

2018

Our Travel Log – Mini trips



Paul Grenier

[Company name]

1/1/2018

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Prolog...

March 2018

3-30 We, possibly like many of you, experience the Lenten Season with some daily sacrifices and, of course, all the obligations of the Holy Days. By the time Carla and I get to Holy Week, at least I, find myself wishing I'd done just a little more. But, now it's Holy Week. Usually in the evening, after viewing the local and national news stations, we'll search for a movie, if nothing else is worth watching. On Good Friday, Saturday and Easter Sunday we try to find something appropriate related to the weekend.

This year we found a good movie on Friday but the Saturday movie will be an annual event for us in the future. We found it on Netflix, but I will intensely look to try to acquire the DVD.

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Hope you have a chance to view it some day.

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April 2018



<http://www.rawartists.org/abbypfister>

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tough and has proven to have the tenacity to continue with very little encouragement. As of today she's been contracted to do several paintings, where she now gets paid for her talent.

She describes herself, in her own words as:

I am Abby Pfister, a self-taught artist from Florida's space coast. My passions include painting and drawing. I enjoy all mediums but mostly use acrylic, gouache, pastels, and watercolors. Many of my paintings and illustrations include healing geometric symbols which have been considered sacred by many past civilizations. I enjoy using art to heal and express myself as well as uplift others!

I am drawn to Sacred Geometry and esoteric knowledge. My art is a representation of the divine connection between all of us and primordial source energy. Many of my inspirations come from nature itself, these shapes and patterns lie in every leaf, cell, animal, building, and human being. Sacred Geometry and art can be found everywhere in my daily life, a constant inspiration.

As I looked over her website this afternoon I was trying to think of anything I could do to help her along in her quest for success. As of this week I've had almost 135,000 viewings to this blog. The last twelve months I've been averaging 70 views a day and I've had little to nothing to say.



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As I mentioned, Abby's creations are original and will grow on you not to mention her work is very pleasing to the eye.

It was Saturday night before Easter Sunday. Nothing special, our usual meal of pizza, beer followed by, hopefully, a good movie. I went to the freezer to pull out a pizza and noticed it was not nearly as firm as it should be, but it was still very cold and it cooked up very nicely. All set to eat the frozen delight and it was off to the fridge for a couple of beers. Once again not nearly as cold and refreshing as they usually should be. By bedtime we knew we had a problem and by morning we were off to the plaza for a couple of 20-pound bags of ice.

We were not shocked. It was only a couple of years ago we were forewarned that this would happen, but no one gave us the reason why. By Tuesday we had resigned ourselves to the fact that we needed a new unit,

after all this living with ice is both expensive and does not quite do the job. We figured it would possibly go around \$3500, more or less, the good money was on the "more." Tuesday the 3rd we would have to go to Alliance RV here in Wildwood, FL for them to install a new unit on Thursday. We decided on a residential unit; these run on AC current and or batteries.

At Alliance we sat down with Mike to go over options for the replacement. The new unit would cost around \$1300 before installation, I could understand that. Then he mentioned we would have to remove and upgrade or inverter, to gadget that turns DC current into AC which is what the fridge needs to function. Okay with that, then he mentioned they cost about \$2700 before installation. I thought it was getting a little expensive but it is what it is. "Oh, by the way", he said, "you'll also have to add two additional batteries to your battery pack, about \$250 , once again, before installation." I'm still Okay, but it felt like we were in the process of buying a new RV. He said that would be about it except for the need to make a modification to the wall cabinetry it would have to be fitted to, no options there, can't leave it in the middle of the floor and, of course, there's the expense of installation, the unit, inverter, cabinetry and, of course, the ever loving batteries that would have to occupy one of our storage bins, under the coach, because the battery closet has no room for expansion. Oh, he forgot, additional wiring would be needed for the new batteries in this new location. All in all with sales tax, of course, the job should come in around \$8000, more or less!

We were not really thinking of going to Paris this coming winter, but I think it's possibly a sure thing we'll spend the winter months and longer just admiring our new Samsung Refrigerator. He did assure us that these new appliances will never permit soft ice cream. The new fridge will save us on propane, which the old unit needed for cooling. The savings on the propane alone should pay for the fridge in about forty-four years, more or less.

For what it is worth, we continue to enjoy the RV lifestyle and continue to come in at under the total cost of property taxes and home-owners insurance on the home we used to own in Titusville. How's your refrigerator doing?



4-7 Well it's finally here! Not fully installed, but installed enough for us to go out and re-stalk the fridge. We arrived at Allison RV on Thursday evening in order to be serviced as early as possible. Well, not everything goes as planned. The electrician was not able to complete the installation by the end of Friday night, but he will be back on the job on Monday morning, we hope. We are optimistic, however.

4-8 Movies we've watched. It is very seldom to brag about a movie, but the last couple of days we've been impressed. Saturday night we watched Bruce Willis in his flick called "Pay the Ghost." This is a must watch film. Sunday we took ourselves out to the Brownwood Village, part of " The Villages." We spent an hour or so walking around; a village very similar to Mystic Village. Our purpose was to go to their movie house and view "The Quiet Place." Dennis tells me it is also available on "On Demand" a viewing option we don't have. This also is a must see film. You do NOT want to see this film alone!

I did receive some good news on Friday. I've begun the final phase of Chemo. Turns out it will be completed by the beginning of May, instead of June. There will still be a need for a PET Scan and then we must hand deliver it to my surgical team in Tampa, Dr. Rosemurgy and his staff.

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4-10 Well the cooling beast is in. It's so big, and best of all, it came in under the projected cost, about \$7100. We did notice that when we bring in the slide holding the new fridge, the slide experiences a bump as it is being retracted. This is another issue we'll have to tend to probably end of this month. 'll have to tend to probably end of this month.

5.12

Nice to be back again. Since my last entry in April much has happen. For one thing it's now May and Carla and I are in our twenty-second month here in Florida.

To make matters worse the Web Site has been down for the last three weeks. I guess it wasn't the Web Site but rather the server. It's been hair raising logging in each day to a message board stating "this Web Site has been deleted."

On May 9th I went in for my final chemo. The results of my blood work qualified me to skip the two booster shots I normally have after chemo, so the trip has finally come to an end. On the 29th I go in for a PET Scan and within a few days from then we transport the results to the surgical team in Tampa. If nobody finds any surprises we could be on the road before my birthday in June. Both Carla and I are so thankful for HIS watching over us these past twelve months. We've had an amazing life together, some years were a little more challenging than others, but, all in all, It's been a Wonderful Life. Once again it's very nice hitting the keys again.

5.17.19

Tomorrow, on Friday 18th, we're going on our first field trip in over a year, if not , almost two years. We'll be traveling with Abby and beau, Michael, and will visit Chiluly St. Pete. We've been to this type of exhibit before in Seattle but, to the best of our knowledge, Abby has not seen something like this before. We're now residing in Orlando, actually Clermont, at the Orlando Thousand Trails RV Park. We arrived a couple of days ago and are now living with 50 amp juice and it's a very big RV Park. A little glitch. We heard back from Abby and Michael, by text, that meeting on Friday was not possible. Plan B would be to reset the trip for Saturday. And as the best laid plans would turn out, Saturday was the day we would go to St. Pete.



5.18 Friday



Such a beautiful day. Our hopes is that Saturday will be equally as nice. We've been going by signage off the highway advertising Lakeridge; a truly nice experience.



This signage was at the foot of the driveway. As we looked ahead it was like tripping in California.





The outside temperature today was 85, just perfect. What's hard to believe is that s vineyard began in 1988, by a CPA. This is the tasting bar, we'll return back here after the tour is complete and sample their products. They've been winning awards since almost their beginning in 1988, I think. Our tour will begin on the upper level. Actually we'll traverse the catwalks from above so as not to get in the way of the workers below. Picture looking down at the main level. In the back of the picture is a 250 gallon drum for aging wines. This system is no longer used and has been replaced with stainless steel drums as we'll soon see. This is Stuart, he'll be our guide on this tour.



Above are the newer two-thousand gallon storage drums and below are the even newer twenty-five thousand gallon drums.



The grapes are harvested, then thrown into these metal grinding machine where they are squished into a juice.



This is the owner of the winery, forgot his name. He started as a CPA and is now into grapes. Below is his father. As the story goes only his father enjoyed the wine that he, the father, produced, but he was the owners inspiration.



The grapes are harvested and collected and the process begins. This is a video we're looking at showing the bottling process. We'll see this machine again shortly



This winery bottles over 2.5 million bottles annually. Florida's hot, humid weather is not conducive to using wooden kegs, therefore the stainless steel insulated and individually cooled containers. Below is the bottling machine that does all the bottling. Just looking at the simple and small bottling machines you'd think this just a family operation. On the contrary; this is the seventh largest winery in the US.



5.19 Chihuly creations in Tampa, FL



This is our second field trip in the last 22 months. We are joined by Abby and beau Michael.





This is a self guided tour, and, as such, it's like walking through a museum. Below are just a small sampling of the many beautiful glass creations at Chihuly; Enjoy.





Above is a ceiling arrangement. not an easy picture to take. Actually Abby took many of these pictures, feels like old times.





It only took us about an hour to complete the tour when we came upon a video on the art of glass blowing.



This should really be at the beginning of the tour, not the end. We never did finish the video since it was time for us to leave the studio and proceed across the street, to experience the actual process itself.

Below is one of the Chihuly work stations, but I sure it's not where all the big stuff is created.

These two guys below, names I've forgotten, will demonstrate how to turn liquid glass into a piece of beauty. These guys, lets call the Blue and Grey, are working with two ovens. Blue is in the first which has a temp of over 2300 degrees and behind him with a grey door you see the second oven with a temp of 2000

degrees. It's difficult to see clearly, but on that white marble slab are 12-15 glass rods with a strand of red in them.



Above Blue has heated those twelve inch glass rods and rolled them up and around a chunk of molten glass from the back oven. This oven has a constant supply of molten glass available to be worked into a new creation. After about ten minutes he has the colored glass rods in an almost perfectly round design. Back, centuries ago, the iron table top used to be a three or four inch slab of marble, but that was then.



The red molten material in the center are the glass rods. The guys will continue to stretch and twist this material for as long as they feel they need. I think we were expecting to see a flower creation, or vase but not to be. Instead we saw the creation of a glass stalk, as seen below. In the next several days they will be adding to this stalk other things of beauty and stick them to this stalk.



Being seniors we we're hungry, so we found a grilled cheese joint, which was very good.



<http://www.rawartists.org/abypfister>

4-1-18

I am always so proud of my kids, but sadly they don't share their everyday challenges with me as I would hope they might. Abby, our surrogate granddaughter, seems to have been in our lives for so many years now. A few years ago she graduated high school and decided to take a year off. She's always had a yearning to draw and/or paint. We always hoped the best for her in that field but very few are very successful. She's tough and has proven to have the tenacity to continue with very little encouragement. As of today she's been

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Thank you.

Paul

JUNE 2018 JOURNALS

6.05.2018- Tuesday We got started this morning around nine am.

The trip went well . We drove through Florida and into Georgia around noon time. We're breaking a little more often than in the past because of me. We arrived in Perry Georgia, at Cracker Barrel just a little after 2:30, following our schedule pretty closely. Total mileage today was 280 miles. Weather was 88 to 90 and overcast. We are still in quest for cooler temps. Wednesday was a long ride but uneventful; Thursday made up for it.

6.7 Thursday - Tuesday and Wednesday's

rides were uneventful which was just great but Thursday began with us witnessing a car speeding down an unfinished road going close to 100 mph. The minute I saw the speeding car I said there's never a cop around when I see something like this. Within seconds at least a dozen State Troopers came screaming by at high speeds then a hand full of local police got in on the chase as well. Needless to say they were out of sight within seconds so we did not give it another thought. About an hour later we were caught up in another slow traffic situation. Low and behold it was speedy Gonzales with at least a dozen or more law enforcement vehicles causing our four-lane highway to be reduced to a single lane. The incident did break up the ride for this day.

6.8 Friday - Today was another 300-mile trip. With no Cracker Barrel in the area we settled for a night's stay at the local Walmart.

6.9 Saturday - arrival day.

Today we arrived at Neshonoc Lakeside RV Park, and we're just a few feet away from the Wards'. The coach you see to your left is, of course the Ward's. If you look way over in the 3 o'clock position you'll see our coach. It's looks further than it really is. Later this evening we'll be going over to their coach for dinner.

6.10 Sunday.

We did Mass today as opposed to our usual Saturday. A little later we joined up with them again and toured W. Salem, WI and visited the St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral. I'll have a special blog on this venue in a day or two. I'll also have a special blog on our W. Salem tour as well. That evening the Tom and Sue joined us for talk, game of Scrabble and Carla's famous pizza. It was a very enjoyable evening. No one kept score on the Scrabble game but that was just fine.

6.11 Monday. Today would be a full day.

The Tom and Sue are great planners. As you have seen in the past we have a tendency to visit churches and Cathedrals whenever possible; today would be no exception. Today we would visit Rose Chapel at the Convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. Our tour guide would be Sister Sarah, a nun in residence at the convent. I will not go into detail on this venue since I will be devoting a special blog to it. Sister Sarah gave us a great amount of time answering our many questions on both religion and the Rose Chapel. We left the Chapel and picked up Tom who was having a physical at this time. The day was complete, as far as I was concerned, but Tom had another venue he wanted us to experience, the Neshonoc

Lake, where he and Sue once lived. It's been so many years since Carla and I have been on the water., it felt so good. The air temp was in the high 70's and the sky was blue with some intermittent clouds. A perfect day. He took us, Carla and I, (Sue had to pick up her glasses) around the full circumference of the lake. Some of the homes along the shore were awesome to behold. I haven't had such a full day in months, but it did not end after the lake ride. We got together with them, once again, for dinner at a "pork restaurant." Carla and I both had way to much to eat but every bite was delicious.

The next day was strictly R and R. I did not realize how tired I could be. Just not used to having so much to do. Later that evening the Ward's did come over and we enjoyed a short card game or two of "King's Corner." The next day, Wednesday, was departure day for both families. We would leave just before 9AM and arrive in Forrest City, Iowa, at Winnebago, around 1PM.

6.17.2018- Sunday Spoke to both my kids today.

That may not seem like such a big deal to you but to me it's a red-letter day. Not to be left out but also the entire Ozdarski family, Cindy and, of course, Abby. Something we both enjoy but eat only rarely is French Onion Soup. Today we thought we'd treat ourselves so we used a couple of good size onions and made enough to go for at least two meals. That did not work. The soup was so good, except for about a half bowl, all was gone in one sitting. Made it using the crock-pot. It did haft to cook for about four-hours, but it was well worth the wait. This will be our final day at Winnebago in Forrest City, IA. We have been told we must vacate the site by 8am tomorrow morning and be on our way to Cedar Rapids, IA. We're looking forward to the trip. The folks there are closer than family. The MacDougall's' have been in both our lives for over thirty-years, they actually introduced me to Carla way back when.

6.20 Wednesday

This is our third day here in Cedar Rapids, IA, and the last two we've had rain. Everything here is just so green. I believe we're to have one more day of rain and that should be it, not complaining, Don and Joyce are treating us like royalty.

JUNE 2018 BLOGS

6.10 Sunday



There's not much to talk about in this blog. The Wards have taken us on a car-tour of W. Salem, WI. The day was just perfect for sightseeing.

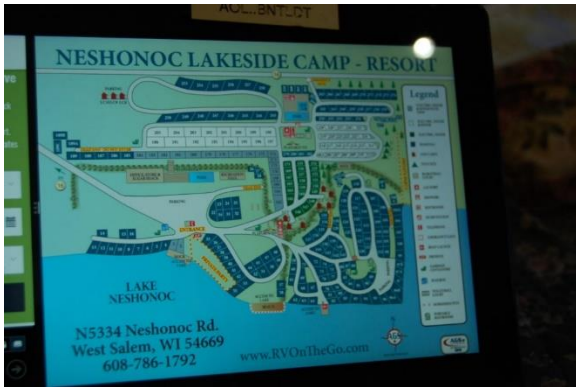


The only time we actually got out of the car to experience a venue was at an open garden area that runs parallel to the LaCrosse River. The garden was broken up by countries. Below, of course are Tom and Sue. This was an actual water-wheel. Not sure if it has any practical use, except for looks. Below are a couple of sight-seeing tour boats, possible water-wheel-looking, not sure.



I may be mistaken, but I think this is the entrance to the Japanese Garden section. There were many more pictures but they all seemed a little redundant. It was an excellent stretch of the legs.

6.9- NESHONIC LAKESIDE RESORT



The Neshonoc Lakeside Resort is located in West Salem, WI. It's an Encore Resort, which are usually a step or two higher in quality than an average Thousand Trails Resort, and so it is here. As you can see from the resort map this RV Campground is spread out over many acres of land. We arrived on Saturday but must leave by Wednesday. Our stay may be short but full of memories of the campground and our friends Tome and Sue.

The high point of the property is, of course, the lake. Tom and Sue lived on the shores of this lake about 4-5 years ago before they sold it all to be full-time RVers.

Our view, the first night here, had campers in front of us, but their stay ran out and we got our view.



Behind us were the Ward's coach and just behind them was the upper level pool which was active from early morning until dusk.



Another view of the pool complex. There is also another pool area, equal in size but not quite as active, at the entrance to the campground.



Here, as at almost all campgrounds, you'll find horseshoes, a boat launch, Volleyball, recreation hall and many other outdoor activities. We did not use it, but each campsite also has a campfire ring and wood is for sale at the office.

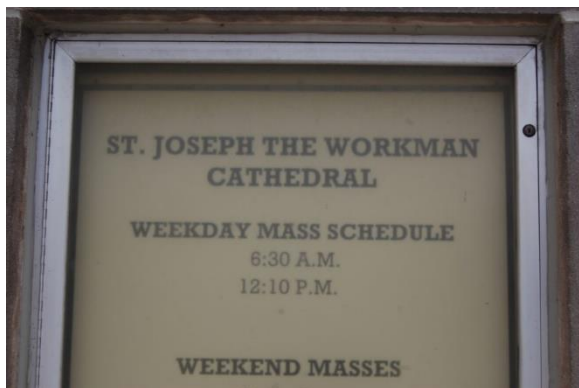


This campground is not a year-round facility, winters prevent that. But many stay for long periods in trailers, coaches and cabins for rent, for those not into the RVing lifestyle.

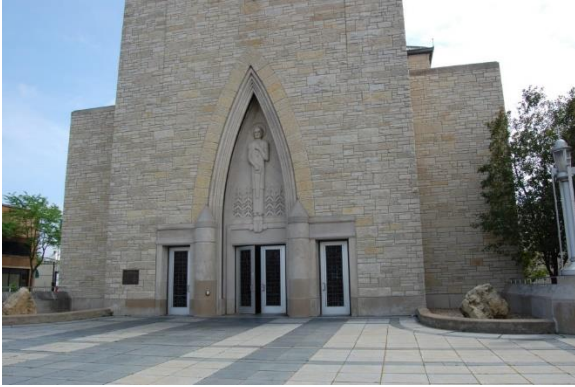


6.10.2018- Saint Joseph the Workman Cathedral

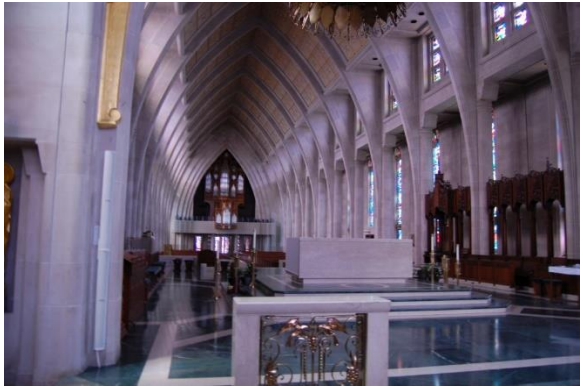
Back in 1863 the parishioners of St. Mary's Church in Lacrosse, WI met and decided they needed a church. The German speaking parish had only been established in 1856, but, I guess, they were getting tired of having Catholic services in the local courthouse. Father Henry Tappert headed up this effort.



As part of this effort it was decided that French and English members of the parish would remain parishioners of St. Mary's and the German speaking members would be members of the new church and parish. The new parish would be German speaking and under the patronage of St. Joseph, husband of Mary. Property was needed to begin new construction so the new parish collected \$1500 and purchased the land at Sixth and Main Streets.



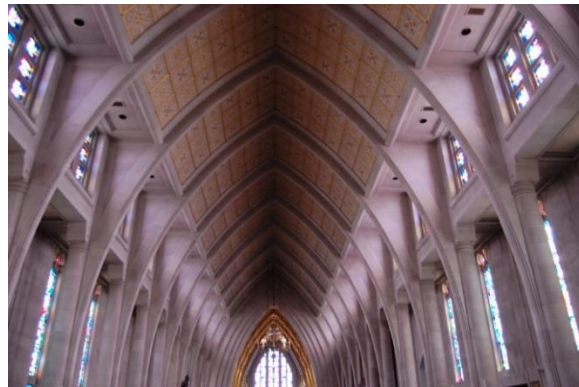
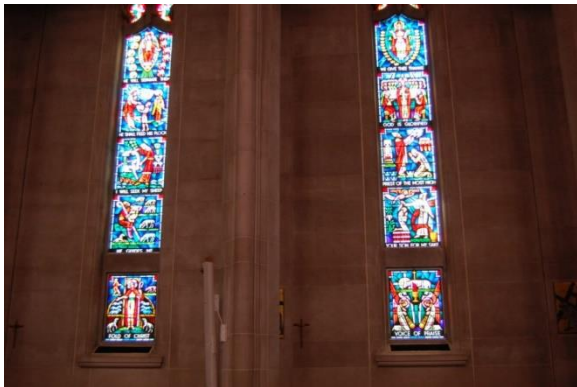
The new St. Joseph Parish would have Father C.J.F. Schraudenbach as Pastor. The parishioners wanted instructional lessons for their children so a school was begun in the basement of the church in 1864. Construction on the church did not begin until 1869 and all worshipped at St. Mary's in the interim.



In 1868 La Crosse was designated by Pope Pius IX to be a new and separate diocese. The first Bishop of the Diocese would be Michael Heiss. He chose St. Joseph to be the cathedral parish of the diocese.



By 1870 construction had finally begun on the new St. Joseph Cathedral. By 1875 the parishioners had finished construction and had completely paid for the construction of the new church.





Once completed new spires were added and by 1884 a new pipe organ was installed as well as the completion of a new school.

Eventually all the buildings and facilities at St. Mary's Parish were moved into the new cathedral and St. Mary's would be associated with Lacrosse University.

In 1964 the Holy Cross School would be raised and in 1969 and a new Cathedral School would be constructed.

6.11 The Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Help

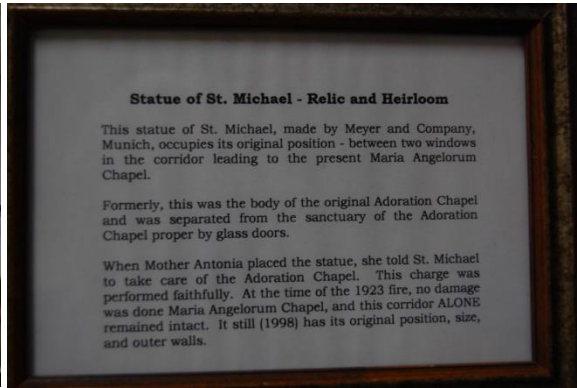
The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. We do this quite often, visiting a church or cathedral, today would be no exception. This year, more than any other we'd enjoyed together, we were made to realize that every day is a gift from Him and as such we should find venues that reflect our thanks for his giving us another day to enjoy.



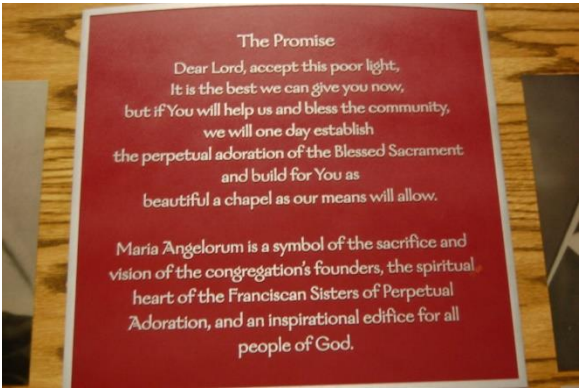
The Sisters are part of the Franciscan orders of priests, sisters and laity. It's a big complex and at present fifty nuns, of all ages, reside at the convent. It is also their corporate headquarters. The building above also goes back almost equally as long.



6-11-This is the reception hall. You'll notice Tom is absent, he had a Doctor's appointment to attend. Within a few minutes we were greeted by Sister Sarah. She was totally knowledgeable of everything in the building and its history. In the bottom picture is a statue of St. Michael. In 1923 a fire threatened to destroy the entire the St. Rose Convent, one sister died. The Statue of St. Michael was to guard and protect the sacred chapels at this end of the convent. Even though the fire destroyed the entire west wing of the facility and fire abruptly stopped when it approached the St. Michael statue.



6.11-The Angel Gabriel is represented here was the angel that appeared to Mary way back in the beginnings.



Sister Sarah talking to Carla. The pews and stations of the cross were all done by local artisans in Lacrosse, WI. That also includes all the wood furnishings like the pulpits. All the windows in the chapels are stain glass. They were imported from the Royal Bavarian Art Institute of Munich, Germany.





6.11-Back in 1865 a promise was made by Mother Antonia Herb that a chapel would be constructed and that "perpetual adoration" would also be promised. Since the completion of the original chapel and least two Franciscan Sisters have prayed in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament since 1878.



The congregation, back in the late 1800's were not rich. However, to look closely at the construction you'd only wonder where the found and how could they afford all this marble. The truth is that they couldn't. What you see is not Venetian Marble but rather concr walls and ceilings, to resemble ete and plaster. Every square inch of the concrete was meticulously hand painted, to resemble marble.



6.11-This is the back of the facility. I believe it forms a square with a privacy yard in the center. There is just too much to talk about in this blog but click on the link below and visit the Web Site for this religious order.

6.18-cedar rapids stay-They discovered first and we fell in love with the food and service as well. At the same time it looks like we're going to get some more rain. Will take this time to do a short blog on Squaw Creek Loop B

6.18 Monday We arrived here at Squaw Creek Campground right about noon, a time we had projected. It was a short and very uneventful trip. Four weeks ago when we inquired into staying here for a this 2-week time period we were told there were no site vacancies. It's no wonder, this is such an awesome park.



What the campground does have is "Loop B" which is "first come first serve" accommodations. Carla and I both agreed that most campers in the Loop B would, most likely, be leaving on Sunday or at least Monday, and we were right. The pickins were very good. Sites available everywhere, but that would not be the case by end of week. We were able to find a very nice site just about half way through the loop. We had no sooner set up camp when we had a call from Joyce MacDougall welcoming us and inviting us to have lunch with them. Chicken salad, corn and so much more, not to mention excellent company.

6.19 Tuesday Having eaten so well we slept equally as well last evening. We're planning to meet up with Don and Joyce in the afternoon and end the evening with dinner at their home. Just short of a feast. Mashed potatoes, native corn, pork loin so tender a knife wasn't needed and more. We ate very well then enjoyed their company till dark set in.

6.20 Wednesday This is our third day here in Cedar Rapids, IA, and the last two we've had rain. Everything here is just so green. I believe we're to have one more day of rain and that should be it, not complaining, Don and Joyce are treating us like royalty. Needless to say we're still kinda stuffed, so this evening we'll have a typical meal at home, hot dogs.

6.21 Thursday I believe we spent most of the day at home doing some shopping and taking care of some loose ends. Our day would culminate at the MacDougall's with a steak dinner. Next day, Friday would be a quiet day for us but it was definitely our turn to reciprocate on dinners, but where to take them, since this is not our neck of the woods? We would let them decide and decide well they did. A choice I would not have made based on the restaurant name; Mandarin Spice! What on earth would a restaurant with a name like that, serve? Was I ever surprised. Don had Mongolian steak to die for, Joyce had orange chicken, Carla enjoyed sautéed shrimp and I feasted on teriyaki chicken, which I hadn't had for many, many years, Heavenly!



6.23 Saturday As everyone knows our routine for Saturdays is generally to relax, Mass, pizza and beer, and so it would be tonight. The MacDougall's' would be nice enough to join us just after we got back from church. As always the pizza came out excellently and we enjoyed food, drink and company. for the evening.

6.25 Monday. We have just a little bit of we time before we get together with Don and Joyce for dinner at Noodles. We were joined by Duncan this evening, grandson to Don and Joyce. If I could buy a franchise, this would be it. Awesome food, great service and a very friendly atmosphere.



They discovered first and we fell in love with the food and service as well. At the same time it looks like we're going to get some more rain. Will take this time to do a short blog on Squaw Creek Loop B. Here we are at the MacDougall's checking out Don's Pachysandra. Believe it or not there are one-hundred plantings. Really miss those days, LOL.



