

Tips for Hosting a Winnebago Meetup

Of the simpler, informal but still fun variety!

Enjoy Winnebago meetups and wish there were more?

Ya know there's an easy solution, right?

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Hosting small meetups can be **EASY** and **FUN!**

REALLY!

I Mean it!

Start with a simpler informal meetup and leverage these tips gathered from meetup hosts.



Reach Out

Brainstorm
(Where, When, What & Who)

Setup

FUN
(Meet Up!)

Reach out to **PAST** meetup hosts
(for meetups you've attended/enjoyed)



- Will they share tips and lessons learned?
- Would they maybe mentor you, or even cohost if they're able to come to the meetup themselves?
- Note: Most hosts would love encouraging and helping you!

Reach out to **FUTURE** meetup hosts
(for meetups you're going to yourself)

- Are there ways you can help them prep?
 - Sounding board for their ideas?
 - Proof reader for meetup handouts?
 - Sort out food options?
- Anything during the meetup you could help with?
 - Welcome folks and answer questions?
 - Logistics, like tables & chairs setup?
 - Coffee making duties so host can sleep in?
 - Host a Q&A session, Trivia Night, or such?



Are you familiar with the area?



How many sites does it have?

That will significantly minimize your hosting effort and stress, as you'll already know things to share rather than relying on Yelp, Google, tourist visitor's center, etc.

Choosing a location with limited site availability is an easy way to start off small.

Can everybody make their own reservations?

- Private RV parks that will block a section but still let folks make and pay for their own reservation are great!
- Public (state, etc.) parks are great if there are sites "open" to book in the same area.
- Hosts paying centrally for RV sites and collecting funds from attendees should be avoided when possible. (Email WinnebagoMeetups@gmail.com if you'd like help on this.)

Are there facilities to support your desired "What" and "When" in case of bad weather or bugs?



Setting expectations, a flexible schedule, backup plans and offsite activities (ie: restaurant road trips) are all things to think about if you lack on-site covered space.

What's the "normal" weather?

"Shoulder" seasons can be great for availability/cost. Maybe that's worth missing out on optimal weather?



Incorporating a festival, concert, or fair is a GREAT foundation for a fun and simple meetup!



Let your imagination run wild! Think of things you'd like to attend yourself.

Example 2023

Winnebago Compact Coach Meetups:

- Chocolate Stroll Festival (staying at nearby state park)
- Lincoln Highway Arts Festival (also staying at state park)
- Highland Games & Celtic Music Festival (with sweet on-site RV parking spots at the festival's county fairgrounds)

Have a favorite non-profit that could use some help?



So many talented and generous Winnebago RVerS who love to help others!

So many options!

- Take a shift at a homeless kitchen?
- Throw a "thank you" party for a non-profit's ongoing volunteers?
- Help as practice "interviewers" for people looking for jobs while on their path to a better future?



HELLO!
WELCOME!
How are you doing?

Be sure to include "chill" time!

It all comes down to setting expectations. Great meetups span the spectrum from accessibility-friendly exploration of an area's cultural places to physically-demanding adventures (biking, hiking, etc.). But including planned chill time to share stories, rest, catch up with old friends and make new ones is always good!



Take some time to mull this over... What Winnebago GoLife Group will you partner with to host/invite?

More on GoLife Groups at: www.winnebago.com/owners/golife-community



A single-model group?

For example,
the Minnie Winnie Class C Motorhome Owners?
Or Travato Owners and Wannabees?
Or View/Navion Motorhomes?

Or one that welcomes multiple models?

For example,
a Location-Based Group?
Or a Special Interest Group?
Or a multi-model group like Winnie Bs or
Winnebago Compact Coach Meetups?



Things to explore and think about...

- What are that group's meetup rules/norms?
 - They are all owner run, and vary a lot. Some are "the more the merrier - just add an Event in our FB group", some have a specific process to get a new meetup on their group's website and calendar, and others are everywhere in between.
- Who do you want to welcome? That may be a key driver in what GoLife Group you partner with. For instance...
 - If you have friends in EKKOs and Travatos you want to come, those are both "compact coaches" (of small Class C and camper van varieties) so you could do that as a Winnebago Compact Coach Meetups event..
 - If you own a Solis and want to gather with California like minded owners, then the California Solis Community may be your best bet.

