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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

THE BUGLER

by William C. Anderson

I recoiled from the elbow in my ribs and rolled over in bed. "Andy, what's that noise?" "Snarral-luff," I said. Again the elbow. "Wake up. Tell me what that noise is."

I reluctantly disengaged from the arms of Morpheus and looked over at my redhead. "Why is it that wives always think husbands know everything? I have no idea what that noise is." I brought my watch into fuzzy focus. "It's 5 a.m. Go back to sleep."

"There it is again."

I removed the pillow from over my head and stuck out an ear. I could make out an unmistakable sound penetrating the early morning air. Then it dawned. "Gadzooks, woman! That's a bugle blowing."

"Bugles got no business blowing at 5 o'clock in the morning."

"And it's playing reveille. Good grief! I haven't heard that horrid sound since my days in the military."

"Well, whatever it is, go out and tell it to stop. You and your military nostalgia. A dozen nice campgrounds in this area, and you have to park Rocinante smack in the center of an air base. I'm surprised we're not on the runway."

Women sometimes aren't very understanding. I couldn't wait, however, to investigate the strange bugle call that I thought had been retired from the military along with K-rations and the riding crop.

As it turns out, March Air Force Base near Riverside, California, was hosting the regional muster of S*M*A*R*T, the Special Military Active Retired Travel Club Inc. This is an aggregation of active and retired military people, from all branches of the service, who like to belly up to the barbecue and tell each other war stories. And a lively group it is.

Everyone knows that the reasons folks become RVers are as diverse as the motorhomes they frolic around in. Some people like to hop into their itinerant igloos and head off into the boonies for

solitude, relaxation and surcease from the madding crowd. Others enjoy tooling around in their rubber-tired residences because RVing is such a great let's-get-to-know-the-family adventure.

But the vast majority of us belong to at least one of the zillions of great RVing fraternities traipsing around. Being social animals, we like to flock together on occasion, sharing adventures, reminiscences, campfires and Bloody Mary recipes.

We pick organizations ranging from the Good Sam Club (for people who are good Samaritans) to the Loners on Wheels (for people who travel without a spouse) to the American Sunbathing Association (for people who like to travel without any clothes on).

Of all the RV clubs, however, there is one that stands out by virtue of its uniqueness. It is S*M*A*R*T, which promotes comradeship among retired and active-duty military people who are interested in recreational vehicle traveling and living. And they do a bang-up job.

Headquartered in Pensacola, Florida, this club boasts some 4,000 members, with 45 chapters spread across the United States and Canada, including a ham-operator chapter and a computer-user chapter.

Its biggest military maneuver is its annual national muster, which was held this year at the U.S. Naval Base near Jacksonville, Florida. Like any self-respecting organization, the club hosts seminars, ice-cream socials, arts-and-crafts exhibits and vendor booths, but, oddly enough, no close-order drill. In fact, the gent who blew the bugle at March Air Force Base has probably been assigned KP duty for the duration.

For this is one military organization in which RHIP has no meaning. Although "rank has its privilege" in the military, it means diddly-squat in S*M*A*R*T. A two-star general in his diesel pusher may find he's parked next to a retired sergeant in a pop-up, and neither could care less, as

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