

THE

EXPLORER



KANSAS



ABOUT US

The Kansas Explorers Club is created to inspire, educate, and encourage the exploration and appreciation of Kansas... and to have fun doing it! Explorers are urged to look for the rural culture elements in each town -

architecture, art, commerce, cuisine, customs, geography, history and people

Kansas Sampler Foundation
978 Arapaho Road, Inman, KS 67546
620.585.2374

STAFF

Marci Penner, Director
marci@kansassampler.org

WenDee Rowe, IT Dept./Social Media
wendee@kansassampler.org

Kim Clark, Bookkeeper, Cat Sitter
kim@kansassampler.org

BOARD MEMBERS

Stacy Barnes, Greensburg

Simone Elder, Leoti

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Sarah Werner, Winfield - President

R.J. Wilson, Shawnee

IT'S OUR BIRTHDAY!

Kansas Day is January 29. We became a state in 1861 and are now 160 years old. Happy birthday to us!

There was nothing easy about becoming a state. What ignited ferocity was the question of whether Kansas should enter as a slave state or free state.

"From this country's infancy, northerners and southerners disagreed about slavery and other cultural and economic issues. These struggles emerged, not on April 12, 1861 with the first shots of the Civil War, but in the 1850s on the border between Missouri and Kansas Territory. The debate over the expansion of slavery into Kansas Territory soon turned bloody as revenge, retribution and retaliation fueled and extended the Border War, a firestorm that prefaced the Civil War. Shortly after the Civil War began, Missourians and Kansans readied themselves for phase two of their fight. Battles, sackings, and burnings continued throughout the war." (freedomfrontier.org)

It's easier to write about the tumultuous times of the past because we know that we survived them and the state moved forward despite all the scars. Now, we are each responsible for shaping the future through our words and actions. Visit Freedom's Frontier sites (freedomfrontier.org) to find understanding, inspiration and courage.



A KANSAS MESSAGE FROM ALL OF YOU

This Kansas Day newsletter is dedicated to you, Kansas Explorers. Because of the multitude of responses to our e-blast asking about your Covid-time travels, we're veering from our regular format one more time to share where you've gone. We share your adventures in hopes of inspiring others. So many of you said you chose these places because of safety restrictions and concerns but also to inject some money into these towns. Way to go, Explorers!

VISIT WITH THE LOCALS

KE #6004 Molly Black (Shawnee) said, "We took a mini-road trip from Shawnee to DeSoto (1) to the Sunflower Ammunitions Plant (see p. 134 in *Kansas Guidebook*). It has been decommissioned and is a super site (previously contaminated) so we didn't get to tour it. But we did speak with the security gate guy at length and he gave us his background. He has worked there since the 70s! He came from New Jersey to take the job. We then walked down Main Street in DeSoto and visited the historical museum. It was a fun half day!"



Abandoned ammunition plant front gate.



Davis Memorial, Hiawatha in Brown County

3rd ANNUAL BIG KANSAS ROAD TRIP

May 6-9 in Brown (2), Doniphan (3) and Nemaha Counties (4)

bigkansasroadtrip.com; Find the page on Facebook

After waiting for more than a year, it will be a joyous time to see all sorts of Explorer traffic crawling around the downtowns, country barns, back roads, and small towns in these three counties. We still may need to practice social distancing and wear masks but if most people have vaccines by then it will really help.

If you've not participated in a BKRT before just imagine a place where the secrets are unlocked, the doors flung open, the pie waiting for you on the porch (in Highland), and the locals welcoming you. You'll get to do only what you want to do. You'll plan your own itinerary from available print or online information and go at your own pace.



See Tall Oak, a 27-foot high sculpture of an Indian chief in Troy (3) sculpted from bur oak by Peter Toth.



Look for more specifics in the April newsletter which will be dedicated to the 2021 Big Kansas Road Trip.

Note: If anyone would like to invite single people to ride along with you, just let us know how many you can take and we'll make some people very happy who are unsure about traveling alone.

Don't forget to bring an old shoe to add to the famous Shoe Tree, located near Wetmore (4).

TAKING FAMILY AND FRIENDS ON THE ROAD

Friends and family are coming over? Surprise them with a road trip. Who doesn't love to jump in the car and see things you've not seen before? Grab your friends and go!



