



East Texas Lakes Newsletter

It is so hard to believe it is already December.

I always have so many plans for the winter months, places I want to go and projects to complete over “winter.” As if winter is a long drawn out season in East Texas and not just the 2 week long cold spell we experience in February. So this year I have approached things more realistically and have been whittling away and my winter list for months. This fall Zoey and I along with Kayla Bass attended ACI in Sedalia, Mo.



In preparation for that trip much maintenance was required for my 1969 AS Tradewind. The biggest thing was new axels and shocks. It is always a learning experience. The torsion axels on the trailer need to be replaced after 20 years, and for good measure I replaced the shocks as well. Next, a thorough inspection of my lights, and replacing the

12v fuse panel. The week we hit the road, we headed over to the Red Devil Truck wash in Gladewater for a quick wash and polish.

Jennifer and her crew did an amazing job in under 48 hours. Kayla Bass and I looked amazing traveling to Sedalia together.

Upon returning home, we did a quick trip through the Red Devil Truck Wash to remove the bugs and grime from our trip. Our Palo Duro Canyon SP campout was a great opportunity for me to complete yet another project for my vintage trailer. This time I completed a new awning and used it for the first time.

My next project was to tint the windows, and that happened as we were rolling out to the Boulders Rally. I have to tell you; I wish I had done it sooner. The team at Ferrari Window Tint in Tyler did an amazing job. At the Boulders we announced our election results, ate great food, had amazing fellowship, and Cheryl Chambers came in 2nd in the pool tournament... it was so close!! Mark your calendars as we will be camping there again 13-16 November 2025.

As I write, I am camping at Lincoln Parish Park, in Ruston, La. and this place is Lit UP for the Holidays. As is typical for me, one more project was completed as I headed

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out. This time I replaced the AC unit with a 15k BTU unit from RecPro by Haughton, installed a new Fantastic fan, had the roof sealed and painted with reflective roof paint.



As the holidays approach I am reminded of how thankful I am for this wonderful camping community and all of the opportunities it has afforded me. Remember to make the most of every opportunity, stop and smell the roses, and hike the trail, you never know what you will find on the journey.

Live life Riveted! I highly recommend it.

Shelley Tumino
President, ETLU

Maintenance Minute

One thing that many Airstreamers may forget about is tending to the 12V power

plants in our rigs known as batteries. There are typically 3 types, and each has its own maintenance needs.

Most newer Airstreams have either Lithium Ion or AGM (absorbed glass mat) batteries. But older units or replacement batteries might use FLA (Flooded Lead Acid). Most FLAs use water but some use a gel material in their construction. If you have FLA batteries that use water, the proper water level is critical to performance. When refilling, use distilled water and do not over fill. AGM and gel-type batteries are still lead acid batteries, but do not require water and are generally sealed (so do not open them).

The first check after determining type is to clean the terminals. It is normally a good idea to remove the cables from the terminal (I rarely do, but probably not the best way to do it) and mix a 6:1 solution of water and baking soda to use as a cleaning solution. Brush it on with an old tooth brush and let sit until it stops bubbling (5-6 minutes). While you are waiting, you might wipe down your battery cases with a wet rag and blow out the debris that might be in your box. Also check the tightness of any brackets that may be holding your batteries in place. After the baking soda has done its job,

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just wipe the terminals down with a rag (or rinse with a water hose, **careful** not to splash anything on your rig). At this point you can add some terminal grease or anti-corrosion spray to the terminals and re-attach the cables. If you have a complex cable layout, it is best to snap a picture **before** you take it all apart.

If you have Lithium batteries, your investment upfront will save you a lot of maintenance. Just keep them clean with a little multi-purpose cleaner and a rag. There is no acid to build up on terminals.

Finally, check your voltage (on FLA and AGM) after they have charged. If you are not getting a voltage over 11.7 volts, you might want to take them to a battery dealer and have them load tested. They might be at the end of their life.

New Members

We have several new affiliate members this month. Shannon and Paige Christian join us from Plano, TX. Edward and Tiffany Wilson come to us via Grand Prairie, TX. Ken and Lynda Davis also come from DFW residing in Colleyville. Terry Lockridge from Arlington is also a new affiliate. Finally, Lynda Humble and Travis Gilley from Bastrop, TX have joined

our East Texas Unit. Thanks so much and welcome to ETLU!

Rally Review

For the first time in the newsletter we can report on two ETLU rallies. At the end of October, we had 7 rigs make the trip out to Palo Duro Canyon State Park. If you have not been to PDCSP, it should be on your Texas Bucket List. The views are amazing and we even enjoyed a thunderstorm. Seeing water running in the Park is quite the experience.

We had the full Wolfberry Group Campground for 4 days. These are the nicest sites in the Park and can only be reserved for groups. The sites are flat with water, 30/50A service and very nice shower facilities.

We enjoyed a chili night, a fajitas dinner and a night of football and thunderstorms at the Sad Monkey Mercantile for pizza, sandwiches and beer. Everyone made it there and back safely and it was a great time (minus the flies).

In November we rallied with North Texas at The Boulders on Lake Tyler. We had 43 rigs between our two groups. It was a huge success by all measures.

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Our own Cheryl Chambers came in second place in the billiards tournament with stellar shots from all over the table. The rest of us failed to make a reasonable showing in shuffleboard or corn hole.

