



East Texas Lakes Newsletter

President's Note

The summer is wrapping up and it is time to think about the Fall. For ETLU, that means we need to be thinking about officer elections in October. So this is a call to all members that would like to volunteer. Per the bylaws of ETLU, members cannot serve consecutive terms in the same position. We made an exception last year since we did not have enough volunteers.

This year we do have a replacement for President as Mr. Tanner Terry has volunteered to take on the role of President. So that leaves a 1st VP role open for anyone that would be interested.

Doug Towns has served as Treasurer for 3 years and would certainly be open to another member serving if they desire. There are several positions open and communication will go out to members in a few weeks for nominations (you can nominate yourself by the way, and it's encouraged).

We have plans for an ETLU Rally in Palo Duro Canyon State Park October 30th to Nov 3rd. All our spots in the group campground are reserved, **but** we can secure **more** spots in the adjacent campground if needed. It would be great

to have more ETLU members attend as the park is amazing.

I also want to let everyone know that Airstream Club International will be raising annual dues for 2025 from \$75 to \$99 per year. Everyone should have gotten an email on August 27th with the details.

Shelley Tumino
President, ETLU

Maintenance Minute

The roof is perhaps the most vulnerable spot on any RV. The Airstream is no different. There are numerous holes for the AC(s), fan(s), vents, antenna and even screw holes for things like solar panels.

Perhaps the biggest issue on the roof after the flimsy fan covers, is the skylight. In addition to flimsy, it is also very loud during any rain storm. So we replaced ours with the Maxim skylight made custom for Airstream trailers. This skylight is a metal-framed window with three layers of 1/8" thick, UV-resistant polycarbonate glass. It is Hurricane resistant (no plans to actually test this feature) and provides impact protection from hail and debris that the OEM skylight does not.

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Even better, this replacement window is made in the DFW area. You can order a replacement for your rig in minutes online at www.maximskylights.com. Our 25 Foot International only has one skylight (the square 23x23), but many larger units have both the square and the rectangular light.



Now these units are not cheap. The square window is \$395 delivered to your front door. They say it takes a few weeks to get them, but ours arrived in less than a week.

The installation does take a couple hours. Most of the time will be spent trying to get the old window off the frame and cleaning up the tape residue. The OEM window is held in place with double-sided tape and nothing else.

There are a couple great YouTube videos on the installation including a recent one

done by the 13 Adventures Channel. The one thing I would recommend on the install is scrape the old lap sealant off beforehand so the new window sits flush on the frame and then re-apply new sealant once the window is mounted. I also did not use 12 screws during the install. I only used 4, #12 stainless steel screws. When used with good adhesive sealant, 4 is more than enough in my opinion. Plus, I could not get to the curb and road side screw locations since the solar panels were in the way.

This is a great way to improve roof integrity and create a more secure rig for your travels. I would be glad to answer any questions if you need help.

New Members

No new members this month.

People Profile

No volunteers this month. Please send us a short bio so we can send it out next month in the newsletter. You might get asked next month...Charlotte???

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Pet Profile

This month's pet profile is the Terrys' pug duo of Luna Bella (3 years) and Bailey (6 years).



They love travelling and have a special spot reserved at the back of their Pottery Barn trailer (it's a beautiful rig) on the couch. From that perch they can monitor

the comings and goings of the camp ground.



They both love Fall camping so they are ready for the Rally in Palo Duro in October. The dogs love campground walks and meeting new friends, especially dog friends. But then again, they also love sitting on Carrie's lap and watching people.

Social Media Update

Don't forget to follow ETLU on social media. The sites are up and running:

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/East>
- [TexasLakesAirstream/](https://www.facebook.com/TexasLakesAirstream/)
- Instagram: east_tx_lakes_ac
- Airstream Website:
- <https://airstreamclub.org/east-texaslakes>

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ETLU Gear

We still have some hats left. If you are interested, please let me know (everyone should have received an order form).



The final cost on each of these hats is the following:

- Richardson Color Logo: \$31.30/each
- '47 Monochrome: \$27.15/each

These are being sold at cost to Unit Members so we can show some ETLU spirit.

Product Review

Ron Battles suggested that we do a product review on bed covers. Now between the Towns and the Battles, I think we have owned about every kind of bed cover there is. Most trucks have 4 choices: tri-fold, roll up, vinyl tonneau, and hard top.

I have owned the Back Flip tri-fold. It is a good cover for the money. Most of the tri-fold units run \$400- \$800. They tend

to seal well and give a decent amount of security. The back flip fits inside the bed rails, so you can lose a little space. There are other tri-folds that sit on top of the bed rails that give you a little more space. On the downside, they do seem to break and wear out. Mine lost 2/3s of it screws after about 3 years.



I have also owned a roll-n-lock cover. I really liked it. I chose the one with the vinyl cover over the slats on the recommendation of the salesman at Woody's in Tyler. I bought it in 2017 and it is still on my son's truck today and seems to work as good as new. The roll-n-lock is very similar to the Retrax unit.



To me, these units provide better sealing and bed security. The downside, the



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canister that the top rolls into takes up a lot of space in the front of the bed. However, you do not lose bed visibility from the cab when you roll it up to gain access. Now these units are much more expensive running from \$1500-\$2000 depending on feature.

I have never owned a tonneau cover. While these to provide weather protection for gear in the bed, they provide very little security. For me, that has always been a deal breaker. However, they are the most cost effective bed cover solution. Many are less than \$200-300.



