

# 2001

We enjoyed several rides in the desert with JC the Jeep. One ride took us to a town named Havasu Landing across the Lake from Lake Havasu City. You could only get there by a narrow dirt road or water. All of the homes were single or double wide trailers. We were curious about how they got the homes in there so Roy looked up the place on the net when we got home. We didn't find out how they got the trailers in there but did find out that the town was under seige by the local Indian Tribe. It seems that the land was leased and the lease had expired on much of the property. The town General Store had been ransacked and several items has been taken by the Indians.

One night we saw The Oak Ridge Boys in Concert at the Casino. They were pretty good. The following weekend we met Bruce and Teri in Laughlin to celebrate my 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. I had a wonderful time. Roy ordered a Champagne Breakfast up to the room which we all really enjoyed. They had brought Chardonnay instead of Champagne but that was ok. I had great fun playing the slots. The slot gods were pretty good to me. Guess it was because of me turning 60 and they didn't want to put me under any additional stress, at least not then.

We got back to Emerald Cove on Monday, January 22 and left for Quartzsite the next day for a week of dry camping in the desert and enjoying the biggest swap meet in the US. We met Gordon and Maxine while there and had a couple of real nice visits with them, Maxine's sister and some of their friends.

When we got back to Emerald Cove we had some nice visits with Gordon and Maxine who had rented a space at an RV resort up river from us. Ray and Marte drove over one weekend and the six of us got together for dinner a couple of times. The following week we met Gordon and Maxine at the lodge twice for dinner and played cards a few times. On Saturday, we took them to the Desert Bar for lunch. They really enjoyed it. Because everyone that goes there is interested in the bars history, there was a hand out available. Ken, the owner, started his business on leased land on the river in 1974 and in 1975, we purchased land in the desert which had been a mine. In 1979 the lease where his bar was expired. With a liquor license about to expire, we decided to build the Desert Bar on his land in the desert. He opened the original three sided bar originally called the Nellie E. Saloon in 1983. Nellie E originates from the old mining claim. In 1988, the bar was completed and since then, we has added the outside bar and cooking area, dance floor, a stage, a bridge, a small church, cooling towers and restrooms. We had not been there in two years and were impressed at the size of the patio area. It has probably tripled in size enabling lots more seating. This is a good thing as people who drive the 5 miles on the dirt road to have a drink, a bite to eat and enjoy the live music are usually so impressed that they tell their friends about it. The bar is only open during day light hours on weekends from Labor Day through Memorial Day. With our pyramids rebuilt and doctor's appointments over with, we left our winter home on February 11 and headed for Las Vegas for a three night stay. We spent one afternoon walking on the strip and taking in the new hotel/casino, The Venetian. It was very impressive with the gondoliers singing as they guided their gondolas under bridges, through the canals which were lined by restaurants and shops.

On February 14, we headed up to Yerington, NV. to visit Daddy and Mom. Because of a huge

storm that had gone through the region the day before, the desert was white with snow. It was absolutely beautiful. The only bad road we ran into was through the town of Tonopah. They had not removed the snow from the north bound lane through town and it was thick slush. Gordon had told us about him losing control in slush in his rig and ending up off the road into a deep ditch. I crept through town at about 15 miles per hour with a line of cars and trucks behind me.

After a great visit with Daddy, Mom and Uncle Roy and Aunt Jean, we drove over to Dan and Haydee's for the weekend. Due to the snowing conditions at their place, we chose not to park down in their RV parking place, and parked next to the house instead. The next day Dan drove us all into Carson City where we visited the Railroad Museum, the Carson City Museum and the State Capital building. It was a fun day and we saw lots of neat stuff and learned some history as well. On Sunday, Daddy and Mom came over for a visit and dinner after church. The next day we had planned on having breakfast with Danny and Haydee before taking off, however another storm was coming in and we felt it was best to make a fast get-away. We called the CHP for road conditions on Hwy. 395 and the recording indicated that there were no adverse road conditions. So set out and everything was fine until we had gone through Bridgeport. It began snowing but it was not sticking to the road. Then there was a road warning sign that indicated chains should be carried. As we started up Conway Summit the road got whiter and whiter. We reached the summit and started down the long grade overlooking Mona Lake. I was traveling at about 15 to 20 miles an hour. Everything was looking pretty good as we went through Lee Vining although the snow was coming down much heavier. I thought to myself, if the road through Mammoth wasn't any worse than what we had just done, we should be fine. As we followed a long line of cars heading up towards Mammoth, a Jeep spun out in front of us. Right after that, all of the cars in front of us began diving towards the right side of the road. Were they trying to avoid something? NOT. There it was, a '**CHAINS REQUIRED**' sign loomed ahead. We had no option but to turn around and head back down towards Lee Vining. We thought about staying at the RV park there but it was closed for the winter. I wonder why!! We dreaded the thought of having to drive all the way back to Yerington to take the desert route over Montgomery Pass. As Roy cranked up the computer to see if there was another option we saw a road sign for Hawthorn. This meant we didn't have to back track through Yerington. After making sure that the road seemed pretty straight, meaning that it was probably mostly through desert and not mountainous, we made the turn and headed east. It was still snowing but not sticking to the road yet. After refueling in Hawthorn, we headed for Montgomery Pass with our fingers crossed that we would be able to get through. Well, we got over the pass just fine, then we got hit with fog, snow and sleet. It was coming down so hard that the windows were covered in ice except where the wipers kept them clear. A most welcome sight was seeing Bishop where we rejoining Hwy 395. Eight hours after we began, which should have been a three hour trip, we got into our favorite stopping place, Boulder Creek RV Park in Lone Pine where we would spend the night before heading back to Southern California.

As usual, we had great visits with our Mom's, Boy's and friends. We were able to take Mama down to San Diego with us however again snow changed our route. We had to go through LA to get down to San Diego due to Hwy 138 being closed. A Smith family picnic put on by Roy's Mom was almost rained out. We did get to visit with Roy's Mom, sisters and brother however it was so darn cold everyone was almost frozen stiff. We had Windy there so many people came in to get warmed up. We didn't plan enough time in San Diego so didn't get to see everyone we had hoped to. We'll try hard not to make that mistake again. We did get to see the cousins as Karin

had them all over one Sunday afternoon. It was good as Mama had a chance to visit with them. I drove her back to the haven on Monday and Roy and I took off for Yuma Lakes on Tuesday, March 6.

