

**Discussion of *Blue Highways* by William Least Heat Moon**  
**Galesburg Public Library Tuesday Book Club**  
**January 2007**

1. Did you like the book? If so, what was your favorite part of the book? If not, why not?
2. In Tennessee, the author meets a man who says, "Satisfaction is doing what's important to yourself. A man ought to honor other people, but he's got to honor what he believes in too." (p 31) What do you think of this philosophy?
3. What problems observed by the author still exist today?
4. What would you most like to ask the author about his travels?
5. How has American changed in the 25 years since the book was written?
6. How does this book compare to *Travels with Charley*?
7. The author gives a soldier a lift. The author writes, "I thought of the machinist whose name I never learned. He had gone out and come back only to find a single change: he was older. Sometimes a man's experience is like the sweep second hand on a clock, touching each point in its circuit but always the arcs of movement repeating." (p110) Reactions?
8. Did any thing that happened or was said in the book stick with you?
9. In Texas, the author writes, "A popular piece of sociology holds that Americans are losing confidence in the future because they are losing sight of the past." (p 145). Reactions?
10. While speaking with a stranger he meets, the author says, "Maybe experience is like a globe – you can't go the wrong way if you travel far enough." (p 163) Do you agree?
11. Has anyone had an experience in any of the places the author visits?
12. Has anyone had an experience with Hacklebarney? That's the place Missourians speak of that's "a nonexistent town you try to get to that is forever just around the next curve or just over the next hill, a town you believe in but never get to." (p 206)
13. Where would you go today to "find" America?
14. A gentleman the author meets says that his wife "was complaining today about me spending my sunshine years just driving around and doing nothing constructive. She doesn't know that's what old men are *supposed* to do: stand and look." (p 211) Reactions?
15. The same Tennessean also says, "Weather to give a man the weary dismissals." (p. 35) Did any local sayings stick with you?
16. While flying over Washington with a pilot, the following exchange takes place (p 250):

"The thing I like when I'm up here," he said, "you know what it is?"  
"Your parachute?"  
"Simplicity. Up here life has just one clear purpose: get back down."

That kind of simplicity to life does have some appeal for me. What do you think?
17. Are there any questions you would like to ask?