6.26 The Youngville Café, where we went for soup, sandwich and pie is on the Lincoln Highway; so what is so special about this place and the Lincoln Hwy? This highway was the first in the country to stretch from the east coast to the pacific coast. It does go by different numbers along the way depending on the state and county it is in, but it is still the same road. Construction began in 1913 and was completed in 1928. The length of the road was 3389 miles long. It begins on the East coast, Times Square, NY and moves westward to San Francisco, CA. As the name implies it was dedicated to Abraham Lincoln. In short this was the Rt. 66 of its times.



As I said the Youngville Café is located on the NW corner of Cedar Rapids, IA and was probably the Howard Johnson or Cracker Barrel of its day.

Below we are enjoying desert.



This is a very small establishment with dining for a small group in the back.



These are the actual gas and diesel pumps of that day.



We returned home, back to the MacDougall's and were visited by a family of four deer. One of the two fawn this afternoon.

6.27 Wednesday Spiedie Chicken Day What an awesome day. For a guy who had aspirations of a "Parenthood" type family, this day was so nice to experience. The menu included a very special "Spiedie Chicken", potato salad, beans and fruit salad. Paul and Ivy, Son and wife to the MacDougall's with their three children also joined us. Duncan, grandson flew through quickly. He belongs to John and Meg. He's spending some quality time with the grand-parents. Everyone went back for seconds not to mention repeats on several of the wines produced by Paul.

6.28 Thursday - Meatloaf at the MacDougall's As we continue eating our way through this two-week stay, we will get to enjoy a meatloaf dinner with left-overs from the day before. An excellent meal enjoyed by all of us. As an extra Don has downloaded the final season of Downton Abby. Today we enjoyed episode ten, the final episode. Carla and I really loved this series. Now it feels like our good friends have moved away, never to be heard from again; Sad!



6.29 Three venues today.

St. Francis Xavier Basilica

This beautiful Basilica is located in the Field of Dreams town of Dyersville, IA As with this venue and the last two, I will be having separate blogs on each of the three.

Please refer to the index on the right to access the blog on Field of Dreams

6.29- Field of Dreams field trip.



The Field of Dreams venue is located in Dyersville, IA and short distance from Dubuque. These are just a couple of pictures of how beautifully green and lush this part of the country really is.



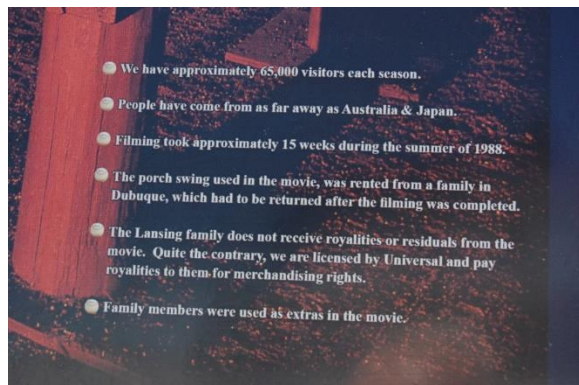
This is the farm house and the baseball diamond that's known to everyone. The movie made the farmhouse look considerably bigger, but it is what it is.



There's always someplace to pick up souvenirs. This place is no exception. We don't usually pick up stuff like this but this place was special.



The white picket fence, we're told was no in the movie but is there now. Families and kids are traversing all over the property. Kids and Dads with baseball hats and jerseys on pitching from the diamond.



The pictures explain themselves, the original owners of the property. Below some stats on the property and the movie.



Joyce and Don enjoying the luxury of an old fractioned glider; are these still made. And exactly how tall does corn grow? Carla is 5 ft. 3 in and the corn still has a lot more growing to do.



The diamond and batters box were in use but we did have a chance to walk the bases, which we did. Below is a far away picture of the complex from the entrance. The remaining pictures are for your appreciation. Iowa is a state as green as Boca and you can see forever.



6.29 Breitbach's Country Dining



The Breitbach's Country Dining Restaurant is actually in Balltown, IA near Dubuque and just a short distance from Field of Dreams in Dyersville, IA. You must not visit Field of Dreams and skip this Dining experience.



The folks here have been serving the public since August 1852. The current owner is Mike Breitbach. It's not that it hasn't had its share of challenges. On Christmas of 2007 and October 2008 they had to deal with fires.



You will experience some of the best German cooking anywhere, not to mention plate portions that will satisfy the biggest of appetites. Sauerkraut, sausage and coleslaw are specialties of the house.



I enjoyed a half-pound cheeseburger with bacon and fries. Carla, Joyce and Don enjoyed patty melts, with onion rings to die for. Even if you must travel out of your way for this eatery, you will not be disappointed.

This is actually our spot. Just looking at the pictures it's easy to tell the difference. A big plus here is that the park only reserves Loop A.



Both Loop A and B offer electrical and water hook-ups, as well as, a very impressive fire pit. What B lacks is the sewer hook-up. Also missing is a cement pad, which is neither here nor there, as far as I'm concerned. The park does provide a pump-out station, several in fact, just outside the park areas as you enter or exit the parks.



6.29.2018-Kids are never forgotten. A very elaborate swing and climbing area is available to them and it's

always in use. What you will not find here is a pool or even a pond, although I think there is a lake in Loop A if I'm not mistaken.

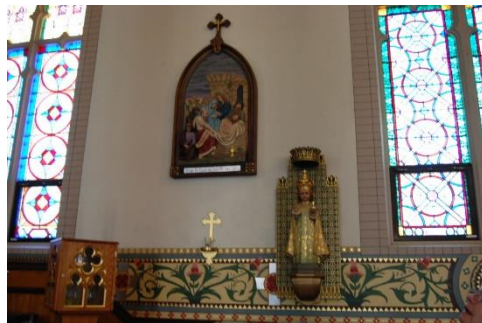
6.29 St. Francis Xavier Basilica



This would be the first church to be built in Dyersville, IA back in 1862. Hard to believe that the cost to the parishioners, back then, would be \$100,000. One-hundred years in the future a new south entrance would be constructed to accommodate the handicap. The cost of this build would be \$130,000.



Even as the church was being build it had to be modified twice to accommodate the increasing number of Catholics coming to this area. Currently the parish counts approximately 1800 families or about 5000 parishioners. As you can barely see, the church has three alters.



6.29-In 1956 the church was elevated to a Minor Basilica by Pope Pius XII. This floor marking reaffirms that credential. This is the Papa; insignia of the Tiara and Keys, This will make this church a Papal Church. The construction of this church was built in the Ruskinian Gothic Revival architecture. One of the primary requisites to be honored as a Basilica is to be Debt-free. The parish was able to maintain this debt-free status almost from the beginning.



In 1935 the parish decided to build a rectory toward the back of the church. It would incorporate fourteen rooms. The church also offers the Tridentine Mass at twelve noon on Sundays, according to the 1962 Rite. This is the Altar of St. Joseph. The wood used in the construction of this altar was created using Bavarian wood.





Carla always enjoys the architecture in the ceiling. The church has 64 stained glass windows. This is the altar on the left of the main altar is the Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The two steeples reach as high as 212 feet high. The seating capacity of the Basilica is 1000 people. At the time the church was dedicated it was only one of 12 Basilicas in the United States.

JULY 2018 JOURNALS & TRAVEL ITINERARY

July 2- Amboy, Illinois, staying at the O'Connell's Yogi Bear Resort, for five days. This is a member park of the Trails Collection (TC), a new group of resorts we recently signed up for guaranteeing us additional free stays on top of the many resorts we already have to chose from.

July 7- Travel to Buchanan, Michigan staying at Bear Cave Campground for 7 days a Thousand Trails Resort (TT). This will be a repeat visit to this park. Dennis once visited us at this RV Park. Carla tells me we'll also be revisiting Notre Dame again. It was an enjoyable visit the last time.

July 14 - Travel to Howe, Indiana, for five days staying at Twin Mills RV Resort (TT). (61 MI)

July 19 - Travel to Jefferson, Ohio, for only two days, since it does not look like there is much to do there. There we'll be staying at Kenisee Lake Resort. In the TT resort booklet there's only one picture of this place, but it looks awesome. (distance 268 MI)

July 21 - We do an overnight at Cracker Barrel or Walmart (CB/WM).

July 22 - We're off to Sturbridge Village for eleven days staying at the Sturbridge Village RV Resort. We've built in some extra time for venues we've seen and want to revisit, as well as, visiting family and possibly Fr. Michael Gill.

JULY 30 - We do another overnight at a Cracker Barrel or Walmart (CB/WM).

JULY 31 - The final leg of the itinerary. Here we'll be staying at the Patten Pond Camping Resort around Bar Harbor, Maine. This will be a fourteen day stay. A longer stay than all the others since this location and Bar Harbor are the object of the trip. Leave Aug 14th

JULY 2018 BLOGS

7.02,2018



Just crossed into Illinois, this is the Mississippi River.



Mississippi again and below is a visitors station. Our coach, parked at the Illinois Visitors Station.



All newbies must stop in here to register. They have our information so this should not take to long. I did tell you it was Yogi Bear's Park. A nice beach area but for some reason it's closed today.



Unique but very small park rental cottages. There are no shortages of tent campers here.



Great park to just walk around. Temp is around 88 degrees with very little humidity.



We met the folks that own this cottage, they've been coming back here for nineteen years and own several others that they rent out. Yes this is a real palm tree, like what you might find in West Palm Beach, but could it really survive this far north. We're about one-hundred miles west of Chicago.



Ducks of all ages enjoy this lake as well.



Doesn't get much nicer than this. I'm sure we'll be back again some day, after all it is on the way to Iowa.



I love this cottage. It's log-covered and probably a pine interior and it looks so comfortable. This is the campground pier. Tomorrow Carla and I will take a walk around this lake and the walk begins right here.



Not sure, but from a distance I'd say that might be the Ranger Station, of otherwise known as a gift shop. Many campers come as a group and pitch their tents together.



7.4 Fourth of July... Nothing planned today so we will go on a walk around the lake. This is the Warf so this is where we begin. The pictures of cottages are just that, no significance to them. It's amazing how unique the owners can get. The Lakeside walk.



This is a huge indoor activity building for the kids.

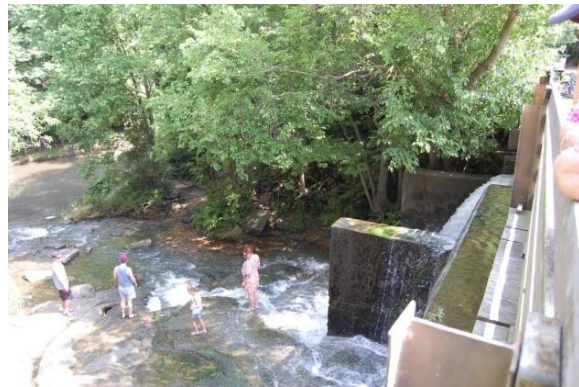
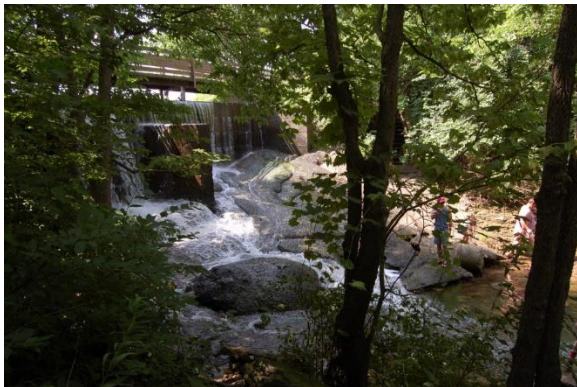


7.04.2018-Like this is not something you see at every campground. You must pay extra to enjoy this water slide but it's very reasonable. Below is another pool area.





Asked, what's biting, just catfish! We're told this is one of the must-see parts of the campground.



This beautiful waterfall area...awesome! Now we get back to our lakeside walk.



This is the mid-point of our trek. I thought it would take much longer but that's not the case.





The campground does provide facilities for them and even fresh water from place to place. We've reached the three-quarter point of our walk, the corn field. Carla noticed the beginnings of the corn cob here. We've finally gotten back to the campground, and it only took about one hour. Below. Our site at Yogi Bear's. Yes, we have a slight view of the lake from the coach! The walk was great but I'm ready to just veg-out for the next couple of hours.

July 5, 2018-The Reagan Boyhood Home:



The name is designated such because this is not where he was born, that was a short distance from here. This was a mail-order home from Sears and Roebuck. The buyers would pick out the home style they liked, place the order and in this case send in \$1500 and your house-kit would be delivered to you on your lot. All the wood and materials needed to complete the construction of the home would be provided in the kit. The buyers would, of course, have to find the carpenters to complete the job.



The furnishings are not all belonging to the Reagans, but are period appropriate. The fireplace was located in the parlor. The rule in this home, as it was in my childhood home, the parlor was off-limits except for special



occasions or very special guests; relatives, birthdays and possibly for Santa Clause as for my home back then..Ron and his brother Neil also known as "Moon", would get paid a penny for doing odd jobs around the house. Ron felt his brother Neil might be stealing some of his pennies. These pennies were important for the reason it would cost five-pennies to go to the movie house to see a movie. Eventually Ron discovered a loose tile in the fireplace hearth so he would stretch his body from the hall over to the hearth and hide his precious coins. Remember no one was allowed to walk in the "parlor." To try to bring in some additional money Ron's mother, Nell, was an excellent seamstress.



On the bed is the family bible. Mom would read from the bible almost nightly. This picture was taken of the President and wife Nancy with brother Neil when they visited the family homestead while President. The reason they appear to be not that comfortably sitting is that the curators of the museum home were not sure the bed could support all three, so they were pretending to be seated on the bed. Above. The quilt bed cover is not original to the Reagans but they did indeed have a very similar cover on the parents bed.



7.05.18-This is a family picture of the Reagans. Jack and Nell Reagan with Neil and younger Ron Reagan. Below is the family living room. On the oval table would be a pair of glasses to remind the guide to tell visitors that Ron was visually impaired until he was eleven when he tried on a pair of glasses in play only to find he was able to see properly.



Family dining room. In the glass case against the wall is a selection on china. Nell was a collector. On the occasion that she would provide a service to a neighbor or friend, seeing that many at that time were very poor, she would accept a tea cup instead. The Reagans had a gas stove although this is a period model not theirs.



7.05.18-The unique piece of cookware can also be seen on the stove. Try and guess the purpose of the cookware. The answer is at the bottom of this blog. Dave, our guide, is now in the Reagan kitchen. He is holding a very useful tool of the day. None of us, not even Carla, could identify it. Answer to this, as well, can be found at the bottom of this blog.



The Reagan garage, in the back yard. In the garage in a Model T 1929 which the Reagans used to own.

Above, of course, is an early day ice chest. Most back doors would remain unlocked so when the ice-man came, if no one was at home, he would enter and leave the amount of ice the family needed as indicated on the sign: 25, 50 or 100 pounds of ice. The milk man also had such an arrangement as to deliver the amount of

milk the family would need and place the milk in the ice chest if they were not home. At the very bottom of the ice chest is a draw that collected the water from the melting ice. It was Ron's job to continually empty the receptacle so it would not overflow and must not spill any of the water as well. He did once. The penalty for spilling the collected water was to wash the entire kitchen floor area.

Answer on the cookware: a early toaster.

Answer on the tool in Dave's hands: An agitator for cleaning clothes.

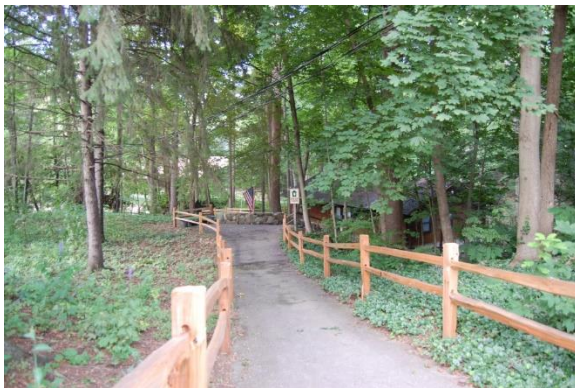
7.08.2018- BEAR CAVE RV CAMPGROUND

This is a re-visit for us. For some reason it looked much nicer three years ago. For anyone who would like to be refreshed on the park you can click on this link:

[goto: Bear Cave](#)



This is actually the office.



Just a couple of pictures to remind you of the park. We're in a totally different location, you might call the cheap seats. When we got here we were across the street with no satellite and no sewer. Come today, Sunday AM, the campers that were here were leaving so we moved to they're spot so now, at least we have satellite.

This is a concern we did not have three years ago, July 20, 2015, when we were here last. Hard to believe three years have go by so fast. This will be a seven-day stay leaving this coming Saturday.

7.11 Wednesday

Today is going to be much like yesterday, tomorrow and Friday, uneventful. But, the fact is we're retired, so hanging around and just enjoying these beautiful days and low 80's temps is just our luck. Just got back from taking a few "current" pictures of the park, our site in particular. This is our site. We made very good use of our fire ring.



As you can tell from the dust on the car, this is a very dusty campground. This campground is worse than Alaska. Next time we come through here it'll be for no more than a 2-day stay. Even better there's a very big.



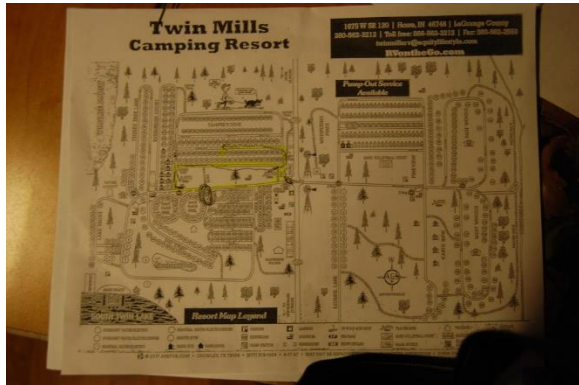
7.11.18-Below is the Class-B that our friend Ann Cunningham. She's like a 6-month full-timer.

7.14.18 TWIN MILLS CAMPING RESORT

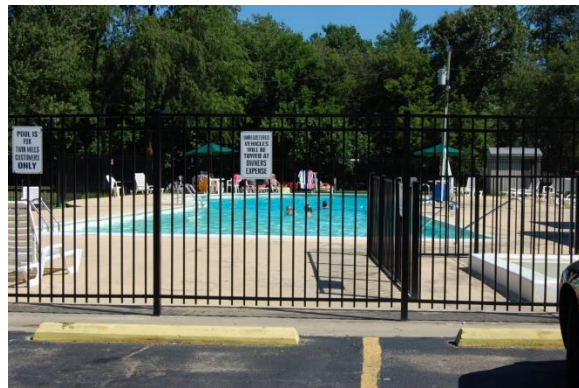


7.14 Sat: We departed Bear Cave and arrived at Twin Mills by noon time. This was a very short but enjoyable ride to the tree-laden campground. The fire-ring at our site is sad, I might try confiscating one from across the road and leaving our in place. There will definitely be no TV this week. We are totally enveloped in trees. It is a very comfortable setting. I will check with Dennis on whether we are at war or what, of any importance, has happen. The coach is a little dusty but the car look very much like it did when we traveled Alaska. Hopefully I'll get it washed in the next couple of days. Temps are projected to be in the upper seventies with 1-2 day with a possibility of some rain. The campground graphic below show how big this camping ground really is.





Just a couple of additional pictures on this campground. This is a Trails Collection facility.

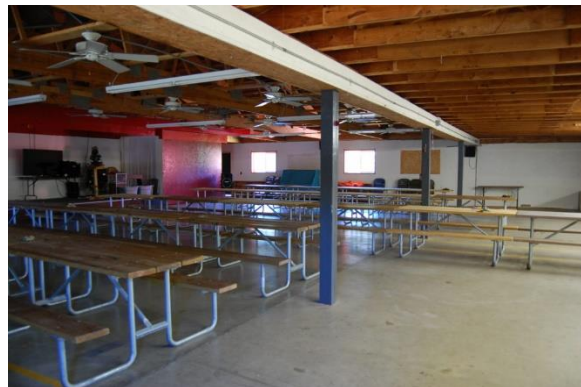


7.14.18-Campground Entrance.





7.14.18-Another playground area for the younger kids.





7.14.18-Above is a mini menu on fast food items that will be cooked up for you if you want. It's closed today, most likely open only on weekends when this place is packed. Below is a snack shack office.

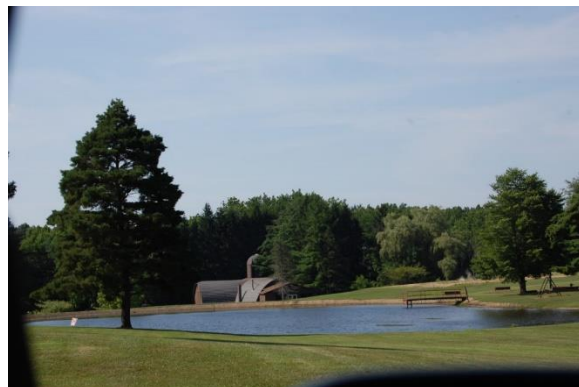
7.20 Friday



Well, we're finally in Ohio. This was a 268 mile, six hour trip and we're tired. So we're taking 2 days here to rest up before we continue.



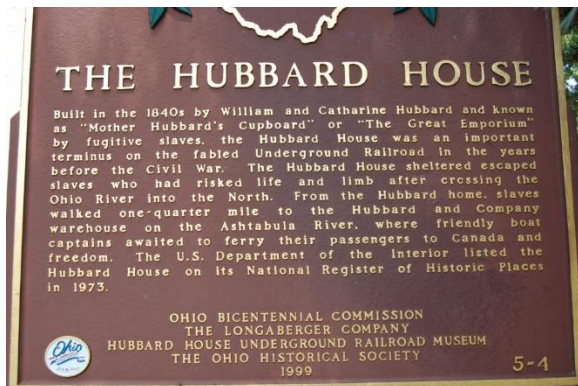
This is a very beautiful and well maintained resort. I believe it's only a Thousand Trail Park but could easily be upgraded to an Encore facility.



7.20.18-It has two very big and beautiful lakes on the, BUT, the wild geese have taken over the ponds as their private bath tubs, so all around the lakes are signs warning "no swimming."



7.20.18-I could have stayed here a little longer to enjoy it a little more but the two days were adequate.



The first thing we learned about this venue and the Ashtabula town it's located in, is that nobody gets up on Friday mornings for anything. It did not matter whether we were here or in the downtown district, the earliest anyone comes to work on Fridays in 1PM. OK, so it's 11AM and nothing happens here till 1PM, so we decide to visit the shore line. Ashtabula is a coastal town and it sit on the coast of Lake Erie. Since there's no way to close down a beach area, we felt safe wandering in town meandering to find Lake Erie.



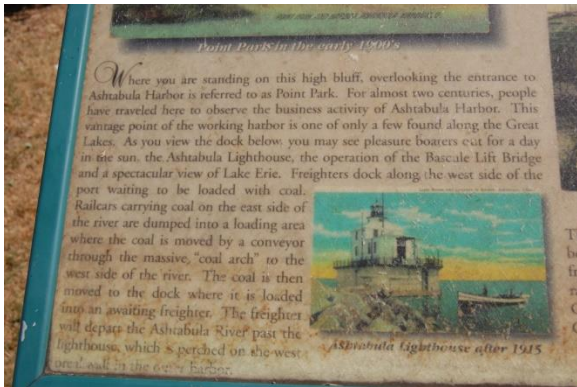
One of the very unique features of the town is their Draw Bridge. It opens on the half hour and on the hour religiously. Evidently the bridge master does not have the luxury of sleeping in on Fridays as does the rest of the town.



7.20.18-Carla enjoys it greatly when a town goes out of its way to add a homey atmosphere. Yup! So in order to keep all these flowers blossoming and without the luxury of a Disney irrigation system, it's up to a single individual to walk up and down the streets with a long spout watering can and keep the vegetation alive. The business owners on the far side of the town took pity on this person and actually began monitoring and watering the flowers in their neighborhood on their own. I wanted so much to visit this church, it was beautiful. But as typical for Catholic Churches, it's come and visit but on our time schedule. All locked up and they were not going to open at 1 PM



There's a museum here to visit if you wish, but time would not permit us to do so. It is said that in the museum is a block of Sea Glass that weighed in at over 200 pounds and was probably the largest example of sea glass in the country; we just took their word for it.



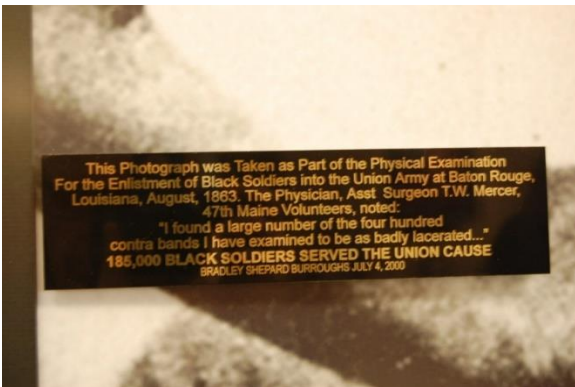
Here we are on a roadway above the town looking down on the draw bridge. It's still not 1PM yet



7.20.18-This town was an essential port for both loading coal on to barges and also having barges deliver coal to the town. The problem was that the deep water basin was on the other side of the town. So as you look at the picture above the coal was delivered behind the big buildings with the red roofs. So about a hundred years ago the coal company decided the solution was with a conveyor belt that would take the coal from the far side and then convey it on a very long belt to where it could be used by the town. Below is Walnut Beach, which is Lake Erie. Water Temperature today was 65 degrees.



Above is a bag of sea glass the residents find in the beach sand. Below, of course, is the beach.



The picture to the left describes the picture below as to how severely slaves were treated by their msters. This slave was enlisting so he could be set free after the conclusion of the war, if he makes it.

I don't get very far with pictures at this venue because I was quickly informed that picture taking was prohibited. There's just so much to talk about as a result of our two-hour tour I could not possibly try to fit it in this blog. The Hubbard House does have a Web Site and



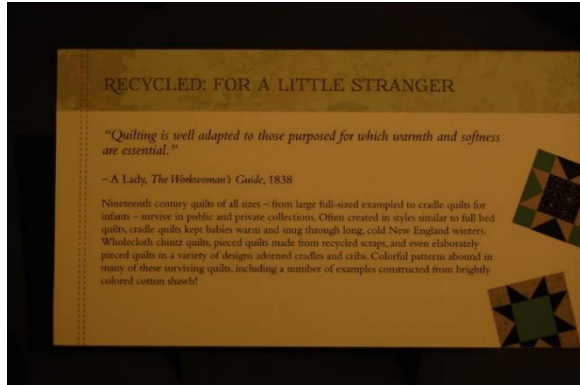
7.27.2018- Sturbridge Village

This place was so big and so informative, there's no way to even recap for the blog. It's easier for you to just use the link provided and go to their website for more information. [goto: Sturbridge Village](#)
 What a great day. First day in almost seven days with no rain in sight. Our goal today is to visit Sturbridge Village. Over the course of the day, over three hours at the village, I took almost three-hundred pictures. It's not possible to download all those into this journal but I will try to pick out the more interesting.

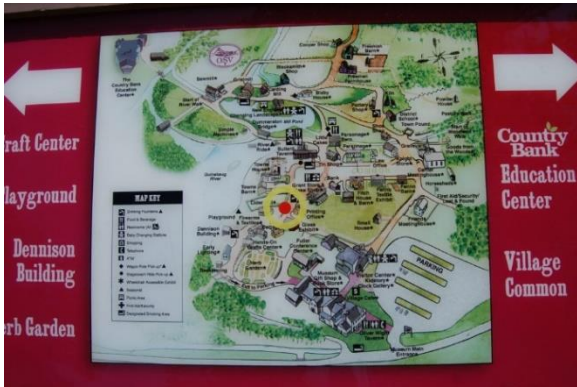


Below is the Village Museum. It gives examples of glassware, clocks and even uniforms.





Left over materials are used back then for small purposes.





We'll come back to this place in a few pictures.

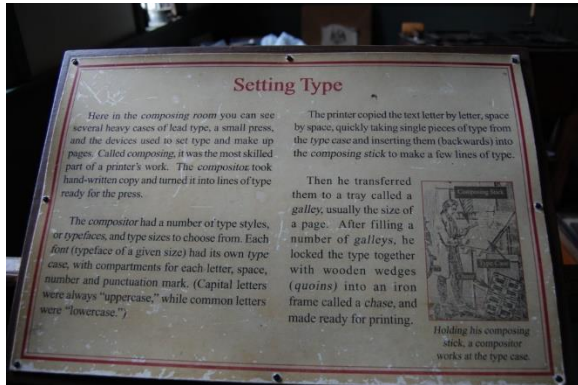




It was closed the first time we walked by. As you can see it's open.

