

2003

On January 2, we started the Dr. Atkins diet. So far we have done pretty well. I can get into my jeans again without turning purple. It's a nice feeling.

We truly enjoy the winters here on the river except during wind storms. When the weather is good, it is very very good but when the winds come it is horrid. One night the winds were so strong that not only did we need to bring the awnings in, but we had to pull in the slides as well. With them out, they caught the wind causing the coach to really rock and roll. After we pulled in the slides, we had no trouble falling back to sleep. The next day, the awning people were out in force. Several people lost or had damage to their awnings. Luckily with ours being automatic, we had ours in with a touch of a button.

We made our annual trip to Quartzsite for the big swap meet, only this time we chose to leave the coach parked at Emerald Cove and just drove the Jeep down two days. It seemed a little rushed so maybe next year we will break camp on the river and drive down for a week.

We had more rain this season which really made the desert pretty. There is a green cast on the desert floor and on the hillsides. Lots of tiny flowers have popped their blossoms through the surface.

For a couple of reasons, I stopped working at the senior center. Even tho it was voluntary, I found myself not looking forward to going in. Some of the workers were very possessive of duties. One day, I was working with a lady chopping veggies. After completing what was in my area, I reached over to help her with what she had remaining. She grabbed those I was reaching for and told me to leave them alone. I had been under the impression that we were all to work together to get the jobs done as quickly as possible. Oh well, after that incident, my enthusiasm deflated like water wings coming into contact with a sharp object. In addition, my shoulder had been bothering me....I think oldness is trying to settle in...sooooo I made the shoulder the excuse for not being able to help any longer this year.

Roy and I celebrated my 62nd birthday in Laughlin. We received two free nights at the Flamingo, show tickets to see Reflections of the Rat Pack and dinner at their restaurant, The Beef Baron. Two afternoons we went to the movies. We saw Harry Potter and the Secret Chamber one afternoon and the next afternoon we saw The Lord of the Rings, The Twin Towers. We enjoyed them both.

On February 20 we left our winter home and headed for Acton to visit Mama. We had a real nice visit with her. I took her shopping and got her two new outfits. On the 24th, we headed for Palm Springs where we stayed until March 6. Bruce and Teri came up over the weekend and we had a lot of fun taking the tram, having dinner at the Trump Casino and on Sunday before they left, enjoyed a nice Mexican brunch.

Just before we left Palm Springs, I got a call from the nurse at the haven. Mama was having a lot of difficulty with short term memory. They felt it was necessary to bring her to ICF where she would have around the clock nursing care. The nurses insured me that she was in good hands and

would probably be ok once she accepted the fact that she had to be in ICF for awhile.

We continued our trip east, stopping in Arizona to see Ray and Vicki Goden, two of the OCS RV'ers. They were currently parked in Picacho Peak between Casa Grande and Tucson, AZ. The state park next door was doing a recreation of the Picacho Peak Civil War battle which had taken place April 15, 1862. I hadn't been aware that there had been fighting in Arizona. It was interesting sitting up on the side of the hill, watching the two sides firing canons and guns at each other periodically attacking and retreating. We really enjoyed our visit with Ray and Vicki. Next it was off to Tucson where we had a good visit with Jim and Sara Jinright, having dinner at their place the first night and then visiting a casino and driving over to Tubac, a delightful quaint border town where we had a tasty Mexican dinner at one of the local restaurants.

After we left Jim and Sara, we drove to Las Cruces where we had a great dinner at the La Posta restaurant in the Historic town of Old Mesilla. The next day it was off to Carlsbad. Caverns. This would be Roy and my second visit and it was just as awesome as it was on our first visit. The first part of the tour was self guided and took us down into the caverns to the big room. That took most of the morning. In the afternoon we took the guided tour which took us through the Queens Chamber, Kings Palace, the Papoose Room and the Green Lake Room. The bats had not returned to the caverns for the season so again, we missed seeing them fly out at dusk.