Kansas Explorers #1861 Brian Pressnall (Bel Aire) led a group of wife Robin's friends on a trip to the Safari Museum in Chanute (5). They were all surprised at this Kansas find. Along the way they took in the outhouses in Elk Falls (6), the flag hill in Fredonia (7), and Toots Drive-In in Howard (6). This winter Brian took two young ladies visiting from New York City up the turnpike to Teter Rock (31).

KE Explorers #3339 Anne and Rich Bailey (Lawrence) along with KE's #7142 Allison Edwards and Zach Brower (Kansas City) and KE's #5036 Emily and John Dickson (Chicago) hiked Horsethief Canyon at Kanopolis Reservoir (8) and used the cabins and the camping area. Anne said, "It was a highlight of the year!"

KE #1861 Robin Pressnall lead a small group of friends to Lindsborg (29) for the day, including a visit up to Coronado Heights.



KE #5097 Carol Carley (Kansas City) said, "My friend and I took a day trip to the museum at Lecompton (9) to see the different kinds of Christmas trees. It was a very nice day and fun to see something different!"

KE's #5452 Kayla Oney Savage, #6604 Suzanne Ryan-Numrich, #5589 Abby Amick, and #5383 Julie Roller Weeks enjoyed a weekend getaway in Lawrence (9). Among other places, they felt compelled to check out the Black Stag Brewery & Pub and 23rd Street Brewery.

KE #3366 Roger Hrabe (Plainville) had the opportunity to get away for some great golf with friends and family at Prairie Dunes

in Hutchinson (10) and then follow it up with another round at the Firekeeper Golf Course in Mayetta (11). "It was great to get away and share some golf and drinks."



KE #27 Susie Haver said, "In lieu of the 2020 Big Kansas Road Trip in September, six of us ventured out on a three-day road trip to explore the east coast of Kansas from Atchison (12) to

Baxter Springs (13). The six explorers included #268 Gloria Moore, #4134 Fran Trost, #1960 Marian Condray, #185 Barbara Shunn, and #6652 Joni Regnier. Susie said, "We used the 8 Wonders of Kansas map and marked things we wanted to see. Some were open, some were not, but we had a fabulous time using the *Kansas Guidebook* and our exploring skills. And we ate a lot of pie!"

KE #6798 David Newcomer (Salina) took his St. Louis brother to Victoria (14), Glen Elder State Park (15), Castle Rock and Monument Rocks (16), Little Jerusalem State



Park (17), the Garden of Eden in Lucas (18), Waldo (18) and Paradise (18) on the way home. David took another trip to ride the bike trails at Kanopolis State Park (8). "It was good to get out and enjoy these wide-open places."



KE #130 Lidia Gray (Liberal) and friend Mary took a roundabout route back from Topeka (19) to Liberal (21). They drove through Blue Rapids (20) where they drove around

the round square and then visited the National Orphan Train Museum in Concordia (47). Lidia said, "What a nice museum! It was so well done and we learned a lot."

continued on page 7

LET THE SCENIC BYWAYS GUIDE YOU



KE #6962 Kylee Bergstrom and husband Alex took a day trip to Mushroom Rock State Park (8) and toured around Kanopolis State Park (8) traveling the Prairie Trail Scenic Byway. In July, they stayed at Cedar Bluff Reservoir (22) and explored Little Jerusalem State Park (17) and Monument Rocks (16) while traveling the Western Vistas Historic Byway. In October, they traveled the Glacial Hills Scenic Byway and stayed in a cabin outside of Tonganoxie (23) and recently took a trip to Alma (24) on the Native Stone Scenic Byway and then the Flint Hills Scenic Byway to Council Grove (25). Their Explorer Quest is to travel every scenic (and historic) byway in the state!



Kylee and Alex will see much of the state if they go to every byway in the state. The twelve byways include nine known as scenic byways and three (Frontier Military, Route 66, and Western Vistas) are classified as historic. The Flint Hills and Wetlands & Wildlife byways have gained national status.

travelks.com/ksbyways/

GOING NATURAL!

Natural landmarks, trails, state parks and lakes are some of the winners during the Covid era. They are outdoors and often there are no other people around. Perfect!