We had a lot of fun in Yuma Lakes, visiting Mexico a couple of times. We also had our teeth cleaned there. Roy was satisfied with the procedure, I was not. It's back to an American dentist for me. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, we drove to Casa Grande where we had a very nice visit with Ray and Marty. After seeing their new cabin cruiser, we visited the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument, where the main ruin is protected by a steel canopy which had been erected in 1932. This four story, 20 feet long ruin is the largest structure known to exist in Hohokam times.

Our next stop was Cottonwood where we visited the old mining town of Jerome and the tourist town of Sedona. We could see the beautiful red rock mountains above Sedona from our campsite in Cottonwood, over 30 miles away.

On March 20, we drove to Canyon de Chelly (pronounced d'SHAY) where we had a wonderful time. It is a National Monument in the middle of a Navaho Indian reservation consisting of several canyons. Other than one trail that goes 600 feet down into the canyon and over to one of the many cliff dwelling ruins in the canyon called The White House, no one is allowed in the canyon without a guide. We hired a Navaho man named Hank Tsosie. I thought to myself, that sure doesn't sound Indian to me but he was. For \$15.00 an hour, and a minimum of \$45.00, he accompanied us in the Jeep down into the canyon and along the canyon floor which was a combination of driving through the river and over primitive trails. There were short areas where the river water came over the hood. Roy got a picture of it splashing on the windshield. It was great fun and the very first time we were able to really see how well JC handled herself in rough terrain and in water. She done good. I guess you got the email from Roy about Hank finding out what was wrong with the Jeep. After one of the stops where Hank told his story of the area, we all piled back into JC and as I turned the key, my heart fell. There was the dreaded sound of silence. This had happened twice before once when the dealer replaced the battery. "Let me take a look", Hank said. After crawling under the hood Hank found that a nut was missing off of the starter. He held things in place while I started her up. He earned his tip. Hank was pretty knowledgeable about the area so learned a lot about the history of the Ancient ones who actually built the cliff dwellings and the Navaho who later lived in the canyon in their hogans.

Our next stop was Santa Fe New Mexico. One day we walked the down town area admiring the artwork and interesting fashions in the store front windows and the architecture of the homes and buildings. Another day we took a long drive where we visited Bandelier National Monument. There was a great walking trail where we saw a Kiva ruin which was where many religious activities took place as well as a place of education for boys and young men of the Ancestral Pueblo People. We were able to climb up and enter one of the cliff dwelling rooms which had been restored. On the back wall of the second story of one of the dwellings was a beautiful pictograph (painted design). It is believed that many of the walls of the dwellings had such art, however most of the walls have crumbled. Many of the cliff walls were decorated with Petroglyphs (designs carved into the stone). We also visited the Bradbury Science Museum in Los Alamos where I enjoyed learning about the history of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and all of it's secrets regarding Manhattan Project. I was never aware of the number of people that were involved in developing the Atomic Bomb and what they endured to keep the secret.

The museum also had a technology sections full of exhibits however I found them quite complex. Guess I wouldn't have made a good scientist. There was also a National Security exhibit which had mock ups of Little Boy and Fat Man, the bombs that were dropped in Japan, ending the war.

After a night in Amarillo, TX. we headed for the Monaco Rally in Stillwater Oklahoma. This was well the money. Every morning we were served a nice breakfast and every night they had a fantastic dinner along with a show. We were able to get several things repaired on Windy plus we attended several seminars. Unfortunately it was so darn cold, rainy and muddy. Several coaches that left a day early became stuck in the mud. When we left Sunday morning, we had enjoyed one day of sun and that along with winds, enabled the pasture we were parked in to dry out some. We later heard only one coach had gotten stuck trying to get out with the caravan to the FMCA rally. The FMCA rally was held at the Fair Grounds in Oklahoma City. We were parked on grass which was soft due the recent rains. The upside of Oklahoma City was that the temperature was a whole bunch warmer than it was in Stillwater. Other than getting more work done on Windy, we really didn't do too much at this rally.

On Friday, April 6, we headed for sister Kathleen and Vic's for the weekend. We had such a great visit with both her and Vic. Kathleen and I talked until are voices were horse but we covered a lot of ground, discussing everything from our child hood to the present. It's Roy's 68<sup>th</sup> birthday, however we decided to celebrate it when we are in New York.

On Monday, we headed west, back across Oklahoma to meet up with Roy's family who were gathering in Crawford, OK. at his Aunt's farm. Roy's, Uncle Jack picked up Roy's Mom, in California and his daughter Betty Sue, in Flagstaff, AZ and drove them both here. His wife Maxine is not well so she stayed home. Roy's Aunt Mae came in from Denver and his cousin Donald came from Georgia. While there, we took a ride out into the fields to find Aunt Kate's herd. We fed them some special food which they enjoyed. That night the winds began and continued through the next day. The sky turned dark, the sun totally blocked from the red dirt that was being blown across the state. Roy and I both agreed that Oklahoma is NOT on the list of places we could settle down in. I may never get that red fine dirt out of the rig.

On April 12, we began our trip back across Oklahoma on our way to Hershey, Pennsylvania where we stored the rig while we visited Manhattan. It took us eight days traveling a day and then staying two nights at each stop. When we were in Oklahoma we noticed a tree that was in full bloom with purple blossoms. When we were at Kathleen's, we noticed they were also in her area. We asked her what they were called. "Red Bud", she replied. She had no idea of why a tree with purple blossoms would be called Red Bud. When we visited Aunt Kate we also asked her why. "I guess that's as red as it gets." she replied. We found that these trees were in bloom all the way from Oklahoma, through Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. They were quite pretty, in fact most of the area we drove through was very pretty. Many homes were very colorful with the daffodilly and tulips in full bloom.

On April 19, we arrived in Hershey, PA where we stored Windy. The next day it was off to the Big Apple. Boy, what an introduction to Manhattan. After we got through the Holland Tunnel, we followed Roy's map that he had printed out to the Off Soho Suites. As I tried to keep from getting crushed between a front loader and 18 wheeler, Roy was directing me as to what turns. to take. Well, right off the bat, where his map told us to go, we couldn't. It was a 'One Way' street.

As we tried to get back on track, we found ourselves on the road back through the Holland Tunnel. This would not do. We forced our way across the lanes of traffic finally getting back to where we needed to be. We were denied. **NO LEFT TURN!!** We were forced across the Manhattan Bridge into Brooklyn. Oh well, at least we're not in the rig. After getting turned around, back across the bridge we went, finally to arrive safely at our hotels front door.

