

1996

LOOK MA, NO JOB

The day after my 55th birthday, I retired from Moore Data Management Systems with 17 years of service. It was a great job offering a good salary, challenge, and freedom along with a healthy serving of stress. There was no pain when I walked out of the door the last time saying quietly to myself, "I'm out of here."

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

On February 6, we began our first extended trip. The first night we planned to stay at Yuma. Roy had been conversing via E-mail with a fellow RV'er who was also interested in genealogy. He was going to be at Cocopah, one of the larger parks. First lesson learned . . . they were full. In fact all of Yuma was full. We hadn't realized that during the winter months, all the snow birds come to Arizona to spend the winter. Reservations, if you can get them, are a must.

We decided to head for Quartzsite where the biggest swap meet I have ever seen was held. We camped on BLM land for \$10.00 a week. No reservations needed . . . The desert is huge. There was, however, a problem. We realized this after we got there and set up our camp. Keep in mind, we are still learning about what NOT TO DO OR WHAT MUST BE DONE! We had been dry camping the weekend before and had not dumped our tanks. To add insult to injury, we had failed to fill up with gas. We had limited fuel for the generator. This is really not a serious thing, but we were parked with the awning out and we just didn't want to break camp and go for gas, get dumped, find water, etc. It became a challenge. How conservative could we be with water, conserving the batteries, and not filling up our sewer tanks? About the 3rd day, a honey truck came by. For \$10 and a beer, we got our tanks dumped. We managed for the rest of the time limiting water and power use. Hey, we are starting to feel like we may know how to do this thing. The best part is, we are still having fun.

We have reservations at Emerald Cove located on the Colorado River three days from now. Spit baths are ok but I REALLY DO WANT A SHOWER. With that, we decided it was time to head for the river. Maybe we will get lucky and find a park with a vacancy. We did find a park very close to Emerald Cove on the river. The sign said "No Vacancy" but we could see empty spaces. We tried to raise the park managers with no success. We drove to a section that seemed to have lots of room and asked a camper if he knew of any vacancies. He said that the managers were gone for the weekend. "Go on and find yourself a space . . . there is plenty of room," he said. It was dry camping but at least now we had gas to run the generator.

The next morning we tried to get into a couple of other parks with no success. We were now one day early to get into Emerald Cove. I really do want a shower . . . now! The decision was made. We will go and see if we can get in a day early. As we approached the park, my heart fell. The RV's were lined up the long drive way, at least six in front of us. We saw several turned away. Maybe they will just let us park in the storage area and use the shower. The tension rose as we approached the registration booth. I began practicing my most pleading face. Needless to say,

when they found out we were there by invitation so they could try and sell a membership, a space was found.

BUY, NO WAY!

The next morning, February 12, we attended the sales presentation and surprise, surprise, we bought and are now members of the Colorado River Adventure. The deal is that we can spend two weeks at any of the four parks but then must spend one week out before coming back to any of the parks. You can do this for as long as you want. This would not be something you would want to do in the summer due to the extreme heat. During the winter however, the weather is great. As part of the deal, we got them to put us up at the park at Lake Havasu City and Needles without having to spend an out week. This was a good thing . . . we had no reservations anywhere except for Stateline on February 22 where we planned to meet the Palm Springs Elks and Uncle Jack.

BEAVER, GEESE AND WAL MART

On February 14 we drove to the Lake Havasu camp ground. It is not on the river but within walking distance of Lake Havasu City. While there, we went on an organized hike to the lake where we saw a huge beaver and several flocks of Canadian geese. They did a lot of honking as they flew over. The guide knew a lot about the plants and wild life and we enjoyed the hike very much. There was a Wal Mart and a Mega Foods store near by where we were able to stock up. The camp ground had a Valentines dance where we met a nice couple from Canada, Roger and Francine. One day, we took a very long bike ride to the London Bridge. I had a delightful lunch at an English Pub. I enjoyed my fish and chips.

February 17 found us at the Needles camp ground. This one is on the river and we have a really nice spot with a view. One day we took a bus into Laughlin. The next day we ran into Francine and Roger. They had just gotten in from Lake Havasu. We invited them over for a drink before dinner. They were our first guests in the rig. It was fun. We all went over to the recreation hall for the organized dinner put on by the camp ground. They invited us over for an after dinner drink and to see their 5th wheel. We all had a nice visit. Roger told us they were leaving the next day as they didn't like the location of their space. It turned out they were not members of the camp ground but were staying with their Coast to Coast membership. This is not a bad thing. Members will be given priority over Coast to Coast, which is only fair.

STRANGE BIRD FELLOWS

The next day Roy went fishing so I took my chair down to river to be near him and read. There was a flock of about 40 ducks floating down the river in a group. They seemed to all dive for food at the same time and after several seconds, began popping up in groups of two, three or four. They floated until they reached a particular spot in the river. At the same time, they all took off and flew up river about 600 yards. They all landed and began the process again. This behavior continued the two hours we were watching.

This reminded me of one time when we were heading to Fiddlers Cove on one of our many weekend escapes with Windy. We saw a flock of pigeons flying up the freeway, darting up and over the cars, in a single group. At one point they were right beside us at our level traveling about 57 miles an hour. Roy shared this story with a group of campers at Fiddlers Cove. One of the ladies refused to believe him. I think she was waiting for a punch line.

VOLUNTEERS

We enjoyed all three parks that we visited. We were able to hike, bike, fish, meet people at the organized dinners and relax. Volunteers do many of the jobs at the camps grounds. If they have a talent, this is normally where they would work. They need people in registration, maintenance, cooking, serving, teaching crafts, languages, painting, organizing events, even taking blood pressure. The different services or activities provided depend on the people available to do them. They have organized dinners, lunches, and breakfasts, depending on the park. The costs are very low, lunches and breakfasts running \$2.00 - \$2.50 and dinners running \$4.00 - \$5.00. The problem is many of the meals are high in fat. They also have organized golf, shuffle board, horse shoes and lawn tennis tournaments. In exchange for working, the volunteers do not have to move out of the park in between each two week stay. Many of them are there for five months.

