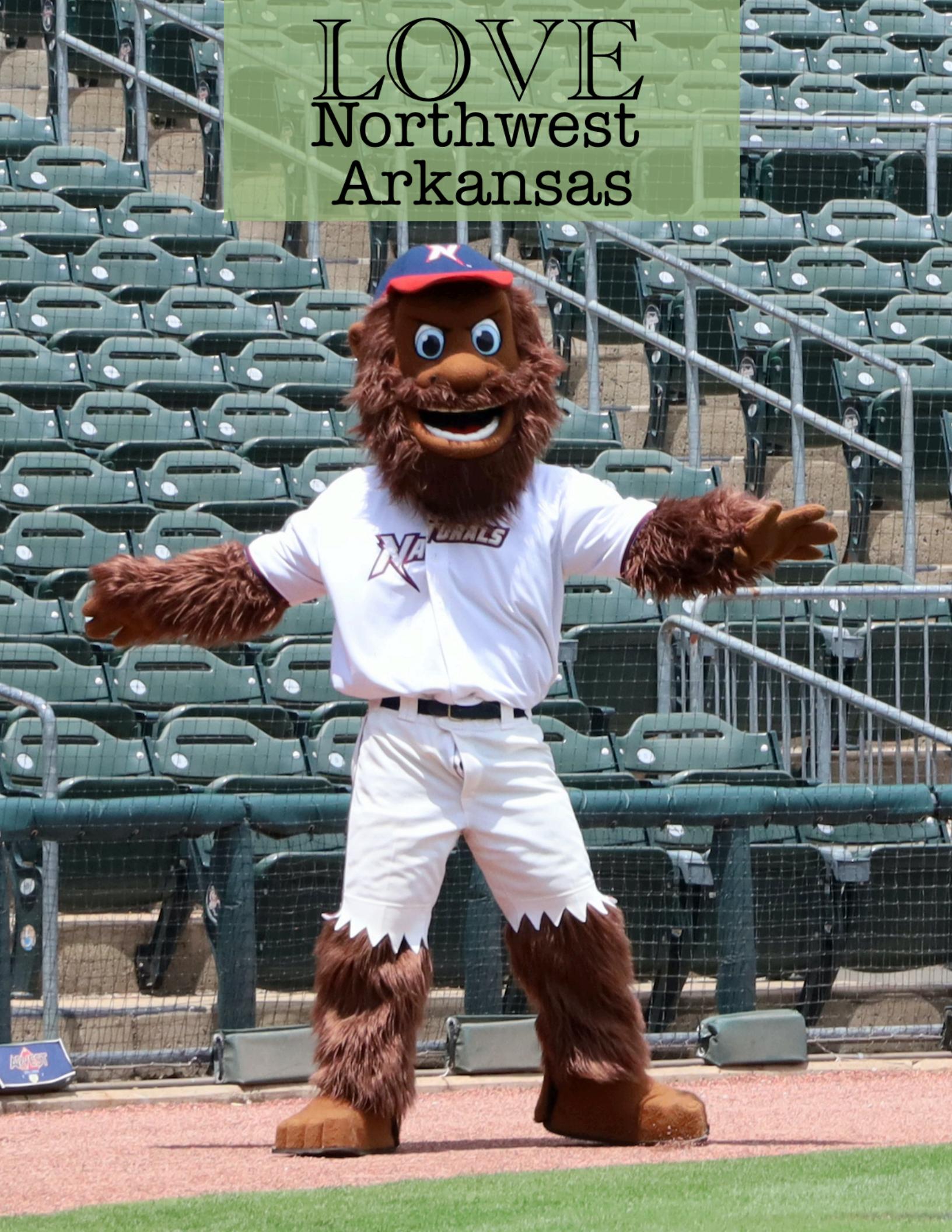


**LOVE**  
Northwest  
Arkansas



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**Dear Reader:**

It is my pleasure to bring you the first issue of Love NWA. It was intended to bring in revenue from Advertising. If nothing else, it gave me the opportunity to photograph baseball again – the NWA Naturals.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Love NWA. I expect it will change over time.

Sincerely,

Ralph Morais



**The Northwest Arkansas Naturals**



Just west of interstate 49 in Springdale, Arkansas sits the home of the Northwest Arkansas Naturals, a devision AA baseball team and subsidiary of the the Kansas City Royals in Kansas City, Missouri. The team moved to Springdale from in 2009 from Wichita, Kansas, taking the name of the NWA Naturals and moving into a \$33 million stadium named Crest Ballpark, after a bank that is at least partly owned by Walmart.



Attendance was okay for a hot Sunday afternoon in July. The team, which is new to the area, finds itself competing with the Arkansas Razorbacks, who have a long standing tradition going back to 1877. The Razorbacks also have the hog call, something that every self respecting Arkansan knows.



The Naturals have a Sasquatch. He's not as frightening as one might think, with long brown hair and baby blue eyes. But he's not a hog, and he doesn't know the hog call. The Naturals were kind enough to give me a press pass to photograph their team in

action. After seeing them play, I am considering getting a season pass for next year. It would be nice if more of the stadium was covered, as I burn easily. And I cannot afford the indoor seats.

Whether the Naturals realize it or not, they are selling more than just baseball. For one thing, they are selling a dream. They are selling a dream for those who play and have dreamt of playing baseball much of their lives. They are also selling a dream for those who hope to play professionally one day.



The Naturals are also selling a memory: memory of spending time with family, eating popcorn and ice cream. They are selling the memory of watching their team play and the memory, for the players, of having played the game of baseball.



If you decide to watch the Naturals in action, I'm sure you won't be disappointed. Prices for tickets are nominal and can be purchased from their website at <https://www.milb.com/northwest-arkansas>. Maybe I'll see you there.