New York was a great experience. We walked up town, down town, across town and when we got tired, we took the subway. The sights and sounds of the streets are an experience in themselves. We never got bored seeing all of the people from different cultures, dress, language and mannerisms. It was so fascinating watching the cars as they maneuvered through these crowded streets, enduring the continuous horn honking, breaks screeching, pedestrians standing at the edge waiting for that small break in the traffic so they could dart across the street tucking in their butt as to not be hit by on-coming traffic. Yes, we learned how to do that also. It was great fun. The secret was to learn to look both ways. Many of pedestrians have lost their lives in New York only looking one way. So many streets are one way and people forget that. I pity the police, fire fighters and ambulance drivers trying to get through this city. On several occasions the siren was howling and the drivers in the street had no where to go. Somehow with a lot of jacking around, room was finally made and the emergency vehicle broke out of the crowd and continued on it's mission. This brings me to mention the NYPD. On a few occasions we had a need to ask questions ie, where is the post office?, where is a street fair?, where is the visitor information center? In every incidence, they were so informative, helpful and friendly. Well maybe not with the street fair but we did make it to the post office and the visitor information location with no problem. We never did find the street fair they sent us to but did find a couple several miles down the road. I would like to mention however, they all looked like they were 15 years old. Oh, my 60 years are starting to take their toll.

We did everything we wanted to do, the Empire State Building (it was just about to celebrate it's 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday), the New York Trade Center, the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Wall Street and the New York Stock Exchange, the Natural History Museum which included the Planetarium. That was so very special. We all filed into the sphere and were seated in very comfortable chairs with a slight tilt back. As we listened to the voice of Tom Hanks, we were taken up out of New York, past our moon, through the Milky Way past many of our planets and their moons, finally out of our Galaxy and into the Virgos galaxy which included six galaxies. From there we continued out further into what they called the visible universe. This of course went on and on and on. Boy, if you have a need to feel insignificant, attend this show. We spend 6 hours at this museum. It was beautifully done covering many cultures. There was really no time to truly cover any specific subject but just walking through all of this knowledge trying to glean whatever we could was very enjoyable. Of course our legs ached at the end of the day but it was a good pain, one well worth enduring.

We also went to see the Intrepid Museum with a tour of the carrier which had so many exhibits of its history, the people who served as well as the planes that flew off her decks. This also included submarine and a cruiser.

We also enjoyed so many delightful dinners. Little Italy, China Town and Greenwich Village, a delightful brunch at the Ambassador Grill near the UN, our Anniversary dinner at the Rainbow Room Grill, looking across to the Empire State Building and a gourmet Indian dinner at the

overlooking Central Park. The waiter explained that all of the other buildings were residential around the park and they were the only building that was commercial....therefore the only restaurant overlooking the park. It worked for me.

Our rooms at the Off Soho Suits were modest but very clean and quite roomy. I especially enjoyed the tub where I took a my bubble bath almost every day. Roy was able to surf the net quite a lot, however I was ready to get on the road by 9:30 to 10:00 am, which forced him to get up early if he wanted to be online for any length of time. He didn't complain. I think he was as anxious as I to see what else we could see in our 10 days.

The parties over and we picked up Old JC. As I began the drive to excite the city, I felt very comfortable manourving the streets that had intimidated me 10 days before. As we made our excite through the Holland Tunnel, Roy said, " You learned how to drive these streets didn't you." I thought that was very interesting as I hadn't driven the streets, but I had been observing the drivers for the past 10 days.

We bought ourselves walkie talkies. These have already come in handy. On our last day, we were visiting a street fair and decided to separate as we enjoy different things to look at. About 45 minutes after we had separated, my guy went off and Roy was asking me where I was so he could join me. That was just too cool.

While in New York, we bought a new HP Pavilion lap top to replace the old IBM that been hurt when Roy closed the lid with a pencil on the keyboard. We had been using this one as the cell phone connection. It also is replacing the old Fujitsu lap top which we had been using for GPS navigation. It had begun showing signs of breaking down and Roy was beginning to become impatient with it. Now we are down to three computers in our home. What a concept. The best of the concept is .....they all work!!

I believe everyone in New York has a cell phone. I cannot tell you the number of times I reached for ours as the darn ringing sound began. It was pretty comical. When the darn thing went off I was digging in my purse or Roy was reaching for his belt, several other people were doing the same thing. I guess I understand now why some people choose the chimes, etc. instead of the ring.

After ten days walking, seeing, enjoying Manhattan, we picked up JC and very comfortably we headed out of the city dodging pedestrians, 18 wheelers and construction zones. As I maneuvered through the street and out to the Holland Tunnel, Roy said, "You have really learned how to drive these streets haven't you?" "Just by observation." I replied.

Back at Hershey, PA the next few day were spent getting the washing caught up and relaxing. We were kind of sight seeing exhausted and didn't even drive into town to tour the Hershey factory. On May 3, we drove to Smith Point on Long Island, a County Park on Fire Island. The Atlantic Ocean was visible out the front window and Long Bay was behind us. On Friday, went to East Hampton where we were able to visit the land where it was said that one of Joseph Osborne's wives dumped the pudding she had prepared on the ground to keep the British from eating it. The street is named Pudding Hill Lane. We also drove over to Osborne Lane where my ninth grandfather, Thomas Osborne had owned a significant amount of land. As we walked down

Main Street, we noted several of the business names were Osborne. The Jackson Osborne house is now the headquarters of the Historical Society.

Also at the library, we found documentation showing Cornelius Osborne's second wife, mother of Charles Barton Osborne, was named Matilda Aldridge. We also learned that Cornelius and his family moved from Calhoun County, MI to Illinois in 1858 and 1860 the family without the mother moved by oxen team to Stanislaus County, CA. We had the kids, Laura and her parents over for a BBQ on Saturday where the weather cooperated somewhat. The next day however it became very cold. That evening we went over to the kids where we had a very nice salad supper. It was a good visit with everyone. Ralph, the kids step-father was very friendly, even telling us we were always welcome.

