



Taking Charge



After our scramble at the end of last month, the Titusville Elks was a safe place to land. They had room and gave us a chance to secure other reservations. And then April became the month of state, county, and city parks.

Our first stop was a Brevard County Park called Manatee Hammock that is right on the Indian River in Titusville, just across from the Vehicle Assembly Building at the Kennedy Space Center. Not a bad spot for viewing the rocket launches. The campground is small but has a pool and covered pickle ball court. The shaded and level campsites are spacious, with several pull-through spots. It was a great location for visiting Central Florida and Orlando.

Next, we moved north to Hanna Park, run by the city of Jacksonville, that has a couple of miles of beachfront plus a lake for boating and fishing. There is also a water park for the kids that is open from May through September. Hanna Park is well known for its mountain biking trails, the most in the state. If you like to watch surfers, "The Poles" is known as the best place in Duval County to see them catch a wave.

The roads and sites are tight yet offer a ton of privacy due to the heavy vegetation and tree cover. The property looks primitive, but the sites have full hookups. There are rustic showers, bathrooms, and even a laundry room. And if you haven't been to the Mayport area in a while, you might be surprised. The area is really improving, with more hipster hangouts and fun places to eat and drink. And don't get us

started on the seafood and the ferry rides! We may, may have gotten our fill of fish, shrimp, and hush puppies, for a little while.

Next, we were off to a bucket list campground, Gamble Rogers State Park in Flagler Beach. You know that saying when a door closes, a window opens? We just lived it. About six weeks ago, Clay County Fairgrounds moved our return date back a week. Though we had several weeks to plan, that's not much for a Florida spot anywhere near the water. Plus, there aren't many places to camp near Green Cove to begin with. So, we hopped on the computer and swear someone must have just cancelled as we were looking. We'd been trying to book a spot at Gamble Rogers since 2023, with no luck. Suddenly we needed a place for a week, and there was one. ONE spot for the exact dates we needed. Come to think of it, we arrived on what would have been Dad's



birthday. So maybe it was divine intervention after all.

The campground is extremely popular because half the sites are on the Atlantic Ocean and the other half on the intracoastal waterway. There is no swimming allowed on the waterway, but fishing and boating are, and there are large picnic pavilions for family gatherings. The park is gorgeous with dark skies at night and cool ocean breezes. And it takes all of five minutes to get from rig to the ocean boardwalk to see the pounding waves or the launches from the Cape. In early May, we return to Green Cove for three weeks before we take off on our next adventure out west. See you all soon!

- JENN

