

Lake Charles Trip, Day 1 – Monday, 22 June 2026 Warrensburg to Harrison

Planning this trip was a tad complex because I'm combining several purposes. One is, of course, regular sight-seeing, another is my 65th HS reunion on Saturday in Lake Charles, and the third is genealogical research in Opelousas, Abbeville, Gueydan, and (maybe) Jennings. If I were to leave Tuesday, I could make it to Opelousas in two days, but too late for visiting records offices. My solution? Leave around noon on Monday and spend the night at Harrison. Here's how the day has gone:

I first had to take care of some bank business for the Johnson County (MO) Historical Society, where I'm Treasurer. That accomplished, it was time for brunch and a caffeine charge at Mary Jane's. I pulled out of town at 1104 hrs, heading south on MO-13. Henry County welcomed me with the first of series of Flock surveillance cameras. Traffic delays at Clinton's lights weren't too bad, only 5 minutes to go the mile or so from north to south.

South of Clinton Truman Lake is high but not flooding. As I cross into St. Clair County I note that Henry County is not part of the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area; St. Clair & Johnson are. I guess the County Commission would rather deny their Historical Society and schools the opportunity to apply for certain grants than to sign off a pledge that has a DEI tinge. MO-13 is fast, a divided highway with J-turns and Fantastic Caverns billboards. Humansville, home of the Barnwood Inn, has single-laning for bridge work.

I run into some heavy misting around Bolivar; I will be in-and-out of it the rest of the day. I turn off of the raceway onto WW hwy north of Springfield and pass the Roumanian Pentecostal Church. I don't turn off to go to the gun club as I usually do. Instead I get on H hwy near Crystal Cave and head for the city looking for the cheap gas Gasbuddy.com told me of. Wait a minute! That sign says \$3.49, not the \$3.15 I expected – ah, there's a sign at Walmart: \$3.05/gal, and that's where I stop.

Now I'm on US-65, 3 lanes of traffic going 'hell bent for leather' to someplace or other. For many, that someplace appears to be Branson. This road has its ups and downs, lots of long, steep ones. Just north of Branson a patrolman runs radar from the top of the hill, possibly to catch drivers who rely overly on gravity-fed momentum from the downhill to make it to the top of the next crest.

I'm 'Flocked' yet again as I cross into Arkansas and lighter traffic on worse roads at 1415. The hills are all green; this would be scenic if it weren't for gray skies and intermittent drizzle. I stop at a Welcome Center staffed by a lady with a delightful Arkansas accent, then head into Harrison to find my HIE. 1st floor, near side exit – perfect. Supper is a friendly Culver's next door.

Tomorrow: To Ruston, LA, via US-65 and US-167.
For the day and the trip 189.7 miles over 3 hours, 41 minutes.

Lake Charles Trip, Day 2 – Tuesday, June 23, 2026 – Harrison to Ruston.

I pulled out at 0725 after a high-carb breakfast at an up-to-date HIE. The weather is cloudy with fog on the hilltops as I head out on US-65. I pass ‘The Good Stuff Furniture’ on the way out via the 2-lane road. One home-made sign accuses the National Park Service of running an illegal speed trap; a more professional one near Pindall says “Pro America, Anti Trump.” There’s Silly Squirrel Snowballs, definitely not open at 0800.

The road improved as I near the Buffalo River area. It even has a pull-off for a designated scenic overlook; I stop – who knows when/if I’ll have another chance.

A side road leads to the Deplorable Brewing Company. Marshall’s DQ eating spot is the Daisy Queen. The landscape here is hills, mostly trees and rocks; the main products are lumber and slab rock.

Botkinburg – is it the home of computer bots or maybe botflies? It is the place where US-65 adds lanes; I’ll have 4 lanes or more for most of the rest of the day. Clinton AR is home of a Western & furniture store with 3-D animal figures lining its right-of-way. Damascus has the Southern Roots Hair Co.

A white-knuckle high-speed drive on crowded I-40 and I-30 from Conway to Little Rock leaves little time to make observations, but I-530 and US-167 are much less challenging. There’s the road to the Forest Tower Baptist Church. A headless road kill deer occupies the ditch. A billboard advertises the Southern Arkansas U. Mule Riders – whether a team or its mascot, it doesn’t say.