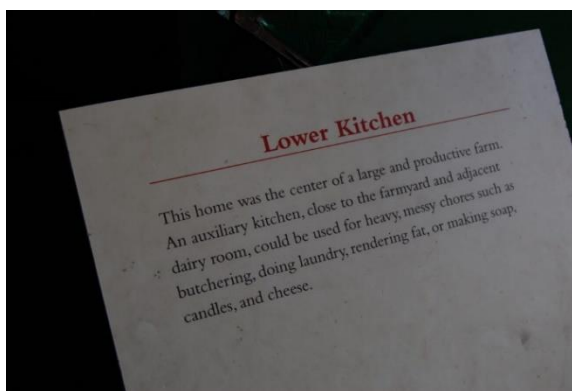


This guy was so informative, I felt like leaving a donation so he could go out and purchase the items he so dearly craved for, in his presentation.



We keep running into this guy on the carriage. Not exactly Wells Fargo, but in its day...







Great day for walking and being outside.





Every building starts at a Sawmill

Water does the work

In early New England, most things were made out of wood - not just houses and other buildings, but bridges, furniture, and vehicles. Every rural neighborhood needed a supply of sawn lumber.

No logs and lumber are heavy, and it was too expensive to haul them very far over rough roads. Is it any wonder that most towns had several sawmills? In the early 1800s, there were thousands of them across New England. There were more than a dozen in the town of Southbridge alone!

Most sawmill owners were successful farmers looking for a profitable investment. They either bought a sawmill or had one built by a skilled millwright on a suitable location. Their mills produced sawn lumber for themselves and neighborhood customers. Most customers brought their own logs to the mill and paid to have them sawed into boards and shingles.

Have you ever seen someone use a handaxe? The up and down motion of the toothed blade cuts the wood. Early waterpowered sawmills worked the same way, with a mechanism that imitated how the task was done by hand.

In the sawmill, a crank attached to a water wheel moves a long saw blade up and down to cut logs into squared lumber. Machinery never gets tired or bored, and so the mill can do much more work in a day than men alone can.

For centuries waterwheels had been made of wood, but things were changing in the early 1800s. This mill uses a pair of cast iron reaction wheels, patented by Calvin Wing in 1838. They are more compact and durable than wooden waterwheels, and use waterpower more efficiently.

Left: Mill saws became dull very quickly and had to be sharpened often. This man filing them, one wheel at a time, at least once a day, and sometimes more often.

Right: Sawmills cut logs into lumber much faster than sawing by hand. One man running a sawmill might produce a thousand feet of lumber in a day, while two men working hand sawing in about three months might produce only a few hundred feet.



Grist

"Grist" is grain, the starchy seed of certain grasses grown as food for man and beast. Milling made the hard grains more digestible. Here are some of the grains that New England farmers in the 1830s might bring to a mill to have ground into meal for cooking, or into animal feed.

We have opened one pair of stones to expose the working surface. Like all cutting tools, mill stones must be kept sharp if they are to work properly. Millers would periodically open their stones and use chisel-like hammers called mill picks to refresh the grooves in the stone surfaces. This process was called stone dressing.







The desks and benches in this classroom varied in size since a teacher, back then, would teach many age groups. Below...need I say more!



This man was so interesting and I was so tired from walking. I could write an entire blog just on the information he gave us. I asked him about the cost of a pair of shoes in those days, and he replied; About the same as today. Back then a man would work sunup to sundown, six days a week for a dollar a day. If he needed a pair of shoes it would cost him about two dollars. In todays dollars a good pair of leather shoes, not imported, will run around 200-300 dollars, or about one-third of a mans wages for a week, we just don't have to work so many hours. I could go on, but!







There's always a gift shop.



7.28.2019-Sat-The Home of Saint Anne Shrine.

This means it is Mass, Pizza and Beer night. What we attended was so far from what we were expecting. This is definitely a destination venue. Not only does it have an indoor shrine Church, St. Anne Chapel, Gift Shop and on top of all that an outside pavilion where Mass is celebrated from June to September. This parish is over 130 years old. You don't have to be a member of this parish to feel the bond the parishioners have with this church. We came back on Sunday, after the last Mass to take pictures. Parishioners were still mulling

around the grounds. As I was taking pictures I noticed the parking lot filling up. Something was taking place, not sure what, but the pavilion was filled with worshippers.







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AUGUST 2018 JOURNALS/BLOGS



8.1 Wednesday:

What a great night to sleep. Temps went down to 62 degrees, all our windows were open and it was chilly when we awoke this morning. Tom and Sue picked us up this morning and have planned a day of sightseeing. Our first venue will be Nervous Nellie.

Our second and last stop will be Stonington, ME. It consist of several neighboring harbors and marinas in the area. As above, there's not much to say about this town so I'll designate this in a pictorial blog on its own.

The August Blogs

8.1 field trip to Stonington, ME. Located about thirty miles south of Bangor, ME. *What a great night to sleep.* Temps went down to 62 degrees, all our windows were open and it was chilly when we awoke this morning. Tom and Sue picked us up this morning and have planned a day of sightseeing. Our first venue will be Nervous Nellie.

Our second and last stop will be Stonington, ME. It consist of several neighboring harbors and marinas in the area. As above, there's not much to say about this town so I'll designate this in a pictorial blog on its own. The pictures are quite nice. goto: Stonington, ME. We had lunch there as well..





8.1

The name of the restaurant was the Stonecutters Kitchen.

Carla and I each had a Lobster Roll while Tom and Sue enjoyed the Lazy Lobster dish. Needless to say the meals were delicious. We meandered around the town and took more pictures so go to the blog. We plan to have dinner with them this evening



Tom and Sue Ward and Carla . The Stonecutters' Kitchen. Carla and I enjoyed lobster rolls while Tom and Sue downed the Lazy Lobster. Food was great.

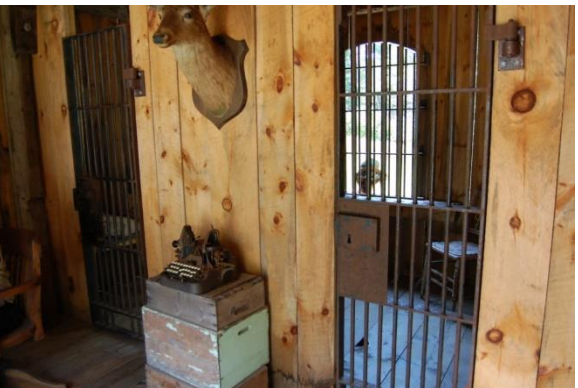




Just a bridge we had to cross going to Stonington.

8.01.2018 Nervous Nellie

located about 25 miles south of Bangor, ME. As you browse through the pictures you'll understand why Nellie might have been nervous.





In the ledger above the characters are entering facts for the town of Brockton, Mass. a town I lived in as a child.

This does not look like the saloon I used to see in the show *Gunsmoke*. But it was a great day to walk in the woods.





Upper right would have been the village chapel

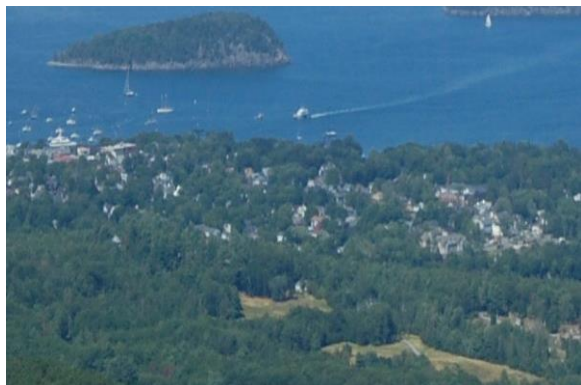
8.2 A PICTORIAL ON CADILAC MOUNTAIN



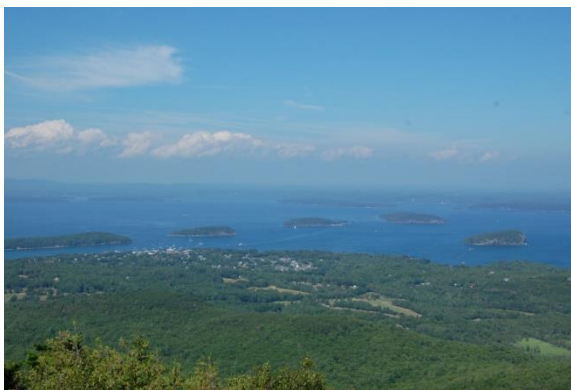
8.2 Thursday-This picture above has nothing to with Cadillac Mountain but I had to stick it in somewhere. t the left side of the lake, called Jordan Pond, is a very exquisite place to eat, but it books up early and we were not able to make reservations, the pond, however, was pretty and wanted to at least mention it.



You can't expect to drive up a mountain and not have to do a little climbing.



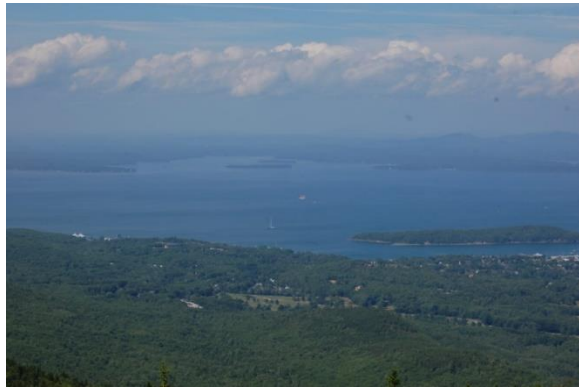
I was not that sure of myself with rocks, I've had occasions to lose my balance, but today went well. There's a very small town by the water that is very difficult to make out. With the assistance of the "crop" feature I was able to enlarge the town quite a bit but you lose a little sharpness. The town your seeing in the above picture is Bar Harbor Maine.



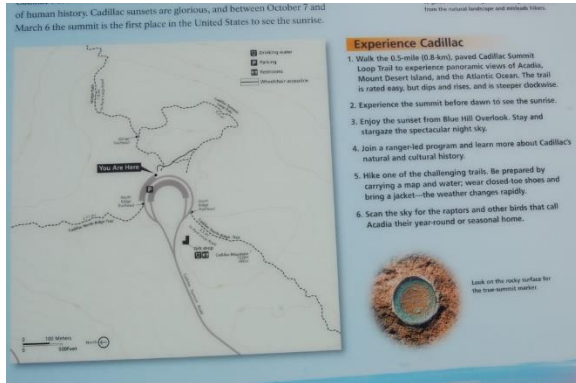
The mountain is not really that high, just about fifteen hundred feet ASL.



It is, though, the highest mountain on the eastern coast, which ,I guess is good enough for the record books.



This is a national park so the roads are kept to a minimum.



SOUTHWEST HARBOUR

8.2.18 Thursday: As scheduled, Tom and Sue picked us up promptly at 10:30 in the morning. Carla and I were just finishing our last cup of coffee outdoors, under the awning. Beautiful day again today. Next two days projected for rain. The Ward's leave this area tomorrow as they will caravan through the Maritime Provinces. We will remain here until the 14th. As like yesterday they have two venues in mind. First will be a trip to Southwest Harbor about thirty miles south from here but will take us over an hour to get there.



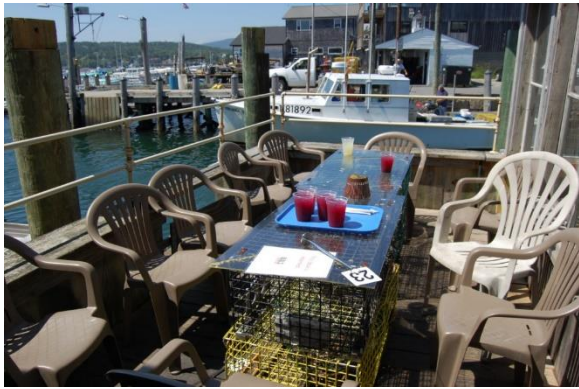
The goal here is to just enjoy the area and take in the coastal Maine atmosphere. Tom has planned, after we see to our hearts content, to eat at Beal's Lobster Pier.

They've been here almost a hundred years and the size and taste of their food is a testament to their longevity.



This is not a good picture I hope to have it replaced soon. A big item here is the Coast Guard. Right across the street is one of their major training and residential centers.







This was interesting. Each container holds ninety pounds of fish, why 90, I don't know.

But this is where and how the fish are kept until the restaurant needs more fish when they run low. The fishermen come in all day long and keeping them in the water in these containers keeps them fresh.

I'm sure it does not hurt to have the US Coast Guard across the street from your eatery.

Time to say good-bye to Southwest. Great food, beautiful town and we had excellent company on this trip.

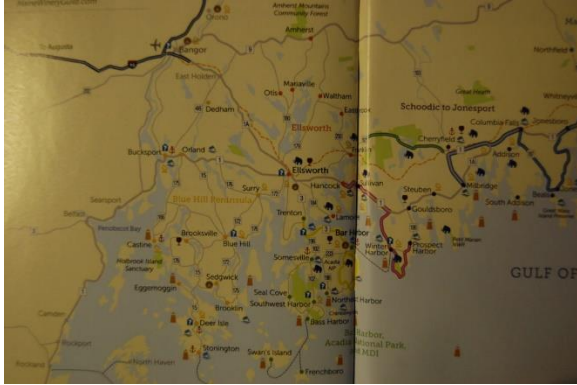
8.4 St. Joseph Church in Ellsworth, ME



Mass will be at 4:30 PM on Saturdays.. Mass will be at 4:30 PM on Saturday



8.5.18-Patten Pond RV Park (pictorial)



As you can see from the picture above Ellsworth, ME is about thirty "slow" miles SE of Bangor, ME. Patten Pond RV Park is located in Ellsworth. This is an above average RV park especially for Thousand Trails. Just wait till you see the lake.



I can understand paying to play air hockey, but pool also? No wonder the table looks hardly used. Below is the office and general store.



8.5 Sunday- Carla's Birthday...We celebrate quietly since buying stuff does not work well with this lifestyle. We do try to go out to eat however. Today would be Helen's. The Internet had nothing but great things to say about the place, as so did Helen's Website. It was a mixed bag.



Only a thirty minute drive from the campground. The inside was very homey and inviting.



We ordered calamari which was not on the menu but they did serve it, only they had run out. So we opted for the fried onions and were very impressed by the size of the portion. Bread soon followed which was heavenly. So soft, warm and delicate you could cut it with a butter knife. Minutes later our salads. Carla had chicken parmesan, in general was good but the tomato sauce, she says, was thin and tasteless. Chicken and pasta were both good. I ordered their "Mix Grill." I was afraid it might be too much to hope for, and in a way it was. The shrimp kea-bob and the pork ribs were all you could wish for. Shrimp was cooked deliciously well and the meat fell off the bones for the ribs. They should stop the meal at this point. Part of the meal was a six ounce steak. This is where they tried to overwhelm and not over please the patron. In all the meals were good but I was hoping it would be a little more appetizing. Carla also tried the Wild Blueberry Pie. She's more used to the old fashioned blueberry pies baked in an oven, the kind that comes out hot, thick and gooey. Maybe next time. We have had some excellent meals since arriving in Maine, and I assume they'll be more.

August 7, 2018 Bass Harbor Head Light (pictorial)



I welcome you back to Southwest Harbor. We were here a few days ago with the Ward's. We ate at Beal's Restaurant. If you squint hard enough you can see it at the left side of the picture above. Below is the other side of the harbor.



Maine has seventy lighthouses that dot its coastline and this is one of them. Like all the lighthouses in the US they fall under the auspices of the US Coast Guard.



This is the lighthouse.

I know, I was expecting it to be six stories high and very awe inspiring, but when your over sixty feet above sea level you don't have to build a building that tall. At first I thought this was the beginning and the end of this venue, until Carla spotted tourists standing by the water. We had to find out how they got there.



Carla's found the path to the water...



Now that's the life. a person or family that has made few mistakes in their lives. Now, instead of climbing a narrow stairway inside a lighthouse to the top, like the Jupiter Lighthouse, we cautiously walk downward.



Yea! like I was really looking forward to rock climbing.



We're both a little pooped but we made it down here without incident. What an awesome trawler. A dream I had a long time ago until I realized only the one-percent can live that lifestyle, but I'm still content being part of the lower ninety-nine percent.



Yea, dream on!

Below, just a trawler boat. Asked Carla if the yearning for a lobster was still on her mind, she answered no. After two lobster dinners were both satisfied. Could go for a good swordfish dinner, we'll work on it. Whoever discovered or invented cropping should be given a medal.



This guy was an encyclopedia on global warming, ice age and rising oceans. What I did not realize was that the oceans will rise as the glaciers melt, from the bottom up.

but what will really make the waters rise is the heating of the oceans.

Cold temps will cause the water to constrict and form ice. Warmer temps cause the waters to expand and swell up, thus giving the appearance of a whole lot of extra water but in reality over decades its mostly to same water expanding. Either way were all going to get wet.



That's the end of the climate warming lesson for today, it's time to head home. One our way down here the car was reading 96 degrees, but I doubt if it's any higher than 85 on the coast right here. This may look like a walk in the park for most of you but for me it was a small challenge.



Now how high is high tide at times? The water marks on the rocks to the left of the picture indicate the water reaches up to the metal pier going out from the shore, a good fifteen-feet.



This is downtown Southwest Port. Carla, once again engrossed by flowers.



It's hard for us to pass up an ice cream shop, but whoa what a crazy business they have. Low on space, you find people eating in every nook they can squeeze a chair and table in. Their menu was enticing. Carla ended us having a tune melt, and I couldn't pass up the club sandwich. But came in super sized. Mine was about four-inches thick. We were so full we took a pass on the ice cream. It's around 2 PM and were still about twenty minutes from home. Tonight we plan to have a fire, cookout and an outdoor picnic.

8.10 Friday- Acadia National Park-

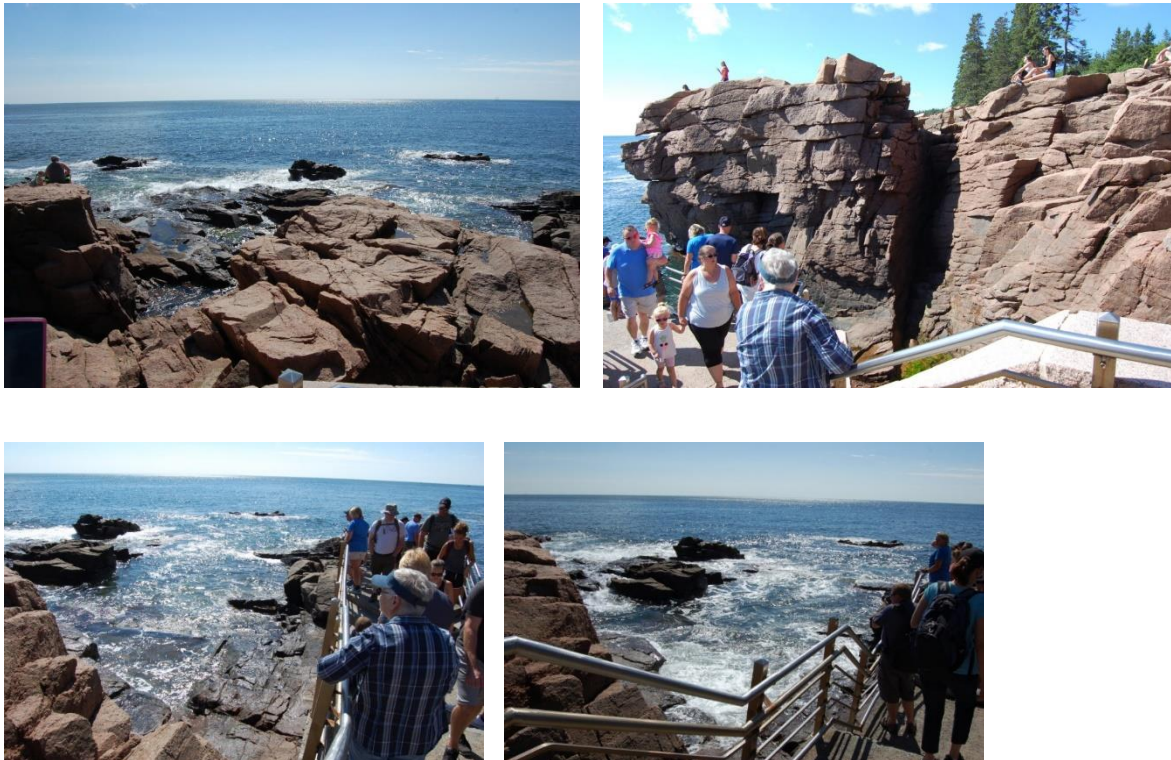
Just a few pictures as we travel to the Acadia National Park to witness Thunder Hole. To get there we must go through Bar Harbor, ME



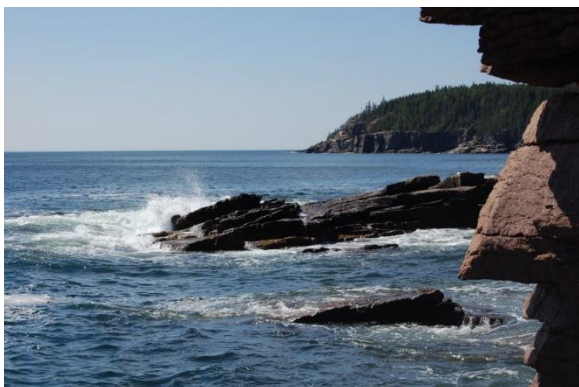
The views from the road are just short of awesome. See everyone standing around, well that's thunder Hole. You'll see it better below. The idea behind this act of Nature is that the water gushes in, thousands of gallons of water, squeezes its way in that narrow canal above or below in a better picture, then smacks itself (the water) against the rock you see in the picture below. That's it in a nut shell, oh, and that make a big thunder sound.



What everyone seems to forget to tell you is that this all happens about two-hours BEFORE high tide, not at high tide as one might assume. The crowds still come even though many are very disappointed.



There's not much else to tell, only that I hope you enjoy the pictures from this venue.



Just a small gift shop, we're both ready for a root beer. After our root beer we must get on the road and find Wildwood Stables, our next venue.



8.10 (Arcadia) If you cannot decide what this picture is all about it's a wild turkey in the 2 o'clock position in the picture above. At this point we're leaving Thunder Hole in search of the Visitors Building, otherwise the big Gift Shop. I thought this was it, but no. This is only the entrance to the "walkway" to the visitor's Center. Oh! forgot to mention, it's a 52 step climb up to reach the center and I'm exhausted and my day is only beginning. Up we go!!! Did make it up but not much to talk about there, the root beer shop was more exciting. Next stop The Wildwood Stables.

8.10 Friday : *The following text is courtesy of National Park Service. (NPS texts in italics)*

WILDWOOD STABLES...



Forty-five miles of rustic carriage roads, the gift of philanthropist John D. Rockefeller Jr. and family, weave around the mountains and valleys of Acadia National Park. Rockefeller, a skilled horseman, wanted to travel on motor-free byways via horse and carriage into the heart of Mount Desert Island.

His construction efforts from 1913 to 1940 resulted in roads with sweeping vistas and close-up views of the landscape. His love of road building ensured a state-of-the-art system.

Rockefeller's interest in road building grew naturally from his father's. John D. Rockefeller Sr., the founder of Standard Oil, had built and landscaped carriage roads on his Ohio and New York estates. From his father the junior Rockefeller learned many techniques that he applied to building his Mount Desert Island carriage roads.

The park maintains a herd of twenty-four horses of different breeds to pull the carriages. The tourist trip to view bridges lasts about two hours then they are given a two hour respid. They never work three shifts. About every twenty minutes the park employee, giving the tour, would stop in a shady treed area to allow the horses to rest a bit. Our trip included at least three steep climbs. At the top of each hill the tour Guide would give the horses a breather from the climb.



8.10---An Integrated System

Rockefeller participated in the construction process. He walked areas staked out for road alignment and observed work in progress. He knew the laborers by name and used experts to design the bridges and engineer the roads. Throughout it all, he paid rapt attention to the most minute details, from the placement of coping stones to the cost of a running foot of road.



State-of-the-Art Roads

Acadia's carriage roads are the best example of broken-stone roads—a type of road commonly used at the turn of the 20th century—in America today. They are true roads, approximately 16 feet wide, constructed with methods that required much hand labor.

The roads were engineered to contend with Maine's wet weather. Stone culverts, wide ditches, three layers of rock, and a substantial six- to eight-inch crown ensured good drainage. Rather than flattening hillsides to accommodate the roads, breast walls and retaining walls were built to preserve the line of hillsides and save trees. Rockefeller, naturally gifted with the eye of a landscape architect, aligned the roads to follow the contours of the land and to take advantage of scenic views. He graded the roads so they were not too steep or too sharply curved for horse-drawn carriages.

Road crews quarried island granite for road material and bridge facing. Roadsides were landscaped with native vegetation such as blueberries and sweet fern. The use of native materials helped blend the roads into the natural landscape.

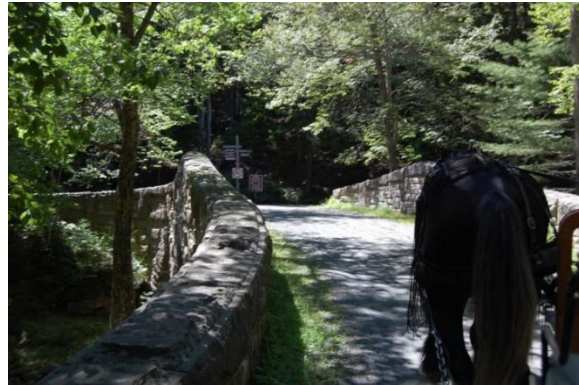


8.10...The Carriage Roads Today

Maintaining the extensive carriage road system is no easy task, and the National Park Service could not do it alone. Between 1992 and 1995, an extensive rehabilitation of the carriage roads was financed by federal construction funds along with matching private funds from Friends of Acadia, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and cultural distinctiveness of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities. Woody vegetation was removed from roads, shoulders, and ditches, and drainage systems were reestablished to arrest erosion. The crown and subgrade layers were restored, and new surface materials were applied to replace thousands of cubic yards washed away over the years. Coping stones were reset or replaced, and some of the historic vistas that once greeted horseback riders, carriage drivers, and walkers were reopened.

- ***Bridges***

Rockefeller financed 16 of 17 stone-faced bridges, each unique in design, to span streams, waterfalls, roads, and cliffsides. The bridges are steel-reinforced concrete, but the use of native stone for the facing gives them a natural appearance. Over time, the stone cutters grew very skilled and Rockefeller often requested them not to cut the facing too well lest the rustic look be lost.



To ensure that the carriage roads will continue to be maintained close to their original condition, the park has formed a partnership with Friends of Acadia. In 1995, Friends of Acadia established an endowment to help protect the carriage roads in perpetuity. Each year, the organization contributes more than \$200,000 from this endowment to the park for carriage road maintenance.

Volunteers working under the guidance of Friends of Acadia contribute thousands of hours cleaning ditches and culverts, clearing brush, and assisting park staff with other restoration projects. The commitment demonstrated by Friends of Acadia in maintaining the carriage roads is only one of many ways the organization

helps support the park.

A portion of park user fees, authorized by the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program, also helps fund carriage road maintenance.



Between 2001 and 2004, federal funds and park user fees paid for a major re-pointing, cleaning, and water-proofing of all carriage road bridges within the park. User fees have also funded annual projects, including repairing stone walls and opening overgrown vistas. More than one hundred vistas have been cleared in the past ten years.

- **Roadside Grooming and Landscaping**

Rockefeller employed a crew of foresters to remove debris from the roads and roadsides. Nationally known landscape architect Beatrix Farrand consulted on planting designs to frame vistas and bridges and to heal scars left behind by carriage road construction. The Fire of 1947 destroyed much of her work.

Rockefeller employed only local road and bridge builders. Once the Park authority was created workers from all over the country were employed for the roads and bridges, but when it came to projects on his property he insisted only local talent be used. The town and state appreciated his employment strategy and in thanks would go along with almost all of his ideas for the park.



Signposts

Cedar signposts were installed at intersections to direct carriage drivers. The posts were stained with Cabots shingle stain #248.

The lettering was painted first with one coat of flat yellow paint, then with another coat of enamel yellow. Today, numbers that match maps and guidebooks are attached to the signposts and help carriage road users find their way.



Most bridges were constructed in about one year. This one was much bigger and took a couple of years to construct.

8.10...Rockerfeller insisted that at the ends of each bridge tree should be planted, if none were there already, so the horses could rest and, most importantly, the riders could stop in shaded comfort to admire his construction abilities.



Below would be the residence of the gatekeeper. If a guest would come they would arrive at the closed gate and with his whip would swipe the arm of the bell to announce to the gate keeper that they had arrived. The gatekeeper would then come out, unlock the gate and let them in.



Gate Lodges

Two gate lodges, one at Jordan Pond and the other near Northeast Harbor, ornament the roads and serve as impressive welcomes to the system. A third gate lodge was planned at Eagle Lake, but was never built. During carriage road construction, engineer Paul Simpson and his family lived at the Jordan Pond Gate Lodge.



