

Natural Beauty/Natural Wonders

Three Days/Two Nights on the Byway



DAY ONE

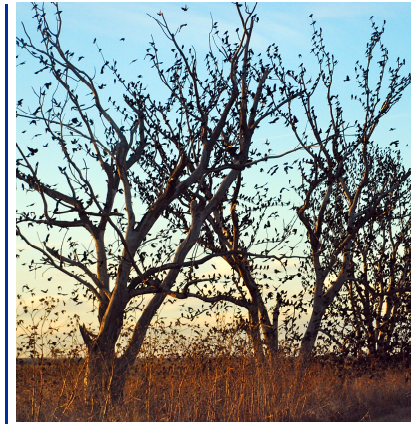
Check into your hotel in **Great Bend** and check out a GPS Video Tour of the byway from the front desk of your hotel or the Great Bend Convention and Visitors Bureau. Orient yourselves to the Wetlands and Wildlife National Scenic Byway with a visit to the Raptor Center (a rehabilitation facility for injured raptors) at the Brit Spaugh Zoo which is a Byway Interpretive Center. Join the locals for an espresso at Great Bend Coffee, then stroll around the Courthouse Square that includes the Santa Fe Trail, the Jack Kilby Memorial, a songbird habitat on the courthouse lawn, and the sidewalk Quilt Walk. Find over 50 large, one of a kind, artist-decorated birdhouses throughout downtown & at businesses all over town. Next stop: Barton County Historical Village to view antique quilts, tour an original Lustron Home (a mid-century architectural delight) and explore the historic buildings. After dinner at Lumpy's Homefield, a Great Bend landmark, drive to **Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area** to watch the sun set over these expansive and magnificent wetlands.

DAY TWO

Enjoy breakfast at Granny's Kitchen where featured specials are from America's heartland. Drive to **Hoisington** a town that has survived all manner of severe weather including a 2001 F4 tornado. Stroll down Main Street to examine the 62 metal banners installed on lampposts that reflect the history and the pastimes of the residents. Appreciate the work of Depression era craftsmen in the Post Office lobby, and in the WPA construction of the high school and the City Building and sundial. Take the back roads to find eight post rock WPA bridges and miles of limestone fences (called Post Rock) that lead visitors from **Hoisington** to **Claflin**. Plan a lunch stop in Beaver at Mo's Place (which may be the smallest brewpub in America) and enjoy a hearty lunch and a brew with locals and with workers who have taken a break from the oil fields and farm fields. The Dubuque and Odin Churches stand as proud displays of the rich vein of limestone near Claflin. See rigs steadily pumping in a region where oil has steadily flowed since 1923. Park on Claflin's Main Street, and experience for yourself this friendly little town now entirely dedicated to the sale of furniture by Millers of Claflin est 1903. Drive back to your Great Bend hotel through Cheyenne Bottoms, once again pausing for what will hopefully be a majestic sunset.

DAY THREE

Using your GPS video, head for the south end of the Wetlands and Wildlife Scenic Byway. Drive to the Visitor Center of the **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge**. Talk with the staff and read interpretive materials that explain the geology of this immense salt water marsh, a place where eagles nest and wild whooping cranes rest, an internationally important wetland on the Central Flyway for migrating birds. Here one can truly enjoy the quiet majesty of nature and thrill to the chance sighting of a bird, a deer, or a muskrat. Pause frequently as you drive. Only six miles down the road is the town of **Stafford** that boasts six buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Methodist Church, inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright, and the Larabee Library. A must-see stop is the Stafford County Historical Museum where 29,000 images on glass negatives from 1880 - 1947 are archived. If you're looking for home made, local and organic food visit The Gathering Place on Main Street or book a meal at Henderson House. Eleven miles north of Stafford is **St John**, which boasts a picture-perfect town square, complete with splashing fountain, lush grass and a quirky Science Museum. This town grows food: the mayor grows pumpkins, Spare's Farms grows produce for Farmers' Markets, DeVore Farms grows pumpkins and gourds, and 4-Star Hydroponics grows fresh tomatoes & herbs all year long.



More to Do & See on the Byway

Hudson. Tour the Stafford County Flour Mills & take home some Hudson Cream Flour.

Stafford: Take a cooking class at Henderson House and "put up" Sand Hill Plum Jelly and Syrup.

Claflin. Check out the message barrel that sits in the middle of Claflin's Main Street.

Ellinwood. View the Panning Sinkhole, a 4-acre hole that appeared in 1959.

Great Bend. Stop at the Great Bend Cemetery for a walking tour then tour the Lustron houses in the adjoining neighborhood

Hoisington. View the Prairie Wavemaker Mural, painted by artist Christina Lamoureux and over 30 volunteers

St John. Visit Delp's Christmas Tree Farm.