I pass Sheridan, wondering if it’s named for the despoiler of the Shenandoah or the British dramatist. The road is good and traffic is light as I drive past pine plantations and an occasional Flock camera (Grrr!). Farindale consists of a store selling liquor & boots. I make a comfort stop at Fordyce. I’d crossed the Saline River bottoms; now I cross the much-more extensive Ouachita bottoms. The high bridge makes me wonder if the river is navigable. It is, if the presence of a dam with locks is any indication.

I finally stop for lunch at La Villa in El Dorado; it’s now on my ‘nope’ list. What kind of flowers are those in that tree over in the cow pasture? Those aren’t flowers, they’re egrets! Junction City, like K.C., has a State Line Road - one of my LCHS teachers grew up there. US-167 is a nice divided highway with a wide median. It is also US-63. Dubach is home of the Louisiana Chicken Festival.

I get to Ruston too early to check in, so I decide to explore a bit. The Lincoln Parish Museum is in an old mansion. It’s supposed to be open but a sign on the window bemoans the lack of volunteers. I can commiserate with that! I take a couple of pictures of the museum & grounds.

Ruston is the home of Louisiana Tech, the Bulldogs. So guess what painted critters abound:

A local QT has gas for \$3.15/gallon so I top off before checking in to my Quality Inn room at 3:00 on the button. My contact in Opelousas has discovered some grave that may belong to my two Truman great uncles who died in infancy; I will check all that out tomorrow.

For the day: 314.4 miles, for the trip 504.1.

Tomorrow: Opelousas via US-167 & I-49.

Lake Charles Trip, Day 3 – Wednesday, June 24, 2026 – Ruston to Opelousas

My alarm went off at 0500, set there so I could get an early start. I looked out the window after morning ablutions and realized that the loud noises I'd heard overnight weren't traffic. It had rained and it was still raining. The room and shower were very satisfactory, and the waffle iron was hot and ready at breakfast.

I'm loaded up and on the road at 0636, heading south on US-167. It's a 4-lane hiway, mostly divided. Driving in rain is a both-hands task, so no tidbits until I neared Jonesboro-Hodge. Hodge has a Smurfit-Westlock plant that provides a plume of either smoke or steam. Bayou Butts and Booze is across the street. A bit further down the road, Weyerhaeuser has a large limber mill at Milam. I cross the Duggedemona River near Winnfield, home of the Chady Shack (seafood & burgers). A sign reads "Oppose Property Taxes. Vote No." In Dry Prong (yes, that's the name of a town) a Dairy Made ice cream place advertises pit BBQ.

A few eroded spots along the right-of-way show an orangish-yellow soil, probably clayish. Choctaw Pines Casino, off a side road to the west, is probably a real one, as compared to the ubiquitous gas station "casinos." I merge onto US-71, a limited access hiway heading to Alexandria. The Louisiana chapter of the World Pentecostal Church has a large campground at Tioga.

I cross the Red River, running high and not very red. I merge onto I-49 across a wide flood plain; it eventually reaches higher ground near Woodworth. Traffic is light and moves quickly; most drivers seem satisfied with the 75mph speed limit. I see two busses heading north, the first bearing the logo of the Ragin' Cajuns, the second that of LSU's Tigers – could there be some summer event that would draw both schools? The rest of the run to Opelousas is uneventful; the scenery consists of trees, standing water, and egrets.

I reach Opelousas at 0930, park across the street from the courthouse, and go upstairs to research property & marriage records on the Truman, Hadden and Daly families here. I will address this in my own records. The place to research other information is closed – the man in charge is on vacation. After finding all I could, I look for a restaurant featuring gumbo but find the local museum instead. Then I find a local Tourist Info center and get directions to my HIE.

I check into my hotel early, message my local contact, and head for Myrtle Grove Cemetery. The cemetery was originally owned by the parish but was later given to the city. The city doesn't maintain it well; I had to wade through foot-tall grass to navigate between family tombstones. The Daly family is well-represented here, the Haddens less so. The only readable Truman stone is that of 1-day-old David. Another unreadable child's stone lies half-buried nearby. I believe these are the 2 male children lost in early childhood, as referenced in a letter I scanned last summer. Pictures from the cemetery:

Interestingly, Opelousas has both a Truman and a Daly Street; any classic residences in this area are long gone; it's now a low income part of town.

I became overheated rather quickly out there, so returned to the HIE to cool off at write this.

For the day: 176.5 miles, for the trip 680.7

Tomorrow: Lake Charles via Abbeville and Gueydan.