We did have our annual officer elections and made plans for our 2025 year. We are going to go back to the Boulders next year for the 3rd annual Boulders Rally with North Texas as it is such a nice place. It is also a lot of fun to see everyone and see a campground full of Airstreams.

Elections Results

We had an excellent response with over 25% of our unit voting in this election! Thanks again for your participation!!!

Our ETLU Officers for 2025 are:

- Shelly Tumino, President
- Tanner Terry, First Vice President
- Ron Battles, Second Vice President
- Doug Towns, Treasurer
- Cheryl Chambers, Corresponding Secretary
- Traci Battles, Recording Secretary

This is basically a repeat of last year's board with the exception of myself stepping in to fill the previously vacant 2nd VP role. And as usual, it was a great time at The Boulders on Lake Tyler last

weekend for the installation rally. We missed everyone that couldn't make it!

Ron Battles
BRN 1072

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.instagram.com/TexasLakesAirstream/)
- Instagram: east_tx_lakes_ac
- Airstream Website:
- <https://airstreamclub.org/east-texaslakes>

ETLU Gear

We still have a few 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

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We sold several at The Boulders rally and they really are nice hats.

Product Review

This month's review comes from Tanner Terry our unit FVP. He uses and highly recommends the AirSafe hitch.



I started researching AirSafe hitches after replacing several rivets on our AS after every trip. I ended up purchasing a Class VI AirSafe hitch with a 3" shank to fit my F-250 without having to use any reducer sleeves. Since I installed the AirSafe, the ride in the truck is much smoother than it was before and it is also easier to level the trailer for towing. We have noticed that our nightstand drawer does not open during trips anymore and we rarely have any missing rivets. The "porpoising" of the trailer is also reduced when we traverse over rough roads and bumps.

- Reduce driver fatigue
- Less wear and tear on truck and trailer
- Improve the quality of the ride
- Protect your precious cargo
- Free-floating airbag between truck and trailer, no pivoting points
- Non-hinged design allows for better performance and superior shock absorption

AirSafe hitches deliver what they advertise and, based on my experience, I would recommend one if you are going to tow with any HD pickup.

Trip Diary

The Battles have another installment of the 2024 Trip Around the USA.

After leaving Michigan, our next scheduled event was the "Sip of Oregon" in McMinnville. Our original plan was to go through Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington to get there. But because life had other plans, we detoured to get "paintless dent repair" (PDR) performed on our truck in Indiana and return to Texas for some other truck upgrades. Then we returned



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to Washington from Texas via a route that would take us back through Colorado and Utah so we were able to visit friends and family again. Spontaneity is one of the best things about traveling in an Airstream!



Since we were anxious to get to Creede, we only made a single stop in Texas along our route. There is a free overnight city camping location in Dumas, TX. They had 30 & 50-amp power and a dump station that we didn't use. I think they had water available as well but we didn't need that, either. The park was close to train tracks (of course) but it really wasn't too bad for a quick overnight stay. On Google Maps, search for "Texoma RV Park" to find it.

When we got to Colorado, we stayed at the Marshal Park Campground outside of Creede. It's a primitive National Forest campground with pit toilets. Unfortunately, the hand pumps for fresh water were disabled because the water

had recently failed testing. We used a propane generator to keep the Airstream's batteries and a portable power station charged. Water was pilfered from our friends in a nearby RV resort when we visited. And we finally got to visit Great Sand Dunes National Park, see North Clear Creek Falls, hike the trail above Creede, and visited every nearby National Forest campground we could find in the area.



I think we picked the best one!





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Our trip through Utah was an opportunity to revisit Dead Horse Point State Park at a perfect time for stargazing at night. We couldn't pass up the opportunity to relax here again and soak in the views. After leaving, we provisioned in Provo and then headed to Bear Lake on the Idaho border. It's clear, beautiful blue color has earned it the nickname "Caribbean of the Rockies". We stayed in the North Eden campground which had just been renovated. It is a nice campground with paved pads, power, water, and a gazebo at each site. Visit The Burger Barn in Garden City for their famous raspberry shake. The burgers were pretty good as well.



From Wallace, the drive to the Washington Land Yacht Harbor (WLYH) in Olympia, WA was about 6 hours. We were anxious to get there and rest for a week or two in the Terraport. The WLYH is a great location on the west coast to use as a home base for exploring the area.



We still didn't get to visit Olympic National Park - maybe next time. We did go into Tacoma and visit a McMenamins restaurant and pub there. We also enjoyed the farmer's market in downtown Olympia.



Next newsletter:

- Sip of Oregon
- Coastal Redwoods
- Colorado Breweries
- Manitou Incline and Colorado Springs

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Trusted Service Providers

If you are like us, when you come back from a long trip, or even a weekend, washing the rig is not the way to come back home. The Terrys took their rig to Red Devil Truck Wash in Gladewater (just off I-20) to get it washed and dried. It takes 45 minutes and \$80-100 to get your rig looking clean and shiny with a towel dry. They come highly recommended by Shelley and Tanner.

You can find them at:

Red Devil Truck Wash
12253 County Road 3111
Gladewater, TX 75647

Other Stuff

We are going to offer advertising space in our newsletter in 2025. Typically, there will be 10-11 issues throughout the year. We will offer ¼ page ads for \$100 to be run in each issue. If you know of someone that wants to advertise, please have them get with Doug at the ETLU Gmail address.

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. We are looking at a gathering in Gladewater at the Winery very soon.

**Hawley Towns – Newsletter
Coordinator**

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