At this point Mama's situation got very grim. She had become very irrational and paranoid.. She felt everyone was against her and doing what ever possible to make her unhappy. She became very mean to the nurses and to her friends, even me on one occasion when I talked to her on the phone. I was very frustrated as we were heading East. We made the decision that I should fly back to LA after we got to Fort Worth. On March 24, I left for LA, and arrived at her place that afternoon. She was so very glad to see me. The goal was to get her stuff moved into her new place. My hope was that when she got all of her things with her, that she might more easily accept having to leave her old apartment. It took three full days of packing, sorting and deciding what to keep, what to give away and what to pack for storage. We had two pull along carts which we moved everything that was going to her apartment in except for her desk, filing cabinet and a couple of larger boxes. Everything went well until the morning I was due to fly back. When I came into her room, she had seemed to relapse. She was convinced that the nurses were listening to her in her room as well as taking her new clothes. I hunted her entire apartment looking for the new clothes. I even asked her if maybe she had put them into a special place to keep them safe. Her answer was no. I was about to go out to the nurse to let them know we had a problem, when realized I hadn't looked under the bed. There they were, rolled up and hidden under her bed. She still had no memory of putting them there. The doctor felt that the fact I was leaving may had caused her to relapse back into the paranoid and confused state. It was real hard to leave her as we had really had a good visit for the first four days. After I got back to Fort Worth, I called her daily and noticed improvement each day.

While we were in Fort Worth, we got to meet, for the first time, Roy's new found aunt Emma , her husband Herman and their daughter Elise. We enjoyed a nice lunch at the Antique Mall. We also got to meet with two OCS couples, Tom and Joyce Lowes, and Howard and Martha Ferrill for lunch at the Red Lobster. We would see them again at the OCS reunion which is the reason for this dash across the US again.

We left Fort Worth and met with sister Kathleen and her husband Vic in Ozark, AK. They had taken part of the day off and drove town to the Ozark camp ground to meet us. It was so good to see them. That morning we had received a call from brother Dan with some troubling news. His wife, Haydee had rolled her car on the way to work. He had no idea when he called how serious her injuries were. She was being air evacuated to the hospital in Reno and he and her daughter were on their way. That was a very stressful drive that day with not knowing how she was. We had just gotten together with Kathleen that afternoon when Dan called with great news. Except for being extremely sore, she seemed to be fine. In fact, they were on their way home from the hospital. The traveling angel was definitely on her shoulder. The good news made our visit with Kathleen and Vic so happy.

The next day, April 3, we arrived at the Graceland Campground in Memphis, TN., which is across the street from Elvis Presley's Graceland. We enjoyed our tour of Graceland which was actually our second time. Roy had joined me on a business trip to one of my companies plants in Memphis many years ago. As before, we were impressed with the whole tour and in learning of what a generous man he was. We celebrated Roy's 70th birthday with brunch at the Peabody down town Memphis. Unfortunately it was raining so we didn't get a chance to walk through the city after brunch. We had taken a city bus into the city and opted to take a cab home. One day Roy took the bus into the library and I drove the car down to a casino in Mississippi to play a while.

On April 8, we drove to the Two River's Campground in Nashville, TN. Not far from our campground was Opry Mills, one of the biggest malls I have ever seen over a mile of large stores and smaller shops. They had everything you could think of. I thought it would be great to be here in the Christmas season to do Christmas shopping. One day we drove into the city and while Roy did some research at the library, I walked through the town. After that, we took the city tour on a bus that looked like a trolley car. Not only is Nashville well known for its music but also for it's fine medical institutions, including the Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

We arrived at the Quantico Marine Base on April 14 where we met up with our OCS RV'er group. We had a real nice site right at the edge of the lake. One afternoon three helicopters gave us quite a show hovering over the lake and then taking off, tearing across the lake as fast as they could go. This went on for over an hour. One evening, we all enjoyed a pot luck together having lots of great conversation and great food. On the 16th, Roy and I drove the coach over to the Manassas Battlefield Holiday Inn where all of the reunion activities would be taking place. The hotel was nice enough to allow us to park in their back parking lot while we stayed in the hotel. Actually it turned out quite nice. The weather turned real cold, and I mean real cold. I was able to go out into the coach and get warmer clothes. The daytime activities included a bus tour of the Manassas battlefield and a bus trip into Washington DC. touring the Lincoln Memorial, the World War II Memorial, The Wall and finally the Smithsonian Air Museum. Since Roy and I had just recently been to Washington DC and had seen most of the exhibits in the Air Museum, we chose to see a movie about the building of the space Station in 3D at the IMAX theater. In the Albert Einstein Planetarium, while reclining in the comfortable chairs, we were treated to beautiful images of stars and planets moving across the dome shaped screen narrated by Tom Cruise. Both films were very entertaining. The reunion kicked off with an opening reception in the hotel with lots of goodies to eat. The next night we were on our own. We got together with some of our RV'er friends and had a real nice dinner at the Old Chicago Bar and Grill. The food