Lake Charles Trip, Day 4 - Thursday, June 25, 2026 – Opelousas to Lake Charles

I dawdled in the morning and didn't get started until 0735. Instead of taking I-49 and fighting Lafayette traffic, I decided to explore some back roads and find the Bellevue & Shuteston area that show up in property records.

My first location to check is the homesite of 2G grandparents, the Hadden family, on Union Street. It's now either a grocery store parking lot or a muffler shop. Time passes. Now I head south on LA-182. It goes through the Bellevue area, flat and somewhat built up. Live oaks help the scenery. A bit further south, LA-182 & LA-178 meet – this is Shutston. There's no sign of the 19th C mercantile or other such edifices.

I turn off of LA-182 at Sunset onto LA-93, aka "Sunset Strip." More houses, many with what I'd call a French-style peaked roofline; I doubt that an adaptation for thatched roofs has any real practical value using modern materials, but it does add to the ambiance. Cankton, a bit down the road, is home of Enchanted Oak Mobile Home Estates.

LA-93 crosses I-10, then a round-about sends me west on old US-90. I turn south again on LA-724, pick up another road that takes me back to good old US-167 through Maurice to Abbeville, parish seat for Vermilion Parish.

I park on the street and go to the courthouse for some research. I cannot find any record for property owned by W.L. Truman, a distinct surprise. The Abbeville visit wasn't a complete loss; I enjoyed a delightful conversation about Acadian history & Nova Scotia with the director of the local combined historical/art museum and visitor center.

LA-14 is an easy hop through Kaplan to Gueydan. People are raising cane; they're also raising rice and crawdads - this is an agricultural area. I arrive early in Gueydan, the Duck Capital of the World and home of the Honey Bears. The old museum building is undergoing significant rehabilitation and redesign, so the museum is temporarily housed on the round floor of a mansion.

The museum won't open until 1300. I take a 2-mile drive out to the cemetery south of town and find the Truman section easily. G-grandpa W.L.'s stone is nice and shiny, his daughter (my grandmother) has a granite stone; G-grandma Cora Hadden Truman's stone remains face down from some previous hurricane. I think I'll see if the local funeral home has resources to fix this.

After a long chat with the museum director and presenting her with a small book written by my grandmother, Stella, I leave Gueydan about 1415 and head west on LA-14 which will take me to within a mile of my Holiday Inn Express. The old steep bridge across the Mermentau River to Lake Arthur has long been supplanted by a modern bridge – which is down to one lane for construction. The first time we crossed the old bridge, my father stopped at the bottom – he'd misheard 'tall bridge' as 'toll bridge'. Oops!

The road continues through rice fields, crawdad farms, pasture & marsh lands, a dotted with white waterbirds. One section is essentially a causeway, flanked on both sides by mature cypress trees. I see an unusual roadkill; a decent sized gator didn't make it across. I pass Daughenbaugh road. Yep, they're relatives.

I arrive at my HIE at 1535, check in, unpack for my 4-night stay, and cool off from 92 degree heat. Then I call my old high school BFF and arrange to meet him tomorrow afternoon. Then it was time for some gumbo and exploration. I'll have to repeat that portion when I have my camera along.

For the day: 156.3 miles, for the trip: 837.0
Tomorrow: Local driving and visiting.

Lake Charles Trip, Day 5 - Friday, June 26, 2026 – Around Lake Charles

I slept late (for me) and stuffed myself with motel omelets, turkey sausage, and cinnamon rolls. That, and some traffic pattern research, gave me a solid base for a day of wandering.

My first stop is the west end of LC's North Beach – what we called “sand beach” in my time. A large, ocean-going freighter is docked across the lake/river from me, worth a picture. I also take a shot of the high (and old) Calcasieu River bridge; I will cross it tomorrow.

I stop at the local welcome center, also on the beach, for a nice chat with the ladies there. They direct me to a fancy new nature center next door. Children flock to the half set up to educate and amuse them, I try the water & fish side. It's worth the stop at half the \$6 entry fee. My next stop is the historic old city hall building, now an arts center.

An America 250 exhibit on the ground floor invites you to sign the Declaration of Independence with a quill; the quill is now yours. The second floor features permanent and rotating exhibits by local artists. I spent most of my visit at the top floor music/musicians exhibit. I remember many names, including a band that played at some of our high school dances.

The Confederate War memorial, across the street, lost its soldier in a hurricane some years ago.

I stop at the Lake Charles High School Memorial and look for names of classmates, many of them long gone.