On the 7<sup>th</sup>, we left Long Island and drove to Port Republic, NJ where we camped at the Chestnut Lake Naco RV Resort. Other than the roads being so narrow, it's a nice park and we had an end site which gave us plenty of room to park JC. We were also able to get both rigs washed. They both cleaned up real good. While here we have visited Atlantic City where we spent one afternoon walking on the boardwalk and visiting the casinos. We had a very nice supper at Los Amigos a colorfully decorated Mexican Restaurant. We also had a nice day trip down to the historical town of Cape May. The old Victorian homes were quite beautiful and colorful. We had a nice lunch at Henry's with a view of the Atlantic Ocean. Later we visited the Cape May Lighthouse and a small museum. Off shore was an old gun turret which in 1942 had been 900 feet from the shore. Almost 60 years later, it now sits in the surf, having been totally undermined by the ocean. It sat on top of many wood pilings which originally were buried in the sand. It is just a matter of time before the wood pilings give out at the huge steel mass crashes into the surf. We also visited Old Barney, a lighthouse on one of the barrier islands north of us. Smithville is a quaint little tourist town with very interesting shops just south of us. We drove over there one afternoon. There had just been an accident where a young man had been struck by a driver who had fallen asleep at the wheel. Even at a distance, it was a little unsettling seeing him on the ground and knowing that he was dead. It has caused me to be more aware of traffic as I take my morning walk. I'm glad we have had the opportunity to spend some time in New Jersey. It is a beautiful state. Our only other experience in the state was Jersey City where we almost got stuck between parked cars on a very narrow street as we tried to get to the Marina RV Park. We enjoyed a delightful Sunday brunch at the Renault Winery which had been established in 1864.

We had an extra day before getting to the Fam Camp at Andrews AFB, so we drove up to Philadelphia where we had half a day to see the city. We started out with one of their famous steak and cheese sandwich's. Boy, talk about a vein clogger. No wonder Philly has so many overweight people and the Mayor as asked everyone who should go on a diet. After splitting the sandwich, we took a buggy ride. The driver pointed out various buildings giving us an overview of the city's history. Unfortunately it was so darn cold and rainy it was difficult to enjoy the tour. We also saw the Liberty Bell and visited Independence Hall. The ranger was so caught up with the story of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, she imparted a sense of pride and true feeling of thankfulness for what those men did for us. I left Independence Hall proud to be an American.

On May 22, we made our way to Andrews Air Force Base about 18 miles from Washington DC.

After driving into DC twice the rest of the trips into town were via the Metro. It was so convenient with no hassle of trying to find a parking place and feeding the meter every three hours or paying \$15.00 at a garage which packs the cars in like sardines. Even tho we enjoyed the museums, I must say I am museumed out. Ones mind, especially mine, can only absorb so much. Seeing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and all of the items people have left brought a tear or two as we walked along the wall reading names. The Korean War Veterans Memorial also was quite moving as we walked beside the statues of soldiers in a platoon making their way through a rice paddy. The Washington Monument was getting renovations on its elevators so we were not able to go in. I was disappointed as we had not been able to see it the last time we were in Washington DC in 1996. Since we had been on a White House tour in '96' we decided not to get into town by 7:00am to stand in line waiting for tickets. We watched a documentary of the White House and the different rooms we would see on a tour at the White House Visitor Center. On the last day, we got a tour that traveled throughout the city making many stops at the various points of interest. They ran every 15 to 20 minutes and we could get off and reboard as many times as we wished. This was great, as it took us to the Arlington Cemetery, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, all of which are some distance from the National Mall. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial was very impressive with its shade trees, waterfalls and statuary. Throughout the memorial are his quotations carved in granite. The changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was so riveting, every move made by the guard and the officer inspecting him and his weapon so precise. As I watched along with a couple hundred other tourist, I wondered what would have happened if a speck of dirt had been found. Would the guard had been sent to his room. I think not. However I bet he would catch hell at the end of his watch. The Arlington House, also located at the Arlington National Cemetery is being renovated and was complete enough to accept visitors. This is where Robert E. Lee was living with his family when he made the decision to resign from the U.S. Army on April 20, 1861. Virginia had seceded from the United States three days earlier. The highlight was our day trip to George Washington's home, The Mount Vernon Mansion. I had no idea of how intelligent he was. He was also quite frugal as well as a perfectionist. He was difficult to work for but a good job done was acknowledged. When crops were planted portion would to allowed to go to seed so there would be seed for the next years crop. Almost everything that was needed was built, grown or made at the mansion. At one time he owned over 8,000 acres. He came up with the seven year crop rotation plan. His land had become depleted of nutrients due to the continuous planting of tobacco, his money crop. By implementing the seven year rotation plan he was able rebuild his soil. He also changed his money crop to grain. He designed and built a two story round barn. The second story floor being slatted. Horses would be walked up the dirt ramp to the second story. The workers would cover the floor of the barn with stalks of grain. The horses would run around the circle. As their hooves stepped on the stalks, the grain would become separated and would fall through the cracks down to the first floor. Here the workers would shovel the grain into sacks or barrels. The grain was then sent to the town mill to be ground into flour. The finished product was then ready to be sold, with much of it being sent over seas.

On June 5, we left D.C. and headed south to the Thousand Trails Chesapeake Bay Resort in Virginia. First we visited Colonial Williamsburg. Trying to take everything in is a challenge in itself. Not only are all of the buildings available to see and enjoy, many special programs are also well worth taking in. We spent 45 minutes listening to Patrick Henry with his take on the beginning and eventually the Revolutionary War. Half of his presentation was taking questions

from the audience. I was so impressed with how he answered every one as himself, Patrick Henry. One person asked him if he realized that his famous quote, "Give me liberty or give me death", would still be so well known over 200 years later. "No, I was telling everyone how I felt at the time. I was ready to die for my freedom and wanted everyone to know it". After meeting with Patrick, we ran into a confrontation between an old mountain man and Mr. Drinkard. They argued on the court steps and ultimately engaged in a wrestling match. Mr. Drinkard was getting the worse of it when his lady stepped in and forced both men to say they were sorry and shake hands. It was a cute stunt.

Another day, we drove to Yorktown, where in 1781 George Washington along with several other American Generals, and Marquis de Lafayette along with several other French generals defeated the British General Charles, Lord Cornwallis. This was the final major battle which ultimately resulted in the independence of the American people two years later. The tour of this area was very enjoyable. We rented a recorder and then drove to all of the important sights in the area. The ending could have been quite different if it hadn't been for the French fleet blocking more British and German troops along with their supplies trying to get to Yorktown. To make matters worse for Cornwallis, when he tried to retreat across the York River sending over a thousand troops, a storm came up and many boats and men were lost. He had no choice but to surrender, especially after redoubts 9 and 10 (a redoubt is as stronghold) were captured by the Americans and the French. This completed the siege line enabling the troops to pound the city with cannons for nine days. Cornwallis was so devastated that he claimed he was too sick to attend the signing of the surrender agreement that was held at the Moore house on October 19, 1781.