These rocks were sheered off from the tops of the mountains and carried by the glacier of 25,000 years ago and deposited in the lower portions of the park.

- *Coping Stones*

Large blocks of granite lining the roads serve as guardrails. Cut roughly and spaced irregularly, the coping stones create a rustic appearance. These coping stones have been affectionately called "Rockefeller's teeth."



The roads were initially constructed to provide a culvert for water from the rains could drain off. If this were not done the water, much of it, would have nestled in the ground and when the winter cold temperatures would come the ice could easily destroy the roads.

Below we are returning home and our trip is virtually done. Of the almost seventy bridges that were constructed on the Rockefeller grounds we only experienced three on this trip. A couple of "bridge pictures" were incorporated in this section from our other travels in the park area.



The carriage barn.



8.14- We left the campground one day early so we would have no pressure getting to the Webb RV Dealership to have a couple of small fixes to the coach. It needs an oil change and the generator needs fluids and a new filter.

8.16-Prouty Beach & Campground – Newport, VT



8.16-18 Thursday



Downtown Littleton. Below is the Thayer's Hotel. It's is now a B&B but it does not matter. It was there on the third floor balcony, as seen in the picture below, that I proposed to Carla. The very next day we went across the street to the Parker Market Place where she found and purchased the dress she wore on our wedding day. The Parker shop was owned, as we discovered, by the wife of the son (Stanley Parker Jr.) of the man I worked for in the sixties and seventies as a pharmacist.



Dog sleeping in store.



Porfido's used to be, and I'm sure still has the best pizza in town. Spent many a dollar there during my single days at the time. Below is Chutter's. It used to be called Parker Drug Store, where I worked as a pharmacist, but that was a hundred years ago.



Up is Chutter's inside. Looks much better and more exciting than the Parker Drug Store. Below is another picture of Chutter's.





Above is Pollyanna, the Littleton child mascot. Once again, the Thayer's Hotel...good memories.



This is the Democratic bench. The Trumpbican bench is on the other side of the doorway. We enjoyed a couple of hours touring Littleton again and reliving memories so old they're prime to be forgotten. It was about a mile up from Littleton off the Franconia Road that we owned our first home, on Morrison Hill Dr I believe. On many occasions we enjoyed a picnic in our back yard when I came home for lunch with Michael sitting on the edge on the picnic blanket. Like all trips they come to an end. The following pictures are from our drive home.



8.16 Below, I purchased another t-shirt and Carla purchased a box of "chocolate covered orange peel" candies from Chutter's Candy Store.



Above are Mary Ann, Carla and myself.



One very nice plus for this campground are the sunsets.

8.18 Saturday-

Things to do most of the day but did meet up with Mary Ann for Mass at 4PM.



View from the front steps of St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church. After Mass we shot over to Mary Ann's for grinders and a movie.



Best part of the day was the ride home. Turns out someone owns an Elk farm.



the farm owns a local restaurant as well as another farm raising buffalo. I couldn't see any "do not feed the animals signs" so Carla started feeding the Elk.

This farm was home to not just a couple of elk but for an entire herd of them. I was later told that the owner of

8.22.18- The Alpine Lake RV Park Corinth, NY

I should have additional pictures in the days to come but for now this is our location in this big RV Park.





8.25 Saturday- It was a very delightful experience. Father Simon was the priest saying the Mass. He could easily have been heard without a mike, but most of all, the parish was participating 100 percent, very seldom these days. I don't usually offer the Websites of the individual Churches we attend, but I'm thinking about doing just that. It's just a village church capacity only maybe 400, but they know how to make you feel at home. We were told that, as a parish, they will be traveling to Auriesville, NY for a conference at the Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs. This was our field trip this last week. They will have the conference in the Coliseum which holds between 6500 to 10,000 worshippers.

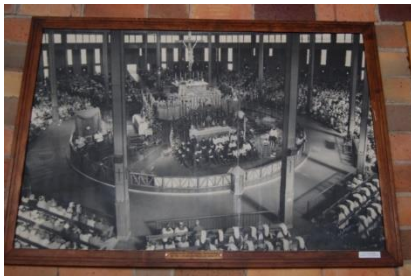
8.25...Our Lady of Martyrs Shrine



If we were going to be here for this I might try talking Carla into going.



This Shrine is located in Auriesville, NY. This area was known as the Mohawk Village. in the mid 1600's three Jesuits missionaries came to this area to try to convert the Mohawk tribe. These priests were: Father Isaac Joques, Father Rene Goupil and Father John Lalande.



Eventually all three were tortured and killed by the Mohawks. In honor of these priests the Jesuits have constructed this Shrine. In the picture to the left is the Coliseum, resembling the coliseum in Rome. It is big. It measures 257 feet on the diameter. It can accommodate from 6,500 to 10,000 pilgrims. As you approach the Coliseum you'll notice monuments and creative floral and shrubbery designs scattered all over the property. An inside view of the Coliseum. In the center you will notice four altars placed edge to edge. Each altar represents each of the three missionaries. The fourth altar represents Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, just recently sainted.

The picture, however so fuzzy, is of Cardinal Cushing preaching in the Coliseum in August 1950, sixty-eight years ago almost to the day.



8.25...These picture from the photo above follow.

This monument is dedicated to the visions at Fatima. This monument commemorates the children lost through abortion. Concerning this picture. Back over three- hundred years ago Fr. Joques, one of the martyrs, whenever he could break away to find a quiet place for prayer and devotion he would carve crosses into trees and the name of Jesus. Those trees have died off so in commemoration of this action crosses have been placed on selected trees on the property.

Statue of St. Kateri. She wasn't a religious, but was a fervent believer. This came about at age 16. Long story short her parents were killed and she joined a Mohawk tribe that accepted Christianity. In her early twenties

a plague struck the village. St. Kateri and she was the first to join in and care, as best she could, for those that were ill. As a result of her helping the sick during that epidemic, she too succumbed to the illness. Her face, because of the illness, was heavily puck-marked. Within minutes of her death her face not only cleared up of all the imperfections her complexion was perfect.



8.25



8.25...An outdoor Station of the Cross. This venue is so memorable of the Church we attended during our stay in Sturbridge, Mass. Below there's always a gift shop. It was a little disappointing considering its size.



8.27 Monday – FORT TIGONDEROGA...There's always a Visitor's Center.



You find some in the beginning and some as you leave the venue area. Fort Ticonderoga is at the start of our adventure. Carla always enjoys a beautiful flower arrangement.



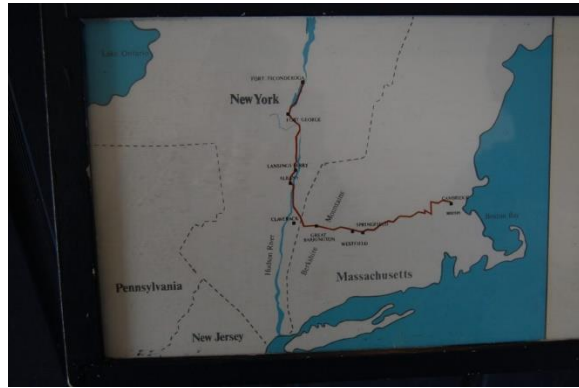
Natural defences for the fort are: 1. Land mass upper left in the above picture is Mount Independence. 2. Land mass to the right is Mound Defiance. 3. The body of water in front of the fort is Lake Champlain. The photo below gives a short description of the importance of the first two areas. This young man is preparing the evening meal. He called it "Mess." What does the word Mess actually mean. "Mess Hall" I understood. But using the word "mess" to describe a meal I found puzzling. He couldn't help me on this either. Hard Tack was also being served with the meal; see second photo down.





Humble tools like picks, axes, and shovels were some of the most important weapons wielded by French soldiers at Carillon between 1755 and 1759. Chopping, hewing, drilling, splitting, hammering, hauling, breaking, and sawing wood and stone built the defenses that protected French troops from English attacks. Many tools they used are similar to those we use today, while others are more unfamiliar. All of these tools had to be brought to Carillon and some came from as far away as France. With these tools the French army reshaped the land and built a fortress that defied the English and protected New France.





Above is an example of Indian writing for those times. Delivering cannons and munitions from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston, Mass; a 300 mile journey in the winter of 1775. Trip, I believe, was done in thirty days.



We spoke and learned about this type of gun (second rifle down on the back wall). Originally, as I mentioned before, I thought this would be a sniper rifle, but no, it's used to hunt fowler.



These two guys are making and repairing shoes and boots.



Gentleman above is repairing clothing. Photo below are typical of the "winter clothing" needed by the troops. Second photo down are summer/spring clothing on the wall hanger.



This photo to the left has little to do with anything. This is a photo of a "woman" who wanted to carry a gun and be part of this man's army. Ironically she was able to serve her full term of two years and hit her femininity at the same time. She was given an honorable discharge and went on to the stage and wrote a couple of book on her times in the army.



The purpose of this picture is the flag at half mast, unlike the flag flying above the Trumpbican White House. After a great deal of pressure from WH Aids and Veterans associations Trump gave in and allowed "his" flag to go to half mast.

8.27 Monday - We explore Lake George.

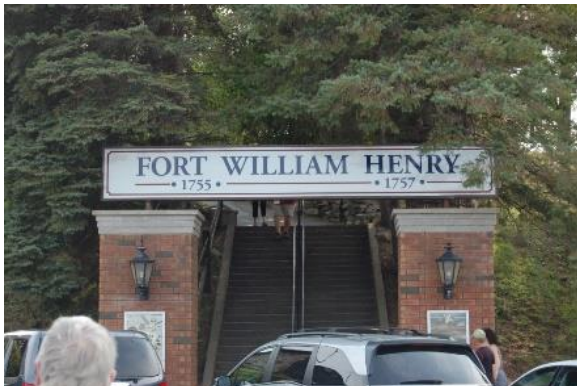






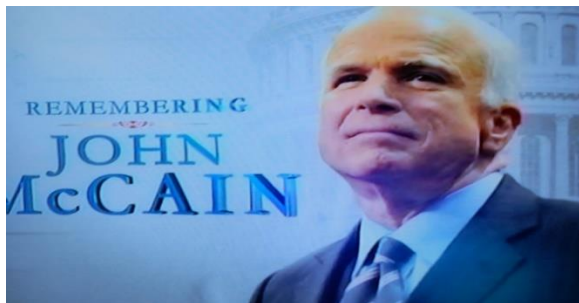


8.27...Travel back in time and view the beauty of Lake George's Southern Basin the way people did over 100 years ago, from the decks of our authentic Sternwheel Steamboat Minne Ha Ha. The Calliope, powered by steam from the vessel's boiler, serenades you as you board. Enjoy beautiful views of the Adirondack Mountains and see stately homes along the water's edge. *This post is courtesy of the Lake George Steamboat Co.*



Not this time around, maybe in a couple of years we'll explore this fort. We ended this long and exhausting day with an Ice Cream from the Hershey stand in this center.

9.1- The John McCain Funeral celebration For certain Carla and I were not invited to this historical event. I apologize for the graininess of many of the pictures. I was fortunate, many years ago, to have possessed one of those ultra high definition Samsung TVs, that unfortunately we have no longer. Our present television just does not have the quality picture our old set did, but for this blog it's passable. At a future time I may come back and insert some comments and subtitles, but for now, it's mostly pictures.



Ivana and Jared Kirchner were in attendance but not so for her father, the President, Donald Trump. Scoots, our cat, decided early she was not that interested in this event.



All these pictures, except for about that last six images are in chronological order.



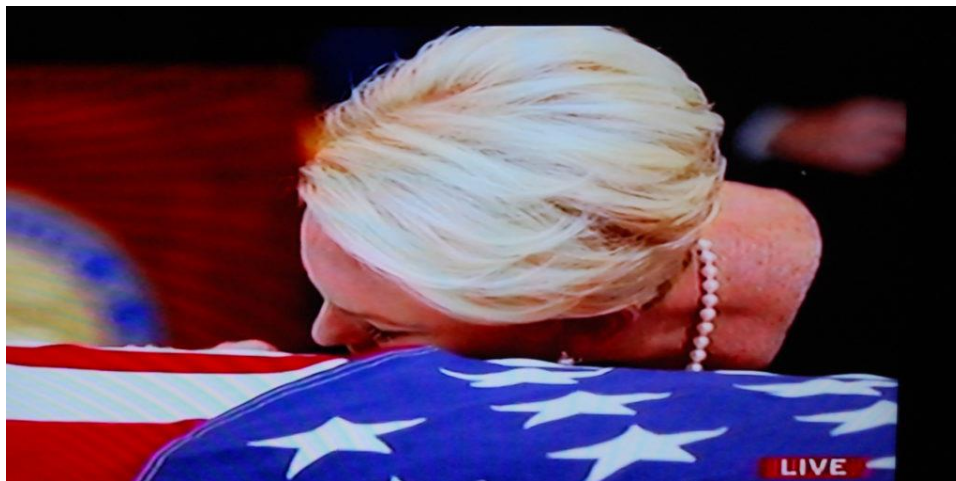


Scoots is still not interested, unlike Carla and I.





The man to the right is the Russian who Russia tried to poison TWICE.



I found this image fitting to end this blog.

9.14.2018-FDR Library

Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site
Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute



The FDR Gardens and some pictures of a few of the rooms in the house.

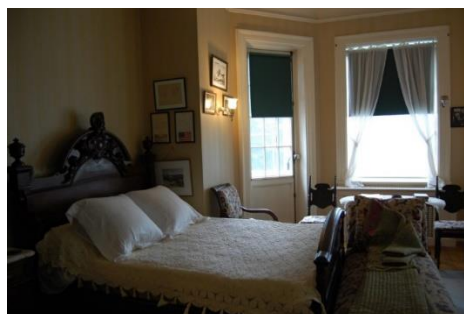


Above and below; the FDR home library.



The Snuggery "The Dining Room"

FDR was crippled suffering from polio. The family bedrooms were on the second floor. Personally I would have relocated the bedroom to the first floor, not that the house wasn't big enough, but getting back. In order for him to get to the upper level he had a dumb waiter installed. The contractor installed the unit wanted to electrify the waiter, but FDR said NO! He weighed about 180 pounds and his chair another 50 pounds not to mention the weight of the dumb waiter. Every evening he would move his chair into the dumb waiter and manually use the ropes you see in the picture and raise himself using upper body muscles to the upper level. He was remarkably strong for his age and his being handicapped.



The Chintz Room



The FDR Bedroom



Eleanor Roosevelt's Bedroom

FDR's Boyhood Bedroom



Above the back of the home. Below the front of the home.

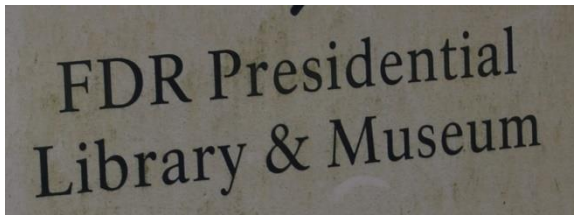


Springwood as it looked around the time James Roosevelt (FDR's father) purchased it.

He (James Roosevelt) and his wife rally wanted to buy a home with property in Rhinebeck, NY, but homes and land were to expensive so they settled on Hyde Park for the family homestead.



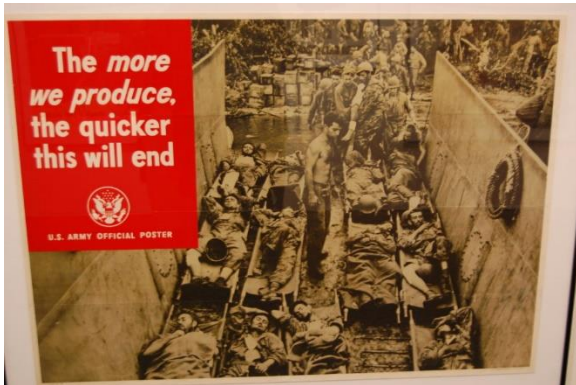
Above and below is the FDR gardens at their home and where FDR and wife Eleanor are buried.



The entrance to the Library.



In the pictures to follow are just a small fraction of the hundreds of posters FDR initiated to spur on the war effort.



The caption above is there to give the reader a small insight into how, even as a President, grounded he was both as a politician and family man. The FDR Presidential desk.

The 1936 Ford Phaeton. This car came equipped with a gadget that, when initiated by FDR, would deliver a "lighted" cigarette for him while he was driving, yes the car was set up for him to drive even though he had no lower body abilities. FDR was an avid model builder. He had built hundreds in the collection in the Library.



9.14.2018-THE VANDERBILT MANSION



The Mansion driveway, what else! The Visitors Center.



Above is our host greeting us at the mansion entrance.





The after dinner room for the men.



In this foyer are three doorways. The one to the left is where the men would retreat to after dinner.



The gals, on the other hand, would settle into the room opposite from the men and socialize, the room you see above. Some random pictures of some of the other 50 rooms in this building. Between the two room described above is basically a very elegant gathering area. From here they would gather until summoned to the dining area.





The Grand Dining Room above. Below is a picture of the men's gathering room to the left of the chair and to the right of the other chair is the ladies room.



Ceiling height on the first floor is eighteen feet. Looking down the stairway of thirty-nine steps to the second level. In the picture below is the upper level.



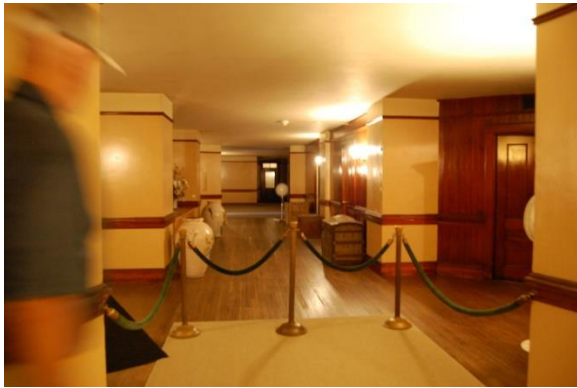
Some pictures of some of the rooms on this level. This would be the main sleeping area for the one per center's attending. If you did not qualify you slept on the third level along with any single women and female staffers. Single men would be sleeping in the now Visitor Center. This would be the Vanderbilt's sleeping quarters. Not exactly shabby. Myself, I'd probably have a difficult time trying to get to sleep with all the opulence in this room. It did not seem to bother these folks.

Down deep they wanted to shape this new country in the image of England where the upper 2%ers would control properties and industry and provide an opportunity for Americans to follow to appreciate their place in this world working for this new class of individuals, as indentured savants. This is really a bit much. No wonder it could not be sold. Unlike other venues from the past the furnishings in this mansion are all authentic and all was part of the household at that time.





Going down to the basement level. Kitchen



The staffers Dining Room. They ate as well as the folks above. Food was about the same, they drank from crystal glassware and they enjoyed very generous Christmas gratuities. A few worked their entire lives here and many had over ten years employment. They were treated like family.



Frederick Vanderbilt, the owner and builder of the mansion, knew how important it was to keep and appreciate all their staffers. Once electricity became readily available he was asked if he wanted to electrify the freezer closet, which until now, was the privy of the house "ice cutters." He declined to have it modernized since he would have to lay off the two staffers who maintained the unit.



Views from the back of the mansion. You can see the Hudson River in the distance.





The mansion had fifty rooms and over seven-hundred acres. As big as that might sound it was considered their cottage to retreat to during the hot summer months. As the story goes the Vanderbilt's were filthy rich and the next generation were fortunate enough to double their wealth. Then came the third generation. They specialized in enjoying their inherited wealth. It did not take to many years for this generation to realize the cottage was expensive to maintain, and quite honestly they were tired of going there. The widowed wife of the grandson to Frederick was left several million in cash which she kept but decided to sell the estate. It went on the market for \$350,000. She never got a bite on the property. She then lowered the price to \$250,000 with the same results. It wasn't until FDR, a neighbor not that far away in Hyde Park approached her to donate the land and property to, which would soon be, the National Park Service which she did. Before the NPS acquired the estate, she confiscated all the valuable and aged wines the mansion had acquired prior to turning over the keys to the property.

9.18.18- The Timothy Lakes Resort.

In a couple of days we hope to get an early start and go into the city and experience the new tower and possibly Liberty Island, Statue of Liberty. Below is the site map on the NORTH section of this campground.

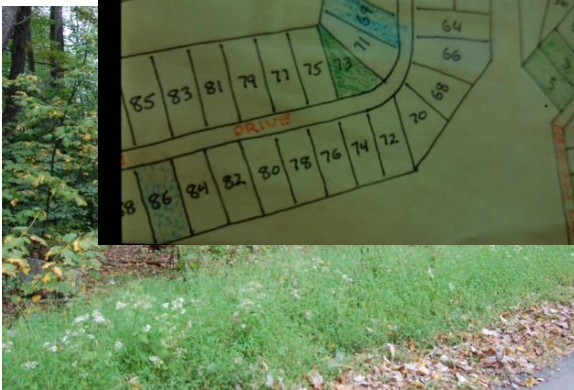


On this site map we're located in the upper section marked in orange of the Southern section of this campground. We should be quite comfortable at this location. We've got sewer, cable, electric and satellite line of sight...awesome! Site #92.



In a couple of days we hope to get an early start and go into the city and experience the new tower and possibly Liberty Island, Statue of Liberty.

9.19- Wed. -OUR POCONO PROPERTY



We have settled in quite nicely and tomorrow we plan to trip over to Newfoundland. We have some land in that area that I foolishly purchased many years ago, and will probably have to die to get rid of it, but nonetheless it's worth checking it out again since we're currently in the Poconos. The property is only about a forty minute ride from here so we should be back in no time. Getting back to an earlier story, of ; how can a big coach fit under a low bridge? Simple answer, I don't know. I googled the height of the coach on the Internet and it is 12.2 feet tall. This could easily fit through a clearance of 12.8 feet. The



problem is that we have a satellite receiver up there as well. It comes in with a height of 1.4 feet. So doing the

math the coach, assuming the tires are all inflated properly, has a total height of 13.5 feet. What's the answer; it had to be a miracle. For sure we were praying hard enough. All for now. 9.20-Thurs. Very chilly night last night, temps dropped to 52 degrees. Today would be a field trip day. Only 62 outside so it's a good day to go travel. We're off to Newfoundland or Sterling, not sure right now, to witness the property we've owned since 2006. This property is in the Pocono Springs Estates. We have frontage of 85 feet and go back 200 feet. The front of this property lies in Lehigh County while the back resides in Dreher County. Confusing, I know! I believe our property begins at the yellow 15 MPH caution sign and extends to the right. All in all it covers 0.41 acres, not very big by how it looks because it drops down a slight slope from the road and is suitable for a very small home fairly close to the road. Being close to the road is not a problem since the road has very little traffic. I would like to see a small log home with a bedroom

upstairs with a full basement much like the log home we had in Maggie Valley. This was our log home back in 2008. Something we'll never ever have again, since it was close to half million home. Cobbler's Cabin was only in our lives for a couple of years prior to the recession of 2008. We had to let it go otherwise it would have sunk us. This property in the Pocono area could not support a structure like this even if we could afford it. I still enjoy the memories from that phaThe property does go deeper but it slopes off quite a bit which means having and maintaining a back yard is not an option. Additional pictures of this property. Below is a schematic on the properties around us, we own lot #72.

For a stretch of half a mile you'll find only two other properties with homes on them.



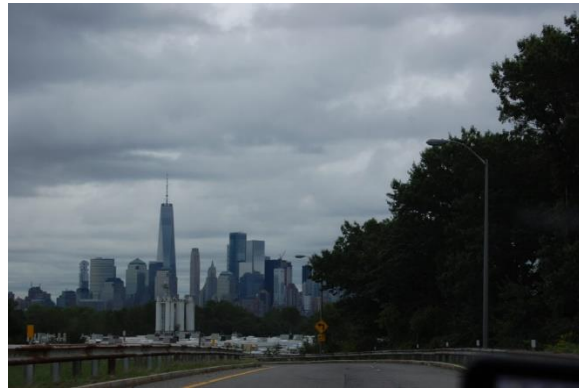
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Properties here are all part of the Pocono Springs Civic Association. There's a beautiful lake which I don't have a picture of, since my battery was dead at the time. If there's anyone interested in this area this property is for sale at a very good price; HOW ABOUT FREE!

9.23 Sunday

Overcast, cloudy but most of all it's only 53 degrees. It's chilly, no it feels cold but it's a field trip day. We plan to trip to NYC and experience One World Center. We drove to Jersey City to pick up this ferry.



This picture tells of many stories. First it is cloudy, chilly but were getting very close to our destination; One World Center, NYC. Once we get there by ferry we'll view the tower, observatory, oculus and memorial.



Doesn't this look like Carla has found an old friend? Not so! He made the mistake of wearing a Notre Dame jacket and the two of them are discussing the Savior Touchdown Statue on the ND campus by their football stadium. Our travels do empower us to speak on many topics, this one was powerful on both sides. Turns out he lives in the City and is a devoted sport fan of every kind. Below you see our "yellow" ferry coming into dock to pick us up and bring us to the City.



I've always had an affinity towards marinas and boats, it's a great lifestyle but expensive.



Above is Governor's Island then you have the image to the left. Cropping has to be the "poor man's 200mm telephoto lens." It was my hope to visit Ellis Island but it's like the Grand Canyon.

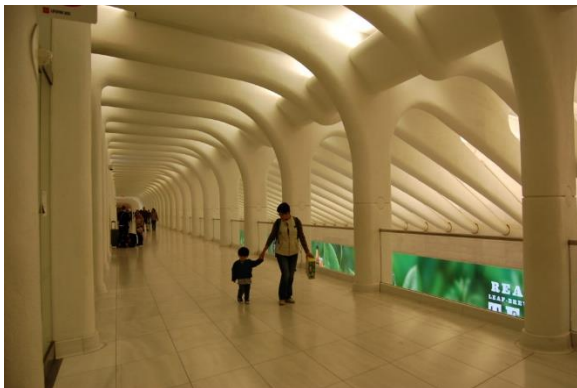
You can visit it, view it and then it's let's go. We just don't have the time to afford a visit, possibly next time.

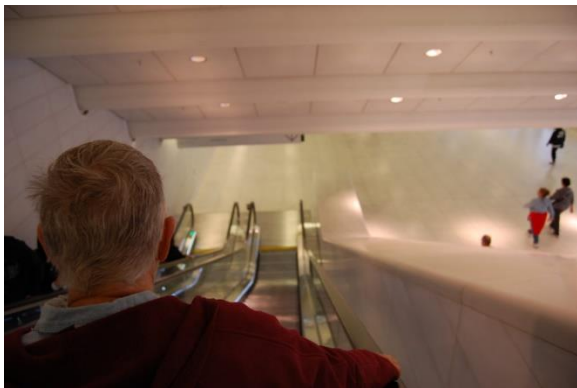


9.23.18- THE OCULUS AT FREEDOM TOWER

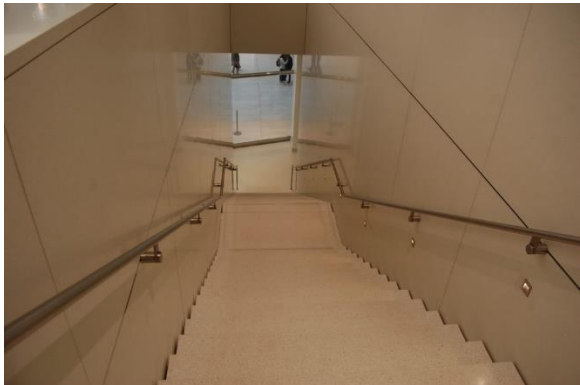


A view of the Oculus from the Observatory floor of the Freedom Tower.







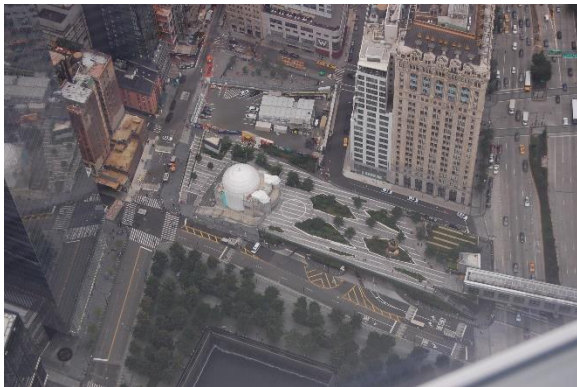


9.23 Sunday

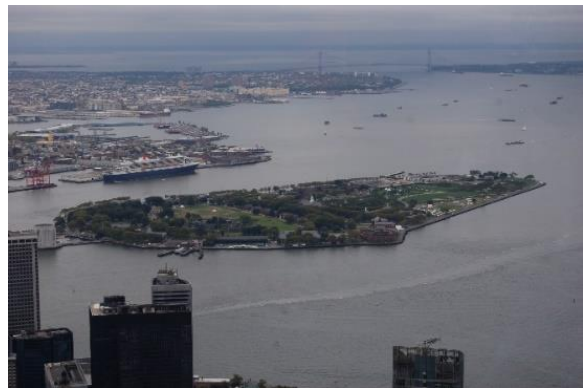
Views from all the windows of the Tower.