From there, it's a quick hop to Walmart, where gas is \$3.29/gal. En route, I drive past the house where we lived during my 3rd & 4th grade years, our first in Lake Charles.

Then it was another stop at the old high school, where this historical marker has been installed since my last visit.

I had a good visit with my Lake Charles BFF and his wife; I'll visit them again Sunday before I return home.

For the day:; 42.9 miles, for the trip: 879.9

Tomorrow: Visit some of my old haunts in the country and attend the all-school reunion.

Lake Charles Trip Day 6, Saturday, June 27, 2026 – Around Lake Charles

This morning was outdoors reminiscing day. I head north on US-171 over the nice modern bridges that replaced those rickety old two lane ones across the remains of a cypress swamp. I turn left at Moss Bluff and follow the now-4+ lane hiway past businesses that didn't exit when I'd travel in the past. There's a bridge over Indian Bayou where once there was none – back then, it was a 3-car ferry over the West Fork of the Calcasieu. I pay a visit to the old ferry landing, now a boat launching site.

Cousin Harold (Pulliam)'s land, once open range grazing, is now filled with upscale small-acreage estates. I bet each of them is valued at more than he got for the whole 640 acre section. I turn onto the once sand/mud road, cross the modern bridge where the single-lane one once stood and where I used to park for moccasin hunts down the west side of Indian Bayou.

East of the bayou the land is filled with subdivisions. That white crushed shell (in place of gravel) road is now blacktopped. I turn off on the narrow lane that leads to my Louisiana BFF's family primitive camp/getaway, "Cox's Wilderness," where I spent many fun & happy hours. On my earlier visits the area was mostly working folks, now it's gentrified as well.

I cross a drawbridge that replaced another ferry and take less traveled roads to Westlake and that I-10 bridge; I don't find it at all scary any more. At the motel I update my Ancestry tree with pictures taken on Wednesday. Now it's time to attend the LCHS reunion.

The reunion is on the 3rd floor of the civic center, in a large banquet room styled the Buccaneer Room. This area was once known as a haven for smugglers, including some notorious for obtaining their wares rather forcefully in violation of maritime law. Contraband Bayou supposedly earned its name.

I met a number of older grads, but none whom I knew – until I saw Cookie, who makes sure that members of our Class of '61 know important-to-us info. We had two speaker/graduates. One served as an Army nurse in Hawaii during the Vietnam era. The other was the son of Lake Charles' only Governor of Louisiana; his stories related to Louisiana's role in WWII.

LCHS was known for our girls' marching group, the Kilties. They had an unusual marching style to a fast, driving cadence. The youngest of their drummers must be close to 60, but they can still drive that cadence! Someone had turned down the lights so I couldn't get a picture with my camera.

The room overlooked the lake; our I-10 bridge is in the background.

Supper was at a Mexican place in Moss Bluff – first time I've had cubed chicken meat in an enchilada.

For the day: 49.5 mile, for the trip: 929.4

Tomorrow: A run down the west side of Big Lake (Calcasieu Lake on your map) to a nature trail teeming with birds, gators, and, most likely, skeeters.

Lake Charles Trip, Day 7, -Sunday, June 28, 2026 – To the Gulf

I started the day with two goals – see wildlife and walk on the beach, both accomplished. At 0730, I head out on LA-14 south (again) and LA-27, aiming for the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge and their Pintail Boardwalk through the marsh. I'm hoping for good pictures I can use in Mid Missouri Artists' annual art challenge, "wildlife." The boardwalk disappoints – few birds and no critters, just plants and biting flies. Here's one of the better plants:

The loop road does a bit better, providing a cooperative gator and a few birds.

I escape the flies, cross the high bridge over the intracoastal canal and continue southward toward Cameron. Almost every building here, from trailer to school, is on stilts in hopes of surviving the next hurricane's storm surge. The folks who were to become my next door neighbors in Lake Charles survived the Hurricane Audrey in 1957 because they were able to reach this solid courthouse.

Cameron is actually a pretty busy port. Fishermen & shrimpers have been here a long time; a substantial industry supporting the off-shore oil rigs is more recent.

I take Trosclair Road looking for a beach entrance (my dad's 1st cousin married a Trosclair). I find a paved road to Rutherford Beach, just what I'm looking for. No, I do not get my feet wet, but I do pick up a small shell in memory of Sandra – she loved beachcombing. Note the fishing boat closest and the oil rigs or ships in the distance.