TIGHT SLOTS/ COLD WINDS AND HOME

On February 22 we left Needles and drove to Stateline to meet with the Palm Springs Elks and Uncle Jack. The slots were tight, the wind was blowing hard and it was very cold. The highlight was Roy winning seven nights of free camping at the campground.

We headed for home on February 25th, stopping for brunch at the Elks Lodge in Barstow. It snowed going over the Cajon Pass. Our first extended trip was fun. We learned a lot and are still happy campers. I can't wait for our next trip.

WEDDING BELLS FOR MY BRO

March 14 we headed for Wellington, Nevada to attend Danny and Haydee's wedding. Bruce and my Mom were our passengers. Snow still covered the mountains and the weather was perfect. I have now taken over most of the driving. I do enjoy driving very much and Roy enjoys reading. It works out well for us.

The wedding was beautiful with only one tense moment. Haydee became so frightened that she wouldn't come out of the dressing room. After some coaching she appeared on Dad's arm. As soon as she saw Danny, all was well. This was a real good trip. Everyone enjoyed the comfort of traveling in Windy, Booger being the exception. He is still not comfortable with his house moving under his paws.

THE BEGINNING OF THE BIG ONE

It's April 24 and we are off on our trip across the United States. Our first stop is Yuma Lakes,

which is part of the Colorado River Adventure and the only park we haven't visited yet. On the 26th, we celebrated our 9th wedding anniversary. It has turned real hot so we took off a day earlier than planned.



We drove to St. David, located about 7 miles from Tombstone, AZ and stayed at a real friendly park. We had a steak dinner with the group, only \$5.50 each. We met a nice couple, Betty and Harry who are full timers. The next morning, April 28, we drove into Tombstone and visited the cemetery where the losers of the gunfight at OK corral are buried. Next stop El Paso, TX.

CURBS AND TIRES DON'T MIX

El Paso is Jess's birth place and you can imagine it has changed considerably since 1960.

We had a little mishap looking for the campground. The freeway was under construction, which is always a delight to try and drive in a 37-foot RV. As a result, the directions we had for finding the campground were not quite accurate. In taking an off ramp which we hoped would be the correct one, I hit a curb with the back tires. This emptied the cabinet that contains the sugar, olive oil, flour, spices, etc., onto the kitchen floor. The olive oil jar broke, spilling olive oil over the spilled flour and sugar. It was quite a mess.

CARLSBAD CAVERNS



We drove to White City, NM below the caverns. We paid and got to choose our spot. Since it was early, we drove on up to the caverns and took the walking tour from the entrance to the floor. The tour down from the entrance and through the great room was self guided using head phones. There were designated locations where we were able to listen to the description of what we were viewing. I felt this was much nicer than years ago, when you went down with a large group of people. The next morning I took a

walk through the desert and came across a dead deer. Poor thing had tried to jump a fence and had caught its foot. The barbed wire still held the foot in its death grip even tho the deer is now a skeleton. We took a tour into the palace room at the caverns this morning. Rather than take the elevator down, we decided to walk down again, only at a much faster pace than yesterday. It was fun. They had a guide on this tour. People were doing too much touching and taking. The tour was well worth it. We learned a lot about the caverns, how they were discovered and learned

some interesting stories about the people who explored them. We finished the tour by noon, so decided to head south and begin our trek across Texas.

DAVY, KING OF THE WILD FRONTIER COUNTRY

On May 1st, we arrived in San Antonio. We spent the night before in Fort Stockton, TX at a nice KOA. They had private bathrooms so when you went in for a shower you had toilet, sink, and etc. all to yourself. It was very clean also.

On the 2nd we took a bus into town where we visited the Alamo, did the river walk on a boat, visited the library and had a nice Chinese dinner. After dinner we went to the Hard Rock Cafe and enjoyed an after dinner drink. They were playing very interesting music videos. We had a nice time enjoying the music and watching people. We decided to take a taxi home rather than the bus as it was getting late and the bar tender felt a taxi would be safer.



The next few days were spent with Preston Leggitt, Roy's cousin, and his wife Evelyn. We were able to camp on the bank of the Guadalupe River at the sub division's private park. Booger really liked this place. Roy rigged a combination of chairs, table, etc. so Booger could climb in and out of the rig through the side window. We met several of Roy's cousins. Preston took us for a speed boat ride which was very interesting. We had a catfish dinner one night at an old mill and on another night had a great dinner overlooking

the river from a deck. Roy enjoyed sharing his computer programs with Preston and Evelyn. They were great host and hostess.

WINDY HAS LANDED

After saying our good-by's to Preston and Evelyn, we drove to Houston where we visited the Space Center and were really impressed seeing the actual operations room. We saw a huge pool where the astronauts practice working under water in space suits. There also was a mock up of the shuttle. One of the most interesting exhibits was a mock up of the inside of the shuttle where they demonstrated the use of toilets, showers, how food was prepared and stored and how the astronauts slept. The tour of the space center and going through the exhibits took about five

hours.

GALVESTON, OH GALVESTON

After touring the Space Center, we drove to Galveston, where we found a neat campground right on the gulf. It was windy so old Booger preferred to stay in the rig. While here, we took a long bike ride down the strand, 18 miles into the city and the old port. It was not too bad as it was all very level and most of the time right along the Gulf of Mexico.

YOU CAN LEAD A CAT TO FISH BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE HIM EAT IT!



May 9, we continue our journey, taking a route where we needed to go on a ferry. That was quite interesting sitting in the rig traveling across a body of water. We found a real nice park in Lafayette on a lake. Roy caught a wide mouth bass, which he threw back. Then he caught a smaller fish and brought it to Booger. Old Booger wasn't too sure about what he should do with it. Poor fish, Roy went to throw it back and hit a branch instead. After retrieving the fish from the rock, he finally got it back into the lake. It took the poor thing a little while to regain his sea fins but finally he swam off, probably a little confused about what he had just experienced.