Setup

Invite and Prep

Spread the word!
Publicize and invite folks

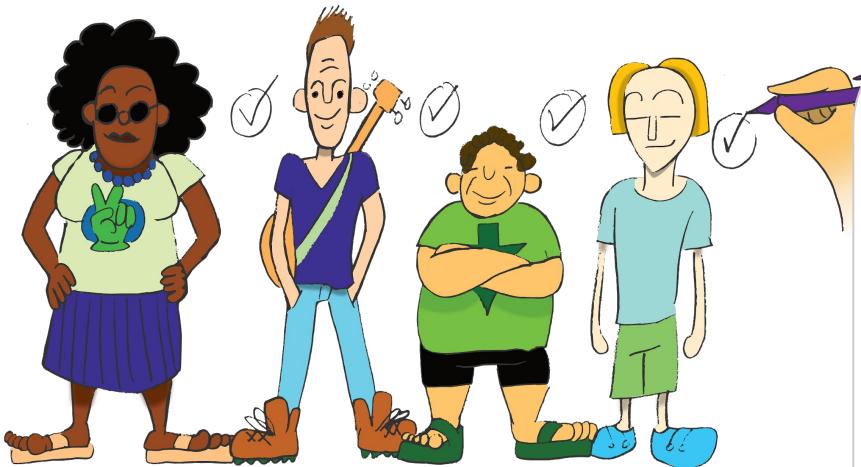
The method will vary, as should align with the "Who" GoLife Group that you're partnering with.

It's almost always good to get it on the Winnebago GoLife Meetup list!

www.winnebago.com/owners/golife-community

For instance if that Group is making it one of their periodic Group Meetups, they may put it on their website. Or you might just need to create a Facebook Event.

Think through if/how you need to track RSVP's.



For instance if you need to make reservations at a restaurant, how will you know who is coming AND plans to go out to eat with the group? A simple way could be a post asking folks to add a comment with the info you need, or sometimes a simple Google Form can be invaluable.

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WinnebagoMeetups@gmail.com has Google Form templates if you'd like help; it's typically done with just a 15 minute-ish video call.

Prepare -
Do what'cha need to do

- Enlisting helpers (like folks you already know who plan to come) can be great.
- Track RSVPs, engage with your GoLife Group community and answer any questions that pop up.
- Follow up on any Winnebago meetup support you requested (when you submitted for Winnebago's GoLife Meetup list).
- Do what'cha need to do for your particular meetup plans. For instance: Make a restaurant reservation? Check the weather forecast? Scope out RV parking? Order donuts? Buy/make name tags?

Host the Meetup - Fun for ALL!

MOST IMPORTANT - HAVE FUN YOURSELF !!!
That is huge factor in everybody else having fun too !



Follow your plan... but adjust as needed.

You know the saying "the best laid plans...often go awry"? Well that's the norm for meetups.

- Don't sweat the details.
- Know going in that RSVPs may not fully match up to who shows up (or when).
- Some things that looked great in the plan will hit snags in the real world.
- Ask for HELP !!!
- Did we mention, don't sweat the details? LOL! Have FUN!

ALSO IMPORTANT - PAY ATTENTION TO NEWBIES !

Lots of meetups are joyous reunions of old friends, which can be intimidating for newbies.

- Meet/greet activities are helpful.
- As host, help encourage inclusion of newbies in conversations. This can be as easy as "Jane - What do you think about ___?".
- Be especially sensitive if there are team/group activities like Trivia teams or ride pooling to go to an offsite activity. Newbies can easily feel excluded.



HAVE FUN !!! ASK FOR HELP !!! BE KIND !!!

Have we emphasized that enough? LOL! Pretty much the same things that make hosting a house party a smashing success also work for a RV meetup.

Other Resources / Info

Links to Related Resources

- Winnebago GoLife Community (List and Map views of Owner-Organized Meetups along with Form to submit a new meetup, GoLife Owner groups by type, GoLife Blog and GoLife Perks):
 - www.winnebago.com/owners/golife-community
- Direct link to the interactive meetup maps:
 - <https://sites.google.com/view/winnebago meetup maps>
- Email with questions about the Winnebago GoLife Community and/or to request Winnebago meetup support:
 - golife@winnebagoind.com
- Email to request help/advice/support from a fellow Winnebago Owner (and meetup enthusiast):
 - WinnebagoMeetups@gmail.com

All the artwork was created by Patrick Cunningham.

They are a testament to his ability to closely listen to Kathleen Hanson's excited brainstorming and transform that into fun illustrations to help bring this all to life. Thank you Patrick!

If you have a project that needs graphics, please reach out to cunninghampatrick393@gmail.com

