienda RV Resort. Its sister company, BoaVida Communities, owns and operates more than 135 manufactured home communities across 24 states.

"We have a high regard for the franchised RV park business model, and if we were earlier in our expansion into the RV industry, we'd have likely kept the property under the franchised brand," said Zach Weiner, BoaVida Regional Manager. "However, we've built a great competency and confidence in operating and marketing high-performing RV properties and felt we could redirect the ongoing franchise fees to more value ourselves."

After acquiring the property and investing in a number of enhancements to the grounds and amenities, BoaVida called on its long-term marketing partner Big Rig Media to design the new property logo and brand guidelines and then deploy this throughout every on- and off-property public-facing touchpoint, both physical and digital. On the physical side the rebranding included monument signage, dozens of on-property signage, park maps, rack cards, apparel, name tags, guest forms, to name a few. Digitally, it consisted of building a modern marketing platform which included a new, conversion-built website, rebranding all social media channels and online review directories along with creating the full complement of digital marketing ads and assets to support its aggressive Google, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram media campaigns.

"Making the decision to rebrand a property is significant and should be done clear-eyed, but once determined, launching the newly branded property is really about paying attention to the details and having an organized plan of attack," said Jeff Beyer, Founder & CEO of Big Rig Media. "The physical touchpoints and digital assets can largely be done with the right checklist and timeline, where it gets more nuanced is with the positioning, messaging and overall go-to-market strategy. You want to respect the property's legacy but also set the tone

for the new brand and guest-experience," continued Beyer.

The new Mendocino Redwoods RV Resort was officially launched on December 1, 2020. Weiner has been thrilled with the response so far from the local community, guests and long-time fans of the property. "Early results have been significant," said Weiner, "in just our first full month of operation we've seen a 30 percent increase in revenue over the same period last year."

"A big reason for our confidence in rebranding the property was knowing we have a first-rate, trusted marketing partner in Big Rig Media. We've seen the results they've delivered for our other properties and knew they could expertly lead us through the transition and ensure we realized all the benefits of taking the property independent and launching the new brand."

Since 2000, Big Rig Media has played an active role in helping hundreds of RV resorts, manufactured home communities and the greater outdoor hospitality industry sell their inventory and fill their properties. The long-tenured in-house team brings the full-range of expertise needed to conceive and execute business building sales and marketing programming: strategy, technology development, design, digital media and marketing, social media engagement, analytics, security, automation and project management. Big Rig Media has built a reputation for flawless execution and a relentless focus on delivering results.

To learn more about Big Rig Media visit www.bigrigmedia.com.

The BoaVida Group includes BoaVida Communities and BoaVida RV Parks and Resorts. For more information on The BoaVida Group, visit www.theboavidagroup.com, and for information on the Mendocino Redwoods RV Resort visit www.mendocinoredwoods.com.

*Source: Press Release*

# Top 10 things Class A RV owners expect from an RV park

*LET'S face it, a good portion of Class A motorhome owners are not roughing it. In fact most of us are a lot closer to glamping than we are camping. Or as the Tiffin Motorhomes motto says, "Roughing It Smoothly". Granted, this isn't true for all Class A motorhome owners. Many of these units are toy haulers with plenty of room for ATVs, kayaks, and paddle boards. In these coaches, glam and luxury often give way to utility and function.*

For equally as many, however, that 50-amp power is being used to drive multiple air conditioning units, heated tile floors, and electric fireplaces.

These are often enjoyed while reclining on leather furniture next to marble countertops situated in one of multiple slideouts.

Aside from the occasional foray into national parks or COE campgrounds, Class A owners have certain expectations of RV parks and resorts. After defining what a Class A Motorhome is, we'll look at a few of those expectations.

### WHAT IS A CLASS A MOTORHOME?

Class A motorhomes are best described as looking like a city bus. These RVs are easily identified by the large windshield dominating the front of the RV and the overall square or "brick" shape.

