



Missouri-Kansas Airstream Club

Gopher News



WBCCI - Unit 059

October 2020

President's Message

In the 1980 film "Private Benjamin," Goldie Hawn plays a pampered and sheltered bride whose new husband dies on the first night of their marriage. Soon after, an Army recruiter convinces her that joining the Army will be like a glamorous vacation. After she joins, she is immediately disillusioned, gets into trouble, and is forced to march with her fellow enlistees in the rain and mud for hours.

Her quote at this time is:

**"I MADE A MISTAKE! FINE, I'M SORRY!
I'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN! I WANNA WEAR MY
SANDALS. I WANNA GO OUT TO LUNCH.
I WANNA BE NORMAL AGAIN!"**

No one in our Airstream Club is currently marching through rain and mud in the Army but everyone has now lived through the COVID virus for the last eight months. In spite of the virus disruption, our Club, with the leadership of **Tim and Paula Timmons** was able to accomplish several improvements this past year, including a name change, new club logo, the adoption of electronic voting and implementing electronic meetings. I want to thank Tim and Paula for their years of volunteer service to the club. In addition, I want to thank **Henry Roberts** for his service as the Club's Parliamentarian, **Kay Corder** as the Club's Treasurer and **Cheryl Ball** as the Recording Secretary.

Finally, I want to thank those volunteers who have agreed to serve in the Club's leadership role in the coming year. They include: **Charles Colbert** - 1st Vice President, **Stephanie Porto** - 2nd Vice President, **Rachel Payne** - 3rd Vice-President, **Linda Poage** - Treasurer, **Kerstin Roberts** - Recording Secretary, **Glenda Ridgeway** - Corresponding Secretary, **Rachel Hughey** - Parliamentarian, **Joyce Cantrell** - Membership Chair and **Kirk Moore** - Newsletter Editor. As an all-volunteer organization, our success depends on our volunteers.

We recently began planning the Spring and Fall Rallies for 2021. We will be ready when those times come.

After all, we all just want to be able to camp with our fellow Airstreamers, wear our sandals, go out to lunch and be NORMAL again. - John



Executive Officers

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Parliamentarian:

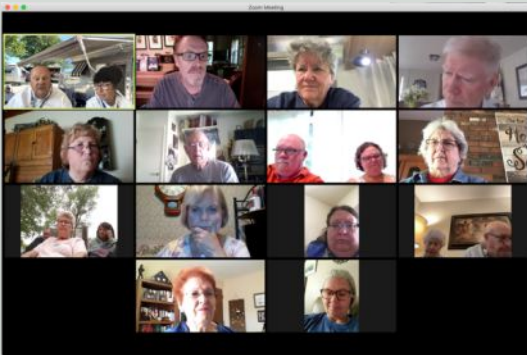
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Joyce Cantrell
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Newsletter Editor:

Kirk Moore
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The 2020 Fall Membership Meeting was held (via ZOOM) on Saturday, 9/26. Please take a look at the *Meeting Minutes* and the *Treasurer's Report* accompanying this newsletter.

Congratulations and "Thank You" to all the new Executive Team Leadership!

Introducing "Gertrude"!

Jerry and Brenda Frese finally got their 2018 27-ft. Flying Cloud christened "Gertrude" - after Brenda's mother (who was 22 at the time the photo was taken).



Do you have your camper's namesake integrated into your Airstream? Send a photo to KCUnitNews@gmail.com!

Upcoming Mo-Kan Club Activities

LUNCHEONS

With heavy hearts, and due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, all 2020 luncheons have been cancelled. We hope to be together again soon.

RALLIES

April 22 - 25, 2021

**Mo-Kan Club Spring Rally
Platte City, MO**

Save the dates! More info later.

April 28 – May 2, 2021

**Region 8 Rally
Amana, IA**

Save the dates! More info later.

July 17 - 24, 2021

**Airstream Club Intl Rally
Lebanon, TN**

Register now at - <https://airstreamclub.org/lebanon>

Common Cents

Not getting together each month has put a damper on our contributions to the Common Cents Fund. However, if YOU would like to remain a regular contributor, please send your check to:

Linda Poage
1904 Honeysuckle Ave.
Kearney, MO 64060



Need a new badge with your favorite logo?