Above is the Oculus of the Freedom Tower.



This is Governor's Island.

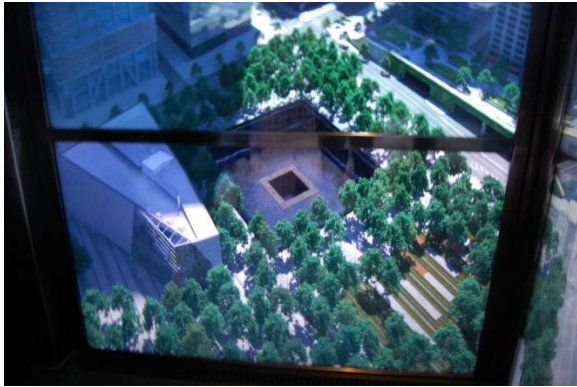


Ellis Island, Statue of Liberty, in the foreground and the ferry depot.



Once again, I enjoy boats and marinas. Can't even imagine what the dock fees might be.

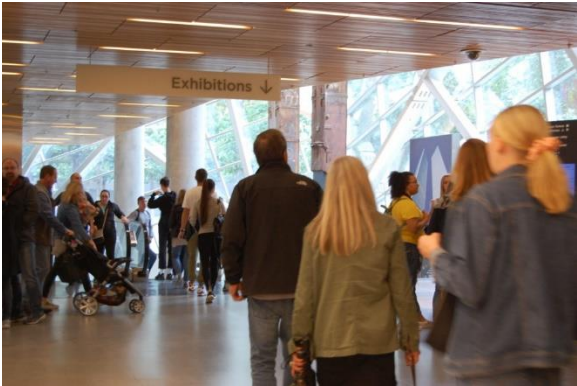




Once you step into one of these elevators you'll be whisked up 102 stories in 27 seconds and, believe it or not, you'll never notice you've started going up. Once the ride begins the walls ignite with a very fast documentary of what the area looked like from the 1600's to present; awesome!

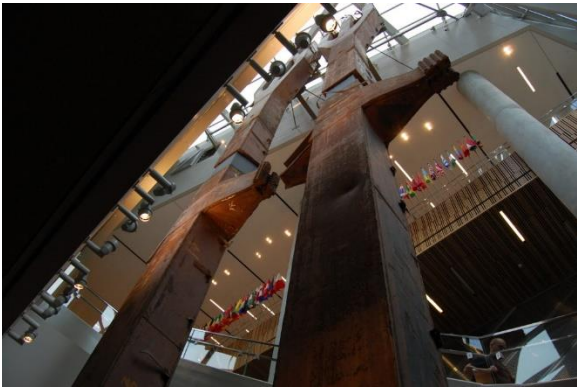
9.23 Sunday

**NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11
MEMORIAL MUSEUM
AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER**



World Trade Center tridents
Recovered from the World Trade Center site after September 11, 2001
Collection 9/11 Memorial Museum, Courtesy of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

Each of these steel columns is the base of a "trident," the three-branched architectural element that gave the Twin Towers their distinctive lower facades. These columns are two of 84 that formed the structural perimeter of the North Tower.





This is the Oculus as seen from the outside. Below: Just a quick view to visualize how deep underground we at.



Not to dwell on what was, but it's important not to forget how we were defiled.



1970s dollars? That's right, the World Trade Center, built by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, as part of a plan conceived by the Rockefeller-led Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association, to shore up Downtown's fortunes.

Now, every weekday, 50,000 people come to work in 12 million square feet of office, hotel, and commercial space in the seven buildings in this city-within-a-city, where they are joined by 80,000 visitors passing through an enormous interior shopping mall below the 5-acre Austin J. Tobin Plaza.

The Trade Center welcomes visitors from around the world to a splendid observatory, the Top of the World on the 107th floor of Two World Trade Center. As many as 10,000 visitors in a single day ride the non-stop express elevators — from the lobby to the 107th floor in 82 seconds — to take in the spectacular views of the city and its surroundings.





The painted tiles on the wall are a group effort commissioned to replicate the blue skies on 9-11.

The Box Column remnants: Steel columns, known as box columns for their rectangular shape and hollow center, provided structural support for the Twin Towers and created their distinctive facades. At the end of the recovery period following 9/11, what remained of these columns was cut to a level elevation, leaving the remnants visible here. The North Tower footprint was outlined by 84 columns, but the South Tower footprint had only 75 columns since preexisting train tracks passed across its footprint. (This text was taken from a plaque I photographed but due to available light did not print well.)



Viscoelastic damper
 Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Kenneth E. Behring Center

The Twin Towers were buffeted by high winds rolling off New York Harbor. World Trade Center structural engineers Alan Davenport and Leslie Robertson devised a damping system that allowed the towers to sway gently on even the windiest days. Ten thousand dampers connected each of the towers' floors and outer walls, moderating the buildings' movement so that it was not troubling or disruptive to most occupants. On windy days, each tower would typically sway 12 inches side to side.



Segment of radio and television antenna, North Tower

Recovered from the World Trade Center site after September 11, 2001, Collection 9/11 Memorial Museum, Courtesy of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

A transmission tower approximately 360 feet tall, assembled atop the roof of the North Tower, began broadcasting television signals in 1980. Changes over time included the installation in 2000 of a high-definition TV master antenna. Transmissions for most stations failed shortly after hijacked Flight 11 pierced the North Tower on 9/11. All transmissions ceased by 10:28 a.m., when the tower collapsed.



This is a surly. Its construction was to prevent the Hudson River invading the Towers.



The South Tower Column





9.24 Monday



Temperature this morning is 52 but we will wait until it reaches 59 before we leave the coach. The trip to Bushkill Falls in the town of Bushkill, PA, is only about fifteen-minute ride from our site; a breath of fresh air from yesterdays two-hour trip to NYC.

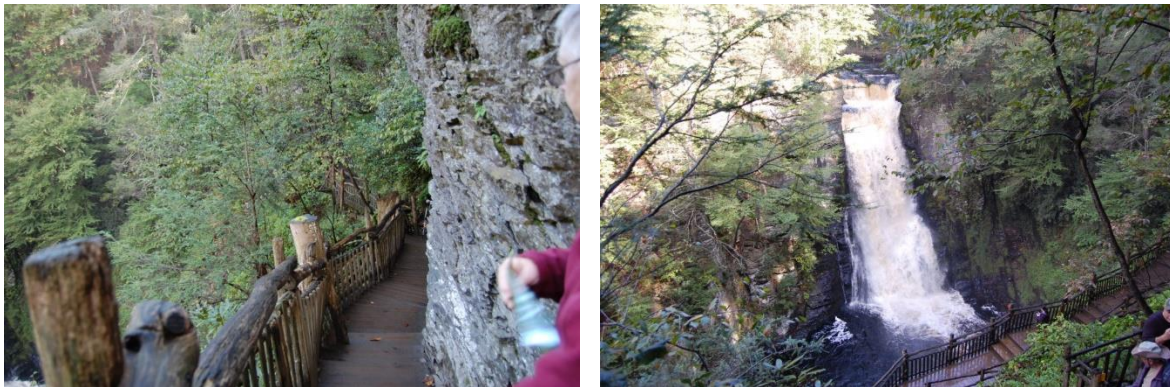


The nice thing about this venue is the wooden walkways. We will find these covering ninety-percent of the walk we will be taking. Below are the options we have with four trails.

Green was the shortest at about 20 minutes. We chose yellow. Yellow, they say, would take 45 minutes, but in actuality took about 75 minutes. Each trail comes with it's own challenges as you will read in a few pictures from now.



The pictures are in the same order as our walk, hope you enjoy the walk. We came home exhausted just like yesterday, it should not be that hard on you, the reader.

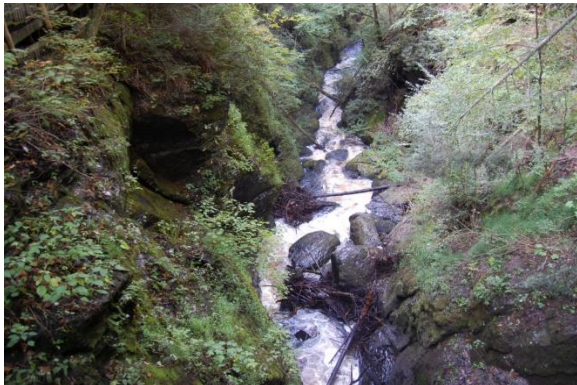


We're approaching "LOOKOUT MAIN FALLS". In all I believe we'll see four different water falls and water basins.

560-Yes, we are as high as it looks in the picture. You should try climbing all these d__n stairs. Going down was not that bad, whenever you go down, you must come up!



We're approaching "THE TOP OF LOWER GORGE FALLS."



People rarely volunteer so why should this day be any different. So I asked the kind lady and she said yes.



Above is the path we just came down. I think we're at the bottom, but we'll see! ...Mistaken!



We're both a little pooped, Good time to stop. This walkway offers few benches. Below is the bottom of MAIN FALLS.

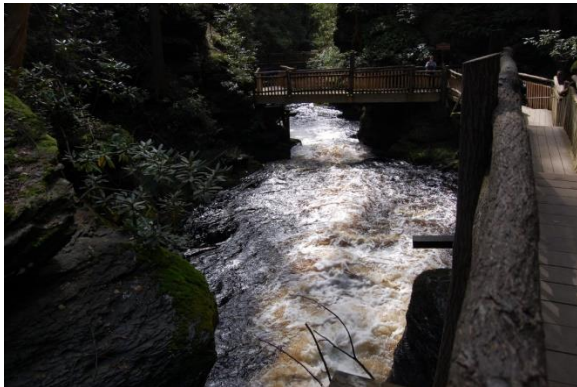


They were so kind to at least warn us of the challenges of the two other trails. Yellow, as you see below was our choice.

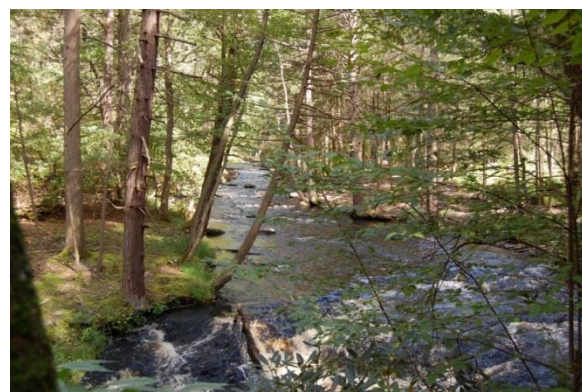
I could barely handle this trail so we made the proper choice.



There seems to be a never ending array of stairs going "down." I don't look forward to the trip up in a few minutes. The picture below is one of the best pictures, I believe, I've ever taken.

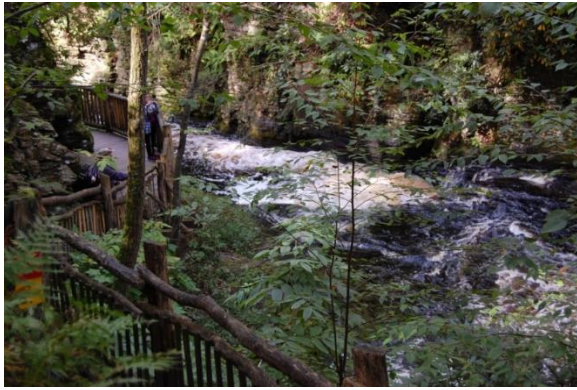


Approaching "UPPER CANYON." Did you hear the word "up?"



Above. This portion of the river is called "ADAM'S FLATS."

It's just that, a very flat area with the river running nicely through it. There's the sign I've been waiting for; but it now means we have to climb our way out of this canyon.



Yup! We're starting to go up.



We've exhaustingly come up a long way, but not there yet. We stop about every fifty feet to catch our breath and appreciate the views.

The walking is starting to get a little more challenging with the gravel and slate path.



Almost there. So tired I'm having trouble pushing the button to take the pictures. Carla's had it also.



The gift shop and snack bar. The fries we're awesome, so crunchy!



9.30 Sunday- Lynchburg RVP in Gladys, VA



This is a Thousand Trails RV Park. The roads may not be paved and we do not have 50amp service but the park roads are wide and clear of overhanging branches. We do have satellite service which few sites have since this is heavily wooded. This park covers 161 acres with an eleven-acre lake. The number of sites are 223. It has all the rest of amenities of most parks. This will be a 5-day stay leaving this coming Friday.

Pictures to follow. For such a short stay we still have a couple of venues we want to experience.





When we arrived here we were scheduled to leave tomorrow morning, but due to a scheduling conflict we've decided to extend our stay by one day.



This means we'll be jacks-up on Saturday morning.

9.30

Today, the 30th, we will leave Woodstock and drive 150 miles to Gladys, VA. We'll be staying at the Lynchburg Thousand Trails Campground.

We arrived in Lynchburg all in one piece. The trip was very pleasant especially a fifty mile segment of it on US 29. It was a 4-lane divided highway which looked like it was carved right through the Shenandoah National Park. In general the roads rated a 9+. On our trip down here we saw highway signs for the President Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Appomattox, VA the courthouse. This would be the location that General Lee surrendered. The picture below is not very clear but is a result of my asking Carla to take the picture in a coach going sixty miles per hour.



The road up is littered with farms both big and small, beef cattle in general.



The views come in so fast, unless you're riding with a camera in your lap, it's hard to catch them all in time. As we traveled south we were in constant view of the Shenandoah Mountain Range and to the west were the Appalachia Mountains. Just prior to our leaving Walmart we met a very nice couple who had just gotten married about a month ago. They were traveling North to attend their daughters wedding. She, in a past life had been a RVer for sixteen years and had talked her new husband into the lifestyle. They mentioned that their home base is in Bowling Green, FL where they spend their winter months. I'm sure we'll be seeing them again. I think she said the campground there at is Arcadia Peace River RV Park.

OCTOBER, 2018 JOURNAL

10.31.2018-We VOTED today

This is such an important day. Every two or four years every citizen has the right to make themselves heard by exercising his/her right to vote.

10.31-Anniversary of my cancer operation

Twelve months ago I underwent a duodenal Whipple operation. It's been a long twelve months as I continue to get back to normal. After twelve months I don't feel I'll get back to "normal," but rather I should concentrate more on accepting the way things are, my new normal. Don't get me wrong, I am very happy that things have gone as well as they have. The alternative was not an option. It's just there are days in which I don't feel the doctors did not quite put me back together after seven hours on the table; but it is what it is.

10.30-Arrive at Rose Bay in Port Orange,FL

We spent last night at the Walmart in Kingsland, GA. It was much quieter than we were anticipating. Temps dropped to the low fifties and, inside the coach, the temperature was at 64 at 3am this morning. To the left is a schematic on this campground. We will be here for two weeks and it's a Thousand Trails "Trails" facility. Basically it's a freebie.

10.29 Monday-Travel day to Kingsland, GA

We got a scheduled late start today to go South to Georgia. Originally we were supposed to go to Jacksonville, FL, but the thought of dealing with Jacksonville at the end of this trip was something to think about. Kingsland is about thirty miles North of Jacksonville. We'll deal with this city with an un-tired attitude. We tried to settle in at Cracker Barrel but their lot was a little too tight, so it was off to Walmart.

10.27 Saturday-Travel to The Oaks in Yemassee, SC

We woke up a little earlier than usual this morning and for that reason we were able to get on the road by 8:30. The trip would be longer than usual around 260 miles. Surprisingly we got to The Oaks a little after 1pm and we're all settled in in 1:30. We are here for only 2 nights and will leave Monday morning for Florida. Excellent travel day temps around 55 with bright blue skies. This is a Thousand Trails property which means it's another freebie. Yesterday, Friday, was a nothing day just watched TV on the capture of the MAGA Bomber and that's about it.

10.25 Thursday- Rain!

Yesterday was R and R and today it's raining. The coach is ready to go. We will leave tomorrow morning and head out SE to Yemassee, SC about 175 miles in distance.

10.24-Wednesday-Four field trips scheduled.

Riley Moore Falls was our first choice. After traveling an hour and being lost most of the time we almost gave up. Finally we found the road to the falls but just looking at the road made our decision for us. Not friendly looking so we skipped it.

Brasstown Falls was very enjoyable. The walk to the falls was acceptable and the view were awesome. You'll also find a blog on this as well in the next couple of days.

As we travelled to Issaqueena we saw a roadhouse sign for "Moonshine ." I'm not naïve, even I know what moonshine is. But, how often do you see signs for it? See the blog on "Distillery."

Issaqueena Falls would be next. It was just a short distance from where we were and well worth the trip. I'll have a pictorial blog on this as well. See the blog on "Issaqueena."

This was not on our list of places to see, but it's hard not to see something that sounds so intriguing. See the blog on "Stumphouse Tunell."

10.23- Tuesday-dinner with Ann Cunningham at Applebee's.

We had a delightful lunch with Ann Cunningham this afternoon. We met Ann a few months ago and promised to touch base with her on our travels back to Florida. She's not a full-timer yet, best reason for that would be the beautiful home she has here in South Carolina. As nice as it is though, I'm still set on the lifestyle we're enjoying. Please visit the blog I have on her beautiful lifestyle here.

10.22- Monday-Travel day to Carolina Landing in Fair Play, SC.

We slept this morning till 8AM, we were just slightly frozen. The coach did do quite well. Coach electric heat was set for 69 and it did well. We arrived a Carolina Landing in Fair Play, SC just a little after noon Monday morning. We woke this morning to very low temps. As an example of how cold it was just look at the picture above. Our car looked the same. All that was left to do was to detach from electric and disconnect the cable connection and I came in so cold. Other than that the day was awesome. Carla looked to her phone and it was 36 degrees in Maggie Valley while it was 64 here in So. Carolina.

10.21 Sunday-Carolina Landing in Fair Play, SC

We've done all we can , we're ready to go. We will leave tomorrow morning to drive to Fair Play, SC. Tonight we expect temps to drop to 32 degrees. We took in the fair and the temperature did not improve by even one degree. We bought a couple of gifts and quickly got back into the car, and drove home before we caught a cold.

10.20 Sat-t Margaret of Scotland and call from family.

We've been here before, several times. This time I would like to present a little history on this fine church. The history will take up to much space for the Journal, so I'll build a blog on the subject. Temps Fri. night came in at 37 degrees, more on schedule for Sat. night.

10.18- Very chilly night, last night, about 40 degrees.

Even chillier last night and today. Saturday and Sunday night coming up are scheduled to be in the mid-thirties. Doing very little today. We worked on our travel plans for 2019 and Carla through together her beef stew for this evenings dinner. Nothing like letting the crockpot do all the work, but it does take all the right fixings to bring the meal together. Our site with a much bigger coach to our right. Nice to have money, should have studied harder! We. Just spoke to Abby and we'll be meeting up with her and beau Michael, in January in Texas. More on that in another blog in the future.

10.17.18-Ice Cream in Maggie Valley.

Today has a very distinct chill in the air, but we should get used to it because it will only get colder, both during the day and evening. We had been quietly doing busy work, Carla reading and I with the blog, when we decided to venture out and seek out an ice cream cone. We had some ice cream in the coach, but no sugar cones. After that we would try to locate a log cabin we once almost bought, but that's a story in itself. Earlier in the day Carla had put together her famous French onion soup. That was such a pleasure to eat when we got back from our escapade. We just had a Prevost Marathon pull in next to us. We're 39 foot and it comes in at 45 feet. At 2.8 Million he paid more in taxes than we paid for our coach including taxes. They up'd and left

by nine am next morning. Must be nice to pay \$50 to stay overnight at a campground. Forgive me; just a little envious of the one-percenters.

10.12-Friday-Hurricane Michael is gone.

Yesterday, as the storm was in our area, we took a ride to Mocksville, NC.

Over the course of the trip we counted over a dozen huge trees that were taken down through the might of this storm, even though the storm here was just a lot of water and some, not that strong, winds.

10.9 Hurricane Michael cometh! Childress Vineyards.

We are listening carefully to MSNBC on all the hurricane warnings. We will be rearranging our travels to Umatilla, GA from Yemassee. Yemassee, from experience, has a very high water table and the ground in their lower basin muddies up easily. Right now we are preparing to go to the Childress Vineyards.

10.8 Monday- Carla and I take a walk.

We have just finished taking a walk through this beautiful campground. This walk would take us through an infested area of mosquitos but ultimately we did locate the historic site. I don't think we've ever had a campground with such a site, We did not see it, but we're told this campground also has a shelter just in case something unforeseen comes in this direction. We have three days of rain in the forecast so no much more should be forthcoming.

10.7- Sunday-Improving the blog & journal appearances.

Just did a little shopping and now that we're home I have to get back to updating the Web Site. I have just been enlightened on some new formatting options this Web Site is now offering and I've made a few changes I hope the readers will find helpful. I've just discovered the drop-down menus on Journal, Opinions and Travel are not as sensitive to touch as I was hoping for.

10.6- Abby's birthday

Really hard to believe she's 21 today; Awesome! As we made our way south I needed a break and we pulled into the Caswell County Rest Area. This place is so pretty it's almost a destination. Below are two chairs; we call "Coke" chairs. We had a cocktail table with tow tall chairs at our log cabin, a \$600 expense, but guaranteed to last a lifetime. They have been constructed from recycled Coke bottles.

10.5 Friday- Our last day at Lynchburg RVP

I must break myself of the old way of doing the Journal entries. In the past the newest entries always went to the bottom, for the convenience of any readers out there the newest entries will bubble up to the top of the Journal. Feeling quite a bit better today, to the point that I spent about two hours prepping the coach, windows, hose and hose trays, for our departure tomorrow. I still had energy to spare so I took out a new brush we bought a while back and began soaping up the coach and hosing it down afterwards. Felt so good I continued and did the entire coach, except the roof, still get dizzy climbing. The coach had not been thoroughly washed down, except for the occasional down pour courtesy of Mother Nature, in over two years, Motorhome looks good. Finished up any loose end on any of my blogs as well. Yup, that's us hiding in the bushes. For all the trees and bushes all around our site we had excellent satellite reception all week. Today I'm tired, time to go to bed. Next time we speak we'll be in Advance, NC staying at Forest Lake RVP a TT property.

10.2-Tuesday- Appomattox National Historic Park

Today looks to be another beautiful day with temps reach no higher than 77 degrees. Our destination is Appomattox Court House (2-words) and Museum. To explain the 2-word item. "Courthouse" refers to just that a court house while a "court House" makes refers to the county seat; FYI! This is the actual looks of the McLean House. It was in this house and location that the signing of the surrender of General Lee took place with General Grant. Picture of the signing of the surrender papers. There's so much to this venue this is just an intro to our visit there.

OCTOBER 2018 BLOGS

10.2-Tuesday- Appomattox National Historic Park

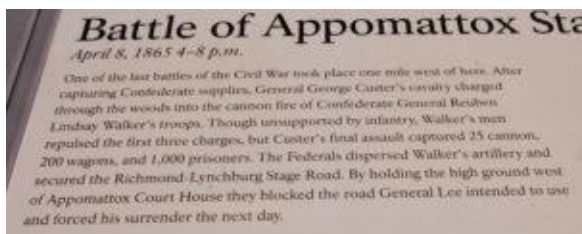
Today looks to be another beautiful day with temps reach no higher than 77 degrees. Our destination is Appomattox Court House (2-words) and Museum. To explain the 2-word item. "Courthouse" refers to just that a court house while a "Court House" makes reference to the county seat; FYI!



This is the actual looks of the McLean House. It was in this house and location that the signing of the surrender of General Lee took place with General Grant.



There's so much to this venue this is just an intro to our visit there. I should have a blog or possibly a pictorial on this venue in the next day or so. I'm fairly certain that the plaques below will reintroduce you to this part of our history.



In April in 1865 as many as 65,000 troops were encamped on these grounds.

Below just a little history on this part of our history. It would have been to much of an ordeal for me to try to summarize what the National Park Service has already articulated in the text to follow. The NPS text is in *bold / italicized* print. If the print you see is not *BOLD and not italicized* then those words are mine commenting on the

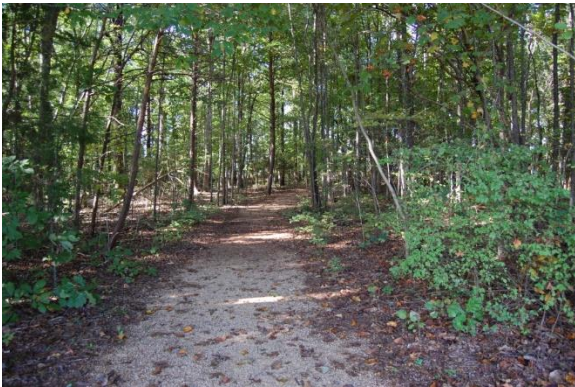
pictures either above or below my text.

General Robert E. Lee realized that the retreat of his beleaguered army had finally been halted, U. S. Grant was riding toward Appomattox Court House where Union Cavalry, followed by infantry from the V, XXIV, and XXV Corps had blocked the Confederate path.

This field is just about a half mile from the McLean House when up to 65,000 troops were encamped both on this side of the road and the other.



Lee had sent a letter to Grant requesting a meeting to discuss his army's surrender and this letter overtook Grant and his party just before noon about four miles west of Walker's Church (present-day Hixburg). Over to the right in this field is a path that we're directed to experience.



Grant, who had been suffering from a severe headache, later remembered that upon reading Lee's letter the pain in his head had disappeared. He stopped to prepare his reply to Lee, writing that he would push to the front to meet him.



A monument dedicated to the Confederate soldiers, mostly North Carolina, in the battle in this area.
The location of the meeting was left to Lee's discretion. After reading Grant's letter, Lee, his Aide-de-Camp Lt. Colonel Charles Marshall, and Private Joshua O. Johns rode toward Appomattox Court House Marshall and Johns rode ahead of Lee in order to find a place for the generals to confer.

In those times, around 1865, those who died in battle were generally buried where they had died.



In the 1960's the government decided to have a special cemetery plot for those that died. As you can tell they could only find the remains of a little more than a dozen men. All but one were Confederate soldiers. You'll notice the first monument which bears the Union Flag was a Union soldier.

As Marshall passed through the village he saw Wilmer McLean in the vicinity of the courthouse. He asked McLean if he knew of a suitable location. Then McLean offered his own home.



Above. The picture on the left is the McLean house in 1865, the one on the right is the current version of that house with 150 years of improvements.

After seeing the comfortable country abode, Marshall readily accepted and sent Private Johns back to inform General Lee that a meeting site had been found.



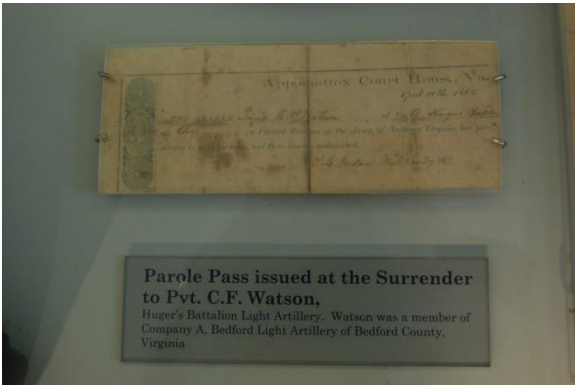
At first I thought this was an early picture of the Surrender Event, then I realized that "colored pictures" would be way into the future. But, none the less, as you enter the McLean home to the left is this room. It contains many of the original furniture but the signing desks are reproductions. The real stuff is in a national museum.

Lee arrived at the McLean house about one o'clock and took a seat in the parlor. A half hour later, the sound of horses on the stage road signaled the approach of General Grant. Entering the house, Grant greeted Lee in the center of the room.



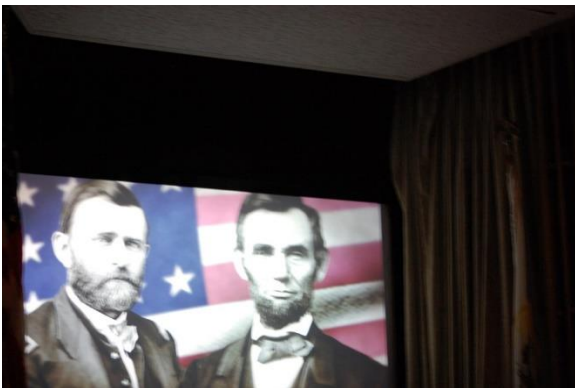
The day after the Surrender signing it was decided that the Confederate soldiers should have parole papers for his men to carry with them so as not to be assumed to be deserters. So the immediately got three presses, 2 are shown, and began drawing up over 35,000 forms for the confederate men.

The generals presented a contrasting appearance; Lee in a new uniform and Grant in his mud-spattered field uniform. Grant, who remembered meeting Lee once during the Mexican War, asked the Confederate general if he recalled their meeting.



A Parole Pass for C F Watson. This picture is the best I could do, remember this pass is over 150 years old.