### HOW LONG IS A CLASS A MOTORHOME?

Available in varying lengths from 25 – 45 feet, the longer lengths are often called "diesel pushers" as they have a rear mounted diesel engine. "Gassers" have a gasoline engine situation at the front of the RV. There is some variation and crossover within these formats, however.

### HOW TALL IS A CLASS A MOTORHOME?

Here again, Class A RVs can vary. Exterior heights range from around 11 – 13 feet. Typically, most Class A units are under 13 feet, whereas it's not uncommon to find a 5th wheel that is over 13 feet tall.

### WHAT CLASS A MOTORHOME OWNERS EXPECT IN AN RV PARK

**1. Solid, reliable 50-amp power**

With a big RV, it all starts

with power, and that power should be safe and reliable. Though most Class A RVs have an onboard generator, you aren't likely to use it in an RV park. That means that your microwave, induction cooktop, and air conditioners need good clean power to operate. Though some RVs have solar and lithium batteries to mitigate some of this need, right now that is the exception rather than the rule.

**2. Fast WiFi**

Whether you are streaming your favorite shows, trolling social media, working for a living, or roadschooling you need fast, reliable WiFi. Whether young or old, fast connectivity is crucial. This should be a primary initiative for all campground owners.

**3. Excellent water pressure**

While this is a desire for all campers, the Class A crowd in particular like to give those tankless water heaters a good workout with long hot showers. Having great water pressure makes that even more enjoyable.

Good water pressure is also handy when flushing out that black tank, or washing the RV, where allowed.

**4. RV washing allowed**

Speaking of washing the RV, in many cases this is not allowed, or is only available when you pay someone else to come do it for you. This is a complicated issue because there are water usage regulations, insurance waters to navigate, and environmental concerns. Still, it's nice when available, especially if you are going to stay somewhere for an extended period of time.

**5. Large RV site & patio area**

Class A motorhome owners like a large and preferably paved RV site and patio. After those multiple slides are pushed out, you still need to have room to walk around them, preferably while not walking through mud, bushes, or your neighbor's picnic area.

The same could be said for the patio. Many of these big RVs come with an outdoor TV. Occasionally even the glamping crowd enjoys watching the big game while grilling or relaxing outside the RV. It's tough to enjoy that lounge chair when it's stradling the sewer hose of the site next to you, and it's more difficult not to infringe on the privacy of others when sites are too small.

**6. Clear, paved campground roads**

Parking or backing in any large RV can be a challenge. Getting through a campground with a 45-foot Class A motorhome pulling a tow vehicle raises that complexity. Trying to do it with bumpy dirt or gravel roads and overhanging trees reaching out to snag your A/C unit, TV antenna, or satellite dish make it nearly impossible.

**7. Well maintained dog parks**

Around 67% of RVers bring pets along. For the 58% of those that bring dogs, having clean and well-maintained dog parks is essential. Some RV parks have excelled at this, and even offer handy dog washing stations.

Dog parks should be plentiful, with good fencing, and well-managed bag dispensers and trash cans. Some parks charge an additional fee for camping with pets. While this fee is at times controversial, if that fee is used to provide stellar pet facilities, then it's worth it.

**8. On-site grill or restaurant**

Glampers do a lot of cooking, whether it's on that fancy, glass induction cooktop or the outdoor grill of your choice. There are times when you just don't want to cook, and having an on-site grill or restaurant to grab a meal is a huge plus.

*Full Article: https://bit.ly/3c1y4Zh*

# Hiddenite campground struggling to recover months after deadly flooding

*ALEXANDER COUNTY, N.C. — In the early morning hours of November 12, 2020, several inches of rain fell in Alexander County.*

About 30 families lived at the Hiddenite Family Campground and had to escape rushing flood waters.

Sadly, five people drowned, including a 1-year-old boy. Ken Korte has owned the campground for 20 years. Korte says the insurance for the campground does not cover flooding and only a handful of families had paid for individual insurance on their campers.

This means that clean up, including digging out people's belongings by hand, has fallen on Korte and his daughters. He has no equipment to help dig out the tons of sand left behind by the flooding.