KE's #5542 Ruben and Kerry Schuckman and boys (Hays) had a "rocky" theme going this year. "We went to the rocky cliffs of Little Jerusalem State Park in Logan County (17), Castle Rock in Gove County (16), Rock City near Minneapolis (26), Rock Town Cove at Lake Wilson (18) and wrapped it up on the rocky shores of Woodson County Lake (27) and Cross Timbers State Lake near Toronto (27) for a Thanksgiving cookout! Kansas is a great place to socially distance!"



Castle Rock Badlands



Arikaree Breaks

KE #3478 Kathie and Jack Crispin (Lincoln) took a road trip to Little Jerusalem Badlands State Park (17) and also did a driving tour of the Arikaree Breaks in Cheyenne County (28). On another trip they went to Mushroom State Park and Kanopolis Reservoir (8).

KE's #6143 Craig and Holly Lofton (Lindsborg) went to Little Jerusalem Badlands (17) on a "super hot day but found it to be an amazing place anyway." On another trip they enjoyed a drive through at Maxwell Wildlife Refuge near Canton (29). At Cottonwood Falls (30) Holly said, "it felt peaceful watching the water pass over the falls from the walking bridge."

KE #1861 Brian Pressnall (Bel Aire) went via dirt back roads to Teter Rock in Greenwood County (31) and found the trip to be "as soul cleansing as a day in church." He went on to say, "The Flint Hills back roads were empty and the solitude and subtle beauty were uplifting."

KE's #1861 Brian and Robin Pressnall finally got to explore the Chaplin Nature Center trails near Arkansas City (32) for the first time this fall. "We had the place to ourselves and loved it. Another day we took a day trip to Pratt (33) to see the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Museum."



Teter Rock



KS CO NB three-state corner

KE's #1861 Brian and Robin Pressnall stayed at the Mt. Sunflower Bed and Breakfast in Sharon Springs (34) and while in the area checked out Mount Sunflower and Fort Wallace Museum in Wallace County (34), Scott State Park (35), the Arikaree Breaks and the three-state corner of Kansas/Colorado/Nebraska located in a pasture in Cheyenne County (28).

continued on page 5

continued from page 4



KE #6356 Paul Schmidt (Scranton) enjoyed Osage County Fishing Lake (36), the riverwalk in Melvern and the two reservoirs (Pomona and Melvern) in Osage County (36).

KE #3870 John Walters (McPherson) said, "We did have fun exploring Marysville (20) and I enjoyed taking photos of Elaine with the town's

Black Squirrel mascots along the street."

KE #4450 Lea Ann Seiler (Hanston) said, "On our way to Burlington (37) for a downtown tour we stopped at CB Baked Goods in Marion (38) for amazing kolaches! We also took a trip to Little Jerusalem in Logan County (17)."

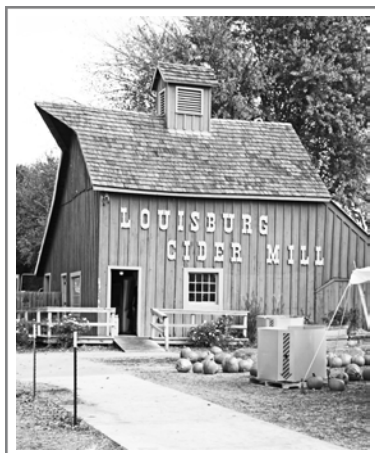
KE #6003 Fred Peterson (Marquette) enjoyed a walk through Botanica in Wichita (39) in September.



KE's #5383 Ryan and Julie Roller Weeks (Abilene)

enjoyed a weekend getaway in Hays (14) where they visited Rock Haven Spa and Gella's Diner and Lb Brewing.

KE #5803 Linda Houston (Leawood) enjoyed the group Explorer trip in February to the Brookville Hotel and Eisenhower Museum in Abilene (40).



KE's #7070 Diane Miller and Dennis Ureche went to Louisburg Cider Mill (41) this fall and stopped at some interesting antique shops—and then drove a few miles into Missouri. "We did some of the cemetery trips recommended in an earlier newsletter. It was just fun to get out of the house."



EXPLORING IS FOR THE BIRDS!