Lee replied that he did, and the two conversed in a very cordial manner, for approximately 25 minutes. The subject had not yet gotten around to surrender until finally, Lee, feeling the anguish of defeat, brought Grant's attention to it. Grant, who later confessed to being embarrassed at having to ask for the surrender from Lee, said simply that the terms would be just as he had outlined them in a previous letter.

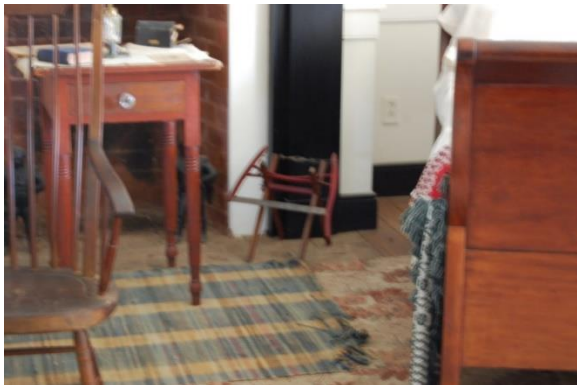


The surrender meeting happened in April but prior to that Grant and President Lincoln had a meeting. In that meeting had asked General Grant to be considerate to General Lee. They both knew that the Lee surrender was going to happen the question was how much longer. The Confederates were basically starved into surrendering. It was Lincoln's attitude that the surrender terms would go along way in re-unifying the country. Lee had only two personal choices; win or disperse his army.





The terms would parole officers and enlisted men but required that all Confederate military equipment be relinquished. The discussion between the generals then drifted into the prospects for peace, but Lee, once again taking the lead, asked Grant to put his terms in writing.



Some of the other room in this historic home. Most of all the furniture is authentic to the house. This is a personal likeable picture. The unit is so small that unless you were looking for it you might not see it. It's a scaled down wood cutting table with saw for the nearby fireplace" FYI!



Below is the formal eating area with the best of the family dishware. Above is reality. This is where the family, most likely, ate most of their meals. This is a "Neo-Classical" home, meaning that as you climbed all those stairs in the front of the house you actually walked in onto the second floor of the home.

The dining table above would be found on the bottom level.



Once again above is the informal eating area. Below is the kitchen. In that time-period it would be normal to find the kitchen area located to the side of the home. The reason for this would be in case of fire.

When Grant finished, he handed the terms to his former adversary, and Lee -- first donning spectacles used for reading-- quietly looked them over.



This picture, to the left, only merits a small entry since the NPS person was just there to be helpful so Carla needed some help on the local bugs. As his dissertation went on he got into kitchens. Having been exposed to this information years ago with our Gettysburg trip on how and why kitchens were not usually part of the living portions of a typical home, he began talking about fires. He mentioned the majority of fire related burnings began in the kitchen. He then went further on to say; the majority of deaths for women were related to fire. The heavy clothing with multiple layers made it very difficult for a woman on fire to disrobe and shed her clothing in order to save herself, sad!

When he finished reading, the bespectacled Lee looked up at Grant and remarked "This will have a very happy effect on my army." Lee asked if the terms allowed his men to keep their horses, for in the Confederate army men owned their mounts. Lee explained that his men would need these animals to farm once they returned to civilian life.



Once again, I asked the NPS gentleman, about the little teepee structure to the left of the main home. (For what it's worth, I already knew the answer.) I knew he would tell us that this structure was used to preserve foods keeping them cool by letting a stream of water flow through the structure. He was nice very forth coming with his answer. It was an "ice house." That's not what I had expected and I told him. He confirmed my understanding but enlightened me by explaining that Virginia has very few underground streams do to all the rock, slate and marble in the ground, therefore no stream cooling. Inside the ice house a hole would be dug, possibly as deep as 20 to 24 feet deep. During the winter season chunks of ice would be cut up and carried to the ice house. Once filled with enough ice to last the hot summer months the ice would be covered with hay to shield the ice from the summer heat.

Grant responded that he would not change the terms as written (which had no provisions allowing private soldiers to keep their mounts) but would order his officers to allow any Confederate claiming a horse or a mule to keep it. General Lee agreed that this concession would go a long way toward promoting healing. Grant's generosity extended further.

The partially grassy area in the center of the picture is the original Lynchburg to Richmond Road. Why is this worth mentioning? In order to get to either destination you had to go through Appomattox. For years this brought a great deal of commerce and settlers to Appomattox, until! The railroad. Prior to the railroad taverns, eateries and rooms to board were all doing a very nice business.

(Just think of it, in 1865 sixty-five thousand Union troops walked down this road to Appomattox.)



The towns folks fought bitterly to have the train station located in this general area, but the powers to be had their own opinion. The RR Station would be three miles from this location. Three miles may not seem that much since we can drive there in about five minutes but back then people had to walk. Mot everyone on the train would, from that time on, stay on the train until their destination, and the town had to remake itself. The picture below is the current Lynchburg to Richmond Road. Needless to say both Lynchburg and Richmond grew exponentially thanks to the railroad.

When Lee mentioned that his men had been without rations for several days, the Union commander arranged

for 25, 000 rations to be sent to the hungry Confederates.

In addition to feeding the Confederate Soldiers, this day since they were hungry, this parole pass would permit them to eat at no charge at any and all government installations these soldiers came across as they made their way back home.

After formal copies of the surrender terms, and Lee's acceptance, had been drafted and exchanged, the meeting ended.

Before he met with General Grant, one of Lee's officers (General E. Porter Alexander) had suggested fighting a guerilla war, but Lee had rejected the idea. It would only cause more pain and suffering for a cause that was lost. The character of both Lee and Grant was of such a high order that the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia has been called "The Gentlemen's Agreement." Courtesy of the National Park service

The Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Lincoln a couple of years ago and the South was not accepting it. This surrender hopefully would unify the North and South and hopefully allow the Emancipation Proclamation to be further enacted. Lincoln would not live to see this happen. Only two days after the signing President Lincoln would be assassinated.



This was the local jail.



The McLean home.



Another picture of the County Courthouse with its Knee and hip killing steps.



This would be the General Store, and then some.

It's a regular Ace Hardware place.



Yes, this is also the post office as well as a Pharmacy. The little yellow shed to the right is an attorney's office.



All kinds of stuff from dishes to fireplace needs, even some farming supplies.



Once again, the Lynchburg Richmond road right through the center of Appomattox. The gentleman above is a retired doctor with a great deal of time on his hands. We sat and tolerated him for twenty minutes and he was still asking folks who they were and where they came from. If I wasn't certain that the Kentucky Fried Chicken Colonel had died, I'd be certain this was he.

This volunteer was really good. Got right to the facts. He saw that most of us were seniors and we did not have time to spare. He went into just enough detail, but not overly so, to paint an awesome picture about the logistics of the Union forces and of course the confederates as well as the impact the railroad had on the town. He was a pleasure to listen to.

10.06.2018- Tripping to Advance, NC



Above is just a very small sampling of the incredible beautiful farmlands we view every time we get up and drive off to another location. Not sure how early in the morning these folks get up to prepare for these yard sales. No lack for patrons, every yard sale has a good amount of shoppers.



When we drove by this sign, I told Carla, would anyone rent a Porta Potty thanks to this sign? Within five minutes this truck drove by us, go figure!



Caswell County Rest Area. As we made our way south I needed a break and we pulled into the Caswell County Rest Area. This place is so pretty it's almost a destination. Below are two chairs; we call "Coke" chairs. We had a cocktail table with tow tall chairs at our log cabin, a \$600 expense, but guaranteed to last a lifetime. They have been constructed from recycled Coke bottles.



We spent about twenty enjoying this venue. Chairs, tables and benches are generously located all over this property. The inside of this building was as nice as any beautiful home could be. Below- This is a very big, clean and sold out park. Many of the campground roads are paved, Awesome!

10.07.2018- Sunday -Relaxing at Forrest Lake with a cook-out.

The trip to Forest Lake Preserve took about three-hours but three very pleasant hours. We got here safely and not that tired.



Could not imagine the steaks would come out so good. We took our time and let them sear for quite a while. After about thirty-minutes time was up and it was time to serve up the potatoes and carrots.



As you can tell this is a very big campground and for the next five days it is 100% sold out. It's amazing we got such a great site. more to come.



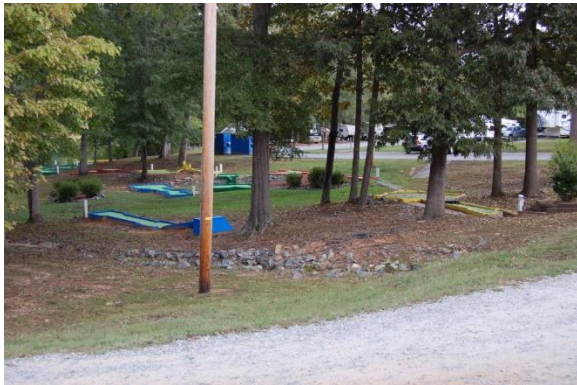
Camp lake and mini golf park.

This is the adult lounge.





This is Hairston Hall. It's a small venue for church services and meetings.



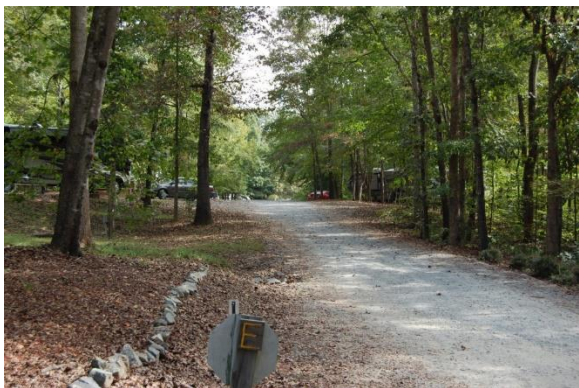


This hall is the Forest Lake Store and Grill. Also serves as a youngsters lounge with gaming machine, pool (also pool table in the adult lounge) and even an air hockey table.





Friends of ours, [Adventure detour ahead](#), are full-timers and just moved up to a Solitude fifth-wheel.



At this point our quest is for a historical site. This would be a quarter-mile walk in an mosquito infested forest area. This is the first time in five years that we've had to deal with mosquitos.



It took a while to find this historic site. It's actually an original structure. A tobacco barn. After walking almost forty-five minutes we noticed the tobacco barn was just a minute walk from our coach, going in another direction.



Finally, we're home again. Now it's time to download the pictures and finish off the RVP blog.

10.09.2018 - Childress Vineyards

As I have done in the past the text presented in bold/italics is courtesy of TripAdvisor. All texts in "plain type" would be my own comments. By opening the doors to Childress Vineyards in 2004,



NASCAR team owner Richard Childress fulfilled a longtime dream that grew from the days when he first began racing in California and visited wineries with friends.



This is the Winery Store Room. They also have a couple of clubs you can join for, what thought, was quite reasonable; around \$200 to \$250. These clubs come with many benefits, especially if you're into wines. *What began as camaraderie and good times soon became an engaging passion for world-class wines and then the vision to build a world-class winery.*

The Banquet Room used for weddings mostly.

After looking at options in California and New York, Richard chose farmland in Lexington, NC located less than five miles from his RCR Racing operations.



This is the Bristol Room. I was pleasantly surprised at the menu prices. I imagined them to be much more expensive than they were.

The location situated Childress Vineyards as the gateway to the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA), North Carolina's first federally designated region for grape growing.



Walkway at the beginning of our Winery Tour. The gazebo below may be used or rented for special occasions.

Childress Vineyards are one of the most prominent wineries in the state's re-emerging wine industry that has grown from 21 to more than 100 wineries since the year 2000.



This is another Bristol venue for big events. As our tour guide said, everyplace in the winery may be rented except for Richard Childress' office. Below is the first step in the processing of wines; the removal of stems and exterior skin coating.



The building we were in originally was over 35,000 square feet in size. We are now in the basement of that building. Wine is store in these aluminum vats for as long as six weeks. Temperatures down here are really chilly. This enhances the fermentation process. Below the holding tanks are being cleaned out and eventually sterilized prior to new wines enter them.



The aluminum containers store most of the wines they produce. The better and more expensive wines are stores in the wooden kegs. Each of these wooden kegs cost about one-thousand dollars each and may be used only once.



Above is Mark. He runs and controls almost every process in the wine making business at Childress.



This room is for their top of the line wines. Each of these kegs is being exposed to the ground which, once again, enhances the wine fermentation process. Below is the Childress Library of specialty wines. This room is always locked and very few enter as well.



One acre of vineyards can produce four-thousand bottles of wine.

For more information on Childress Vineyards click on the following link: [Childress Vineyards](#)

10.12.2018-Friday-Hurricane Michael is gone.

Yesterday, as the storm was in our area, we took a ride to Mocksville, NC.



Over the course of the trip we counted over a dozen huge trees that were taken down through the might of this storm, even though the storm here was just a lot of water and some, not that strong, winds. Half the trees had fallen in the roadway blocking one full lane or more, everyone proceeded cautiously, warning on-coming traffic of the impediment. On our way home, about 1000 feet from the entrance to the campground another tree came down. We sat patiently, in the car for about an hour, waiting for the obstruction to be remedied.

Today we're planning a trip into Advance, NC to go to a Wells Fargo Bank. Around here we don't talk about cities, more like towns or villages. Sat. we attend Mass at Saint Francis of Assisi CC. Our time here is quickly coming to a close. We have nothing worth mentioning planned the next couple of days. It's jacks-up on Monday morning, and heading to Pride RV Campground in Maggie Valley.



It's a beautiful place to visit even in a blog. By using your "page-back" key after visiting this blog of the past, this page-back key should bring you back to this Journal.

10.12.2018- Saint Francis of Assisi in Mocksville, NC



Today we're planning a trip into Advance, NC to go to a Wells Fargo Bank, then it's Mass, pizza and bear get the weekend going. The Church is St. Francis of Assisi.



Total capacity might be barely 200. Around here we don't talk about cities, more like towns or villages. Regardless the Pastor gave an excellent homily and the parishioners are very friendly.

10.14.2018- Sunday.

At Mass yesterday, I was fortunate to speak to Fr. Eric Kowalski. I mentioned to him how, last week, he spoke of how fortunate this parish is for having, not one relic, but two. I knew every church had the one relic, but why two. St. Francis, as some might know, was cremated. The Roman Catholic Church has his ashes. The Bishop, I believe, offered to give this parish a second relic, that is, ashes of St. Francis. In the picture, to the left, is a statue of St. Francis. To his right and above is a small wall stand. It is on this stand that his ashes are displayed. The first relic is embedded into the altar. The parish history in a nutshell. Way back in 1958 the parish was established. It had a total of three families enrolled as parishioners. Long story short by the year 2000, under very frugal leadership, the parish was able to free itself of all its mortgages on the buildings and the associated lands. In 2010 the parish had over 300 families. In 2017 Fr. Eric joined the parish as the parish's new pastor. He came from a very big parish and relishes his new life shepherding the parishioners in his new home. In the picture above is Fr. Eric



Kowalski.

10.15.18- Pride RVP

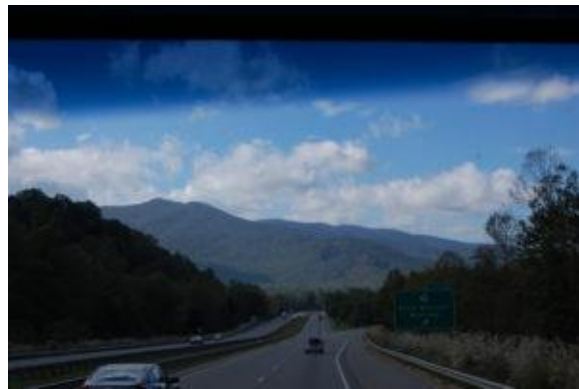


Pride is a privately owned park, not a Thousand Trails Property. For that reason we must pay to stay. Visiting Maggie Valley was very restful but in the future I'm going to recommend staying no more than 3 days, just to expensive.





10.15- Trip to Maggie Valley:



What the pictures above and below do not show are the overcast skies we left at Forest Lake in Advance, NC. Carla loves flowers, especially wild flowers. Virginia devotes a great deal of highway to natural coverage.





We've been in North Carolina for a short time but the road and landscape had not changed much. Seeing the sign for the Blue Ridge Parkway was very reassuring.

In this picture look at the car in the distance. This dude got pulled by five state trooper cars. Being caught by one state trooper is bad, five is indescribable.



The mountains in the far distance begin appearing on every corner we take. Below is the sign we've really been looking for. We find ourselves reminiscing on a couple of trips we took we Abby back in days gone by, when we had the log home.

10.20.2018 Fr. Michael Murphy,



builder of St Margaret of Scotland Church

This will be a very short blog on the history of Fr. Michael Murphy. Michael Murphy, prior to becoming a priest, was a businessman. He came to North Carolina in 1950. He was also a wealthy man. In the years that followed he financed and built several churches in the towns surrounding Maggie Valley; he was known as the "Apostle of the Smokies." Long story short in time he bought 33 acres of land in Maggie Valley. On these 33 acres he built a 25-unit motel. Shortly thereafter the Bishop gave him permission to build another church. In

1969 the new St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church was dedicated. The name was chosen in honor of his mother Margaret Murphy. The name, which was a second choice, was chosen because "She always fed the poor and he always fed the poor." The facility was built to accommodate 200 parishioners at one service. The parish, at that time, was hardly big enough to fill the church, even if it wanted to. In reply to the size of the church he commented, "I did not build the church because of the demand, I built it for the future- strong so it will last for ages. Someday, it will be full every Sunday." The Bishop there at that time often urged Michael Murphy to become a priest.



After some thought Murphy enrolled and studied at St. Meinrad Seminary in Indiana and was ordained on May 11, 1972. Now, Fr. Murphy, was age 80 when he was ordained. News of his ordination sped around the world. Fr. Murphy, believe it or not, continued to operate his Falling Waters Motel. In 1981, with help from the Bishop, it was converted to the Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center. Even to this day it continues to be a popular retreat spot. Within a year after his ordination he was assigned to be Pastor of the St. Margaret of

Scotland Church, which he had constructed. Fr. Murphy presided over this parish until his death. He was 99 years old. The parish hall he had built on the land he donated to the Church, was named Murphy-Garland Parish Hall. St. Margaret's has a strong push to try to have Fr. Murphy Canonized. In the "book for the sick and departed" a message reads that "should your request be fulfilled, please call the parish office. The Internet has much more on this awesome person, I have only provided some of the highlights on his life. Upon entering a new church I always look for the "book for the sick and departed." A parishioner pointed it out to me. She also quietly mentioned that it is a miracle book. Not having the time to inquire why, I just took her word on it. There it was smack dab at the foot of the Alter area, in the front of the church. The church is now half full and praying the Rosary. I hate standing out in a crowd, but did it anyway. So many are ill and so many are no longer with us. After five-years of doing this I have it down to almost a science; basically immediately members of the Ozdarski/ Grenier families and then family members needing special mention; even get a chance to add a couple of non-family individuals as well at times. The purpose for this in so many churches is both altruistic and self-serving. So many are forgotten with a few weeks of their passing. Purgatory is probably over crowded with "forgotten souls." Should either Carla or I go, I know we'll have each others backs after the fact. My self-serving interest is that should I survive Carla, I dread the thought of being one of those forgotten souls. I have no doubt I'd be forgotten shortly by any remaining family members. For this reason it's a matter of self preservation after death. Even though many of the us listed in these dozens of churches have not departed yet, I feel we could all use a prayer or two from time to time.

I have provided a link to this fine person, it's a quick read and much more organized than what I have written. [goto: history of Fr. Murphy](#)

10.23.2018

This is a schematic on the Carolina Landing RVP.



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No lights in here but plenty of water. We did walk in quite a bit, but I hoping for more.

Looking out from the tunnel.

I uses they had rail service. This is a pretty steep mountain to get up here.

Carla is looking up because we hear voices; just a family doing a hike.



10.24 Wednesday-NEW PAGE



This area is peppered with large estates, homes and so many log homes. The road to the falls is just a tad bit wider than our HHR car.



The roadway finally does come to a parking lot, or at least a parking area. We were told to take the easier path to the left, however, I see only one path. About two-hundred feet along the path we were given a right and left choice, we went left, of course



We begin our trek down this narrow path. In the distance we can hear the falls, or at least we think that's them.



A beautiful stream is to our left and if you look carefully you'll see Carla in the picture above, in the distance. I'm trying to keep up.



The path here is cleared of debris, but it is loaded with tree roots. Finally the falls come into view.



The falls are in full view, but to get better views we do have a slightly treacherous path.





We hang out for a short time and take a few pictures then decide to go back to the car. On our walk here was mostly downhill but the way back we must go up.





Along the way are cleared area for campers. Not the type of camping we're into. The path is still going up but we're sure we're getting closer to the parking area. Below our trek comes to a close



10.24.2018-The road to this location was very relaxing and would be awesome if we were more timely with the foliage. The couple in this RV were from Lake Placid, FL. Lake Placid is known as the Mural City.

They were not full-timers but did spend a good part of the year traveling. I did a blog on Lake Placid about three years ago.

The Legend] of Issaqueena

Many versions of the story of Issaqueena exist. One such tale tells us Issaqueena was a Cherokee girl who fell in love with an Oconee Brave, while another regales the story of a young girl named Issaqueena who was captured by the Cherokee and given the name Cateechee.



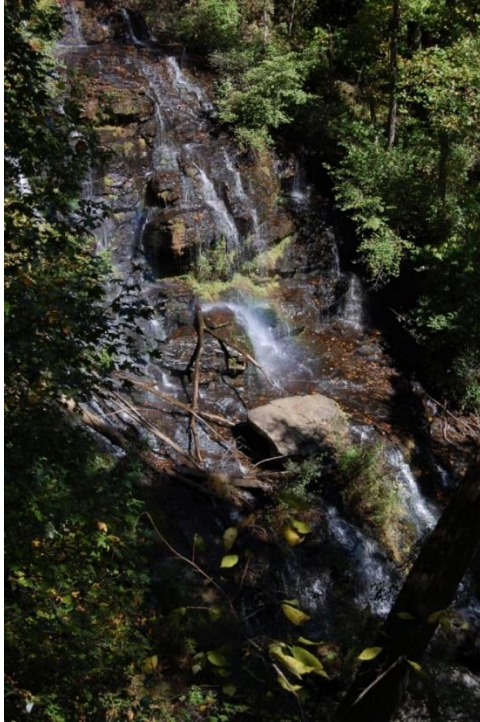
“Cateechee” then met and fell in love with a white trader named Allan Francis. Yet another variant has Issaqueena falling in love with a white silversmith named David Francis.



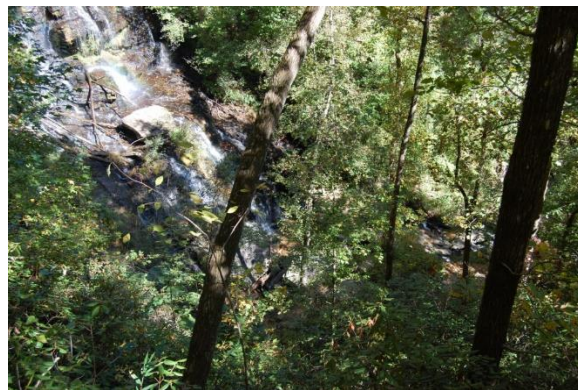
This is a covered bridge that spans the stream leading to the falls. This is a very small narrow stream. How it manages to transform itself to such a beautiful waterfall baffles me. Early on we begin seeing the beginnings of the falls not to mention the beautiful sounds of water falling freely. As you walk through the covered bridge to the other side you come to an observation area looking down to the stream and looking out over the hills.

Regardless of who Issaqueena fell in love with, the numerous adaptations all end roughly the same way. Issaqueena overhears her tribesmen planning a surprise attack and sets out ahead of the braves to warn her lover — naming the local landmarks of Mile Creek, Six Mile, Twelve Mile, Eighteen Mile, Three and Twenty, Six and Twenty, and finally Ninety Six along the way.

The towns of Six Mile, Ninety Six and the creeks still exist.



She then marries Allan/David/Oconee brave and starts a family. The family then builds (depending on the story) either a “stumphouse” home or a home on Stumphouse Mountain, just north of what is now Walhalla. Her tribesmen, still seeking revenge for their spoiled attack plan, finally track down Issaqueena and chase her through the woods. She eludes her pursuers by leaping off a nearby waterfall. The tribesmen, believing her to be dead, call off their chase and Issaqueena, who had actually landed on a ledge and hid out of sight behind the great wall of water, was able to return safely to her family and live happily ever after.

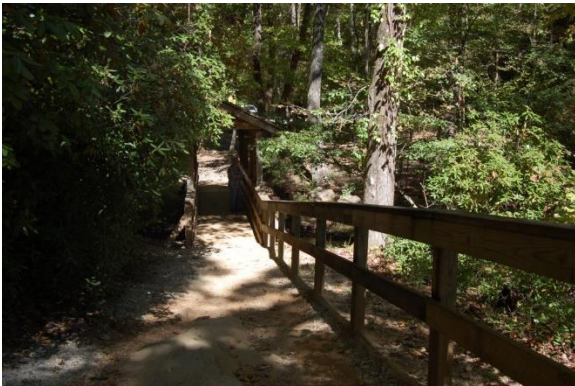


The rendition with the Oconee brave has them both throwing themselves over the falls rather than die at the hands of the Cherokee while the narrative with David Francis has the happy couple ending up in Alabama.

The Legend of Issaqueena is a prime example of local lore shaping an area but historians frequently disagree about how much (if any) truth is surrounding the story.



The trail to the falls is steep at times but not dangerous to most visitors. I, on the other hand have recently become a klutz at walking, and am slightly more cautious than most. The downhill path Harkins the thoughts of having to walk this same path, next time, going all the way uphill.



For one, according to local author and Cherokee language historian John Currahee, the name “Issaqueena” is actually the transplanted Choctaw word “isi-okhina” meaning “deer creek.”



“(The legend) may have some vague factual basis but the Indian maiden’s name was not given until 1895 when she was called ‘Cateechee’ in an essay,” stated Currahee. “It was not until 1898 that Cateechee became Issaqueena in a poem, the duality explained by saying that Issaqueena was a Choctaw captured by the Cherokee and given the name Cateechee among the Cherokee.



What it looks like from the top of the falls



“Both the poet and the essayist owned up to inventing the two names out of thin air, although the poet seemed to know that Issaqueena did come from the Choctaw language,” Currahee said.

The poem Currahee was referring to is the epic “Cateechee of Keowee” penned by J.W. Daniels in 1898.

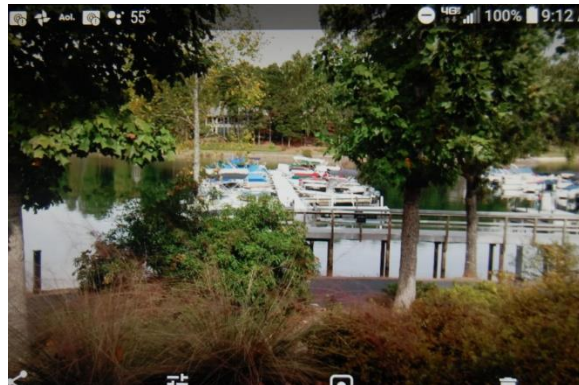
No matter which — if any — version of the legend a person chooses to believe, the 100-foot waterfall itself is truly a fantastic sight for all and should not be missed.

Story credit - Easley Progress online

10.24.2018



Applebee's in Seneca, SC. We had a delightful lunch with Ann Cunningham this afternoon. We met Ann a few months ago and promised to touch base with her on our travels back to Florida. She's not a full-timer yet, best reason for that would be the beautiful home she has here in South Carolina. As nice as it is though, I'm still set on the lifestyle we're enjoying. This is Ann's home. It's no wonder she is not a full-timer RVer.



The mariner which only charges \$700, not a month, but yearly for dockage; awesome!



10.24 Wednesday-

This trip will ultimately bring us to three separate venues.

We were just casually driving on our way to the next waterfall when this sign jumped out at us. I mean, could you just drive by without checking out some "Moonshine?" The first of the three venues was this typical *general store*. It sold everything from grass seed to liquors.

We were there only a few minutes when the storekeeper told us of their other location was bigger and had a better selection; so off we went.



Just up the road from the country store was this very symbolic western town. It wasn't just a façade, all the storefronts were occupied. Some of the units had, sheriff, barber shop, ammunition and a restaurant/B&B. Below, I'm not sure. A little to small for a "tiny home!" I'll let you contemplate other options.



The views from this part of the world are awesome! We're up high enough so we can see for miles. Below is the second venue.



This property is years of creative building and plantings. Above is a silo with an herb garden in the forefront. Rows and rows of grape vines, not to mention other plantings. This is the area in the back of this building. Mostly used for large group meetings and weddings.



The storekeeper back in the original location was right. Much more stuff to look over and purchase. Jams and liquors are very noticeable.

Yes, we did not leave empty handed.