I head back toward Lake Charles, turning off on LA-384. I could turn off onto LA-385 at Boone's Corner, but, no, I keep on – and have to wait for an open drawbridge. When the tow finally comes through, I count 4-5 barges pushed by the Mark Duplantis. Moving again, I pass Big Pasture Road and what's left of Big Lake (the town). I shouldn't have ignored that "bridge out" sign. I back track, have a much shorter wait for another tow to pass; LA-385 ends but the road continues as a street I know.

Dinner tonight at my Lake Charles BFF's house; I'll finish getting everything ready for an early departure.

Lake Charles Trip, Day 8 - Monday, June 29, 2026 – Lake Charles to Idabel

I woke up early. Too early for breakfast, too late to get back to sleep. So I load the car, miss the hotel breakfast and hit the road (US-171) at 0602. I pass Moss Bluff, Gillis and other country towns, and arrive at DeRidder. Boy, that place has grown! It's a cross roads town for hiway and rail, and it has a RR museum. I found one of those ice making machines and topped off the ice chest. I noted that almost all Mexican eateries call themselves "Mexican Grills" – is that just a SW Louisiana thing?

I'm on a nice divided howay, here the "Myths and Legends Scenic Byway." The yellowish dirt tint I noted yesterday is giving way to a reddish tint in those few places not covered bt grass or trees. Leesville is the home of Ft. Polk, originally named for the Episcopalian Bishop of Louisiana, Lt. General Leonidas Polk, CSA, renamed something politically correct, then re-renamed for someone named Polk. A bit north, I pass the Louisiana Lions Camp, complete with a lion statue by the gate. Anacoco shows off its patriotism by lining the hiway median with decent-sized American flags.

I'm just north of Hornbeck when I encounter a scarce terrain for the state: hills! They're more like gentle rolling hills, but down here you take what you get. Florien is a pretty town with an unusually low speed limit. Many (pronounced 'man e') features quite a few murals. Zwolle claims to be the gateway to Toledo Bend (reservoir). At Converse someone is selling 'yard eggs.' At Mansfield, I drive past a B-47 mural, tun off on LA-509, follow it to I-49 leading to Shreveport. I stop there and have a nice visit with a true Southern lady I had met through B&B contact.

After a short visit I follow her directions, buy gas for \$3.11/gal, and whiz right through Shreveport. My brunch is eggs & grits at a Waffle House; then I head out on LA-1 toward Texas. LA-1 crosses a bit of Caddo Lake, a large natural lake the reaches both sides if the LA/TX line. A bit further on on the Boom & Bust Byway I reach Oil City, home of the Gusher Days festival. Next is Vivien, with a couple of well pumps working away in a park next to the hiway; it has some nice murals.

I cross into Texas 7 hours into the travel day; the speed limit immediately goes from 55 to 60, then later to 65, then 70 and 75 – all on 2-lane roads! There's the Cross Creek Cowboy Church, with its own roping arena. My TX-77 crosses US-59 at Atlanta, TX; and US-67 at Naples.

I'm now on US-259. It runs for a while on a long, high causeway over an unnamed river.; a short while later it crosses the Sulphur River. I run into repeated area of construction north of I-30. I finally cross into Oklahoma and pass the Bigfoot General Store: A Legendary Stop. I get to Idabel about 1500 and find the the Red River Museum is closed on Monday. I check into my Comfort Inn, have supper at a Mexican place (the Italian place next door is closed on Mondays), and settle in for the night.

For the day: 329.6 miles; for the trip 1405.9.

Tomorrow: Tahlequah via about a dozen less-traveled roads

Lake Charles Trip, Day 9, Tuesday, June 30, 2026 – Idabel to Warrensburg

Oops! What happened to Tahlequah? Here's the story...

After a motel breakfast I hit the road at 0700. US-259 runs with US-70, a road that shows up in other trip reports, for a bit. The road crosses a couple of bridges named for Choctaw code talkers in WW I., passes a big Tyson plant and several Choctaw casinos and Broken Bow (Choctaw gas, \$3.19). Smith's Good Eats is a roadside cafe, and a sign a bit further on advertises Grateful Head Pizza Ovens. Hochatown is near a lake, so is busy with all the usual stores, etc. It's home the Gutter Chaos – apparently a roof gutter company.