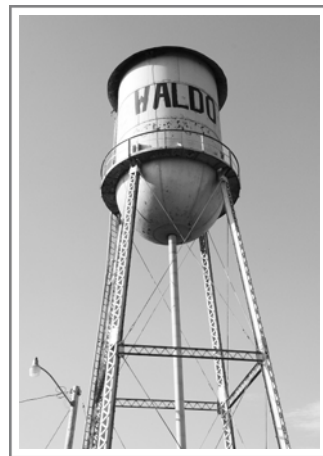
KE's #1037 Trish and Chad Remley (Miltonvale) followed the bird migration through Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (42) from the end of July through the end of November. They went every two to three weeks, seven times during this period. Trish said, "It was quite enlightening and we now have a real understanding of which species come through and when starting with the shorebirds, stilts, egrets and ending with the ducks, geese, swans and Sandhill Cranes, with many birds in between. The sheer numbers, the beauty and solitude was all so wonderful. We went to Cheyenne Bottoms (43) a few times too."

KE's #1413 Melanie Terrill and Michael Soetaert (Salina) took a day trip in the fall to see Cheyenne Bottoms (43) and Quivira Wildlife Refuge (42) to look for cranes, pelicans, herons and more. They also met friends at the Bartlett Arboretum in Belle Plaine (44) to see this beautiful setting. They enjoyed walking through the prairie or woods at the Lakewood Park nature trail in Salina (45), too.

KE #6481 Carolyn Croft (Bel Aire) took solo drives to Quivira Wildlife Refuge (42), Cheyenne Bottoms (43) and Maxwell Wildlife Refuge near Canton (29).

FINDING WALDO!

#7100 Jo Hudson (Salina) went on a road trip to answer the question "Where in the world is Waldo?" She saw many interesting (artistic) creatures along the way (most in Russell County) (18) but then finally came to Waldo in Russell County. There she found a spitting image of Waldo. Her last stop on her good day was Paradise (18).



KANSAS EXPLORERS CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

Ah, your names! We haven't met all of you in person but when your names come through as renewers each year we feel like we know you. A renewing name shows your ongoing interest to explore and get to know Kansas. *Renewals as of January 22, 2021.*

RENEWING MEMBERS

#54 Gene & Barb Merry, Burlington
 #99 Karen Sturm, Caldwell
 #205 Duane & Kathy Schwab, Ellinwood
 #272 Janet Wilson, Arkansas City
 #309 Vicki & Bert Hull, Lawrence
 #339 Ellen G. Neufeld, Inman
 #598 Gary & Kay Nelson, Wichita
 #668 Gwydotta Ukens, Concordia
 #706 Adolyn Bartels, Inman
 #1033 Bill & Susan Bunyan, Dodge City
 #1110 Leann & Jerry Toews, Goessel
 #1413 Melanie Terrill & Mike Soetaert, Salina
 #1507 Bert Mosier, Redwood Valley, CA
(Bert, thanks for always renewing your nephews!)
 #1558 Kathy & Eric Sexton, Derby
 #1559 Tom & Florence Haskett, Emporia
 #1599 Madlyn & Dale Swenson, Concordia
 #1889 Ron Jones, Salina
 #1918 Dianne & Larry Rapp, Wichita
 #1958 Donna & Francis Wiley, Lawrence
 #2107 Mickey Hicks, Iola
 #2200 Nancy L. Cole, Topeka
 #2356 Judy Langley, Hutchinson
 #2451 Mary Shaffer, Salina
 #2764 Mike & Kathleen Hess, Westwood
 #3089 Fred & Connie Neufeld, Inman
 #3094 David, Kim, Ana, John, Cara & Leah
 Criswell, Wilson
 #3246 Dan, Kathryn & Maggie Kuhn, Jamestown
 #3254 Joe & Jennifer Kyner, Mission Hills
 #3309 Bill & Jennifer Kassebaum, Burdick
 #3372 Donna Feudner, Newton
 #3505 Sue Parker, Salina
 #3506 Mark Neubrand, Salina
 #3555 Kelly Gourley, Beverly
 #3907 Jerry Hager, Ford
 #3919 Diane Smith, Lenexa
 #4290 Richard & Edna Williams, Junction City
 #4546 Robert R. Brown, Salina
 #4738 Keyta Kelly, Leavenworth
 #4818 John & Kathy Green, Wichita
 #4986 Kaye Page, Shawnee Mission
 #5182 Beverly Ebright Brejcha & Robert J.
 Brejcha, Independence
 #5430 Susan Rogers, Manhattan
 #5651 Laveta & Charles Horner, Chapman
 #5654 Susan Osborn, Lawrence
 #5742 Kathryn and Steve Black, Wichita
 #5803 Linda Houston, Leawood
 #5989 Karl Kastens, Topeka
 #6097 Cynthia Rhodes, Whitewater
 #6115 Kendal & Dawn Rohr, Canton
 #6348 Allison Thon, Sharon Springs
 #6385 Greg & Deb Koch, Baileyville
 #6523 Christine Stephens, Rose Hill
 #6603 Kelli Hilliard, Topeka
 #6605 Mike Wildgen, Lawrence