Jamestown, the first permanent presence in North America was also very interesting. Even though we have visited Jamestown before, we still found ourselves learning more about the first settlers. On May 13, 1607, 104 colonists set foot on land, settling Jamestown. The Virginia's Company had recruited these people. These people were second sons (men who would not be inheriting anything from their family as the first son always got everything, gentlemen, maybe a blacksmith and other tradesmen. Oops, they forgot to bring over farmers. With the help of the Powhatan tribes, Captain John Smith the colony was preserved. In the winter of 1609-1610 only 100 of 300 survived the "starving time". In 1619 Africans arrived. It is not known if these were slaves or servants. In 1620, 90 unmarried women arrived. It is said all were taken. In 1624 James I revokes the Virginia Company's charter and Jamestown became a royal colony. In 1660, the monarchy halts the colony's extensive trade with the Dutch which weakens its economy. As the flow of indentured servants ebbs, the legal status of Africans erodes and slavery is established. By 1690, there are 9,300 African slaves among a white population of 53,000. By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Virginia is dependent on slave labor. After a conflict by the town angered by what they see as a weak response to Indian attacks on their farms, back country settlers led by Nathaniel Bacon during Berkeley's absence from Jamestown, Bacon burns the town. The rebellion ends with Bacon's death but the town never recovered. After the statehouse burns in 1678 the colony's government is moved to Williamsburg.

On June 12, we drive to Pinehurst where we meet up with Dave and Terry Parsons. We had a very nice visit with them for two days with dinner at their home one night and dinner at a neat restaurant the other. We really got a lot of rain from Allison. Everyone said it was a good thing as they were really needing the water. We heard on the news that since Allison hit land, it had dropped enough rain to supply America with water for a year. That's amazing.

On June 14, we drove over to Willmington, NC where we had my cousin Shirley and her husband John over for dinner. It was so good to see them and to get re-acquainted with them both. The next day we went to the nursing home where Aunt Arlone is living. I wasn't prepared for it at all. After two strokes, she didn't even look like my Aunt. In fact, we asked a nurse in the hall if she was actually Aunt Arlone. She came into the room and assured us that it was her. Aunt Arlone didn't recognize us or anyone I mentioned including her sister, my Mama or her daughter, Shirley I couldn't hold back the tears any longer, so after giving her a hug and a kiss goodby, we left. We drove over to Brunswick Town-Fort Anderson and walked those grounds. Brunswick Town was settled in 1726 and was burned by the British during the Revolutionary War. In 1862 the confederates built Fort Anderson on the site. The fort was captured by the Union soldiers in 1856. We then drove back to the old portion of Willmington where Roy visited the library while visited the shops in town.

On June 16 we drove to the Thousand Trails at Forest Lake where we enjoyed a nice brunch at home on Sunday to celebrate Father's day. It is real hot here, in the 90's with very high humidity. It makes it so much hotter. On Father's day, so many people were using power that we could only run one air conditioner. It's 90.7 in the rig as I speak. Hot Hot Hot!!!! We didn't do much while at Forest Lake. There was a Blue Grass Festival going on at the camp ground and it was interesting to see all of the activity going on. Most of the performers had converted bus's and they were coming and going during the four day event.

On June 25, we drove to the Thousand Trails Preserve at Lynchburg, VA. We were very impressed at the beautiful and well kept home and yards in Virginia. The home owners seemed to take a lot of pride. While in Lynchburg, we drove over the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia to see the Natural Bridge and the Caverns which were near. We learned that George Washington surveyed the Natural Bridge and surrounding area around 1750. The patent of the land was granted to Thomas Jefferson in 1774. It was really warm hiking up from the bridge but we made it fine. I think my pores must be totally cleaned out with all of this humid hot weather we have been experiencing. We found a Red Lobster on the way home and really enjoyed our meal.

On July 1, we drove to the Thousand Trails Preserve in Wilmington, Ohio. While there, we visited the Elks Lodge a couple of times. The people were real nice. We also drove to a little town called Hillsboro to take in their street fair. In the advertisement it sounded like a real big celebration, however when we got there, we had seen it all in about a half hour. Oh well, you never know until you get there. We also went to the Marshall County Fair which was about as exciting as the street fair, however I did enjoy going through the barns and seeing all of the animals which had been raised by the 4-H kids. We drive down to Cincinnati to get our Costco fix. In Dayton at the Wright Patterson Air Force base, we visited the U.S. Air Force Museum and Imax Theater. I have never seen so many planes in one area before. The museum was huge. We also enjoyed the the Imax movie of the Blue Angels training and finally putting on a show. The shots from the airplanes wings, belly and roof were awesome. We also enjoyed a very enjoyable dinner at a real nice restaurant in the town of Wilmington. July 4<sup>th</sup> started out to be very rainy so we decided to stay home and cook up a special meal.

On July 9, we drove up to Marshall, Mi. where it isn't any cooler than Ohio. We were hoping that the further we got north, the cooler it might get. Roy spent time at the Marshall library and

found out where Cornelius's first wife, Deborah, and Rufus are buried along with a bunch of other Osborn's. While he was at the library, I walked up and down main street taking in all of the antique shops and other specialty shops in town. The next day he visited the Marshall courthouse while I stayed home and got caught up on housework....or should I say coachwork. We drove out to the Windfall cemetery where we found the graves of Deborah, Rufus' first two wives, side by side. Also we found the grave of Rufus and his last wife. They were buried side by side. The marker was very impressive. We also found lots of other Osborn headstons and got pictures of them all.

On July 13, we drove to the St. Clair Thousand Trails Preserve. The roads going through Detroit were in the worst condition I have ever seen. I thought the rig would shake apart. We talked to several people asking why and they just said that the state just didn't spend the money for upkeep and now they have a major job ahead of them. Also the Michigan truck load limits allow super heavy trucks and loads to travel on the roads. Eighteen wheeler doesn't seem to be part of their vocabulary. We saw trucks that appeared to have over thirty wheels. While in St. Clair, we drove to Dearborn to visit the Henry Ford Museum. We really enjoyed the section for cars. They had four of the cars used by the Presidents of the United States, including the one Kennedy was shot in. which had served several presidents including the one where Kennedy was shot. I was surprised to learn that they continued using that car after it had undergone several upgrades which included a bullet proof roof. . There was also one of the biggest train engines I had ever seen. Also on display was the chair President Lincoln was sitting in when he was shot. One day while Roy was doing more research on Daddy's line, I drove across the bridge into Canada to the casino. I had fun. The last day after a very nice supper with a river view, we drove over to the casino. The nice part of playing in Canada is about \$145 American is worth \$200 in Canada. It boils down to more pulls on the handle.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, we drove up to Mackinaw, MI where we met up with three OCS RV'er couples where we had a grand time. One couple live on an Island on Lake Huron so we took the ferry over to their place one day. On the 25<sup>th</sup>, we followed one other couple, Gordon and Maxine, to their place in the Upper Peninsula, or the UP as locals call it. The people call themselves Yupers. Many of the people who live up there sound just like the people in the movie, Fargo. We saw a lot of Lake Michigan on the way to their home. They live on a nice size lake and have the necessary water toys which include two three seater water crafts and a pontoon boat for a more relaxing trip around the lake. After a brief lesson, Roy and I took off across the lake separately on the two water crafts. It was great fun. We also took a drive up to Lake Superior to a place called Point Whitefish. The three great lakes we saw on this trip were very beautiful, and of course very big.