Below is another gathering area, smaller than the outside area. The fireplace was awesome.



The views are as awesome as the plantings around the property.



Our third and last venue in this area was just up the road, where else, was a distillery. Ben was the barkeep. The storekeeper gave us his name. I have a feeling this is one very big family operation, I might be wrong, but I feels like it. More vineyards.



Last time we saw Llamas was n a farm in Maggie Valley.

What is it about Llamas?



Our last look of mama Llama. It's time to leave. Off to our final destination which would be "just down the road." For more information on this venue:

[goto: Chattooga Belle Farm](#)

10.27 Saturday-Travel to The Oaks in Yemassee, SC



We woke up a little earlier than usual this morning and for that reason we were able to get on the road by 8:30. The trip would be longer than usual around 260 miles. Surprisingly we got to The Oaks a little after 1pm and we're all settled in in 1:30. We are here for only 2 nights and will leave Monday morning for Florida. Excellent travel day temps around 55 with bright blue skies. This is a Thousand Trails property which means it's another freebie.

I don't think in two days I'll get around to take another bunch of pictures on this campground but I'll give you a link to visit the blog I did on this place on Oct. 2015,

almost exactly three years ago to the week.

[goto: The Oaks TT RV Park](#)





10.27-Saturday

Saturday means, of purse, Church, Pizza and Beer. St. Anthony's is in Ridgeland, SC about a 20 minute ride from here. I really hate traveling on Saturdays, since it's Mass night and we're not always that organized coming into a new location, finding a church and getting there, but we've been there before.



This is a picture of the inside of the church. Evidently I never took a picture of the outside, hope to fix that tonight. Off to church we go...

10.30-Arrive at Rose Bay in Port Orange,FL

We spent last night at the Walmart in Kingsland, GA. It was much quieter than we were anticipating. Temps dropped to the low fifties and, inside the coach, the temperature was at 64 at 3am this morning. I wasn't to concerned since I was sleeping soundly, except for Scoots climbing on me on the bed looking for shelter under the bed cover from the cold. I decided to just turn on the electric heat, oops! Forgot we were boondocking; therefore no electricity. Normally I would just turn on the generator, but we're sharing this parking lot with eight other RVs all in close proximity. Generators are noisy. My neighbor in back of us made his feelings felt when he came to the coach last night to ask us when we were planning to turn it off.



This was one of the two signs that we've been looking for.

We'll spend a little time in Georgia but the sign we are really looking for is Florida.



I was a little taken back by the question, since a Walmart parking lot has no rules, you get what you pay for, and your not paying anything, you have to accept the conditions as they present themselves. We went without the generator; just snuggled up a bit more. We arrived in Port Orange after travelling 136 miles right around 1pm. We got a nice site with good Wi-Fi and Satellite. We are having a small problem with the electricity but that should resolve itself. We've called Carla's sister a couple of times and we're waiting for her to call back. Tomorrow morning it's blood work, Walmart (fix light) and it's time for us to get haircuts. To the left is a schematic on this campground. We will be here for two

weeks and it's a Thousand Trails "Trails" facility. Basically it's a freebie. Awesome highway/bridge infrastructure in Jacksonville, FL. The "Bow Tie Bridge." We cross this bridge and we're welcomed by the St. John's River Bay.



10.31.2018 Today we voted. *Operation anniversary*



This is such an important day. Every two or four years every citizen has the right to make themselves heard by exercising his/her right to vote. This year is especially important. Many are adamant that some tweaking is needed at all levels of government. If the changes don't take place the way I've voted I can at least say I made the effort to alter the course of local politicians, the House as well as the Senate.

This voting by mail is so simple and intelligent. Our ballots are mailed to us in a timely manner, we have more than ample time to complete the form and, most importantly, we have the option to Google, for a clearer interpretation of the amendments. Even, should the day come that we decide to stay planted, we will continue to vote by mail.

10.31-Anniversary of my cancer operation-Twelve months ago I underwent a duodenal Whipple operation. It's been a long twelve months as I continue to get back to normal. After twelve months I don't feel I'll get back to "normal," but rather I should concentrate more on accepting the way things are, my new normal. Don't get me wrong, I am very happy that things have gone as well as they have. The alternative was not an option. It's just that there are days in which I don't feel the doctors did not quite put me back together after seven hours on the table; but it is what it is.

NOVEMBER 2018 JOURNAL

11.01.2018-Thursday- All Saints Day and Ozzies' Trike.

Today was a Holy Day of Obligation therefore we go to church. We attended Epiphany Catholic Church at their 12:15 Mass. Carla says we'd been here before but I could not recall that event. After Mass we went out for lunch at a Mexican restaurant. I was a little leery about the menu but my meal was excellent. When we got back to Mary Ann's she told us of her new toy; an electric trike. We both fell in love with it.

11.02.18 Three days left...This is the most important midterm election in generations. So important that nothing get in your way to go out and vote. Even those politicians vying for local and state wide elections are all important. Carla and I are planning on a shrimp and junk food Tuesday as we plan to watch the winner on all the races. Such a shame in this day and age to see what Georgia is trying to suppress the votes. Likewise for Kansas. Imagine moving the voting location to a location outside the city limits! Please go vote! On another subject in a few minutes we plan to leave and spend some time with Mary Ann, Carla's sister. We are planning to take her with us to church this evening. Usually we have pizza and beer on a Saturday evening but tonight we're go out to Culver's for dinner.

11.03.18 Saturday - Saturday would mean Mass, pizza and beer; but not today. Yesterday was a quiet day, many things to do. Had a Eye Doctor's appointment, and he took my glasses so new lenses can be inserted in them. I do have an old pair but hardly fill the bill. Today we would spend some time with Mary Ann. We'll be picking her up at 3pm for Mass at 4pm, she has many before Mass prayers. After mass she treated us to Dinner at Culver's Restaurant in Port Orange, FL. They specialize in Wisconsin Beef only and it was truly great tasting. It's not exactly one step above a McDonald's but a little lower than a Cracker Barrel. The onion rings were especially good.

11.04 Sunday- Pork dinner with Mary Ann at the coach.

We did all the usual Sunday things, today we had our pancakes with strawberries in place of syrup, I know, we're really living life on the wild side. Around 1pm we picked up Ozzie at her home and brought her to the coach for a pork dinner. Carla, as usual, put on an awesome dinner. For desert we all enjoyed ice cream with strawberries and strawberry sauce, delicious! Tomorrow she and Ozzie are going shopping. I've mentioned how the Wi-Fi is just not doing it with Netflix in the past. So today, after breakfast, we tried to change the Dish Settings so we can get Netflix through Dish instead of using our Wi-Fi. We were successful. We've watched three movies, two more than we usually watch in twenty-four hours, with no down time or buffering; heavenly.

11.05 Monday-It's your obligation to vote tomorrow.

Hard to believe voting day is in less than 24-hours. Today Carla and Mary Ann got together and did a little shopping, I chose to spend quality time with Scoots. We skipped our pizza night last Saturday Night so we'll be doing pizza and beer tonight.

11.06.2018 VOTING DAY-BY MAIL

11.07 Day after voting day.

In all it was a good day for the Democrats. Not so much for the fact that there are more Democrats in Congress, but to the fact that we no have a check on the Executive Branch of the government. I had some reflections on a couple of the outcomes. Go to the "blog."

[goto: Reflections on the Midterms.](#)

11.08.2018 Thursday-Another nothing day.

Mary Ann took us out for lunch after she let us use her washer/dryer. Once again we opted for Culver's. Yesterday was a nothing day also. Basically were here to kill time until we align ourselves with our reservation schedule. Nice thing is that we're in a Thousand Trails campground so it's a free stay.

11.09 Friday-Breakfast and Christmas with Mary Ann.

Below is a picture of C's restaurant the place we went to for Christmas breakfast; we had excellent meals. The view from Mary Ann's lanai. It's a beautiful, well-maintained neighborhood of very affordable housing. Besides, it's hard to beat an HOA or Association dues of \$20.00, that's twenty dollars a year. Below we get a night light and canvas bag as gifts. There's a more in debt coverage of this beautiful day in my blog; "Mary Ann's Christmas" or do it the easy way by clicking from the right column "Resent Posts."

11.10.2018- Travel Schedule updated for 2019

This is still a work in progress but so far we've planned to go as far as Verde, AZ just south of Flagstaff, AZ. It's beautiful country and we hope to meet up with our former Director, Cindy, relax and enjoy her company and family for a few days. For the full schedule in more detail click on the link provided. [goto: 2019 Travel Plans](#). Of course this is Saturday. We chose to Go to Epiphany. Mass was followed, of course, with pizza, beer and a movie.

11.15.2018 Sunshine Travel RV Park, Vero Beach,FL

What a beautiful and well organized campground. As we checked in, in TT tradition, we were given a campground packet and told which site was assigned to us. Just a thirty second walk from the clubhouse, pool and everything else. It's also known as Vero Beach Encore, but is located in Fellsmere, FL. The picture below is a site-plan on this campground. We're occupying site 190. Please check out my blog on Sunshine Travel RV Park, one of Equity Lifestyle Properties nicest campgrounds.

11.15- Lunch with Abby and Michael at Dixie Crossroads

This walking bridge, we think, is part of the Florida Bike Trails and it spans I-95. Above is at the entrance to Dixie Crossroads. This gator is harmless, they say. We all had excellent meals at Dixie. Just before we all departed we took a walk around the Dixie building. Could not pass up the park bench for a photo-opt. Behind the building was a huge outdoor mural. A "young couple" we met as we arrived at the eatery was nice enough to take a picture of the four of us. For additional information, menu and/or directions on Dixie Crossroads click on the link:

[goto: Dixie Website](#)

11.16-Friday-Hot Dog Day at the campground

This community meeting room, just across from our site, is the hot dog night venue. Below is our current site. This room was literally filled with campers from the RV Park. The menu was simple, inexpensive and very good.

11.17 Saturday- Quiet day; just church, pizza and beer.

Very chilly, very nice at night. I have hopes to clean up the coach today in preparation of our leaving on this coming Tuesday for Pompano Beach, FL. This weekend we would attend St. Sabastian Church. The Pastor Fr. John Morrissey. We first met Fr. John about three years ago. See the blog on St. Sebastian Church

11.18 Sunday-For us it was up bright and early this Sunday morning as we were planning to visit my brother Dennis in Boca Raton, FL. It has been six months since we left the Boca area, and even though we telephone regularly, there's nothing like a visit.

11.19.2018 Monday- Just another day, watching grass grow.

11.20.18 Tuesday-Travel to Pompano, FL

We got up early this day, don't know why? By 10am we were on the road. We were told could not enter the park until 2pm so we had to kill some time. So we were off to Sam's for air, shopping and pizza. Arrived on Highland Woods in Pompano, FL around 2pm.

11.21.2018- Wednesday-Today will be another watch grass grow day.

A little shopping at Walmart and we're waiting for 1st Choice to re-install a part in our bed to assist in raising the bed up when needed. They lost this part three years ago when they installed our satellite system. Today they will finally finish the job.

11.22 Happy Thanksgiving Day

We hope everyone has the luxury of spending time with friends and love ones. As for Carla and we plan to spend a good portion of the day, including dinner, with my brother Dennis, this tome with him should begin around 10 or 11 am. As you know we are residing at Highland Woods Resort. This, believe it or not, is an Encore property. The big plus for this location is that we're only about a fifteen minute ride from Boca, where Dennis lives.

11.23 Friday- Deck the halls at Dennis' ,

Morning jobs. A little after noon will find ourselves at Dennis' where we were hoping to find his Christmas decorations from last year. We spent a little time today trying to expand our 2019 travel schedule. Same as the first schedule it begins in Florida but this time it takes us to San Francisco. See the blog of **11.23 "Deck the halls at Dennis'."**

11.25 Sunday Travel to Alliance RV

We were up early and were on the road by 8 am. Refuelled twice and had a bite to eat at a local Checkers fast food. Arrived at Alliance around 2:30, got a nice spot and relaxed for the rest of the day. The ride was much longer than I had expected, thankfully it was uneventful.

11.27-Waiting in the waiting room at Alliance.

It's about as boring as it could be, just sitting in a big room as the techs work on your coach. Today they'll be pulling out the slide on the passenger side to reinforce the slide plate which allows the heavy slide to glide in and out with very little friction. This will be a two-day job which means we'll be staying at a motel tonight and tomorrow night. We should be all back together again by Thursday.

11.30 Friday- Finally settled in a campground

We've been in the area, Wildwood, FL, for a few days, but hanging out at Alliance RV as they remedy the passenger side slide and an oil change.

It's taken three days and we must go back on Monday for them to fix a hole they accidentally drilled into the side of the injured slide. We are now staying at Three-Flags RV Resort in Wildwood, FL. Alliance is just five miles from here.

11.30.18 George H. W. Bush dies

NOVEMBER 2018 BLOGS

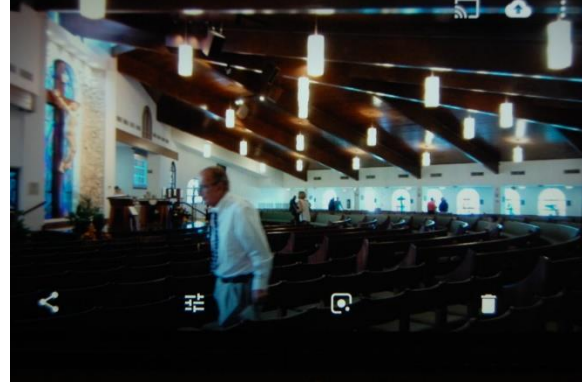
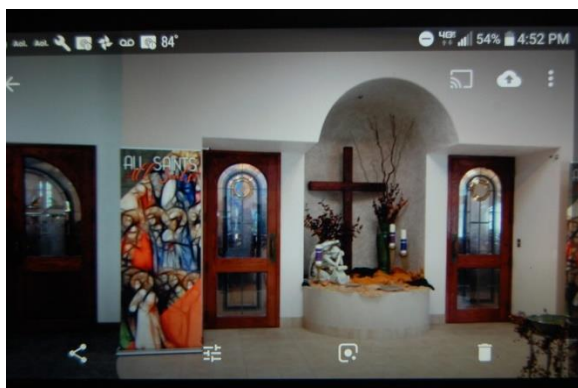
11.01.18-Thursday- All Saints Day

Epiphany is located in Port Orange, FL. Guess we've been here in the past when we had the trailer on Seabird Island.



Today was a Holy Day of Obligation therefore we go to church. We attended Epiphany Catholic Church at their 12:15 Mass. Carla says we'd been here before but I could not recall that event.

This is such a beautiful church, I find it hard to think I could not recall being here before.



Look carefully and you'll notice that the pews are circular. We'd never seen that before.

11.01.2018 Mary Ann's new toy



After Mass we went out for lunch at a Mexican restaurant. I was a little leery about the menu but my meal was excellent. When we got back to Mary Ann's she told us of her new toy; an electric trike. We both fell in love with it.



She loves it and so did we. Both Carla and I had the opportunity to test it out. Reluctantly after a good ride I did bring it back to her. This is not a toy, it can reach speeds of up to fifteen miles per hour. On top of that, in Port Orange, she can use it both on the roads and on the sidewalk. I would not take it on I-95 however.

11.03.2018 Saturday- Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church

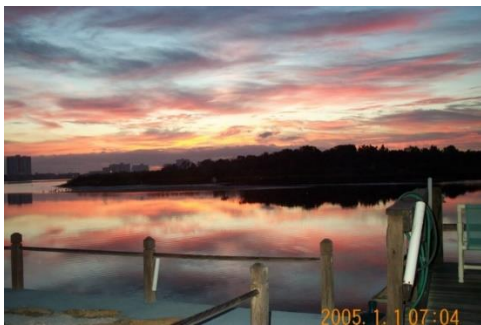


Our Lady of Hope is located in Port Orange, FL. We used to attend this church back in the days when we had the cabin on Seabird Island, Florida.

Just a couple of pictures from one of our stays on the Island.



I could not resist the urge to dig back into my stand alone hard drive and search out a few pictures from days and nights gone by. Seabird Island is located about six miles south of Daytona Beach, FL



Yes, we enjoyed a fairly large dock just off from the cabin. It really wasn't a cabin, but just a fifty year old trailer, but oh the memories we have from our many stays there.



Above Dennis and a chunkier version of myself enjoying a lazy afternoon. Below is Mary Ann (Ozzie). She had the trailer next to ours. Can't make out what she just caught.



Yes, that's brother Dennis as he shows off one of his finest catches; a shark!



11.07 Day after voting day.

In all it was a good day for the Democrats. Not so much for the fact that there are more Democrats in Congress, but to the fact that we now have a check on the Executive Branch of the government. Now I would have to go to Texas. Robert Francis "Beto" O'Rourke was so dynamic, I thought for sure he would take Texas, but for a Democrat in a red state he did awesomely. *I hope to see Beto in a couple of years for the 2020 Presidential Elections.* Next Georgia. A statement from CNN summed it up nicely.

Democratic candidate Stacey Abrams is not conceding the Georgia governor's race to Republican candidate Brian Kemp, arguing that the high stakes contest is too close to call. CNN has not projected a winner in the Georgia governor's race, but Kemp is ahead in votes with 99% of precincts reporting. "I'm here tonight to tell you votes remain to be counted. There's voices that are waiting to be heard,"

Abrams told supporters early Wednesday morning gathered in Atlanta. In a statement provided to CNN, her campaign cited several specific reasons why she is not conceding, including that three of the state's largest counties "have reported only a portion of the votes that were submitted by early mail" and four other large counties "have reported exactly 0 votes by mail," according to the campaign. Together, it said, the seven counties "are expected to return a minimum of 77,000 ballots."

...He (Kemp) dismissed critics alleging that he weaponized state law to suppress the minority vote as "outside agitators." A lawsuit filed Tuesday in a Georgia federal court by five state voters asked a judge to strip Kemp of his powers over the midterm election -- including any potential runoffs.

My hopes and prayers are for Abrams, only time will determine this outcome. It's hard to believe voter suppression would still be in our vocabulary in these modern and enlightened years. Good luck Stacey!

11.09.2018 Friday- Christmas at Mary Ann's, Carla's sister.



The picture above has nothing to do with Ozzie's Christmas. Rather, it's a picture for my brother should he ever start thinking of relocating to a less expensive neighborhood, Mary Ann's neighborhood. Below is a picture of C's restaurant the place we went to for Christmas breakfast; we had excellent meals.



The view from Mary Ann's lanai. It's a beautiful, well-maintained neighborhood of very affordable housing. Besides, it's hard to beat an HOA or Association dues of \$20.00, that's twenty dollars a year. Below we get a night light and canvas bag as gifts.





We gave Mary Ann a head-rest pillow, Scoots, on the other hand, got a folding playpen and cat-grass. This was an awesome gift. Each book of the fifty books, tells of everything you need to know about each state.



Thank you Carla. This is a Triple A (AAA) product.



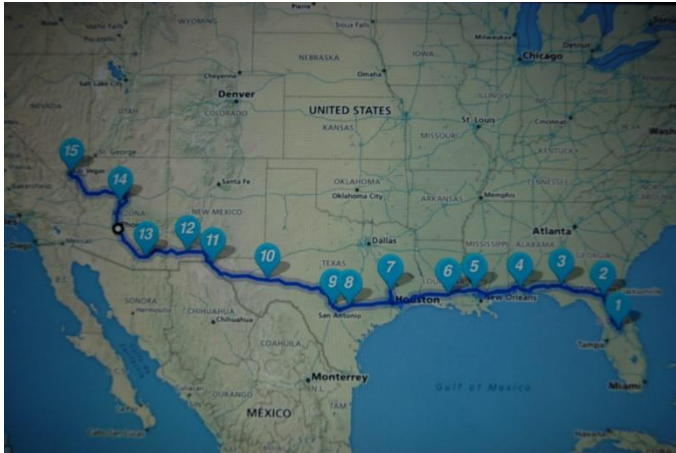
She gave me a seat riding cushion and Carla got a classic RV pillow. Ozzie below got a Walmart Card.



A classic RV gift name-card. A carpet the coach deeply needed to help keep the coach cleaner. Below a gift to us of two classic Curling Stones, from the past.



A couple of pictures of Mary Ann's neighbors.



This is still a work in progress but so far we've planned to go as far as Verde, AZ just south of Flagstaff, AZ. It's beautiful country and we hope to meet up with our former Director, Cindy, relax and enjoy her company and family for a few days. We might even cruise up and revisit the Grand Canyon again. It won't be quite the same this time since Abby will not be with us. Number 9 in the travel plan above is Lakehills, TX. We're still looking for that perfect spot for up to fall back on some time in the future and this might be pretty close. Voting, fishing and beautiful sunsets. Temps vary, depending on the season from the lower 40's to high 80's. Not sure about humidity. Imagine it's a dry heat. At least we'll experience Texas in February.

JANUARY 2019

1. Dec. 31st Arrive at Clermont, FL at Orlando TT RVP for 2 weeks
2. Jan. 14th Lake City, FL - Overnight
3. Jan. 15th Marianna, GA Overnight
4. Jan. 14th Arrive in Robertsdale, AL - Wilderness RVP (RPI) x 4 days ?
5. Jan. 18th Hammond, LA Overnight, AZ
6. Jan. 19th Lafayette, LA Overnight
7. Jan. 20th Willis, TX staying at Lake Conroe (TT) RVP for 12 days.
8. Feb. 1st Lake City -Overnight
9. Feb. 2nd Lakehills, TX at the Medina Lake RV Resort (TT) for 14 nights
10. Feb. 15th Fort Stockton, TX overnight
11. Feb. 16th El Paso, TX - overnight
12. Feb. 17th Deming, NM overnight
13. Feb. 18th Benson, AZ at Valley Vista RV Resort (T3) for 14 nights
14. March 3rd Phoenix, AZ overnight
15. March 4th Cottonwood, AZ at Verde Valley RVP (TT) x 14 nights

11.13.18-Sunshine Resort

What a beautiful and well organized campground. As we checked in, in TT tradition, we were given a campground packet and told which site was assigned to us. Just a thirty second walk from the clubhouse, pool and everything else. It's also known as Vero Beach Encore, but is located in Fellsmere, FL. The picture below is a site-plan on this campground. We're occupying site 190.



As you can see in the picture this campground is an Encore. Encore parks are also members of the Equity Lifestyle Properties group. In a nut shell Encore parks are similar to the Marriott Hotels, four star properties. Thousand Trails RVParks would be grouped as similar to a Motel-6 or Holiday Inn type properties. There are five star hotels as well as five-star campgrounds. Some, I've been told charge from \$100 to \$1000 night. I'll have to take everyone's word on these since we'll never have reason to experience these properties.



Our site #190 for our stay. Great location, 50 amp and satellite access... awesome!





These camp style homes dot the campground everywhere. This is one of TT most beautiful parks and annual residences are popping up everywhere



Another campground gathering place. Also used for dances, bingo library for books and DVD's and most importantly the mailroom.



Both above and below is the office where we register when we arrive.



11.16-Friday-Hot Dog Day at the3 campground

11.15-Thursday- Lunch with Abby and Michael at Dixie Crossroads



This community meeting room, just across from our site, is the hot dog night venue. We arrived at 5:15 and by 6pm the room was full. And why not? For two dollars we were fed a 1/4, similar to what Sam's would serve, chips, a coke or other soft drink and an ice-cream desert. Just when I thought it could not get much better the volunteers announced that they had about two-dozen dogs leftover and seconds were being offered at no extra charge. This walking bridge, we think, is part of the Florida Bike Trails and it spans I-95. Above is at the entrance to Dixie Crossroads. This gator is harmless, they say. We all had excellent meals at Dixie.



Just before we all departed we took a walk around the Dixie building. Could not pass up the park bench for a photo-opt. Behind the building was a huge outdoor mural. A "young couple" we met as we arrived at the eatery was nice enough to take a picture of the four of us.



11.17 Saturday- Quiet day; just church, pizza and beer.

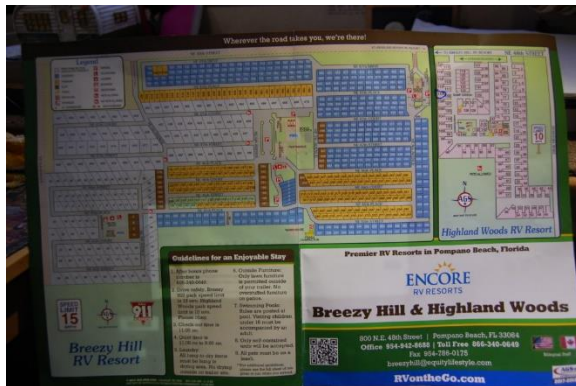
Very chilly, very nice at night. I have hopes to clean up the coach today in preparation of our leaving on this coming Tuesday for Pompano Beach, FL.



This weekend we would attend St. Sebastian Church. The Pastor Fr. John Morrissey. We first met Fr. John about three years ago. He had just finished his homily and noticed us. After ending his homily he noticed us and spoke to the gal next to Carla. At the end of the Mass the gal asked if we had time to join Fr. John in the rectory with other parishioners. We did and met many of the parishioners. If it were not for us being RVers and if we were in the market for a new church to attend, St. Sebastian would fill the bill. It was memorable seeing him again.

11.20.18 Tuesday-Travel to Pompano, FL

We got up early this day, don't know why? By 10am we were on the road. We were told could not enter the park until 2pm so we had to kill some time. Carla noticed the right rear tire looked low so we called Sam's in Fort Pierce to see if they could check the tire for us. The Sam's auto technician was good and fast, yes; the tire needed some air. After getting the tire straightened out we could not pass up having lunch and possibly do little shopping, awesome!



Highland Woods is a Thousand Trails Property located in Pompano, FL. We will be staying here for five-nights leaving on the 25th. As a result this will be a free stay for us. This is very big campground. It's made up of three parks all either next to each other or across the street. It looks like they could have about 1500 sites altogether. What we were not told is that all reservations go through the Breezy Hill Resort; we found that out the hard way. Nothing fancy here, but who cares, we're just here for Thanksgiving and visiting with Dennis. Dennis is aggressively looking a new home in Broward County.



Above is a section of a Solar Farm that is being fitted with solar panels. Below is another section that is further along with panels. This parcel of property must be over one-hundred acres, really big. Next time you're traveling north just past Ft. Pierce, FL look to the west, Driver's side, and you'll see it with no difficulty.

11.22 Happy Thanksgiving Day

We hope everyone had the luxury of spending time with family, friends and love ones.



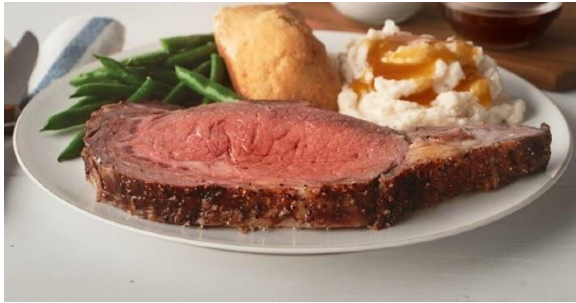
As for Carla and we plan to spend a good portion of the day, including dinner, with my brother Dennis, this time with him should begin around 10 or 11 am. As you know we are residing at Highland Woods Resort. This, believe it or not, is an Encore property. The big plus for this location is that we're only about a fifteen minute ride from Boca, where Dennis lives.



Kiesha, Dennis' caregiver joined us at this Thanksgiving Dinner as well. It was a happy occasion but we could not help but remember those family members and friends who are no longer with us.

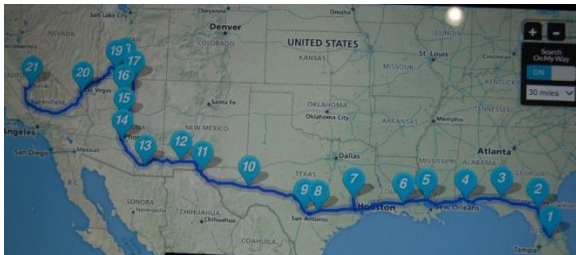
As you can see in the bottom picture we did not have turkey. For Carla and I it was a real feast. Dennis opted for Prime Rib this year for the Thanksgiving meal. This meal was a freebie for me, Keisha would do any washing or at least place the dishes in the dishwasher. As the official dishwasher of the family, I was off the hook for this meal and Boston Market provided the meal, so no one had to cook either. The meal was so good, you could cut the meat with a fork.

Picture is courtesy of Boston Market:



Above is what Boston Market says you will receive, below is what you actually get. Much thinner than is seen in the above picture. It's not to say it lacked excellent taste, because it did, it's just that you will get a much thinner piece of meat. We got the same thickness, or lack of thickness, in all four meals. Four \$15.99 size is everything.