NEW ORLEANS, THE FRENCH QUARTER, ABOVE GROUND CEMETERIES AND OLD HATCHET FACE

May 10, we arrived in New Orleans. After setting up camp, we took the bus into town. We were the only whites on the bus and in town where we got off. As we entered the French Quarter that changed dramatically. We had a drink at O'Brian's and had a nice supper at Sammy's. We were able to look out onto Bourbon Street from our table. After dinner we listened to two very different jazz groups then took a cab home. When we got home there were several white rabbits eating the grass beside our front door. We let Booger out and he was very interested in them but just sat and watched them, probably wondering what the huge ears were for. The rabbits didn't seem concerned about him being there.

While in New Orleans, we took several tours, which enabled us to really get a good feel for the city and surrounding areas. Had a nice ride on a genuine steam paddle boat where we were allowed to visit the engine room. We visited a couple of cemeteries. The people are buried above ground due to the high water table around the city. We saw many beautiful of homes in the garden district, all taken very good care of. There was lots to see on the river walk where we visited the aquarium.



Also took a boat cruise into alligator country and saw several of them. One was called Hatchet Face. He was missing one eye and had a big gash in his head. When the captain threw marshmallows to him on his bad side, he couldn't see them but knew they were there. He kept swimming in circles in the direction the marshmallows were. Everyone in the boat felt sorry for old Hatchet Face. His persistence however did prevail and he finally got his marshmallows. New Orleans is called one of America's most interesting cities and after spending the last four days here, I have to agree. We saw some very strange and interesting people and sites.

SOUTHERN KISSING COUSINS

The next three days are spent visiting Matt, Roy's third cousin and Roberta in Shalimar, FL.



They have a beautiful home, almost looks like a museum with all of her fine pieces placed on the antique furniture. She is an Atlanta, Georgia girl. Roy helped getting her computer set up so she could receive mail, etc. They insisted we stay with them so left the rig and Booger parked at the famcamp on the base. I wish we could have stayed there as it was on the bay and real nice. Matt drove me back to

the rig so I could let Booger out for a while and feed him. The mail didn't reach us on the 15th so Matt drove me to the base the next morning so I could get the rig off the base and parked in a store parking lot while Roy continued to work on Roberta's computer. Luckily, we got our mail by 11:00 A.M. and were able to drive to Valdosta, GA.



The drive was a little stressful as the roads were very narrow. I wasn't up to visiting Donald, Roy's first cousin, so Roy called him and we arranged to have breakfast with him the next morning. Donald is a large man and ate a breakfast fitting his stature. I had some grits which I really enjoyed. After breakfast Donald took us to his home where we met his daughter Pattie. She was quite a character. Later Donald took us to see Agrirama, where there were several homes from different periods of time. Cooking, farming and living were displayed using only what was available during that time period. We saw corn being ground using the water which turned the paddle, which turned the stone which ground the corn. We bought some of the freshly ground grits. We saw wood being cut using a steam engine which ran the saw. The men worked in the mill, on the saw and did the farming. The women made the thread from the cotton on old spinning wheels and then wove the thread into cloth. They cooked the meals over the fireplace and ironed using the irons that had to be heated over the fireplace. That night Donald and his wife picked us up at we went to dinner at a real nice restaurant.

The next day we drive to Unadilla, GA. where we met with Roy's third cousin, Charlotte and her husband George. After lunch, we took a ride to Montezuma and Andersonville. Andersonville was a prison camp where thousands of union soldiers died after being captured by the confederate army. Later we went to the grave site of Mathew Leggitt, Roy and Charlotte's great-great grandfather. Back at camp, the gnats were so bad, we were forced to stay indoors this evening.



WINDY GOES WHERE NO RIG HAS GONE BEFORE

Today, May 19, we drive to Atlanta, GA. We have arranged for a car while here and head to the airport to pick it up. Can you imagine being in a car rental agency at the airport driving a 37-foot RV? We got permission to park in a no parking area while Roy went in to get the car. Then the fun began, trying to get the rig out through narrow aisles. I got through the gate and had to wait for Roy to get out with the rental. Of course, no place to park there either so I pulled to the side of the road as far as I could while angry drivers tried to get by me. Finally Roy got out and took the lead to the camp ground. I was glad to get parked and get camp set up. We will be here for a week while Roy does his research at the Georgia State Archives.

I spent the first couple of days getting the wash and shopping done. Also gave the rig a good cleaning and caught up with post card writing. It is impossible to keep the rig clean. Every time Booger comes in from outside, he brings in half of the forest, dropping it on the rug and furniture.

One of the days while here, I took Roy into the archives and went shopping. I found a real nice shipping mall and enjoyed the day out all to myself.

THE AGONY OF DEFEAT

We saw the Cyclorama which I found very impressive. It is a huge painting in the round of the Civil War. Figures have been added in front and into the painting giving it real dimension. The viewers set in the middle revolving inside the painting. What we are seeing is told by a story



teller. We also visited Doug Davenport, the man handling our investments. It was nice that he had time to meet with us. After our meeting we drove to Stone Mountain where there is a carving of Andrew Jackson, Robert E. Lee, and Benjamin Davis on the side of the mountain. It was quite a side to see. We began our hike to the top trying to ignore the heat. The temperature was is the high 90's and there was

no breeze. Both of us were too stubborn to admit we wanted to abort the mission. When we learned we were only half way, we both stopped in our tracks. Words were not necessary. We would save the top for another time. There is so much more to see and there was a beautiful camp ground as well. I'm sure we will be back. We treated ourselves to a dinner out at Ruby Tuesday's just down the road from our camp ground.

Our last day in Atlanta, we went down town to see the Underground. It is comprised of many shops that were built underground where the abandoned rail tracks were. We enjoyed a nice lunch and then did the Coke tour. Tons of Coke memorabilia was on display. It was very interesting seeing the advertisements go from the early 1900's till the present and to see the history of the nation being depicted in Coke advertising. At the end they had fountains of Coke for all to drink.



Wherever we went, roads, parks, buildings and attractions were in the process of being repaired or rebuilt due to the Olympics being held here this summer. Many of the people staying at our camp ground are in construction and are here for jobs.