After saying our good-by's on July 27, we began our trip west. After two night stops in Tomahawk WI, St. Cloud MN, Bismark, ND we arrived at Harden, MT where we visited the Little Big Horn.

After driving the road that took us through the entire battle and then listening to a ranger explaining what had happened on June 25, 1876 and June 26, 1876 we have a much better understanding as to what happened. The 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, numbering about 700 men, located the Indian camp at dawn on June 25. Custer, probably underestimated the size and fighting power of the Lakota and Cheyenne forces, divided his regiment into three battalions. He retained five companies under his immediate command and assigned three companies each to Major Marcus A

Reno and Captain Frederick W. Benteen. A twelfth was assigned to guard the slow-moving pack train. Since Reno and Benteen never saw Custer alive again and there were no survivors of his companies, only Indian accounts of the battle are available. No one knows for sure the exact sequence of events that led to the massacre of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and his 210 men. Under Reno and Benteen, 53 were killed and 52 wounded. Grave markers are seen throughout the entire battlefield. These were placed to mark where each man fell. The remains of the men have since been placed in a mass grave at the site of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Monument. Thanks to Mrs. Custer, the museum has quite a number of items, uniforms, etc. that belonged to Custer. On August 6, we drove to Gardner which is located at the North Entrance of Yellowstone. Immediately, we were very unhappy with the Rocky Mountain campground. The sites were so narrow, our neighbor's motorcycle was in our patio. The electric connection for the park was so bad that we could only run one air conditioner and it was so hot the first two days, that we had to keep the shades drawn. Very depressing. Other than that, we really enjoyed our four visits into Yellowstone. The first day we took a bus tour which drove the entire loop with various stops along the way. The bus driver had lots of stories to tell which made the trip interesting. The next three days we drove in on our own taking our time to see everything. The weather cooled off some so we were able to take some of the longer walks. Even though we have been to Yellowstone before, seeing many of the geysers, springs, varieties of thermal activity, rivers, mountains, lakes, critters and re-growth of the forest was all quite enjoyable. Critter count...three coyotes, several chipmunks, countless female elk, one bull elk and herds of bison. However, we saw no bear, deer, antelope or wolf.

On August 11, we drove to Missoula, MT where we stayed for two nights at our first Jellystone campground. It was pretty nice with roomy sights. On August 13, we drove out of Montana, across Idaho and into Washington. We stayed at our first Leisure World Resort which is part of Thousand Trails. This park is located in the Crescent Bar Recreational area on the Columbia River. It was 107 degrees the day we arrived, however their electricity situation is good and we were able to run both air conditioners. We have a great spot with a nice view of the river. Unfortunately, we had no cell phone coverage and this park did not offer modem hook up in the office like most parks we visit. There was a nice rest stop up the hill where Roy could get a good connection to download and upload email. Also on the way up the hill, we got an AT&T cell signal so if we had any messages, it would let us know. While there we learned of the death of my Aunt Arlone. It's sad, however she was so ill and not aware of much at all, it was probably good that she went. Her daughter Shirley said that her passing was very peaceful.

On August 19, we left the real hot weather and drove to Oceana, WA. This is also a Leisure World Resort. They have no sewer hook ups so while here we are on super conservative water program. It's been a long time since I have used the campground showers. They were nice and clean. The first two days were there the weather was cool but nice. However the rains started on Tuesday and continued for the next three days. We checked for our mail every day and it never arrived so we filled out a mail forwarding card to Seaside, OR. our next stop. It is a short walk to the beach and I did enjoy taking my morning walks when the weather allowed. Roy tried to fix our broken tiles in the kitchen and soon it was apparent that we have a problem with the slide. Monaco was booked through November so we have made an appointment at Quality Coach Service in Eugene, OR for September 6, to have the slide adjusted and the broken tiles replaced. We ate out twice while at Oceana. Once at a Mexican place, not much to look at but the food was great and at a Chinese place. The meal was exceptional but so much that we took home enough

for another full dinner.

On Sunday, August 26 we drove the short distance to our next stop Seaside, OR and another Leisure Time Resort. The Columbia River was crowded with fishing boats as we crossed over the bridge from Washington to Oregon. This resort is real nice, very well kept and lots of room between sights. After getting settled in, we took a drive into the town which is a typical beach tourist town. The phone cell coverage is great and Roy is able to get good connections. While here we got to see Jess, who was on a business trip, and Jeremy and his girlfriend, Kristi. We met them for dinner at the Rusty Duck in Longview, WA. We had a nice visit with all of them. We also took an afternoon to revisit Fort Clatsop, the winter home of the Lewis & Clark and their men from December 7, 1805 until March 23, 1806. We had visited the fort the last time we were in the area. On one of trips into Seaside, we ran across a display where the salt makers worked to boil the salt water to gather salt for the return trip of the Lewis & Clark expedition. We also enjoyed a visit to a Butterfly display on a sunny day, where we got some real great pictures

We had been noticing lots of cracking sounds when we slide the living room and some tiles visible when we were slid out were cracked quite badly. Roy decided to try and repair them with no success. It appeared we had a real problem so he called Monaco in Colburg only to learn they were booked through November. They did have a shop which did their overflow so we made an appointment for September 6.

On September 1, we arrived at Whalers Rest another Leisure Time Resort. Other than having no cell phone coverage, this was a very nice park with lots of room between sites. We had a nice lunch with Roy's nephew Lance and his wife Dana. We also stopped in to see his niece Shelly. I drove to a Casino up the coast one afternoon. We enjoyed visiting the harbor and seeing the fishermen preparing their catch for sale. Also there was quite a number of Sea Lions lounging about on floating docks. The docks would rock precariously as they would slide on or off. One time the whole group got dumped, rather unceremoniously. They all swam around the dock trying to be the first to reclaim their spot.