Don't forget that the Club will buy updated badges for current members! (You can keep your old badges if you prefer) Fill out the form and send to **Linda Poage** this month!



Remember, It's Time to Renew!

- 2021 Membership dues are now \$75.00 a year. \$75.00 + \$15.00 local dues = **\$90.00 total**
- Local Clubs are **now encouraged** to renew online at airstreamclub.org/renew.
- If you are unable to pay online, you can renew over the phone - 937-596-5211.

Birthdays

Louise Mercer – 10/01 Jerry Lamb – 10/9
Mike Bedinger – 10/7 Denise Chevalier – 10/17
Brittain Kovac – 10/31

October Celebrations!

Anniversaries

Lee & Joyce Cantrell – 10/19

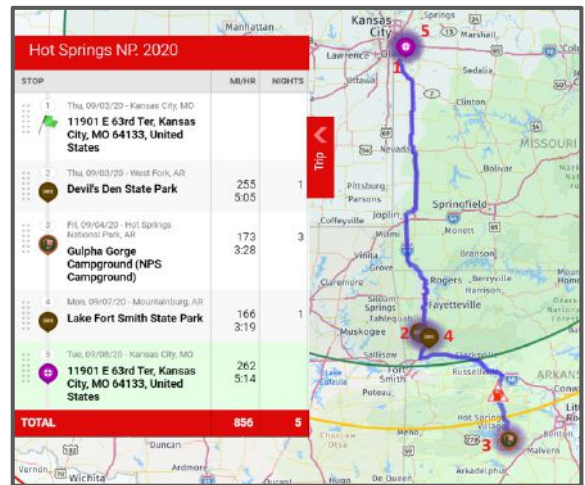


Devil's Den State Park, Hot Springs National Park and Lake Fort Smith State Park in Arkansas

RV Trip and Campground Reviews

John and Maria Eckardt, August 2020

In hopes of finding a diversion from the COVID-19 crisis, we decided to leave Kansas City for a five-night Airstream trip to Arkansas. One camping goal we have is visiting as many National Parks as possible, so we chose Hot Springs National Park (NP) as the destination. Using the assistance of our RV Trip Wizard application, we divided the 420-mile, 8-hour trip from Kansas City to Hot Springs, Arkansas into two legs. On the southbound trip, we stayed at Devil's Den State Park (SP). On the northbound return trip, we stayed at Lake Fort Smith SP. These two state parks were only about 25 miles from each other and about one-half of the distance between KC and Hot Springs, Arkansas.



The Arkansas parks that we saw were very well maintained. In 1996, Arkansas voters enacted Amendment 75, which levied a statewide one-eighth of 1-cent sales tax to fund the Department of Parks and Tourism and three other conservation agencies. Due to this, the state park system in Arkansas is well funded, mature, functional, mostly full service for RV's and clean. There are 52 state parks in Arkansas and 32 of these offer RV camping. According to the Arkansas State website, one may make reservations 12-months in advance at <https://www.reserveamerica.com/> or by phone at (877) 879-2741.

Devil's Den State Park

Devil's Den State Park is located about 20 miles south of Fayetteville in West Fork, AR. The 2,500-acre park was built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The park is only a few miles west of I-49, but getting to the park from I-49 is the first important decision to be made. Luckily, we took the north exit (Exit 53) and drove about 18-miles into the park via Route 170. Our truck GPS for several miles on Rte 170, nearly insisted that we take the southern exit No. 45. Although the southern exit is only 8 miles from I-49 to the park, the last one-two miles into the park will not allow trailers over 26 feet due to the steep and curving terrain. A Ranger later told us that RV's which get stuck must be towed out at the owner's expense. We noticed billboards on I-49 later warning motorists not to take the shorter southern route to the park if towing an RV of these lengths.

We camped in Campground E which had 45 RV camping sites. The park offered several camping options. Being a senior citizen with a National Park pass, camping at Arkansas State Parks is typically less than \$20 per night for a full-service site. Amenities usually include a modern bathhouse with hot showers and flush toilets. Our campsite included water, sewer, electric hookups, a picnic table, grill, lantern hanger and an adjacent 15 ft x 15 ft. hard surface chert (small gravel) area typically used for an additional tent or shade/insect cover. The sites were spaced about 80 feet apart and the campground was completely tree covered.