#6759 Justin Rupert, Wichita
 #6795 Glen & Marty Armbruster, Wichita
 #6798 David Newcomer, Salina
 #6799 Margaret Weilert, Wichita
 #6801 Jeff, Alaina & Reyne Kaufman, Buhler
 #6807 Samantha Kudrick, Coffeyville
 #6837 Teresa Mugler, Winfield
 #6873 Ann Miner, Colby
 #6944 Jade, Jonathon Mosier-Spellmeier
 Madalyn & Maisel, Goodland
 #6945 Jacob Mosier & Sunnie Pringle & Aiden,
 Morland
 #6946 Josh, Ashley, & Maxen Mosier, Rexford
 #6960 Sally Holliday, Liberty
 #6962 Kylee & Alex Bergstrom, Seneca
 #7047 Julia Berk, Jeremy Luby & Maria Kerr,
 Overland Park
 #7062 Michele Peel, Lafayette, CO
 #7069 Nikki Bowman, Riley
 #7070 Dennis Ureche & Diane Miller, Inman
 #7071 Deborah Willsie, John Dewey Stewart III,
 & Jack Stewart, Park City
 #7079 Amy Crouse, Basehor

NEW EXPLORER MEMBERS

Welcome to the Kansas adventure world! We hope to bring you many adventure ideas to encourage you to get out and see all parts of the Sunflower State. *New members as of January 22, 2021.*

#7189 Mallory Horn, Salina
Gift from KE #4546 Grandpa Brown, Salina
 #7190 Christy & Troy Newman, Courtland
Gift from #6802 Kathleen Norman, St. John
 #7191 Janet Weaver, Newton
Gift from #7160 Judy Beedles-Miller, Manhattan
 #7192 John & Janice Good, Newton
 #7193 Iris Alban & Chuck Sturdivan, Coffeyville
Gift from KE #5589 Winston & Abby Amick, Alma
 #7194 John Morrison Sr., Baileyville
Gift from #6385 Deb Koch, Baileyville
 #7195 Susan Sutton, Concordia
Gift from #27 Susie Haver, Concordia
 #7197 Joe & Lyn Land, Piedmont, OK
 #7198 Haley Hays, Rock Springs, WY
Gift from KE #4405 Nancy Harness & Malcolm Smith, Lawrence
 #7199 Bill, Salena, Lacie, Nathan, Jaeden &
 Olivia Rotz, Belle Plaine
 #7200 Diane Kuhn, Shawnee
Gift from KE's #3246 The Courtland Kuhn's
 #7201 Meg & Mark Braun, Topeka
Gift from KE's #3246, The Courtland Kuhn's



HAVE YOU MADE YOUR 2021 EXPLORER BUCKET LIST?

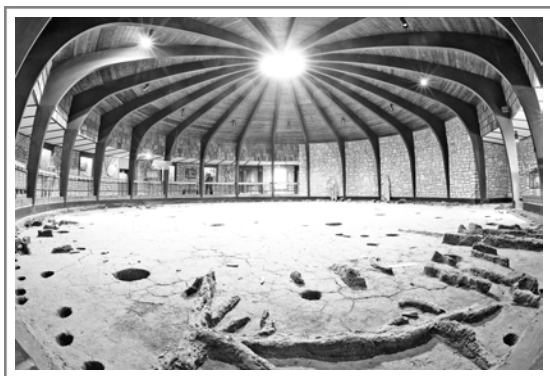
Have you chosen an Explorer Quest?

Choosing a quest or putting together a bucket list makes exploring even more fun. It helps make you accountable and you can check off your progress as you go.