DUCK AND COVER

Our next stop is Memphis where we plan to spend at least four days. We are in a camp ground on a huge lake east of Memphis. We spent Memorial Day waiting out tornado warnings in our county. We realized that if one came our way, we had no where to go. Windy doesn't have a basement.

A FART TO THE RESCUE

The rest of the stay was very nice with nice sunshine. We took nice bike rides, walks and Roy got some fishing in. Booger gave us a few tense moments. He has decided that a neat place to hide is under our next door neighbor's rig, which is a diesel pusher. The neighbor had been working and had a couple of compartments open. Later they left in their car. I couldn't find Booger and started to call him. I heard him meow and it sounded like it was coming from one of the compartments. After a while I looked under the wheel and there was old Booger looking down at me from a ledge that went over the engine. I was able to get him out. When the neighbors came home I asked them how long they were going to be staying. My fear was that they would drive off with him. They were staying longer than we so I was relieved. I told them about Boogers hiding place. The morning we were leaving, we couldn't find Booger. I went around the neighbors rig calling for him but he refused to come out. The neighbor came to the rescue. He released the air brakes causing a very loud fart. Booger shot out from under the rig on a dead

run. We gathered him up, thanked the neighbor and headed for Arkansas.

Two days later, we arrive at Vic and Kathleen's. We had a real nice visit with them and Lola and Jessica, Kathleen's granddaughter. That Saturday Vic drove us to Branson where we were going to see Kathleen perform. Due to a mix up, the equipment she was to use had been changed and no one knew how to change it back so that she could set up with her equipment. She almost sounded pleased saying it was going to be nice having a night off. We went to a 50's show that night, had front row seats. The next day after we got home from Branson, Vic took Roy and me fishing at his pond. This was the first time I had ever fished with minnows. It was strange having live bait on the hook. I caught two wide mouth bass and hooked three more that got away. I threw the two I caught back in. Jessica, Kathleen's granddaughter, kept reeling in her line and holding up the minnow telling us she caught one. On June 6 we said our good bys and headed for Oklahoma. It was not a sad one as we will be seeing them in two weeks at Dad's.



We spent the night at Dana Eddings', Roy's friend from his Air Force days. His wife Sylvia and her mother fixed us a real nice dinner. Boy that Dana could talk. He had so many stories to tell us and we were totally entertained. When we sat down to dinner, he was in the middle of one of his tall tles. Sylvia, along with the rest of us, waited patiently for him to finish so she could say grace.

On June 4th and 5th we have a real nice spot at a camp ground in Elk City. Our front door opens out into a beautiful shady green field with a creek. Booger is happy as he wasn't able to get out at Kathleen's due to dogs or Dana's due to ticks. We are close to town so we rode our bikes to get hair cut, get groceries, visit the library and visit Norman Martin at the funeral home. Roy had corresponded with him prior to our trip. He was very nice and took time to give Roy information on his grandfather and grandmother. We visited their graves on the way out of town on June 6.

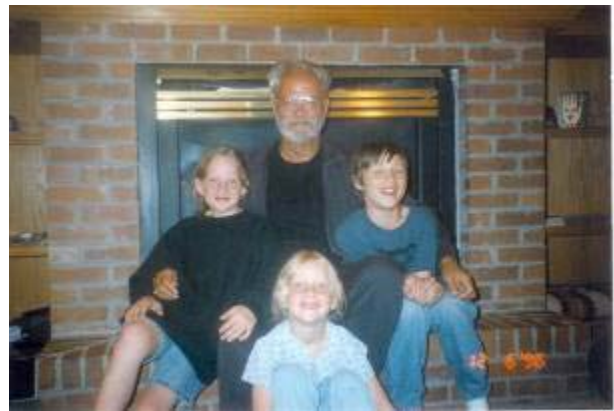


We got to Cheyenne, OK where we found a parking spot next to the courthouse. Roy's Mom and Marge found us when they came into town. Roy went to a meeting at the library and I stayed with Mom and Marge, seeing the sites of the town. There was a real neat store that had all kinds of antiques and crafts. There was a painting on exhibit that Aunt Kate had painted. We got out to Aunt Kate's farm that afternoon. We are here to help Aunt Kate and Uncle Jack

celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. It is going to be quite a weekend. Tonight we went to a dance with Uncle Jack and Auntie Max and Marge. We met some of their old friends. Some of the people at the dance had come over 100 miles. It was strange, during the break from the music and dancing, many people would go out to their cars and fix themselves a drink.

Friday afternoon was the first planned event of the celebration. Aunt Kate had prepared all of the food. This party was mainly for family and was held at a Dude Ranch. I bought an Indian doll in the gift shop. This is something I have always wanted. Family members kept arriving all day. Saturday, Roy went with his mom and sister to visit family graves, etc. I felt I needed exercise so I stayed at the farm and took a nice long bike ride with Spot, the dog, instead. That night, Kate and Jack treated all the family members to dinner at the #1 Okie dinner house. Everyone seemed to be running around with camera's shooting hundreds of photos. Sunday was the final event and was held at the community hall in town. The whole town had been invited to share coffee, cake and punch. The coffee was served in proper china coffee cups, all in beautiful patterns. We enjoyed all of the events and meeting members of the family members who had come from all over the country.

After a night in Garden City, Kansas, we arrive in Colorado Springs to visit the grand kids, Wayne, Sandy and Carolyn. They have a beautiful home with lots of pine trees. We took the kids to an amusement park where Roy and I both got a little sick on the rides. The kids, however, had a grand time. We said our goodbyes the evening of June 12 as we need to get an early start tomorrow morning. We want to get close to Salt Lake City so Roy has research time the day we arrive.



