



GATOR TALES

Volume 13, Issue 1

*

Spring 2024

A Publication of ESCAPEES CHAPTER 57
FLORIDA SUN GATORS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello to all,

Spring is near, so now it's time to plan your Summer adventures. If you're planning a trip and would like some company let us know. Our April Rally in Lake City is coming up and will be a lot of fun. The Campground is sold out, however, if you are in the area and would like to join us on the day trips, you're always welcome.

Additionally, we will be asking for a nomination for chapter VP under old business at our meeting on the 13th. If anyone is interested, let me know.

VICE-PRESIDENT:

1. Appoint, elect or retain a wagon master, unless you will do these duties yourself.
2. Appoint, elect or retain a membership chairperson, unless you or the Secretary will be performing these duties.
3. Ensure that the chapter financial records are audited before the new Treasurer receives the books. Ensure that the Treasurer's annual report is sent to the Chapter Director by January 31st each year.

I am happy to welcome our new members, Christopher & Janice Amstutz, Jack & Julie Haworth, David & Joanie Hoyt, Lee & Brenda Samaniego, Melissa Gomes, Captain Randy Banger & Kelly Clem, Danton & Rebecca Timm and Carolyn Orr. Hoping I didn't miss anyone and looking forward to meeting you all.

For the members that could not make it to Lake City, Diane Wright (our secretary) is setting a camp-out May 15-20 at Thousand Trails, Clermont, FL. Keep a lookout for camp-out information.

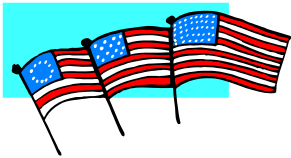
Lastly, let me thank those who volunteer to make our chapter possible. Diane Wright

(Secretary), Debby Thompson (Treasurer and Webmaster) Chick Thompson (Facebook), Becky Lunde (Newsletter) and Marilyn Forbes (Sunshine Lady). A special thanks to Maria Sens and Diane Wright for the new design of our Adoption Badges.

See you soon
Russell Sens,
President, SKP Chapter 57

<i>President</i>	Russell Sens	SKP #56793	rsens2672per@yahoo.com
<i>Vice President</i>	Vacant		
<i>Secretary</i>	Diane Wright	SKP #13713	dimor222@gmail.com
<i>Treasurer</i>	Debby Thompson	SKP #89508	gator57banker@gmail.com
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Minutes of the Business Meeting for Escapees Chapter 57 Sun Gators



November 7, 2023 Location: Cypress Campground and RV Park, Winter Haven, FL

The minutes from this rally were emailed to all members and also appear on the Website.

From the Treasurer: Chick and I have bought a house and the RV is up for sale. We no longer need our mail forwarding service, so the Green Cove Springs address is no longer a valid mailing address for me (the treasurer). I have made every effort to correct my address to Orange Park address on anything on the website. Sometimes something is overlooked, so if you find anything with the Green Cove Springs address let me know so it can be corrected. **DO NOT USE THE GREEN COVE ADDRESS.** In accordance with Post Office regulations, any mail received for us or the chapter after March 30th will be shredded. We found it odd they do not return to sender, but this is postal regulations not the mail service policy. Here is my treasurer's report: Bank balance 11/30/2023, (Winter Gator Tales) [REDACTED], Deposits: \$205.00, Expenses: \$22.83, Bank statement balance 2/29/2024 [REDACTED]. Unearned Dues (2025-2028): \$418.00 So available balance is [REDACTED]

Have you paid your 2024 dues? There has been a good response to the dues notices that have gone out. Thank you. There are only about 5 that I have not heard from. Most have renewed. Like Chick and I, several have hung up their keys. It's good to see we are growing and maintaining our membership. Just a reminder for those that have not paid, our by-laws state:

“dues are due by January 1st of each year. Any member whose dues are not paid by April 1st shall be suspended from the Chapter rolls. Any member whose dues are more than one year in arrears shall be dropped from the Chapter rolls.” If you are not sure if you owe for 2024, email me at: gator57banker@gmail.com. Just a reminder also “Membership in this Chapter is open to all current members of the Escapees Club.”. If your membership with Escapees expires, you shall be dropped from our Chapter rolls.