The final bed cover type is the solid cover. There are many products in this category including the fiberglass varieties made by Leer, ARE, and Century. These are great covers for weather protection and security. The downside is you lose a lot of bed access from the top. They typically have a clam-shell opening so you have to remove them if you want to haul anything taller than the bed rails. But you can color match most of them to

your truck and they look great for many years for \$1000-\$1500.



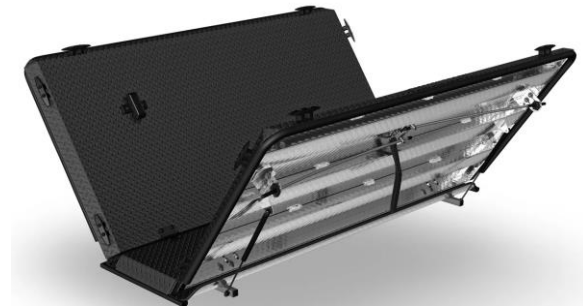
Now on my new 2500 Silverado, I used something I have been envious of for years, a Diamondback cover. This is a cross between a trifold and a solid cover. It is made with aluminum diamond plate and can hold 1,600 lbs of cargo on top (no other cover can do this).

It opens in a V-shape in the middle of the truck bed so you can open the front and back for access. It rests on the top of the bed rails so you do not lose any interior space. The Diamondback is very secure with a front and back lock that has mechanisms that slide under the bed rails for security. I elected to get the one that is covered in a Rhino Lining material. It has a lifetime warranty and is extra heavy duty. The front and rear panel are easily removed if you want to haul something taller than the bed rails.



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I have had it a little over a year and would not trade it for any other cover. Now these do set you back a bit. But if you plan on having your truck for many years (like I do), then it is cheaper than buying a roll up cover and then replacing it after 5-6 years.



I did not touch on bed caps. However, if we were full-time Airstreamers, I would most certainly have one. These open up a lot of storage and give you plenty of security. If anyone has experience with a bed cap and would like to share, let us know.

Is there something you would like to review? Please send it in to the newsletter and share it with the rest of us.

Trip Diary

The Battles are on a multi-month trip again. This is part three of their trip diary:

Many people at the Sip of Wisconsin wanted to know where we were heading after the rally. Since our next hard date was in September for the Sip of Oregon rally, we had no set plans. We had SO many people saying that we needed to check out Door County while in Wisconsin, so we set that as our course.

We were able to snag five nights at Peninsula State Park, which lies on the shores of Green Bay. There are several paved hike and bike trails that run throughout the park, so we enjoyed getting out and viewing the area on bike. We learned that Door County is the top producer of cherries in Wisconsin, and there were cherry orchards EVERYWHERE!

We drove to Egg Harbor for lunch one day and bought so many cherry products to bring home. Another day, we visited Sister Bay to see the famous Scandinavian restaurant 'Al Johnson's', which has sod roofs with goats that graze all summer. The weekend before we arrived, they had the "Roofing of the Goats" festival that we unfortunately missed, but the locals celebrate this each summer!

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The day before we left Door County, we drove to the Lake Michigan side of the peninsula to tour the Cana Island lighthouse.



We had never actually been IN a lighthouse before, so that was very unique. It was windy up top, but the views were beautiful!

After exploring Door County, we decided to circle around the Peninsula and drive

up into the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. We spent the next ten days staying at a few of Michigan's State Parks. We noticed a common theme for their parks. None had a paved or gravel pad, but were all on grass, although level. They were all electric-only, but had potable water spigots nearby and a dump station. The bath houses were all newly remodeled, with a dish-washing station outside, and individual shower rooms that you could lock and have 100% privacy.



All the sites were spacious. While in the "UP", we drove up to the northernmost part by Lake Superior so we could see Pictured Rocks National Seashore. Although it was raining during our time there, the views were still spectacular. I would love to take a boat ride next time so that we could view the colorful cliff sides from the water. There were really only a couple of places that you could view them from land. The next day we stayed near Sault Ste Marie

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and did another lighthouse tour and visited the Soo Locks. It was interesting to watch the locking process from the observation platform as the ships came in. We were also a stones-throw from the Canadian border but unfortunately without our passports, so we were unable to go any further north.



The last thing we did before crossing the Mackinac Bridge into the Lower Peninsula was ferried our bikes over to Mackinac Island for the day.



The island has no motorized vehicles on it, only horse-drawn carriages and bicycles.

We circumvented the island on our bikes and spent some time exploring the main

street. Mackinac Island is known for their fudge, and there were fudge shops everywhere! In fact, as soon as we got off the ferry, I smelled fudge and horses.



Two of my favorite things! Mackinac Island is definitely a bucket list location. There are hotels on the island, but we stayed at Straits State Park which was only about a mile from the ferry docks.

Now onto Oregon!

Next month we will hear about the Chambers' trip to New Mexico. They will also give us a review of the new camp sites at Balmorhea State Part, home of the world's largest natural swimming pool. This a great stopping point if you are headed to Big Bend.

Other Stuff

The North Texas Unit is having what they call a "Wally's Workshop" September 13-15th in Hillsboro. This is the perfect opportunity to learn about your

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Airstream from some professional (actual profession RV techs) and seasoned Airstreamers. If you have interest, you can call Ann Brandon at (214) 460-0420 for details on how to sign up.

If you have any ideas for the newsletter, please let us know. We would like to add birthdays and anniversaries, but we don't have many in our data base. You can send those to the ETLU Gmail address (no years please, just day and month).

We will also be organizing some non-rally socials to get people together. If you would like to have dinner and organize a meeting at a local watering hole, just reply all to the newsletter email. There are bound to be takers.

**Hawley Towns – Newsletter
Coordinator**

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