**CHAPTER TRAVEL FORUM NOTES**

**By Dan Sockle and Terry Babin**

Notes from the September 15, 2022, Travel Forum

[NOTE: Our apologies if you had trouble joining the September Travel Forum. Your computer and the link were OK—the problem was on our end. Should not be a problem for the November 2022 Travel Forum.]

The following information was scheduled to be shared with Forum participants:

1. Scotland/Ireland.

* London’s LHR remains the international airport to avoid—research other options to get to Ireland and Scotland.
* Travelers going to Edinburgh for the Military Tattoo, Castle tour, high tea, etc., or travel to see the Highland games, need to have reservations in advance before locking in out-CONUS transportation.
* Reservations needed include any rail, regional air, lodging, car rental, and other site tours.
* Rental cars remain expensive relative to pre-pandemic costs—as much as 300% increase.
* Cars are small; rent a SUV if 3-4 or more in your party with accompanying luggage.
* Reservations for supper should be made as far in advance as possible.
* Edinburg has very limited parking; so, try not to have a car rental during the visit—check out other transportation options.
* A reminder that airport and rail stations, and aircraft and trains, currently have significant staff shortages—plan to allow more layover time between transportation connections.
* Avoid using Scotland Rail—great reputation in the past, but currently has many problems.

1. Western Montana and Idaho Panhandle.

* During a two-week trip used a combination of KOA and Good Sam RV Parks; only the KOA in Twin Falls ID was filled.
* With the closure of the North and Northeast Gates into Yellowstone N.P., there was a large backup to enter the Park; arrived at the West Gate before 8:00 AM, and still took ½ hour to get through the lane for those with passes.
* If interested in the Hiawatha bicycle trail (highly recommended) near Lookout Pass on the ID/MT border (I-90), make reservations in advance online; if not bringing your own bikes, include bikes and bike delivery in your reservation.
* Silver Valley area of Idaho, and Wallace in particular, have many activities and things to see and do; however, RV parks and hotel accommodations are very limited in the area.

Other items for the Forum:

* With high fuel costs, many State Parks and RV Parks experienced an usual number of traveler cancellations this summer—If you are planning fall or spring trips but could not get a reservation at your favorite site earlier, keep checking for cancellations/availability.
* A recently published survey showed that United, Delta, and American Airlines were the best of eight domestic airlines in taking care of passengers when there were lengthy flight disruptions or cancellations. Alaska Airlines was fourth.
* Fares can vary significantly for round trip tickets to the same destination using different departure airports. For example, significant savings were found by using British Air to Cairo from San Diego vice departing from Portland. Savings were enough to pay for round trip tickets on Alaska Airlines from/to Portland and San Diego, airport hotel in San Diego, and several hundred dollars still saved.

**Next Forum Zoom meeting is Thursday, November 17th at 7:00 PM.**