After a 400-mile driving day, we settle in at Green River, WY. About one and a half hours out of Salt Lake, we heard this terrible sound coming from under the hood. After taking a long look, we found that some wires had gotten loose and were falling into the fan. Roy was able to tape the wires so they were safe from the fan and we were on our way again. We got into Salt Lake City by 11:00 A.M. so Roy was able to get in a half day of research done at the Mormon library. I was able to catch up on post card writing and the laundry. Today, June 15, I walked into town and met Roy for lunch. After, I did a little shopping. Roy took the bus home and when he was getting up for his stop, a car pulled out in front of the bus. The driver put on the breaks, throwing Roy into the front window, cracking it. A report was made should he have problems later. He is having some pain. Tonight we went to dinner at a cute place about a block from the RV Park.

June 16 and we head west through the salt flats. Many people have stopped and placed rocks in the white ground, telling whoever passes and reads will know that they were there. Some even made their signs out of beer bottles turned upside down. After one night lay over in Nevada, we arrive at Dad's..

June 17-27, we celebrate with Dad's family and friends his 76th Birthday. It started at Dan's where the family came together to enjoy each other company. I remember one incident which really was humorous. We had eaten and it was time for Dad and Mom to head for home. We were outside in Dan's carport, saying our good byes, when we started telling more stories. The light was motion sensitive and as we talked, the lights went out. Without hesitation, everyone, except Dad and Mom, raised their arms, and immediately, the lights went on. Dad looked



puzzled, but continued listening to our tales. Soon, the lights went out again, and we all raised our hands, bringing light upon us. Dad again looked interested as to what was going on, but didn't say a word. After the fourth time, he looked at us and said, "What is going on?" We all laughed so hard and sweet ole Daddy joined in, as we explained about the motion sensitive light.

On the 19th the party moved to Dad's place. It was great being with Dan and Haydee, Kathleen and Vic, Jeff, Kelly and family, my Mom, Jess, (Karin was not able to get time off) and of course Dad and Tommi's friends. After the party, Kathleen, Vic, Jess, Dad, Tommi, Roy and I went to Honey Moon flats for two days of fishing. Vic and Kathleen stayed with us in our Rig and Jess stayed with Dad and Tommi. Everyone had such a great time. It was very beautiful, however the weather took to cold and it snowed the day we left.

After a night of gambling in Lake Topaz, we headed to Aubery for a couple of days with Sonne and Trish. Windy began to give us a little trouble, cutting out, leaving no power. That was a little stressful, but we were able to limp to their home. They were great hosts and we had a very nice visit. Booger really liked it there. He had lots of places to roam. We had the cutting out problem for the remainder of the trip, but were able to keep going and got home safely.



Hey guys, it's getting serious. We got Tilly the Talon outfitted with the tow bar mount and July 24 through the 31st, we did our first towing trip (a short one) up to a campground just past Ramona. We probably chose the hottest week for the year, but everything seemed to work well. We did have a problem getting Booger out from under one of the permanent trailers when it was time to leave. Roy had to jump up and down on the porch to get him to come out.

September 21 and we are off on a five-week trip which will take us to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Yellowstone, west to the coast and down the coast from Oregon to home. Our only commitment is reservations in Jackson Hole and Yellowstone.

Our first stop was Stateline, Nevada. Unfortunately, we are still experiencing the cutting out problem we had on our last long trip. Tried to get help in Las Vegas but no one had time to take us immediately. We decided to continue on rather than wait several days here for help. Got the fuel filter replaced in St. George, Utah, however that turned out not to be the problem. Spent the night at a nice park in Harrisburg and called ahead to Logan, Utah to have our problem looked at. In the meantime, I have found by feathering the throttle, I can nurse her along to where she does not cut out. Roy has been doing a lot of reading on what the problem could be and it is looking like she is vapor locking, or at least trying to. We have also determined that if the weather is cooler, there does not seem to be a problem at all.

BOOGER EXITS STAGE RIGHT

September 25 was a sad day. I let Booger out at 7:30 AM. We planed to leave Provo at about 9:00 AM. I purposefully did not feed him as he has begun dragging his heels getting back to us after letting him out for his little romp in the morning. At 9:00 AM we began to worry. He had not returned for breakfast. We went through the whole park calling him to no avail. By 11:00, check out time it was time to go.



As Booger had been less and less willing to return to the rig, we decided that he probably had made his decision to exit stage right. The neighbors next to us said they would keep a look out for him and gave us their son's phone number in Provo. It was hard to drive off without him but as I let the memories run though my mind of him balking at getting into the rig, not really being comfortable in the rig, I tried to imagine him finding a stable home that did not move. Unfortunately, that did not stop the tears from falling as we drove north through Utah towards Logan. That is where we hope to have our cut out problem fixed.

Our night in Logan was not one of the best. Of course we are concerned about Booger. That coupled with staying at one of the worst camp grounds we have seen did not help our moods. I was very happy to wake up the next morning and get out of there. We almost didn't make it out of the campground. Since we were only going a few blocks we didn't hook up Tilly. Roy had driven off and as I pulled in after him there was the 30 foot power cord dragging along after him. After we finally got the cord stowed we glanced back and the power pedestal was leaning quite a little in our direction.

While waiting for the shop to work on Windy, we stopped for breakfast and I called our neighbor's son to see if they had any word on Booger. He did not so I told him I would call from our next stop. Unfortunately, after working on Windy most of the day, the shop was unable to correct our cut out problem. They replaced the fuel pump and checked the fuel lines but on the test drive, we still experienced some cut out. We decided to continue on our trip. It was beginning to get cooler and it seemed the problem occurred mostly in hot weather. Tonight we are camped at Bear Lake in a town called Garden City. We had no problem with the cut out

problem even tho we did do a lot of climbing. I called the neighbors son and he had good news. Booger had been spotted by his Mother however she was unable to get him. By now we are over 250 miles from Provo. We thought about going back and than dismissed it. We were not sure we would be able to find him if we did. The son assured us that if his Mom saw him again and was able to get him, they would see that he found a home. That was so very nice of them and I told him how much we appreciated his and his Moms help.

Garden City was so nice we decided to stay two nights. After sleeping in, we drove into town for breakfast. We noticed a bike trail so after we got back to the rig and I spent some time doing a little rig cleaning, we took the bikes down and enjoyed a nice bike ride. The area with the lake and mountains is beautiful. After our ride, we spent the remainder of the day reading under the awning. After a great dinner, we had to lower the awning as a storm came in bringing rain, lightening and winds. Oh well, one less thing we have to do before we take off tomorrow.