Rather than having to leave Newport super early in the morning to make our appointment with Quality Coach Service at 9:00am, we decided to leave on the 5<sup>th</sup>. We stayed at the Eugene Elks that night and only had a short drive to Quality Coach on the 6<sup>th</sup>. After examining the damage, it was obvious that this would be a major and expensive repair. The owner suggested that we talk to Monaco to see if they would approve the repair as a good will gesture. We drove over to Colburg and Roy talked to Baba who approved the repair. Next it was back to Quality Coach to see how long they would need. He agreed to have Windy ready for us by September 13. They would need to completely pull out the slide, re-tile the floor and replace the roller which had come unadjusted, causing all of tile damage. He would begin working on it the next day. We were due in Central Point to visit Roy's sisters so we packed our bags and headed for the Seven Feathers Resort and Casino in Canyonville. We were lucky to get one of the last available rooms. It was Friday night and we had no reservations. They have a real nice restaurant there where we had a great dinner. I had fun on the machines which at least gave me some play for my money. I ended up \$5.00 ahead. The next day we arrived at Lucile's to spend the weekend. On that afternoon we drove to a real nice restaurant on the river where she treated us to a very nice dinner. The next day she had the family over for a picnic in her back yard. It was nice to see Meryle and Jim again. She is going for the World Wide Senior Barrel Riding Championship this year. Sure hope she get it.

Jim's doing well with his team roping events. They both looked good.

On Monday morning we headed for Gold Beach where we had reservations at Ireland's Rustic Lodges where we had a quaint cottage with a fireplace. We had a nice dinner just a block from the cottage and got a good night sleep as the next morning we had reservations for the Mail Boat Hydro Jets up the Rogue River. September 11, we were up early and getting ready to leave for the boat when Roy, who was on the computer said, something has hit the trade Center. We need to turn on the TV. We sat there in shock as the horrible pictures of the Trade Towers burning and then the Pentagon in flames. Then the terrible sight of the first tower crashing down. We then made the decision to go ahead and drive to the Mail Boat office. Many of the passengers had not even been aware of the incident and of course were as shocked as us. During the tour, it was hard to keep our minds off of what was happening in New York and at the Pentagon but we did enjoy the boat ride very much. Critter count was four Black Bear, one alone just walking along the river and the other three comprised of a Mama bear and two cubs. Also we saw countless Harbor Seals, two Bald Eagle, lots of Osprey and Blue Heron a huge River Otter and a few deer. In addition, the Salmon were running and we saw several being caught by the fishermen on the river. Throughout the trip, the captain would do a high speed donut causing lots of water to splash on us. We had chosen to take the long trip which included the rapids. All and all, it was great fun. After returning to Gold Beach, we stopped and picked up a few things we could eat at the cottage. We spent the evening watching the TV in disbelief of what we were seeing and hearing.

When we got back to Eugene the next day, Windy was almost ready and we were able to spend the night in her. The next morning, they did the finishing work and we were on our way by Noon. We got as far as McCloud, CA where we spent the night. The next day we arrived at brother Dan's. We had reserved a trailer to haul our stuff to Parker and the U-Haul person had previously called us saying she was having difficulty getting the larger size we needed. We had planned on driving the trailer to Parker with Windy, leaving the Jeep at Dan's. On Saturday, we took Dan's truck over to pick up the trailer. As we were getting ready to begin loading the trailer when Dan offered to let us take the truck rather than taking Windy to Parker. After some discussion, we decided that this would be a better way to go.

Since Danny had worked for a moving company, he was put in charge of placing our stuff in the trailer as we would need every inch of space to get it all in. There were many times when we would look at what still needed to be packed and would think there is no way....then we would look and say, I think we're going to make it. Well, everything made it thanks to the extra room we had in Dan's truck.

September 17, Monday morning, Roy and I sat out in the truck with trailer in tow. It was a long trip, over 500 miles. We got to the Blue Water Hotel and Casino at 8:30pm. The next morning, we drove over to the storage place where we had previously reserved an 8X10. Roy and I worked hard getting everything unloaded and into the unit. It was so hot, we had to take a couple of breaks in the truck running the air. The good thing was that we didn't have to work too hard fitting things in. The 8X10 is more than enough room for our stuff. We wanted to be able to get at things easily. The next morning, we piled into the truck for the drive back to Dan's only to find that the battery was DEAD! Thanks to our road service contract, we were on our way about a half hour later. Somehow, I had messed with the floor lights and when we got back to the hotel the day before, it was daylight and we didn't notice that the floor lights were on. We were home well

before dark. It's amazing how much better time you can make not pulling a trailer. We had a great visit with Dan's and on Sunday, he had Daddy, Mom, Uncle Roy, Aunt Jean, Jeff, Kelly and Amanda over for a BBQ. The weather was great and we all had a good time.

On Monday, we drove over to Yerington to visit Daddy and Mom. We stayed in the RV section of their trailer park. Their double wide is quite nice. Mom has it decorated very nicely. They had it painted, put on a new roof and added air conditioning since they moved in. Daddy also planted a small area in back, which they fenced for Segoe, their dog. We had a good visit with both of them. One day we drove out to the cemetery where we re-shot the graves with the new camera. Also we drove over to the copper mine to see the big hole. Mom had a wonderful dinner our first night, we cooked dinner for them the second night and they treated us to Buffet at Casino West.

On Thursday morning after saying our good-by's, we headed for Sonora, CA. where we planned at staying at the Elks. After we got in, Roy called his school mate, Bob Wicks and I called Diana, my cousin. Bob came over for a short visit and later, Diana and Wayne picked us up. We drove to a real quaint town and had dinner in an old hotel. It was pretty nice. They then took us to their home which was beautiful. The next day we drove up to Bob's home in Twain Harte which is in the mountains north of Sonora. After seeing their beautiful home, we drove further north where we had breakfast in a little café. We then got back to the Elks Lodge, and drove on down to the Elk's Lodge in Modesto.

On September 29, we attended Roy's 50<sup>th</sup> High School Reunion at the Modesto Marriott. We really had a nice time and enjoyed seeing Bob Wicks and his wife again. They are a real nice couple. The reunion began with a social hour and ended with a few speakers after dinner.

October 1, we drove down to Acton. I drove Mama to her doctor appointment where I met Dr. Clairfield. I had spoken to him many times on the phone but had never met him in person. I understand why she feels very comfortable with him. He didn't rush through the visit giving her plenty of time to ask all of her questions. He gave her the OK to come with us.

