

Earn \$1000 month

\$1,000/MONTH (OR MORE) IS POSSIBLE!

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Writes Jan: "We are planning on putting our house up for sale next year and going full-time." How realistic is it to expect to earn over \$1,000 a month?"

Step One: How much do you need to earn? As we figured in the last issue, you can compute how much per hour you'll need to make. If you figure taxes are about 20% (and that will depend on any other income and if you owe state income taxes), to net \$1000/mo, you'd have to earn \$1200. If you divide that by 4 (# wks) and again by 40 (hrs/wk), it comes out to \$7.50/hour - for one person. Two of you together at minimum wage would earn more than that. But that would also be working 12 months/yr. If you each found jobs earning \$7.50/hr you could work six months/yr instead.

Step Two: What do you want to do? Have you thought about what you'd like to do? What skills you have? And does your budget include money for RV parks or are you thinking you will get jobs where a site is included?

Step Three: Consider these possibilities

- 1. Concessionaires:** Most of the concessionaires in national parks pay at least minimum wage or more (federal minimum wage is raised to \$6.55 on July 24, 2008 and states may have higher minimum wage), though some jobs pay more. RV sites are low cost, sometimes included. Some jobs earn tips such as tour guides. At the Grand Canyon, the bus drivers for the shuttle buses earn more than \$20/hour!
- 2. Temporary work:** One RV worker couple I know have been working through a temp agency, taking only jobs that pay at least \$10/hr - but they are able to park their RV at their son's so incur no expenses in that department. She found also that doing light manufacturing or warehouse work paid more and was more active. National agencies make it easy to transfer from one location to another.
- 3. Government jobs:** Bill, my late husband, and I worked for the National Park Service in maintenance. Pay for WG-05's is usually around \$11-\$14/hour and we could work up to 6 months (if the park has the budget). His last job he earned about \$17/hour. With two of us working we usually earned a minimum of \$22/hr between us. We paid for housing which varies. On average, we have paid \$2-3/day, though in Alaska we had to find our own housing and the monthly rate for RVs was \$360 - a bite out of our pay, for sure! Friends work for the Forest Service during forest fires and earn good money. It's not steady work but when you are called out, you do well.
- 4. RV parks and campgrounds:** RV parks hire workers and usually include a site. Do you subscribe to Workamper News? Their ads can give you an idea of what the going-rate is. Some pay for all hours worked plus give you a site, while others pay a pittance and you are working 15-20 hrs/wk for your site. But that doesn't mean you should accept it!

Once we interviewed for a job on their Hotline. Bill told the employer he wasn't getting older folks - he was getting a couple in their prime who wanted to work! He convinced the employer we were worth more than he initially wanted to pay.

5. Be proactive: Don't limit yourself to RV parks or employers that advertise. Contact other RV parks directly and ask for \$6-8/hour or more plus perks. Be persistent and insistent and you'll find the right position.

6. Work/volunteer for a free site: You might do a combination of volunteer/work to get a site. One winter I worked at an accounting firm for tax season at \$10/hr while Bill volunteered for the Forest Service in exchange for our site. In Alaska, halfway through the summer, Bill became campground host. In exchange for 20 hours/week of minimal duties, we received a primitive site, and a small stipend plus our propane.

7. Be creative: There are any number of ways to put it together. We have sold Christmas trees and earned \$3,000 for about 3 1/2 weeks work. That meant we didn't have to earn as much the rest of the year. There are tons of seasonal jobs out there. It's a matter of identifying what you want and focusing on it. Employers are constantly looking for employees so even if you missed out getting hired in the spring, you can find openings. So get going!

For more information on finding these jobs and many others that pay well, see *Support Your RV Lifestyle! An Insider's Guide to Working on the Road, 2nd ed.* Chapter 17, for example, explains the process on how to find seasonal jobs with the federal government.