From the Website Manager: Our website: <https://sungators57.wixsite.com/sungators> has a lot of information at your fingertips. I make every effort to keep our website up-to-date. If you see anything that needs corrected or something you want added, please contact me at sungators57@gmail.com (there is a link on the website). Anything underlined on the website is a link. Email addresses (or names) underlined opens an email to that person. References to a document underlined will open that document in a new window. An event, campground or place underlined opens a link to the website for information about it. The members section has a copy of the latest Gator Tales (unedited for public), a Membership List (roster) and Secretary's Report (minutes from the last meeting). If you've forgotten the password it's [REDACTED]. A current Roster is on the Web Site.

From Facebook Administrator: Nothing new to report. Most people wanting to join our page that do not answer the required questions are not chapter members. If you invite someone to join our Facebook page, remind them they must answer the 2 questions to be accepted. I do message them and give them a chance to answer, but if I get no response, they are not approved to join.



Sunshine Report

Since the last newsletter, the following members have received cards. A sympathy card was sent to Rose Irons in January when Dave passed away. Larry Forbes received a get-well card in February and Diane Wright and Morgan Kirk received a get-well card In March. Hopefully all are doing well.

If you know of a chapter member in need of a sympathy or get-well card, please let me know. You can call or text me at 352-552-0132 or email me at mforbes37796@gmail.com.

Hope to see lots of you at the rally in Lake City and/or the lunch in Zephyrhills. ☀️☀️

Hugs,

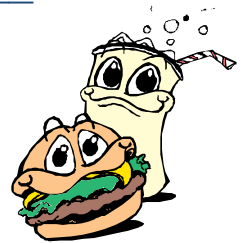
Marilyn Forbes, Sunshine Lady

Dave Irons passed away in January. His Celebration of Life was March 2nd. Dave was a proud Veteran and Escapees member. He was kind and friendly, and enjoyed entertaining everyone. He will truly be missed.



POT LUCK PAGE

No Recipes At This Time



MEMBER NEWS AND TRAVELS

Chris & Janice Amstutz:

I'm a native Floridian and Jan is a Jersey girl. We have two children (mine) and our first grandchild is (finally) expected this May. We are both retired and have been RVing since 2019 camping in 41 states and 5 Canadian provinces along the way.



Our current home, 23MLE fifth wheel get out every month the summer. I'm a out in search of new already booked this with the Sungator



As new members camping

when on the road, is a 2023 Keystone Cougar that we pull with a GMC 2500HD. We generally and usually take an extended out-of-state trip in bit of a planner generally looking 12 -24 months places to experience. We have a lot of trips year so it might take us some time to get in sync events & rallies.

we're looking forward to meeting and sharing experiences with fellow Escapees and the local

chapter members. We love traveling and are always looking for other campers that share the same interests as us - exploring new places, a good campfire, good food, National Parks & fun events to name a few (we'll be camping at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta this October and New Orleans Mardi Gras in March 2025).

Looking forward to meeting and camping with you and perhaps we'll go on a trip together.

Capt. Randy Banger & Kelly Clem:

We just purchased a property in Oxford in April of this year because we love the Villages and were paying over \$90 nightly for our RV during season the last few years. I am a semi-retired yacht captain, inventor, professional mechanic and fabricator with a passion for classic cars. I just finished my state-of-the-art garage and want to offer discounts to senior RVers. We also have two 50amp sites with concrete slabs and one 30amp and one laundry room and guest bathroom.

If you ever need a guest speaker, I share mechanical tips and give some background info on my mechanical career, boat safety invention, and years of service as yacht captain for several celebrities and pro athletes.

Here is a link to my new Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61554882652847>

www.sealorsink.com

Lynn & Becky Lunde:

Happy New Year and Happy Spring! The New Year started off great with a Gatsby theme New Year's Eve celebration at Southern Palms RV Resort in Eustis, FL. The park spent 3 days decorating the clubhouse to transform it to follow the theme. Everyone was dressed in their formal attire as we danced the night away to the sounds of a terrific band. Food including desserts was enjoyed. At the striking hour, toasts were made with filled glasses of Champayne. Since that time, we continue to dance and party as much as we can. Party Party... that's our motto! We hope to do a little traveling this summer perhaps in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. Wherever your travels take you, we wish you an enjoyable and safe summer.

Carolyn Orr:

Hi, my name is Carolyn Orr and I live in Tavares, FL. I don't usually make New Year's resolutions but this year I decided it was time to be a little more adventurist and get out and enjoy life, so on December 31, 2023, I joined the Escapees. First step in my New Year resolution.