We had a very enjoyable drive to Jackson Hole and the KOA camp ground there. After getting settled, we went into town to get information on the area and do our grocery shopping.

Our second day here, we went back into town, looked at some of the shops, and booked our rafting trip for tomorrow, and had a drink at the Cowboy Bar. The bar stools are saddles, so as I drank my wine and Roy his beer, we were sitting on the saddles along with all of the other tourists and having fun doing it.

On the 30th, we are up early and ready for our great rafting adventure. We were bussed to the location where we would be taking an ore boat for a float down the river. After getting our slicks and life jackets on, Mike our guide, lead us to the river and the oar boat. In this boat, Mike stands in the middle with the passengers sitting in front and in the rear. Mike was very knowledgeable of the river and surrounding area. We were lucky and saw six bald eagles and an osprey dive, catch a fish and carry it to a tree, where he began to eat his breakfast. Now it was time for ours. Mike docked the boat and after a hike up the hill, we came to a camp, where breakfast was being prepared for us. We had pancakes, eggs, fruit and juice. After making sure we all had our fill, Mike said it was time to go. We followed him back to the boat where he rowed us across the river, where we would be changing boats. This was also where other people joined us who had not booked the float portion of the tour.

All of our companions from the float continue on with Mike as they had not chosen to paddle themselves. We had wanted the experience of actually paddling through the white water, so we are transferred to another boat and guide, Jamie. At first we was concerned because we only had six people, one of which was an older female, me. Jamie took the first five minutes instructing us on how to follow his instructions on when to paddle, right side, left side, all sides, forward and backwards, and when to paddle like hell. He



told us we were good at following directions and then reminded us that if we did not follow and give our all, he could end up being bucked off. He was working a big oar at the rear of the boat. You can be sure, when Jamie yelled “paddle hard,” we did. We all had a great time, especially going through the rapids. I do have to say however, I was very tired, but it was a good tired.

MOUNT FUJIYAMA

The next day, we went to Teton Village, had a great lunch and road the tram to the top Rendezvous’ Mountain. It took about 12 minutes to get to the top. After walking around for a while, we decided



to hike the 7.2 miles. It can’t be that bad . . . it’s all down hill. We took a rest by a very pretty spring . . . Roy actually

took a little snooze. The wild flowers were very beautiful. We saw a critter that we could not identify. He was about the size of a beaver with thick fur. When we reached the bottom, three hours and twenty minutes later, Roy spoke into the camera, saying something to the effect . . . It is a wise man who by foot descends Mount Rendezvous’ once . . . It is a fool who does it twice. I’m glad we did it, however I agree, once was enough. Maybe, another mountain on another day.



September 1, and our legs are very, very sore. We drove through the Teton National Forest. Every time we stopped to see site see, we had quite an ordeal getting out of Tilly and walking. Our drive ended up in town where we ordered our white water photos. I found a nice sweat shirt for ½ off.

September 2 finds us heading for Yellowstone. After we get settled at the camp ground in Fishing Bridge, we drive to Old Faithful. We only had a ten minute wait before it Old Faithful did its thing. We took the long walk around the area to see the rest of the sites. It was mostly level



walking and I do believe the exercise was good for our legs. The blisters however, are still giving a little pain. On this outing we saw one bison, a yellow-breasted marmot and an elk. We got back to the rig and were relaxing when an old bison

wandered by. He attracted quite a crowd of on lookers.

September 3, on our way to tour the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone, we saw two herds of bison. Everywhere we stopped to view the canyon, the site was spectacular. We stopped at every point of interest and did a lot of hiking. One of the highlights was watching the river approach the brink, push out over the edge, cascade down over the huge boulders, and finally crash to the bottom of the falls. It hit with such



energy that a huge spray explodes out with a force that would crush life from whatever floats by. The river, foamy white and emerald green, continues through the rugged canyon, the walls bright with shades of yellow, gold and rust. I took way too many pictures.



The next day we drove to Madison, stopping at the Norris Geyser Basin which had many geysers to see. We ended up waiting for the Echinus Geyser to do its thing which was well worth the wait. We watched as the water began to rise, building up to what looked like boiling water in a huge pot. At first we thought that was it, then several minutes later, up gushed the boiling water into the air. It lasted about six and a half minutes. I actually found this more exciting than Old Faithful, probably because we were much closer and could actually see the build up. An elk wandered by, glancing casually at the event.

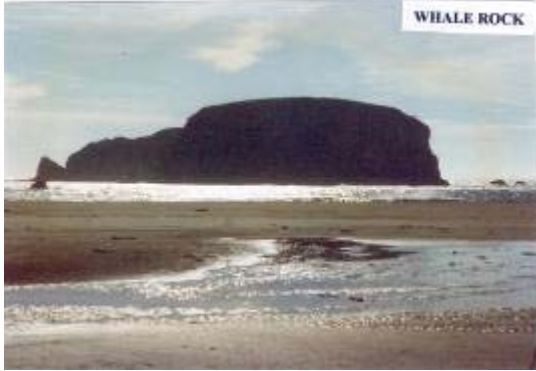
The following day we awoke to rain. I decided that this would be a great day to do the laundry. Unfortunately this idea came to everyone else in the camp ground. It was a battle to get machines, however I came out triumphant. The sun came out in the afternoon, so off we went to see more. Due to the cold, all of the geysers were emitting tremendous amounts of steam into the air, at times causing a white out.

Due to the rain yesterday, we stayed another day to enable us to see the Tower, Roosevelt and Mammoth Hot Springs. On the way back to camp, we saw a cow moose.

September 7, we head out the north gate of Yellowstone and saw the original gate to the park. Montana is a beautiful state. We stayed the night at a Coast to Coast campground in Anaconda which was next to a very nice resort. We ate dinner in their very nice dining room.

