

HELP FILL THE SKIES WITH BLUE - DONATE AN UNNEEDED CAR, BOAT, YACHT, TRUCK, RV OR MOTORCYCLE TO NABS

Bet Zimmerman



Doug in front of The Pleasure Palace. The camper was recently donated to NABS via Action Donation Services. Find out more about the donation program at www.actiondonation.org.

Doug and I spent a decade exploring the continent in our 28 foot Class C motorhome. We dubbed it “The Pleasure Palace” because it was so much cushier than the sleep-on-a-pile-of-rocks camping style of our younger years.

When Doug died suddenly last summer, I realized my world would never be the same. One of the many changes was that camping in that RV was no longer an option. The behemoth was unwieldy and required regular maintenance that I couldn’t handle. Plus it just wouldn’t be any fun without Doug. But I didn’t want it to just rust away in our backyard.

I offered the RV to Doug’s family. When they declined to adopt it, I thought of selling it outright. But that would mean dealing with repairs, marketing, potential liability issues and more hassle than I felt I could handle at this juncture.

Then a friend suggested donating it. What a great idea! But I quickly learned that most donation companies only accept cars. I did some research online and found **Action Donation Services** (ADS) at www.actiondonation.org. They handle recreational vehicles (RVs), boats, trucks, heavy construction equipment, and other motor vehicles (including cars) that are no longer needed.

I saw that ADS was experienced. Their turnkey service cost the donor nothing. All I had to do was supply the registration information and title, and they would send someone to pick it up. A generous portion of the proceeds from sale goes to the designated charity. In addition, I would receive a legal tax deduction. (For some donations, a partial cash payment is also an option.)

I called ADS and peppered them with questions. They were patient, kind and informative. They explained that they don't just auction off the vehicle wholesale – they try to maximize the selling price. When financially beneficial, they repair and refurbish it. This is important because the selling price determines the tax deduction that can be taken under newer IRS rules. More importantly, it directly affects how much money the charity receives.



ADS told me I would get to select the recipient charity. I looked at their long list of local, state and national organizations. None really resonated. I wanted a smaller organization to which such a donation would make a significant difference. I also wanted an organization that had some connection to the life Doug and I shared.

Then I got to thinking...could NABS become one of their charities? Many of our members enjoy the outdoors and might

also have RVs, boats, motorcycles, or cars they might want to donate to help native cavity nesters.

I spoke to Jonathan Ridgeway and the NABS Board about it. We learned that ADS protects client charities with strong liability insurance coverage. Their contract complies with the IRS guidelines and state statutes. It contains language to protect the charity's reputation and its board members. They also advertise for client charities at no charge. The Board agreed to move forward. NABS is now listed as a recipient charity on the ADS website.

After weeping my way through cleaning out the RV, ADS came and picked it up during a torrential downpour. I thought perhaps the sky was crying for the life being left behind. But I was also happy to know that perhaps a new family would now be able to enjoy the great outdoors in that camper.

Doug and I enjoying a tailgate picnic while installing nestboxes at a closed landfill.



Within a few weeks, ADS had a buyer. They called me to discuss the offer. I thought the RV was worth more. They said not to worry, they would keep trying. Inside of a month, they got the price I had recommended.

Thousands of dollars will now be added to NABS's resources. I am confident the money will be well-spent on education and research to benefit native cavity nesters and their landlords. It is reassuring to know that our loss is their gain, and that Doug can continue to help fill the skies with blue.

Bet maintains a 100 nestbox bluebird trail in northeastern Connecticut and an educational website on cavity nesters at www.sialis.org