I had heard about Escapees and on a whim, almost a year ago, I decided to take a road trip to Sumter Oaks Campground in Bushnell FL to check it out. Driving around the campground I met Linda Ward, who was enjoying gardening outside her motorhome at the time. She took a time

out to fill me in on the friendships and fun of being a part of the Escapees (thank you Linda). She gave me an Escapees magazine and invited me to come to a Rally that was being held in Florida a couple months from then. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend at that time. I'm still working full time right now, and I've been told I'm a workaholic, but hoping to change that this year. I am looking forward to making new friendships, traveling, and going to rallies and events. I'm excited to attend the March Solos Event and the April Sungators Ch. 57 Spring Event, and to continue my New Years resolution... enjoying life.

Carl Pichotta:

Nomadic and fit at 61, I embrace the freedom of RV living and the boundless adventure of exploring the great outdoors. From traversing backroads to trekking dense forests, from scaling mountain peaks to casting lines in tranquil streams, my passion for nature knows no bounds. Whether tent camping under the stars or marveling at the beauty of a sunrise or sunset, I find solace and vitality in the wilderness of the US, Canada, and beyond.

Chick & Debby Thompson:

This will be my last recap of our travels (at least by motorhome). As I said in the last newsletter, on our annual trip to Jacksonville area for the holidays and doctor visits, we found a house. We closed December 21st on a house in Orange Park, FL near the kids and back in the area where we started. Our first night at the house was New Years Eve, so we started the year out here. Our home no longer has wheels and the Phaeton is up for sale. As I stated before, DO NOT use the Green Cove address for us, or your mail will be shredded. Our new Orange Park address is on the roster etc. If you're in the area, please stop by. (FYI, no room for an RV at the house unless it's a small one!)

George & Sue Young:

Sue and I enjoy the country music festivals held around Florida, offering a combo of country, bluegrass, and gospel music. All provide camping for the RV. And they are so affordable—where else can you go for three days of entertainment—noon to ten, twelve different groups for \$100-.

So far this year we've done Okeechobee, Palatka, and Jekyll Island. Brooksville is coming up this weekend, and two more in March—Dunnellon and Sertoma. Go to their Facebook page for pictures. <https://evansmediasource.com/events/>

Editor's Note: As your Newsletter Editor, I will do my best to make the newsletter an interesting read, and provide accurate information. To make the on where you have been or where you are RV. Send me funny articles or poems. In appreciate it. Please submit any articles (lblunde@aol.com). Pictures are welcome



best to make the newsletter an interesting read, and newsletter the best it can be, please email me articles going. Send me articles on how to fix things on your other words, I need your input, and would really for the Gator Tales to me via email and may be used in a collage, or cropped for space.

JPG format is preferred. I will attempt to include all articles in the current issue. I look forward to receiving lots of articles from everyone. **The newsletter deadlines are March 15th, September 15th, and December 15.** Thank you for your participation. I hope you enjoy this issue.

Becky Lunde

Thank you to all who submitted articles for this issue!

JUST FOR LAUGHS

1. What did one wall say to the other wall? I'll meet you at the corner.
2. What did the paper say to the pencil? Write on!
3. What is the fleas favorite way to travel? Itch hiking.
4. How did the bullet lose its job? It got fired.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Florida Escapees Gathering For Lunch

Luncheons are held the first Thursday of the month (**November thru April**) at 11am at Golden Corral, 6855 Gall Blvd. in Zephyrhills, FL.



Chapter 57 Spring Rally –April

When: April 12-17, 2024

Where: Dreamin' n Driftin' RV Resort, 8883Hwy. 90W, Lake City, FL 32055

Rally Coordinator: Russell Sens

Site Fees: \$55.00 per night + 3% (\$8.25)= 283.25 for the week. A \$63.25 deposit required. Sites 77 -93 have been blocked for us. If anyone wants to come in early, book your site per the link and add days by calling the campground directly at 386-315-0698 - owners Paula and Bobby. These sites will be released one month prior to the rally.

Reservations: reservation link **(THE CAMPSITES ARE SOLD OUT)** If you are in the area, join us for day tours.

<https://resnexus.com/resnexus/reservations/group/2F969860-886E-45DE-ABBE-469FF9034F15?GID=649bceab-c131-437f-b190-cee51aaa5bd1>

Chapter 57 May Rally

In addition to the April & November rallies this year, there will be a May rally.

When: May 15-20, 2024

Where: Thousand Trails RV Campground
2110 Thousand Trails Blvd
Clermont, FL 34714
Phone: 352-394-7575

Diane Wright (our secretary) is setting up this rally. **This is being sent to you because she needs to know who is planning on attending by March 15th to reserve the rally site with Thousand Trails.**

After March 25th, **you** will make your reservations with Thousand Trails. Non-Thousand Trails members will be charged \$48 per night camping fee. Must have 10 rigs (incl. members) for this rate. Make sure you tell them you are with the Chapter 57 Rally. Thousand Trails members will follow their membership guidelines.