September 8, we drove all the way to Spokane, WA, passing through the top notch of Idaho. Our campground is in a Ponderosa pines forest. We made an appointment to have the generator repaired. They needed to send for a part. It arrived in late morning the following day so we finally got underway in the early afternoon. On the way to Umatilla we passed a bad accident with the car upside down and a fatality under a blanket in the middle of the freeway. Realizing that someone had just died causes a lot of thought, or at least it did for me.

September 9 found us heading along the beautiful Columbia River. We bypassed Portland, heading south towards Salem, then west to Lincoln City, located on the Oregon coast. While in Lincoln City we had rain every day. As Roy likes to say, we were there seven days and it rained eight of them. We purchased a satellite dish and system. Poor Roy, working out in the rain, trying to get the darn thing to lock. Finally he was successful. I believe part of the problem was the heavy rain. We also got a 13-inch TV. The 9 inch was just too hard to watch. I also got a cross stitch kit. I find it very time consuming. Maybe I'll get it done in my life time. I am enjoying it so it was worth the purchase. While in Lincoln City, looked at some manufactured homes and spoke to a realtor about the area.



While driving south from Lincoln City on our way to the Whaleshead RV Park, I looked over to Roy and said, “What do you think about doing this full time?” “You know, I’ve been thinking the same thing.” A lot of the remaining time on our trip was discussing how we were going to accomplish what we had just decided. What fun. The Whaleshead RV Park was real nice. We have a patio overlooking the park. There is a tunnel that goes under Hwy. 101 leading to the beach. While here, we talked to DMV

regarding registrations requirements in Oregon. Going full time means getting a new rig. If we sell out in California, there would be no need to register it in the most expensive state in the union.

On September 19, we left Oregon and drove to Benbow, which is close to Leggett. While here, we took a drive through the Avenue of the Giants. So many beautiful trees and ferns lined the road.



On the twenty first, we continued our journey south. Heading down a long grade and building speed to get up the other side, I looked into the rear view mirror to see a huge cloud of smoke poring out of the back of Windy. By the time I made it to the side of the road, the transmission was not working. We were just north of Willits so unhooked the Talon and drove into town to get help. We were lucky that a repair shop was still open. Everyone was on their way out as it was Saturday afternoon and there was a local baseball game to go to. We arranged to have Windy towed to that shop where we spent the remainder of the weekend. We did take a nice drive on Sunday on Hwy. 1 where we saw a lighthouse at Pt. Arena and had an early supper in Fort Bragg. On Monday morning it was determined that they needed to order a rebuilt transmission kit. It came in the next day, however they were not able to get the work completed that day. The work was finally completed on the twenty-fifth and we finally got under way by noon.

As we approached Monterey and deciding where we would spend the night, the front brakes went out. In getting off the freeway, we probably took the worst turnoff we could have. It was a down hill, windy road, crowded with everyone trying to get home. I had no choice but to keep her in first gear so you can imagine the people behind were not very happy with me. Finally, there was a turn out which I immediately took. We were lucky that the tow truck driver knew of a shop which would be able to help us the next day. He called the owner who came to the shop to open the gates



to get Windy in. The next day while waiting for the work to be done, we were able to take the Seventeen Mile Drive in Monterey, which afforded a beautiful coast line, a herd of deer munching on the golf course and lots of seal sunning on the rocks. They were not able to get the brakes repaired until 6:00 PM. We made it to the Laguna Seca race track and camp ground where we had to find our spot in the dark. Boy I hate that. The next morning we awoke to race cars practicing on the track. It brought back old memories.

Today, we arrived at our last stop of this trip, Orange, CA. We went to a big complex where there are many kinds of RV's on display. We found one, a Holiday Rambler, which both of us liked. We will keep that in mind when we go to the big RV show in Pomona.

We got home on September 30 and immediately began making plans to get the house ready to put on the market. We have a lot of work in front of us but are both totally convinced that this is what we want to do.

October 4-6, we joined our camping group in Chula Vista. Only five rigs were able to attend.

The weekend of October 10, we joined the Elks at the camp out in Victorville. After, we drove to a Coast to Coast camp ground about 45 minutes from Mama, so we could take her to dinner for her birthday.



The next day we drove to the Pomona RV show where we purchased our new 38 ft. diesel pusher Holiday Rambler Endeavor. Wow, things are really moving fast. Guess we had better get the house sold soon.

On October 22, we drove Windy to Camarillo, where we are to turn her in and pick up our new rig. We were really stressed. Windy kept making very strange noises on the way up. She probably suspected that her days were numbered with us and perhaps she was trying to get even. We made it with no mishap, and after a good nights sleep, went to the dealership the next day to get our new girl. We call her Holly.

The plan was that a driver would drive the new rig and us to Las Vegas, where we would take possession. After that, we will have three months to get her registered. Unfortunately, they had discovered a water leak that morning and she wasn't ready until late that afternoon. We still had to offload all of our stuff out of Windy and into Holly. The driver was very upset. (Since we were taking out of state delivery, we could not drive it ourselves.) I guess the dealership hadn't bothered to call him and tell him that the trip would be delayed about six hours and he lived about two hours away. We were finally on our way by 4:30 PM and got into Las Vegas by 11:00 PM. It was pretty scary driving her for the first time at night and having to find a camp ground for the night. We found a site in Boom Town, I believe the last one. The campground said they were full but we decided to take a chance and just drive through. We found a spot and immediately

took it. The next morning when we went to pay for it the clerk said that it was already been rented by someone else and they were not due out until this morning. Lucky for us, I guess they vacated early, leaving it for us to find. Oh, yes, they did collect the rent from us so they got double rent for that spot.

We spent the next two nights at Stateline and really enjoyed checking Holly out, learning all about her. I think we said more than a dozen times, "Oh, Windy didn't have this, or we couldn't do that with Windy." What a difference ten years makes in technology, design, user friendliness and all the special little goodies. I think we'll keep her.

We drove to Yuma for a few days. The weather was great and we got some good bike riding in.

The weekend of October 8, we met our camping group at Fiddlers Cove. On the way out, I cut the corner too short and caught a fence on her right side. OUCH!!