On October 5 we drove to Sun City to stay at Wilderness Lakes. We had reserved a trailer for Mama which she really enjoyed. On Saturday, we hosted a picnic for all of Roy's family. We had about 45 people attend. What was great was all three of Roy's boys were there. We hadn't seen them all at the same time for over five years. Roy Dean, his youngest, also brought his two youngest boys, Kiona, their step sister, and his girlfriend Sharon. We hadn't seen the grand kids for about two years. Sharon is real good with them and seems to be a real nice lady. Derald, his oldest, and Kim announced their engagement. We are so happy for them. Alan had lost weight and looked real good. It was also nice to see all of Roy's siblings and of course his Mom and Uncle Jack.

On October 11, we gathered up Mama and drove down to Poway. We dropped her off at Jess and Karin's where she would be staying and after a quick run to Costco to order stuff for you birthday party, we took off for Potrero County Park where we met up with the Del Pacifico Camping group. It was good to see all of our friends again. The last night the guys got a fire going and it was so pleasant just to sit around the camp fire swapping stories. It was a great weekend.

We left early Sunday morning for Admiral Field RV Park in San Diego. Since we were getting in so early, there was a possibility that our site might not be available. We lucked out. Our reserved site had been vacated the night before so we had no waiting to get parked and sat up with plenty of time to shower, drive to Costco to pick up the birthday stuff. We got to Jess and Karin's before noon with plenty of time to get ready for her party that was scheduled to begin at 2:00pm. She really enjoyed herself. Dan and Haydee had driven down from Nevada and three of her nieces and their families were able to come. The weather was great so the party was able to overflow into the patio. Dan and Haydee spent that night with us and headed out early Monday morning for Nevada.

For the next two weeks, we were busy with family and friends. I drove Mama home on Tuesday, the following Friday we met friends Ray and Lavern for lunch and met several friends at the Elephant Bar. Roy and my real estate boss was there. We hadn't seen him for over ten years. The next Saturday, Dennis and Brigid had us over for dinner. That Sunday, we drove out to the antique tractor farm to meet with Bob and Sally, Bruce's sister and brother-in-law, Keith, his half brother and of course Bruce and Teri. The big show was going on and we saw some really neat old tractors. On the next Tuesday, Roy and I caught the trolley and rode it to Mexico for lunch. All was fine until we tried to get back across the boarder. The line was two hours long and then another hour and a half on the trolley. We didn't get home until 8:00PM. I would say that was a pretty long lunch trip wouldn't you. On Wednesday, we met with Ray, Lavern, Ed and Virginia for lunch and that evening we had a delightful dinner at the Escondido Brigantine with Jason, my youngest. We celebrated his 33<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The next day, Ray was able to give us an hour ride in one of his friends Cessna 172 airplanes. We took off from Montgomery Field and flew up the coast then east over Escondido, Barona, El Cajon and back to Montgomery Field. It was quite interesting especially when a gust of wind hit just as he was about to touch down. We hung there for a long few seconds before the wheels connected with the pavement. That evening we had Derald, Kim, Alan and his lady, Loretta for a BBQ. Kim had just gotten her engagement ring and she was beaming. On Friday we met Bruce and Teri for dinner at Carvers in Rancho Bernardo where we celebrated her birthday. That is a real nice place to eat. They had a live band so we did a little dancing after dinner. Fun, Fun, Fun. On Saturday we took Jess and Karin to Dinner at the Poway Brigantine where we celebrated both of their Birthdays coming up in December. We really enjoy their company. On Monday morning we rolled our fat bodies.....literally...out of bed. We both had put on over five pounds during our two week stay in San Diego. We sure did have a good time tho. Our first priority, when he get back to Emerald Cove. will be to try and get rid of the extra poundage we had been gathering for the last several months.

Before heading to the desert, we took Windy for her check-up, oil change etc. We made it to Quartzsite at dusk and enjoyed sitting outside for a while before dinner.

On October 30, we began our three month stay in our desert. It's just as beautiful as it was when we left last January. Our three Pyramids are still standing, several cactus have buds already. Hopefully they will bloom before we have to leave in February. Emerald Cove is preparing itself for the arrival of the snow birds. We have a beautiful view of the mountains out our front window. Life is good!!

What a year this has been. All of us feel the pain caused by the events of September 11. However, we as a nation were not willing to let them break our spirit The United in United

States seems to have much more meaning. Our nation has pulled together and our people have shown more compassion toward their fellow man than ever before. I find it sad that we had to endure such a loss to bring out all of the positives that have come from this tragedy. I guess sometimes getting hit on the head is needed to get our attention. I am so thankful that the blow didn't take us down to our knees.

Now, off the soap box, Roy and I are really enjoying our time here at Emerald Cove. Most of November was wonderful with beautiful warm and sunny days and pleasant evenings. The last week however, it turned quite cool and several days the winds were strong. In a way, this is what I love about the desert. You never know what the next day will bring. For instance, we have two weather programs that Roy checks on each day and they have never given the same information for the same day.

Roy and I are still trying to get rid of the extra pounds we put on this year but it hasn't been easy. The lesson to be learned is don't let them get on the first place. How many times have we agreed to that and how many times have we ignored it?

Our Thanksgiving dinner was at home with turkey and the trimmings.

In early December, we visited Laughlin for three nights. Roy had called the Edgewater where he took me for my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday to see if they had any deals going. The hostess checked our card and told us that she could give us three nights including our meals and drinks at no charge. That was so much fun going out to dinner and just giving the waitress our gold card. Of course tips and gambling money were on us. I didn't have good luck for the first two days and was down about \$900 going into the last night. However, both Roy and I got lucky that night and the whole visit cost us \$500.

With Laughlin out of the way, the focus was now on Christmas. I enjoyed Christmas shopping at Wal-Mart and Penny's and also did some on line. Jess, Karin and Eric came to visit us on December 26, so we postponed our Christmas dinner until then. It was celebrating Christmas with them. The next day we hiked up to our pyramids and afterwards enjoyed our pool and spa at the park. That night we took them to our favorite restaurants which is on Lake Havasu near Parker Dam. The next day we drove over to Lake Havasu City to visit the London Bridge. We took the Dixie Bell for a tour around the island. After dinner it had gotten dark and the Christmas lights were so beautiful in the village. Unfortunately that night we got a call from Teri telling us that she had to have Bruce taken to the hospital. The kids decided to cut their visit a day short so that they could get back in time to be able to see him so after lunch the next day, they left for home. That night Jess called with the bad news that his Dad is probably terminal. It's so sad.

Roy and I stayed home New Years Eve. After a nice dinner with champagne, we watched the ball drop in New York, 10:00pm our time and went to bed. The next morning we were up early and enjoyed the Rose Parade and the games that were played that day. Of course we had a New Year day meal of black eyed peas and cornbread. This has become a tradition for us.