More details will be on the website and in the Gator Tales, but **Diane needs a head count to set up the rally with Thousand Trails by March 15th**. Please let her know **ASAP** if you will be attending. (Or if you have questions)

Email: dimor222@gmail.com OR call or text: 843-902-2858.

FUTURE ESCAPADES: <https://escapade.escapees.com>

When: June 16-21, 2024

Where: Sweetwater Events Complex, Rock Springs, WY

(Row Reps are needed for Escapade, June 16-21 in Rock Springs, WY. As a Row Rep, you will receive 50% off of camping fees. You will also be reimbursed for expenses to decorate the Row table and information about Ch. 57. Please let President Russell Sens know if you are interested. For further information regarding Row Reps, please see the attached page. This information is also listed on the Website).

Escapade – Tucson, AZ

When: March 16-21, 2025

Where: Pima County Fairgrounds, Tucson, AZ

SKP ACRE Rally:

We are working on finding a location for the last weekend in April 2025, April 25-27 plus 2 more days. Finding a location has been difficult. Most large, successful campgrounds have been bought out by travel or equity companies. They are very difficult to work with and typically charge outrageous fees. When we have a place and a signed contract, we will post the info here.

Steve Masterson

President, SKP ACRE

(For further information, go to <https://skpacre.weebly.com>).

Escapees Boot Camp - <https://www.escapees.com/community-calendar/category/rvers-boot-camp/>

Itinerary for Chapter 57 Spring Rally –April

- Friday the 12th arrival check-in 12:00-8:00PM

All in-park activities held in Recreation Hall adjacent to office

- Saturday the 13th,
 - 9:00 - 10:00 bring your morning coffee and Registration, signup sheets (\$5.00 rally fee)
 - 10:30 - 11:30 Business Meeting
 - 11:30 MASA presentation with lunch provided (all park guests invited)
 - Afternoon Open
 - 4:00 Happy Hour, Adoptions, Pot luck dinner,
 - 7:00 Games (all park guests invited)
- Sunday 14th:
 - 9:00 - bring your morning coffee – volunteer signup, and sign up to give someone a ride sheets
 - 11:00 Trip to the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center, with a guided tour of the museum and tower
 - 4:00 Happy Hour, Dinner on own,
 - 7:00 Games at the clubhouse (all park guests invited)
- Monday 15th:
 - 9:00 bring your morning coffee
 - Enjoy local attractions: Falling Creek Falls, Webb's Antique mall, historic downtown etc.
 - 3:00 Meet downtown Lake City at Frankie's place for an early dinner (279 Marion Ave Lake City)
 - 7:00 Dancing DJs (Becky and Lynn) (all park guests invited)
- Tuesday 16th:
 - 9:00 bring your morning coffee
 - Day events to be determined
 - 4:00 Happy Hour bring leftovers to share
 - 7:00 fun and games

Wednesday 17th

Hitches and Hugs

Escapade 2024

Row Information – From Wendy Stanwood, Chapter/BOF Director

Arrival: All representatives for the Row should arrive by the morning of Saturday, June 15th. If your Escapade welcome packet states your arrival for June 16th, please contact the registration office to let them know you are a Row Rep and must arrive on the 15th.

Set-up: Times for set-up on June 15th are from 10am to 2pm. The Row will be easily found on the Escapade map. The Row will be in the Hospitality Room. You will be provided with a table and two chairs. For your exhibit you will supply your own brochures, visual arrangements, banners, table-clothes, etc. All this must fit within your booth space, so bear that in mind. Electrical outlets are not normally available, so please make sure to charge up all computers and battery powered devices that you may need during the Row hours.

Row Social Hour: June 15th at 4:00pm, the Row Social Hour will be held in an area to be determined at the fairgrounds. You will be notified of the location during Row set-up that morning. This is a time to socialize and meet your fellow reps. Snacks will be provided, and you will only need to bring your beverage of choice with you.

Row hours: The Row will be open from Sunday, June 16th, through Wednesday, June 20th. The hours of operation are 10am to 2pm. During the open hours of the Row, it will be **REQUIRED** that at least one person be manning the booth. If you wish to rotate personnel, that is acceptable if it is a member with knowledge of your group. An unmanned booth is not helpful to interested parties and detracts from the purpose of the Row, which is to tell others about your group.