October 12 finds us on our way to Oregon to get Holly registered. We stopped off at Camarilla to get the entertainment center installed. While they were supposed to be getting the job done, we took Mom to lunch and shopping. We were so disappointed when we returned and learned that they were unable to do it there. On our way to Valencia, where we were to spend the night, Roy discovered that they had not given us the cargo door keys back. Roy was pretty upset and insisted that someone drive the keys to us in Valencia. After some tense moments, they finally agreed to bring us the keys.

We stopped in Sacramento, CA and Gold Hill, OR getting into Newport, OR on November 16th. We'll go to DMV the next day. In the meantime, we got a call from Dean, our realtor. There is a possible offer on Botero coming it.

We got the rig, the Talon and our Oregon drivers licenses all taken care of on November 17, and all for about \$350. We learn that there is an offer on Botero. We countered so now we just wait and see. We had a registration party with a bottle of Champagne. At 1:00 AM we were awakened by tremendous winds that really kept the rig rocking. We pulled in the slide and sat in the living room until 3:00 AM hoping that she would stay upright. The next day we learned that the winds had been gusting up to 80 miles an hour. Good news!! Our counter has been accepted verbally. Dean will send up the escrow papers. He said there is a list of items they have requested we do before the walk through. We'll see what they are when we get home. While we were in Newport, we had dinner with Shelly, Roy's niece one night and Lance, Roy's nephew, and his wife Dayna another night. Lance told us that last year, a couple of fifth wheels had been turned over at our camp ground during one of the storms. Lance is quite the fisherman and gave us four real nice salmon steaks. There was a real balls up getting the escrow papers to us. We ended up having to have them rerouted to Dad's as we need to start our move back south. We will spend Thanksgiving at Dan's.

Wow, the flooding was terrible on the way to Interstate 5. Farm after farm was under water. After we got to Interstate 5, we saw a huge sink hole in the freeway near Roseburg, OR. At least one car had fallen in causing quite a lot of damage.

On November 24 and 25, we stayed in Reno at a camp ground in the city. Boy they were not built for big rigs. I couldn't make it through the tiny driveway on the first try so we had to disconnect in the middle of the street. The registration man was apparently used to this. As soon as he saw us get into trouble, he was out in the street with a stop sign directing traffic until we could get disconnected and into the driveway. The sites were so short that we hung way out into the driveway. We enjoyed the city especially when Roy won \$200.

It was so cold that it took several tries to get Holly started when it was time to head for Dad's. When she finally fired up, the white smoke pored out of the back. We arrived at Daddy's ok. They were really impressed with Holly. We had them over for some of that great salmon Lance gave us.



We had a great Thanksgiving at Dan and Haydee's. They came over to Dad's and the visiting continued. My Uncle Roy and Aunt Jean also made it over. It was good to see everyone. We stopped at a new RV park in Lone Pine on the way home. It's beautiful with a magnificent view of Mount Whitney. The winds were too cold to go outside but I enjoyed the view from my living room.

Back home, we met with Dean and he gave us the list of what needs to be done before the walk through. Even tho it is irritating to have to jump the loop for the buyers, we really want to sell and have decided to do what we can to make the deal fly.

Both Roy and I have gone to the doctor and have been diagnosed with high blood pressure. This is probably due to everything that needs to be done to get moved out by January 2.

The week of December 6, we joined our camping group at Borrego for the annual Christmas outing. Everything including the weather was great.

From December 9 through the 17 we have been running non stop getting ready for the walk through, meeting friends, doctor appointments, Elks banquet, getting ready for company and packing. We were lucky to be able to hire Pete, an old friend of Roy's to do a lot of the stuff on the list. I'm not sure we would have gotten everything done without him.



OUR DEL PACIFICO CAMPING GROUP, CHRISTMAS CAMP OUT, 1996

Mama came in on December 17. The walk through went fine on the 21st. It looks like escrow will close on schedule. After the walk through was over, we took Mama to Chula Vista in the rig. Don't ask me why. I guess we just wanted to get away for a night and Mom hadn't had a chance to stay in our new home so it sounded like a good idea. I was exhausted and didn't even feel like



going for a walk around the camp ground. We just hung out and relaxed. The next day we drove back and had everyone over for Jess and Karin's birthday dinner. The prime rib was excellent.

To complicate things a bit, Jason moved out of his apartment. He and his room mate had a falling out. He asked if he could store his stuff in our garage until we moved. Now the garage is sanctioned off in several sections. Jason's stuff,

items that will be going to various kids, items that will be picked up by Good Will, stuff that will be picked up by Nora, Roy's sister who has a year around yard sale, etc. etc. etc. In the house there are areas for items that will go directly into the rig and areas for items that will be put in storage.

Roy Dean and family came down for the afternoon on December 23. Dan and Haydee were also due in, however there was a bad snow storm and they got a real late start. They finally got in after midnight.



CHRISTMAS DINNER ABOUT TO BE SERVED

It's Christmas

Eve, our last one at Botero. Mom, Jason, Dan, Haydee and Govenda are with us. Jess, Karin, Eric, Derald, Alan, Bruce and Teri will join us tomorrow. We all sat in the living room looking at the tree realizing that this Christmas will be the last big event at Botero. I'm sad but also very excited about the new adventure that awaits Roy and me. We will most definitely miss our family and friends and the great get together we had

here. This home has really seen some neat times. What can I say about Christmas day other than it was just as hectic, fun and enjoyable as Christmas should be. A fitting fair well to our old home.

Dan and Haydee decided that due to weather conditions still being iffy over the mountains that they had better leave on the 26th. They would drop Mom off at her home on the way. His car was something to see, piled with suitcases, gifts and people.



With Christmas behind us, we turn to the final phases of leaving. We had Dennis and Brigid over, however she became very ill so we passed on going out to dinner. Our appointment with the doctor was positive. The medication he gave us worked and has lowered out blood pressure to acceptable levels. We are both very pleased. Our last dinner in our old house was New Year's Eve. We invited Bruce and Teri to share steak and lobster and Champagne with us. They are turning into real nice friends and we enjoy their company very

much.