We spent the afternoon hiking and sightseeing. Our favorite hiking trail was the Devil's Den Trail, an easy, 30-minute hike behind the Visitor Center. However, the park also offers a modern outdoor pool and manmade lake with dam—all built or improved by the CCC in the 1930's. Lee Creek runs through the park and numerous families were in the water cooling down. Our takeaway was that this park is rugged, natural and secluded and good for those wanting to get away from urban activity. There are no close amenities or gas stations. Although a little difficult to get to, this stop was well worth the one-night break.

Hot Springs National Park

The next day's 3-4-hour drive south got us to Hot Springs NP. We followed our truck GPS to get there which took us south on I-49 to I-40, then east to Russellville. At Russellville, we turned south onto "Scenic" Hwy 7—then about 60 miles to Hot Springs. One should proceed with caution when the term scenic is used to describe a road. Scenic, yes, but also slow, curving, several steep hills and towns. On our route back to Kansas City from Hot Springs, we came back on I-30 from the Park to the west side of Little Rock and then proceeded west on I-40. This was a longer route but was nearly as fast and a smoother more relaxing ride.



We were told prior to the trip that there are no reservations taken for Gulpha Gorge, the National Park's campground. The park policy was that units leaving on a certain day, must depart by noon. Those who arrive at the park close to noon have the best chance for a camping spot. There are 40 campground sites with full hookups. I liked our odds for getting a spot—even on a Friday--but as insurance, I reserved a spot at the campground at nearby Lake Catherine SP for \$25. We arrived about 1 PM and got a flat, prime location in the Park.

After the trip, we concluded that for an active campout, three nights at the park were sufficient. In that time, we hiked most of the mountain trails, toured the historic Bathhouse Row, walked the Grand Promenade behind the Bathhouses, took an elevator to the top of the Hot Springs Mountain Tower, toured the historic portion of the town, filled our empty water bottles with the natural spring water at the town's public fountain and kayaked for six miles down the nearby Caddo River.



Of the nine original historic Bathhouses, only two are operational bathhouses. One is a Park Administrative building, one is a restaurant and brewpub, a couple have closed and two offered bathing. The first bathhouses dated to 1912. We chose the Quapaw. Due to COVID concerns, the bathhouse was limited to 20 males and 20 females. For \$20, one could secure a locker and bath for an unlimited amount of time in one of four large 3 ½ foot deep baths. Temperatures varied from 98 degrees to 102 degrees.



As with the State Park system, Gulpha Gorge amenities included full service, relatively flat spots, asphalt drives, a picnic table and a full canopy of overstory trees. The most popular spots were sites 20 thru 33 along the active stream at the side of the campground away from the entrance road. The stream was an extremely popular location in the campground even with families not camping.

Lake Fort Smith State Park

Lake Fort Smith was constructed in 1930's by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and was originally a Fort Smith city park. It became a State park in 1973 and reopened in 2008 on the western side of the 1,400-acre reservoir of Fort Smith Lake. The RV parking is on the north side of the lake and close to Interstate 49. The park is popular with many because it is the western trailhead of the 165-mile Ozark Highlands Trail. The trail stretches across the Ozark National Forest to the Buffalo National River—all along the rugged Boston Mountain Range. The Ranger at the office estimated that 250 people a year hike the entire trail length. We had not heard of the Boston Mountain Range prior to this trip and will likely keep that in mind for a future trip—along with the Buffalo National River site in north-central Arkansas.



The park has a Visitor Center, marina, boat ramp, pool, overlook and campground—all adjacent to the north side of the lake. The campground is rather small with about 20 full-service sites and 10 Class B campsites. The camping at this campsite was similar to Devil's Den in that the primary benefit for us was the quiet and solitude. The campsites were about 80-100 feet apart and barely visible. There did not appear to be any cities within a reasonable driving distance, even though the park was less than 10 miles from I-49. Like other campgrounds in the Arkansas system that we saw, the park was full service, mature and clean.

Summary

We were hoping for a good get-away, five-night trip to an area we had not visited before. We were both impressed with the natural beauty of Arkansas, the fact that a National Park is close, and the full-service, natural condition of the campgrounds in the State Parks. We recommend this trip.