Gifts/drawings: You are NOT required to provide a drawing or gift and is strictly up to your Chapter or BoF. However, if you choose to do so, all Row gifts are to be kept within the Row to giveaway. They will not be given away during the nightly drawings which are reserved for the vendors and parks. “Must be present to win” drawings are discouraged due to many members attending seminars during the open hours of Row. It is suggested that you obtain phone numbers of the entrants to make the giveaways easier for contact purposes.

If you wish to donate an item for giveaway for the end of the Row during the Row Rep drawings, please contact us beforehand.

Frequently Asked Questions about Row at Escapade

Q: What is the Row?

A: The Row began in the early years of Escapade when some enterprising members of Escapees chapters and BoFs (Birds of a Feather) placed tables outside of their rows of RVs to tell others about their groups. Today's Row is held inside and includes all the chapters, BoFs, SKP parks and co-ops that gathers for four days of Escapade to share all the greatness of their groups.

Q: Do we have to provide our own tables and chairs?

A: No, a table and two chairs will be provided for you. You are welcome to bring your own chairs if you prefer. You are encouraged to decorate within your space with any banner, flag, tablecloths, displays, etc. that fit within your area.

Q: What are the responsibilities of a Row Rep?

A: Those can be found online in the Chapter Manual by logging in as a member to [escapees.com](https://member.escapees.com) and going to <https://member.escapees.com/community/chapters/forms> . Click on the Chapter Manual link and go to page 33 to find those responsibilities. Any changes to those responsibilities will be given to you by your chapter director prior to Escapade or at any time during the event.

Q: Is there a discount for Escapade for being a Row Rep?

A: No, there is not.

Q: What are the hours of Row?

A: Row Reps arrive on the Saturday before Escapade begins to get set up. The Row runs Sunday through Tuesday from 10am to 2pm each day.

Q: Can a table be set up and left unattended?

A: No. The table MUST be always manned by at least one knowledgeable member that the Row is open.

Q: Do we have to give out goodies... candy, stickers, etc.?

A: No, you do not. It does help draw people to your table and many groups do, but it is not required.

Q: Are we allowed to sell or raffle anything on the Row for donations to CARE?

A: Per the Escapees legal department, there is no selling allowed on the Row for any reason due to the varying laws from state to state.

Q: What do we need the most on the Row?

A: Smiling faces. This is not an exaggeration, because people are naturally attracted to friendliness.

Q: Is there electricity available?

A: This varies from location to location, so therefore prepare as if there is no electricity available at your table. If you wish to use a computer at your table, recharge the batteries prior to each day.

Q: Do the Row Reps have to come to the Row Social Hour on Saturday prior to Escapade?

A: We won't make you come, but we'll certainly miss you.

Q: How do we sign up as Row Reps?

A: When you register with National, you will let them know that you must arrive on Saturday. Then you will notify the Chapter Directors at chapterdirectors@escapees.com to be placed on the rep list.

Q: We've heard that there was a "parade of banners" in the past. Does this still occur?

A: No, there is no longer a parade during opening ceremonies. However, you are encouraged to display your flag or banner at your Row table.

Q: How do we know where to park or go when we arrive?

A: There are many friendly Escapade volunteers that will assist you in getting parked and maps to guide you everywhere you will need to go, including the Row.

Q: Will we get more information as Escapade nears?

A: You'll get tired of hearing from us, but you'll not be short on information. And you're always welcome to send an email to ask anything you wish.

PICTURES FROM FEBRUARY LUNCH AT GOLDEN CORRAL – 30 in attendance!



MARCH LUNCH AT GOLDEN CORRAL – APPROXIMATELY 20 IN ATTENDANCE – NO PICTURES

Chapter 57 Membership Application

Please complete the information below. Then give or send to, along with cash or your check made out to: "Florida Sun Gators Chapter 57", to Treasurer: Debby Thompson, 2200 Thomas Lynch Ct., Orange Park, FL 32073-5080.

Please Print Clearly: Checks payable to Sun Gators Ch. 57

Name(s): _____ SKP #: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Addresses: _____

Telephone No(s): _____

Check all that apply: _____ RENEWAL, or _____ NEW _____ \$5 one-year membership _____ \$20 five year membership

A Publication of ESCAPEES CHAPTER 57
FLORIDA SUN GATORS



Florida Sun Gators
Escapees Chapter 57
Gator Tales
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Bradenton, FL 34205

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FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

Next Newsletter Deadline

SEPTEMBER 15, 2024