I'm getting into some real mountains. The Bethel Cutoff takes me to Indian Road 144 and deep into the Blue Ouachitas and Kiamichis. Weyerhaeuser appears to have a large presence here, as pine plantations cover hill sides, some of which appear fire-scarred. I come to a crossroads – all options are labeled as Rt. 144, and there are no helpful signs. I pull out a map that doesn't show the road I'm on. A pick-up truck pulls in behind me and I have them to pass. It stops next to me, and a redneck leans out the window and solves my problem – Talihina is straight ahead, about 30 more miles of mountains.

144 ends at US-271, 8 mi. south of Talihina. This is flat land, but not for long. Out of Talihina on OK-82, I'm back into mountains: the winding road over the Winding Stairs, then a modern one over the Sans Bois. Somewhere in between at Red Oak, I see the Totally Hitched Trailer Park. A quick jog west on OK-31 to Kinta., then OK-2 north past Whitefield over the Canadian River. I've crossed the Canadian in New Mexico & Texas, as well – it flows into the Arkansas.

I pass a mail box mounted on aircraft landing gear. Poorum was a hangout for the infamous Belle Starr. Her birthday was February 3rd, same as Sandra's. There's a sign for Rickety Ridge Taxidermy. This area is prairie country. At Warrner, I turn east onto US-64 to Weber's Falls and Gore, then north on OK-10 to OK 10-A. This takes me to Indian Road, which wanders by the side of Tenkiller Lake. I pass the Burnt Cabin Campground., and finally reach Tahlequah at 1130 AM.

First stop in Tahlequah is the Cherokee Heritage Center & Museum, supposedly open Tuesday-Sunday. Uh, no. They're closed for renovations. So, it's not even noon, I have a non-cancellable reservation at the HIE and nothing to do here except maybe investigate a casino or two. I buy gas for \$3.07, decide to eat the loss on the room, and head home – it's only another 250 miles or so.

US-62 north/east is another winding, hilly road with no place to pass, but it takes me to US-59, a nice, modern road, to Siloam Springs. I decide to skip the stop at the John Brown University library to see pictures of my dad & mom from their time there as instructor & student, respectively. From there, I take AR-43 north to AR-72, thence through Gravette past The Ruff Inn pet boarding and on to I-49. I-49 is fast; I set my cruise control at 75 and head north. Only one tid-bit recorded: the dueling silo trees on opposite sides of I-49 just south of Nevada. I get off onto MO-52 east (limit 60 in Bates & St. Clair, 55 in Henry) and have pretty clear sailing on MO-13. I arrive at home at 1700, unpack, then run to town for supper and groceries, set up computer, take care of trip accounting, and crash!.

For the day: 468.0 miles, for the trip 1874.

The Wrap Up

I had two goals for the trip – genealogical research and reliving High School memories. I accomplished enough of each to make the trip worthwhile. I learned quite a bit about where various family connections lived, visited graves of some I knew & some I didn't, and discovered the name of one of the 2 sons my great-grandparents lost as babies. I saw my old haunts around Lake Charles, and visited with my HS BFF. I did get some good pictures on my side-trip to the Gulf of Mexico.

The low point was food. I couldn't find any Cajun food (gumbo, etc.) that didn't include sausage – which I need to avoid because of testing positive for alpha-gal. I tried Popeye's chicken and discovered it's fried in beef suet and ended up with the trots. Mexican chicken dishes are generally safe, but the places where I dined weren't very good. I doubt if I would voluntarily return to most of them.

I stayed at three Holiday Inn Express hotels, one Comfort Inn and one Quality Inn. All were acceptable; the best was the HIE in Opelousas. The HIE in Lake Charles and the Comfort Inn in Idabel were undergoing renovations. The HIE I canceled in Tahlequah looked relatively new and modern.

Lodging costs for 6 nights at HIEs was 119,000 points, the equivalent of a bit under \$100 per night. The other two nights cost about \$120 each. Food cost about \$125 and gas under \$150 (a bit under 8 cents/mile). Boarding one cat cost almost as much as food & gas combined. I also wrote a \$200 check to help support my high school's memorial.

Ratings:

Best Roads: Louisiana, surprisingly enough. Every major road was 4-lane, and most of the others were straight.

Worst Roads: Mountain sections in Oklahoma & Arkansas, although the ones in OK were scenic.

Best food: No awards given

Worst food: Have you ever had diced chicken cubes in a Mexican dish?

Best scenery mountains: Oklahoma

Best scenery water: Rutherford Beach, Cameron Parish, LA

Miles by State:

- Louisiana: 838.8
- Missouri: 370.3
- Arkansas: 335.9
- Oklahoma: 247.4
- Texas: 78.9