KE's #1171 Jim Hanni and Vicky Durand have a goal to visit every one of the 105 county seats. They've devised four concentric circumnavigation routes to accomplish this quest. They've also taken many day trips to visit county seats close to their home base in Lawrence (9).



Thomas County courthouse,
Colby



KE #6856 Joyce Hazelton (Meriden) and friends took a fun day trip to the Pawnee Indian Museum in Republic County (46). She said, "We were the only ones in the museum and had the undivided attention of a very knowledgeable guide. We stopped for some great pie in Belleville (46) at the Bel Villa. On the way home we took the wrong road and went past a strange structure at the edge of a field that turned out to be a guardhouse for the Concordia (47) German P.O.W. camp! I went home and did some fascinating research and learned about a piece of Kansas history that I knew very little about. It's the unexpected that makes travel so fun!"

KE #2013 Larry Hornbaker (Wichita) took his sister and cousin on a day trip to see the tornado monument in El Dorado (48), the discovery site in Eureka (31), and amphitheater at Neosho River Park in Humboldt (49). They had lunch at Vaquero's Mexican restaurant in Yates Center (27).



KE #6358 Idana Perkins (Barnes) and a friend made a day trip to visit the National Orphan Train Museum in Concordia (47).

KE's #1609 Lucille and Mike Heller (Hunter) took a day trip to Milford Lake (50) and the Army Surplus Store in Junction City (54) with three middle-school grandsons and provided some birthday spending money. They intend to take all grandkids on birthday destination trips in the future. As Lucille said, "As kiddos get older, it's harder to give a gift, but day trips are fun for us and them."

Kansas Explorers Club Membership and Renewal Form & Special Guidebook Price

Explorers Name _____ Names for family membership _____

First-timer _____ ; Renewal _____ ; Renewers, list your Explorer number (if you know it) _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Gift membership to: _____ Mailing address _____

This is a gift from: _____ (Gift card will be enclosed)

Annual dues: Individual membership \$18.61; family \$30 (Family membership prior to #881 is grandfathered in at \$18.61)

Check is enclosed _____ or Credit Card (all cards accepted) # _____ Exp. date _____

Name on card _____ **TOTAL MEMBERSHIP** (& book order if applicable) \$ _____

Kansas Guidebook 2 for Explorers is \$18.61 (price includes tax & shipping) _____ (# books);

8 Wonders of Kansas Guidebook is \$15 (price includes tax & shipping) _____ (# books)

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IF IT'S TIME TO RENEW THERE WILL BE A NOTICE ABOVE
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THE SANTA FE TRAIL IS 200 THIS YEAR!

Find events at santafetrail.org



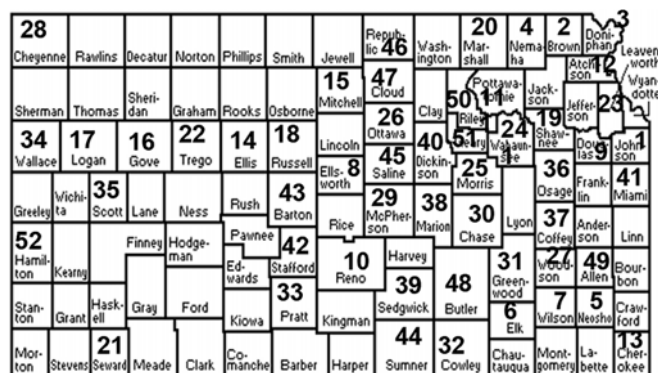
This is the year to go see Santa Fe Trail markers and attractions. After the Big Kansas Road Trip we'll be sharing Santa Fe Trail information in the newsletter.

KE #5 Lynda Fort
(Mulvane) visited eight

counties and checked out approximately 34 Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and Santa Fe Trail markers, and other Kansas state historical sites. Her main purpose was to check conditions of the markers for any needed upgrade before this year's recognition of the 200th anniversary. There are 67 markers in the counties from Marion (38) west that are in the Southwest District of the State DAR regions.

KE's #1301 Lois and Gail Wiens (Inman) partially followed the Santa Fe Trail in western Kansas and stopped at several historical markers, looked at the ruts, and explored Coolidge (52).

FIND THE COUNTIES HERE



GO FIND THEM

Wondering where all of these places mentioned in the newsletter are located? Almost all of them are listed in the *Kansas Guidebook 2 for Explorers*. kansassampler.org.