11.23 Friday- Deck the halls at Dennis'.



Morning jobs. A little after noon will find ourselves at Dennis' where we were hoping to find his Christmas decorations from last year. It only took a couple of hours since all the decorations were in his condo. We were on our way back to the coach around 4pm. We will be visiting Dennis again tomorrow to do Christmas since we'll be leaving on Sunday and our Florida sites from Sunday on will be about four-hours from Boca. *Same schedule just different map formats; a map and satellite format below.*

We spent a little time today trying to expand our 2019 travel schedule. Same as the first schedule it begins in Florida but this time it takes us to San Francisco. Ultimately this schedule will go on beyond San Francisco and, right now, it goes to Cedar Rapids, IA. Our tracking program we're using, Rand McNally, allows us to only plot 25 waypoints. The waypoints we've outlined are projections only, but we'll nail them down in the next few weeks with dates and campgrounds.



11.24-Visit w Dennis, Christmas and Mass



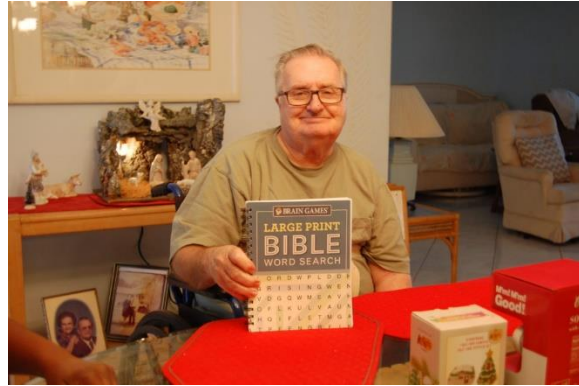
We woke a little early this morning in anticipation of a visit from Dennis and his caregiver Camille. They would be visiting us here at the coach. By 11am they were here. It was so nice that we spent the entire visit outdoors. It was an afternoon enjoyed by all. Temps, for a change were around 78 with a constant breeze blowing between our coach and the one next to us.



At 1pm we drove to his condo to share an early Christmas with them. We topped off the afternoon by attending Mass at Dennis' church followed by, of course, Pizza and beer. For a change we attended Dennis' Church, John the Evangelist CC in Boca. It's a beautiful church, but attendance is about the same as most churches these days. St. Vincent de Paul has them all beat with out a doubt.



Some additional pictures on Dennis' Christmas.



I must have taken us at least 5 minutes trying to pry this gift from its skin tight container

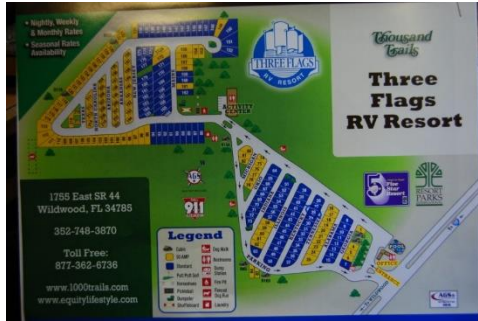


Super size package of 24 inch Twizzlers, just what he doesn't need, but it's Christmas. Below is an audio book of that infamous book "Fear." Dennis has difficulty reading small print; we have no doubt he'll enjoy listening to the audio version of this book.



Above a cap from our travels and Scoots' gift to him a cat laden head rest pillow.

11.30 Friday- Finally settled in a campground



We've been in the area, Wildwood, FL, for a few days, but hanging out at Alliance RV as they remedy the passenger side slide and an oil change. It's taken three days and we must go back on Monday for them to fix a hole they accidentally drilled into the side of the injured slide.

We are now staying at Three-Flags RV Resort in Wildwood, FL. Alliance is just five miles from here. Needless to say this park feels like home. For six months they let us stay here for a very modest price while I finished chemo and radiation. Wednesday and Thursday nights were spent at a motel called "Sleep Inn." A little pricier than what we usually opt for but was worth every

penny. Just down the street from the Inn was Hungry Howe's. We'd never eaten there before or any of its franchises but I'm ready to go back. We both decided on the buffet. I was delighted with every item I chose. Salad, spaghetti, 2 slices of pizza, 2 pieces of Bowie bread and corn; awesome! I even went back for seconds on the pizza. That was just about it for something to Wright about. Forgot, I did take some camera pictures.



This contraption would eventually pick up the slide, which weighed in at over 1/2 ton, so the techs could repair the slide skids which were on the bottom of the slide, which is why the slide had to come out. To lighten the weight of the slide furniture components inside had to be dismantled, cloths removed for the closet and draws relocated to other parts of the coach.



This is about what it looked like. Needless to say both Scoots and I were getting a little depressed. Fearing she might go catatonic we both spent a little time talking her through this ordeal. One saving factor was her new portable condo, a gift from Carla's sister Ozzie. In the end we all survived the trial, especially the coach. The oil change was on schedule for today, Friday and Monday they plan to finish repairing the hole the placed in the slide.

DECEMBER 2018 JOURNAL

The Journal is a quick peek into almost everyday activities of our lives. The blogs are a more in depth decitation on a particular activity or venue. Each Blog is introduced in the Journal but not all Journal items will be found in a blog. Journalentries begin on the last day of the month and move to the first day.

12.1.18-SATURDAY-GEORGE H.R. BUSH PASSED LAST NIGHT.

So hard to believe that this is the beginning of another new month and approaching the closing of 2018. We began the day with shopping at Walmart; can you believe \$208.00. We had to replenish some staples but very rarely to we spend that much at Walmart. Looks like light rain is on schedule for the rest of the day. Later, as always, it will be church and pizza.

12.02.18 SUNDAY SHOPPING AND TEXAS ROADHOUSE DINING

Not much to do today. A little later on today we plan to do a little shopping. I've also finished the blog on the coach repairs needed a few minutes ago, which is about as interesting as a root canal sadly. Strangely our shopping would take us to Lady Lakes, FL the home of a Texas Roadhouse Restaurant. The meal left nothing to be desired. Go to the blog on the Texas Roadhouse and read about our experience. Only warning the reading and seeing will make you hungry.

12.03.18 PRESIDENT GEORGE H RBUSH AT THE CAPITAL ROTUNDA

We spent most of our day at Alliance again, except this time we were able to remain in the coach as they made their small fixes. The paint job on the coach came out great and they even fixed the defect I inflicted onto the coach by using the rough side of a sponge. To my surprise all they did was to buff it out. Those circular buffers are awesome. The rest of the day was spent watching #41 at the Rotunda in the Capitol. We treated ourselves to night out eating at Hungry Howe's again. Once again it's not somewhere you'd bring someone on a first date, it is better than a McDonald's but definitely not as good or as nice as an Applebee's.

12.05.18 PRESIDENT GEORGE H R BUSH AT THE CATHEDRAL

Just watched a lot of TV on George HR Bush. Sadly its times like this that commentators talk about a deceased person and you learn so much about his character and mannerisms.

12.06.18 #41 LAID TO REST AT HIS PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM.

We did a little shopping and then we watched the final day of #41 off the DVR. Blogs and pictures will be coming on #41 in the next couple of days.

12.07.18 FRIDAY, ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK.

Today was another Doctor visit day, same as last Wednesday. Everything looks good we're told. They would like to see us in three months but we'll be away, so the next visits will be at the end of 2019. At 4pm we'll be off to church, then the day is ours.

12.08.18-TRAVEL TO ORLANDO RVP

We did get up around 7am but could have slept a little longer, if that luxury was still an option for us. Orlando RV Park is one of Thousand Trails' biggest parks. A little later, as on all Saturdays it will be Mass, pizza and beer. We are planning to be here for two weeks. The church we go to in Clermont, FL is St. Faustian. It's in a plaza and they're renting about ten-thousand square feet for services over the weekend. Thing is that this church is struggling hard to build a new building but funds are short.

12.10.18 MONDAY-CHRSTMAS LETTER DAY

Today was my Christmas Shopping Day and later I was able to put together the 2018 Christmas Letter. We dug up the Christmas decorations aiso. There are very few occasions when I look back and have some regrets on this lifestyle; the Christmas Season would be one of them. Carla and I had an awesome display of Christmas décor to chose from and Carla did an awesome job of decorating our home. But that was then and this is now. Regardless, we made the right decision.

12.11.18 EXPANDING OR TRAVEL PLANS FOR 2019

We deleted quite a few stops do to necessity. Our focus for 2019 will be Utah. So much to see in such a beautiful state. We kept everything up to and including Grand Canyon Village. From there it would be Utah, but it wasn't that simple logistically. Utah is very big with only two good campgrounds to chose from in the southern portion of the state.

12.12 WED. DECKING THE HALL

We thought today would be just another quiet day, but we surprised ourselves. Walmart and shopping was our first duty. After that we were off to Target. Scoot's suit, new this year, looked blah, and the coach in general needed some additional Christmas décor, so today we made those updates. Go to the blog for the details.

12.14.18 FRIDAY- CALL FROM DWIGHT

We were just sitting around when the phone rang; it was from Dwight Smith. So nice to hear from him again. It was a call of mixed messages. Dennis, his cat, had to be put down this year. They were life-long mates. At 86 even he has a few problems, but like all of us, he's dealing with them. His big trip of the year was Quebec City. The high point was the St. Anne de Beaupre Cathedral Quebec. He found it very exciting. We're hoping our paths will cross in 2019. Dwight became a part of our life when we met him on our Alaska Tour. [St Anne De Beaupre Quebec](#)

12.17.18-NEW ENTRY IN THE "REFLECTIONS" SECTION.

It wasn't very insightful just another topic for me to reflect upon. In the Reflections section you'll find it under "Christmas, Traditions and Stuff."

Or you can click on: [Christmas, traditions and Stuff, reflections](#)

12.18.18- CHRISTMAS IS ONLY SEVEN DAYS FROM TODAY**12.20.18 ANOTHER CAT IN THE HAT DAY-HEAVY SHOWERS LAST 2 DAYS**

Just like everyone else on the east coast, we're stuck inside as it pours outside. Half hour ago we were in a "tornado watch window", that wasn't to reassuring.

12.21- FIRST DAY OF WINTER WITH VERY STRONG GUSTY WINDS

Since early morning we've been experiencing heavy gusty winds. All morning the coach has been nudging us from side to side as a result of the heavy winds. We did get a break around 10am with some windy weather with no rain, and I took advantage of the break and brought in the septic hoses and water lines in preparation for our departure Saturday morning, tomorrow. The trip tomorrow is about 180 miles and should take about 4 hours. This will be our first time staying in Arcadia.

12.22.18-SATURDAY-NOW AT RIVERSIDE RVR, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL

We left Orlando RVP in Clermont, FL this morning around 8:30. I'm happy to say was another uneventful ride. By 2:30 we were getting ready for church at St Antonio CC. The sermon was enjoyable, funny and to the point. I doubt if it lasted longer than ten minutes..Every family has certain traditions, even small families like Carla and I. Almost every year we make plans to watch The Polar Express and, of course, It's a Wonderful Life.

12.23.18 RESERVATION CHANGE--CHRISTMAS EVE EVE

We were scheduled to leave here, Riverside RVR, on the 29th. Now we'll be staying until the 31st. We cancelled our reservations in Wauchula, since it has a tendency to turn muddy with even a small amount of rain. Tonight would be an It's a Wonderful Life night. For the most part I do enjoy this movie. My only concern on the movie is Uncle Billy. I could wright an entire blog on Uncle Bill, but I will forgo that for now; It's a personal reflection and not worth the time to type out.

12.24.18-CHRISTMAS EVE

Carla let me sleep in this morning, that is till 8:30, then we bided our time until the Christmas Vigil Mass at 3:30. It's not the same as it used to be either when I was a child or in those days with my kids. The magic was even there when Abby was a bigger part of our lives; miss those days.

12.25.18-CHRISTMAS

Great night for sleeping. Woke up this morning to find the temp in the coach at 61 degrees, decided to turn on the heat. We woke up this morning around 8am and, for a change, I made breakfast. Over all we were pretty well matched and the gift giving went well. Before opening we enjoyed breakfast, then made few family calls wishing all a Merry Christmas. After lunch we took a stroll to visit the Peach River- see blog.

12.29-MOVE TO A NEW SITE, SAME PARK

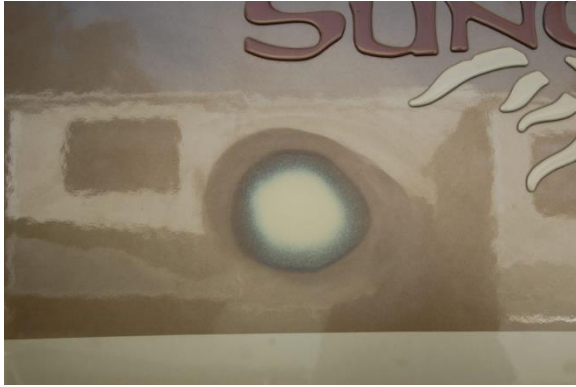
We've never done this before. according to the old schedule we were supposed to leave Riverside and travel to Wauchula. If you remember some of the old blogs on Wauchula, you'll remember that the park has a very high water table.

12.30.2018 NEW YEARS EVE, EVE

We still haven't gotten out to eat at Texas Roadhouse, but hopefully maybe in couple of days. I was going to call Alliance o make the rug repair to the slide but Carla suggested calling the guy who installed the carpet itself three years ago. We did contact him and we hope to meet up with him on this coming Thursday.

DECEMBER 2018 BLOGS

12.1.18- Saturday...A Cat in the Hat Day.



George H. W. Bush passed last night. So hard to believe that this is the beginning of another new month and approaching the closing of 2018. We began the day with shopping at Walmart; can you believe \$208.00. We had to replenish some staples but very rarely to we spend that much at Walmart. Looks like light rain is on schedule for the rest of the day. Later, as always, it will be church and pizza. As for myself, today I'm a little bored. My next door neighbor, on the other hand, is busily working with the tools. His pastime is creating wind-chimes from beer cans. I am so thankful that I have a purpose in life, especially in these older years; Writing a blog, I accept few will read, in hopes that I will reflect on these precious memories in the year 2032 as



I approach ninety. Hopefully I'll still have the mental acumen to access this Web Site in those later years; doesn't this beat building wind-chimes?

12.02.18 Sunday



Above is the patch for the 3.5 inch screw that was used in a 2.5 inch wall. Hopefully paint will be sprayed onto the area and hopefully it will blend in with the twelve year old paint job of the coach. Below is a tree sap stain. We're hoping the paint technician will be able to buff out the remaining remnants of this stain.

12.02.18 Sunday-lunch at Texas Roadhouse

This, most likely, will not be our Christmas Season Dinner, that should be a little closer to Christmas. We found ourselves with a gift certificate, from my daughter I think, and it had a balance on it, and was getting dusty. We had some shopping to do and the best stores in the area are in Lady Lakes, FL a few miles from Wildwood, FL. If Lady Lakes sounds familiar it's because this is where I came for both chemo and radiation only a few months ago, but that's in the past. Today was a beautiful day and our shopping went better and faster than expected. When we arrived at Texas Roadhouse I ordered the same meal as Carla. This is the same meal she had when we found ourselves in Elmira, NY. Only difference between hers and mine was rice in place of the potato. Aside from the generous portion of potatoes were the beef tips. Sauteed exquisitely in a bed of onions and mushrooms. Not the least of the dinner were the bread rolls everyone loves. TR is a little like Kohl's for us today. You buy something and you leave with a gift certificate to put towards another meal or two in the future; awesome!



12.03.18 PRESIDENT GEORGE H RBUSH AT THE CAPITAL ROTUNDA

We spent most of our day at Alliance again, except this time we were able to remain in the coach as they made their small fixes. The paint job on the coach came out great and they even fixed the defect I inflicted onto the coach by using the rough side of a sponge. To my surprise all they did was to buff it out. Those circular buffers are awesome. The rest of the day was spent watching #41 at the Rotunda in the Capitol. We treated ourselves to night out eating at Hungry Howe's again. Once again it's not somewhere you'd bring someone on a first date, it is better than a McDonald's but definitely not as good or as nice as an Applebee's.





In the picture (above right corner) is Jim Baker, a life-long friend of George HR Bush. He took his passing very hard. He gave two eulogies one at the National Cathedral and the other at St. Martins Episcopal Church in Houston, TX.



Above- George W and Jeb with wives look on at #41 is laying in State at the nations Capitol. George HR will lay in State for the next two days.

12.05.2018- Service at the National Cathedral



SHHH! Just resting my eyes. All commentators agree that the President and Ivanka either did not know the prayers of the service or did not bother to read them in the memorial program in his hands.



Former President Jimmy Carter and wife. I apologize for the picture, MSNBC, that I know of, did not give me a close up on them. Below, once again, #41's life-long-friend Jim Baker. Jim Baker, at the service for #41 at the National Cathedral was extremely emotional of his passing. Turns out they'd been close friends most of their lives. So many stories told of his life at the White House and in Maine. The story goes that he once took Putin out for a ride in his speed boat. With three- three-hundred horsepower engines for power Putin had a white-knuckle experience. They were going so fast it took several minutes for the secret service to catch up to them.



12.05.2018



Union Pacific, on their own, took the initiative to repaint the locomotive in the same colors as Air Force #1 and registered the name of the locomotive to "4141", for the day, the 41st President of the US.

12.06.18 #41 LAID TO REST AT HIS PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM.

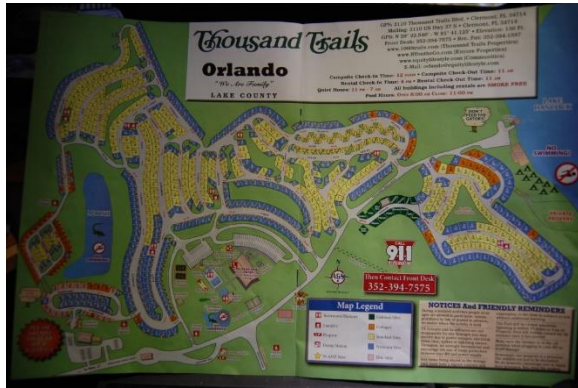
We did a little shopping and then we watched the final day of #41 off the DVR. Blogs and pictures will be coming on #41 in the next couple of days. #41 will be transported to College Station where he will be interred next to his wife Barbara and Robyn there child that died decades ago.



2.05.2018-#41 arrives at the Union Train Station for a slow ride ultimately to College Station. Years ago #41 asked if he could take controls of the train, the engineer agreed to the request.

12.08.18-TRAVEL TO ORLANDO RVP

We did get up around 7am but could have slept a little longer, if that luxury was still an option for us. Orlando RV Park is one of Thousand Trails' biggest parks.



They have relatively new rules. Under no circumstances can you arrive even fifteen minutes early, as we did, and expect to stay even in the huge parking lot. We were told to get out and come back in fifteen minutes. I think it's the only park in the TT gallery of properties with such stringent rules. The ranger who directed us to our site mentioned that the campground has almost nine-hundred sites with over one-hundred-fifty more in the planning. Just a few random picture of this beautiful campground.





12.08.18- Clermont, FL is St. Faustina

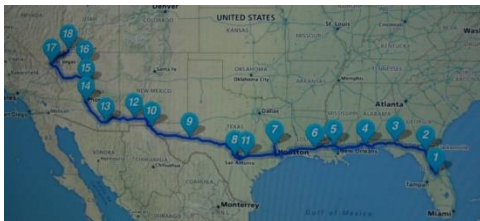
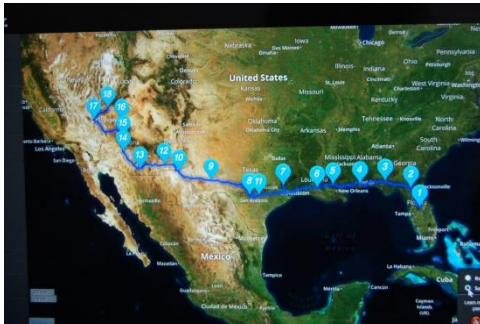


The church we go to in Clermont, FL is St. Faustina. It's in a plaza and they're renting about ten-thousand square feet for services over the weekend. Thing is that this church is struggling hard to build a new building but funds are short. It's time for the Diocese to come in and give these parishioners some assistance. What the Diocese does not realize is that the services this church is providing *is standing room only*. The big difference is that parishes like St. Vincent de Paul are fortunate to be pulling from the Villages. St. Faustina is a working man's church. With all the money St. Vincent and St. Mark's bringing you'd think they could share some of it with a struggling Parrish like St. Faustina This parish is not looking for a multi-million over built building meant to impress even the two percenters; They just want their own building so they don't have to keep throwing away six or eight thousand dollars a month to a landlord for the luxury of the use of his rental unit. You would think

the Diocese would feel the same way. Like everything else the rich always get preferential treatment and those that struggle are told to work harder and save more . It's not my Parrish, we're full-time motorhome people, but I do feel for these parishioners. We make St. Faustina our Parrish of choice for the four to six weeks each year as we camp in Clermont for Doctor appointments and to wait out some of the bad weather up north.

Only wish I had either the political clot or financial resources to give these folks a helping hand.

12.11.18 EXPANDING OUR TRAVEL SCHEDULE IN 2019



We deleted quite a few stops due to necessity. Our focus for 2019 will be Utah. So much to see in such a beautiful state. We kept all the stops up to and including Grand Canyon Village. From there it would be Utah, but it wasn't that simple logistically. Utah is very big with only two good campgrounds to choose from in the southern portion of the state. We found ourselves at the Grand Canyon in the middle of March, a chilly time of the year and we were about to climb to higher elevations with even cooler temps. Our quandary was to squander a couple of more weeks somewhere till the temps warm up a bit. The solution was to go to Las Vegas for two weeks.

Thousand Trails has a campground in Las Vegas that would be free to us for at least two-weeks. So on March 22nd we'll leave Grand Canyon Village and travel to Vegas, a longer than normal trip of around 275 miles but we can do it with a couple of additional coffee breaks. On April 5th we'll depart Vegas and trip to St. George, Utah.

12.12 WED. DECKING OUR HALL



We thought today would be just another quiet day, but we surprised ourselves. Walmart and shopping was our first duty. After that we were off to Target. Scoot's suite, new this year, looked blah, and the coach in general needed some additional Christmas décor, so today we made those updates. Go to the blog for the details.



Carla noticed it first; Scoot's had no Christmas décor on her suite. Then after Scoot's was so decorated the coach began to look blah. Target had strings of lights for sale so we ended up buying three sets of them.

You can actually have up to eleven sets attached to one plug in.



The coach began to look alive and in the Spirit.



Temps outside have been very cool so Carla warmed us up with her French Onion Soup for dinner this evening. Earlier this morning, after putting the clothes in the washer, Carla wanted to see if we could find the Russell's who were supposed to be here as well. All we had to go on was the model of their new Fifth Wheel and their grey truck. Luckily within fifteen minutes of meandering in and out of these small campground roadways Carla spotted it. It had been over two years since we'd last met up with them. Below is a picture of dad (Scott) and Kora. No picture of the three of them yet.





12.20.18 A CAT IN THE HAT DAY-HEAVY SHOWERS LAST 2 DAYS

Just like everyone else on the east coast, we're stuck inside as it pours outside. Half hour ago we were in a "tornado watch window", that wasn't to reassuring. The Window is scheduled to last for another two hours, so if I don't finish this entry; well, that will be that! Since we have to rely on satellite and satellite relies on clear skies, television is possible but not very enjoyable. Nice thing about MSNBC they'll repeat their "breaking news" every two hours so what you miss at 10am you'll catch at noon. Today we've opted to listen to Christmas Carols, a very nice change. We just finished listening to some Perry Como oldies. I know, you younger readers are asking Perry Who? (Google it!) Only five days till Christmas, can that even be possible? Once again it will be jacks up come this Saturday morning. We'll be traveling to Arcadia, FL staying at the Riverside RV Resort. Our stay in Clermont has been relaxing and beneficial, with so many retailers close by. A week ago I had all my shopping done, since then I've returned just about everything and opted for other choices. Our Christmas', thanks to our lifestyle are simple, to say the least. Many of our gift choice are mostly one level above stocking stuffers, but are very humorous. This all relates to that saying: "*Happiness is to have everything...*" you know how it goes.

12.22.18-SATURDAY-NOW AT RIVERSIDE RVR, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL

We left Orlando RVP in Clermont, FL this morning around 8:30. I'm happy to say this was another uneventful ride.



We gassed up at a tight Shell Station and about twenty-five miles from Port Charlotte we dropped in to a Cracker Barrel and had an early lunch. We arrived at Riverside RVResort in Port Charlotte, FL, shortly after noon. This is one of the nicest, if not the nicest campground, we've every stayed at. I'll try to get a blog on it in a couple of days. By 2:30 we were getting ready for church at St Antonio CC. The sermon was enjoyable, funny and to the point. I doubt if it lasted longer than ten minutes. The church was relatively new and beautifully designed. Once again, the church was full, unlike what is commonly found in churches these days.

12.22.18-SATURDAY-The Polar Express Movie

Every family has certain traditions, even small families like Carla and I. Almost every year we make plans to watch The Polar Express and, of course, It's a Wonderful Life. Tonight was the Polar Express night. Yes, I've seen it possibly a dozen times, and will never tire of it. Your next question might possibly be; Do you believe? The answer, of course, is yes! Not in the mind as of a child, but more importantly in Him. All my life, in so many ways, I've found myself in situations I felt were not solvable, yet, to my disbelief, a solution would present. itself. Some, I would say might just call it luck, but no, picking the right lottery number requires luck. What Carla and I went through this last year required a great deal of believing.



is awesome, and neither of us ever want it to end.

The Polar Express had to do with gifts also. As it was mentioned in the movie *"friends are the most important gift you could have."* Friends I've not had that many, more since I've married Carla, but each is very important to me. More importantly all of us could always use closer ties with family, I know I could. I will always "believe" that that situation might someday improve. In the movie the conductor mentions *"Where the train is going is not that important, getting ON the train (of life) is what matters."* Carla and I embarked on this train of life almost thirty years ago, and it's been one heck of a ride. Even though many don't really understand the challenges and rewards of this lifestyle, it

Believe, we will always "believe." We only hope all those who read these blogs will never stop believing either.

12.25.18-CHRISTMAS



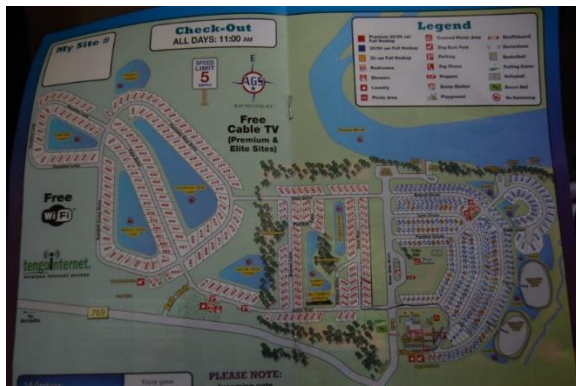
Great night for sleeping. Woke up at 4am this morning to find the temp in the coach at 61 degrees, decided to turn on the heat. We finally woke up this morning around 8am and, for a change, I made breakfast. Below is a blue thing-of-a-majig. Guess why it is used for. Answer later in the blog. In the big package is my main gift, a buffer. Not the inexpensive one I thought I would get, but much nicer.



Over all we were pretty well matched and the gift giving went well. Before opening we enjoyed breakfast, then made few family calls wishing all a Merry Christmas. Below would be Carla's main gift, a photo album with 150 pictures of our 2018 travels; a gift of love more than anything else.



Scattered on the table are most of the rest of our gifts. It was a very nice day, but as I mentioned in a previous blog, it's just a tad bit more exciting with young ones in the mix.



The thing-of-a-majig. It's a little stub you place in back of your phone to hold it upright, or in my case, most times, to take pictures of a picture on the phone, since I don't know how to transfer pictures in any other manner. After lunch we took a stroll to visit the Peace River- see blog.

12.25.18 The Riverside RVR- THE PEACE RIVER

This campground is located in Port Charlotte in the town of Arcadia, FL. To say the least this is one of the best we've ever stayed at. It's a Thousand Trails property in their Encore collection.



It doesn't get much more relaxing than this. Many of the residents here, many annuals, have towable boats of all sizes on the grounds.



**I doubt if I'll ever forget the thrill of driving a boat; if only I were younger!
Excellent dockage here for putting your boat in the water. The Resort has all the attributes we're both looking for, should we ever we get older, except that it's in Florida.**

12.29-MOVE TO A NEW SITE, SAME PARK

We've never done this before. according to the old schedule we were supposed to leave Riverside and travel to



Wauchula. If you remember some of the old blogs on Wauchula, you'll remember that the park has a very high water table. The last time we were there we had to be towed out, an easy way to spend one-hundred dollars. The last couple of weeks have been very rainy and we did not want to chance another mishap. Christmas was very nice and yesterday we celebrated a bit by going to the movies. This is a luxury we do only 2-3 times a year. Can you believe we paid over nine dollars a piece for a matinee showing!



I'm beginning to sound like my father; unbelievable. To get back to our move today, since I have very little else to talk about our total distance was about five-hundred feet. On our way to the new site was the propane filling station. We have a twenty gallon tank but usually only refill it once a year. Now we are fully ready to travel. We'll be contacting Alliance again since the slide on the driver's side is sticking a bit, always something.