To help families who aren't emotionally ready to return, the sisters have been in knee-deep mud and debris digging for people's belongings. They have found wallets, purses, safety deposit boxes, and other personal belongings that were thought to have been lost by the water. All the digging done with minimal equipments and mostly by hand.

Korte does not have any heavy machinery to make clean-up easier. His daughter's say Korte has been at the campground cleaning up almost every single day since the flood.

*Full Article: https://bit.ly/3o5LXbj*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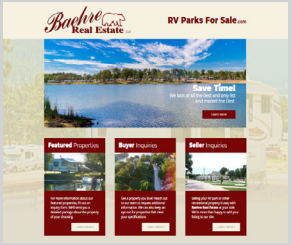


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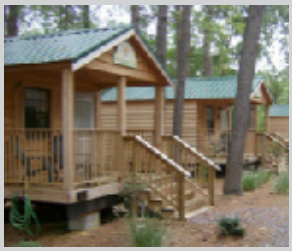

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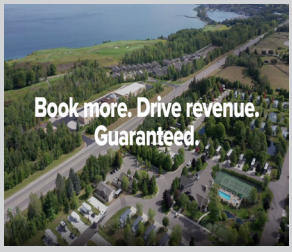


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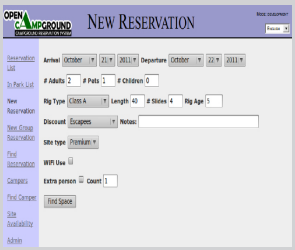


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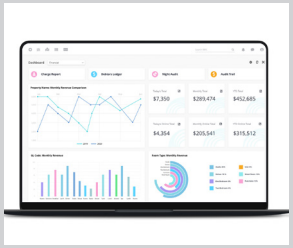

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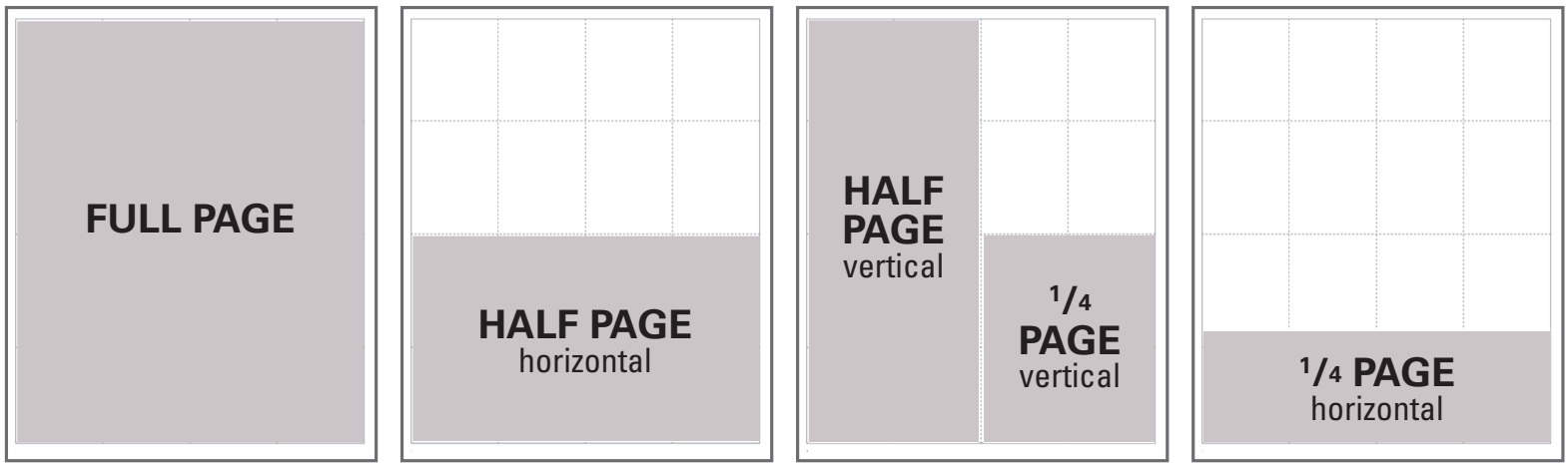


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