was great. The next night we were all bussed to Don and Carolyn Rose's home for a fantastic BBQ dinner. As far as I was concerned, that was the highlight of the reunion. The next night we had a nice buffet at the hotel and Sunday morning, we all said our good-bys after a tasty brunch at the hotel.

After brunch we headed west, taking two days to reach Fort Wayne Indiana where we stayed for the next six nights. Roy was able to get lots of research done at their library. One day I went in with him and spent some time at the Mall in town. We celebrated our 16th wedding anniversary on the 26. No restaurants (other than rib and fast food places) close to the RV park so we stayed home and had a nice seafood platter with a bottle of Champaign. The next day we were off to the Monaco repair facility in Elkhart, Indiana. They had a very nice area for the people in for repairs with hookups except sewer. At 6:30am the next morning we met the writer to go over everything that needed to be done. After that, they took the coach into the shop to begin making repairs. They had a comfortable lounge where we could wait with magazines and television. Roy was happy because they had several on line connections which kept him busy all day. I just jelled. They were finished by 9:00 am on Wednesday. Everything was taken care of except the body work. Since it was a good will job and made by the facility in Oregon, they offered us \$400 to get the painting done on our own. We agreed and were so anxious to get out of there, we took off, heading for the Chicago area soon after 9:00 in the pouring rain.

We found a nice RV park close to the train depot called The Windy City Camp Ground. It was about 35 miles from Chicago. One day we took the train into Chicago which is well named the windy city. It was super cold. We took the tour on a bus that stops at points of interest and allows you to get off, see the sights and continue on the tour with another bus. We stayed on for most of the tour. We got off at the Navy Pier and as long as we stayed out of the wind, enjoyed the walk on the pier. It looked like it would be fun on a summer day with all of the neat restaurants, amusement park, and lake cruise boats. We also took the tour of the Skydeck at the Sears Tower. I couldn't help not think of the Twin Towers and 911 as we walked around the deck peering down on the tops of sky scrapers and the vastness of Lake Michigan below. The Sears Tower was begun in 1970 and completed in 1973 and is the worlds tallest building from street level to rooftop, 1,431 feet, 110 stories Add the antennas and your looking at 1,730 feet. We caught the train home with lots of commuters leaving from work. We were surprised to see many of them drinking cans of beer as they carried on conversations with other passengers.

Our next stop was Golden Colorado where we stayed at the Dakota Ridge Campground. We had stayed there once before. One evening to drove into Denver where we met Roy's Aunt Mae and his cousin Helen and Ray at the Mall. We got there early and walked through several of the stores. Boy were they expensive. Maybe I've been spending too much time at outlet malls. We had a nice visit with all of them. We also drove down to Castle Rock where we met with David, Micheal and the grand kids, Wayne, Sandy and Carolyn. They also had an exchange student with them from Switzerland. A very nice young man. After dinner Wayne challenged his grandpa to a game of pool. It was nice as we weren't ready to have the visit end. We ended up staying there a couple more hours as most everyone took their turn playing pool. It was a great visit with all of them.

On Mother's day, we took a bus up to Black Hawk to the casinos up there. It was a pleasant bus ride and on the way up we spotted several big horned sheep. They all but stopped traffic as

everyone wanted to get a look. Our original plan was to have the seafood buffet dinner after playing for a while, however that seemed to also be the plans of hundreds of other people. We kept checking back to see if the line was getting any shorter and it was not. There was probably an hour and a half wait. We checked out the gourmet restaurant and decided to have dinner there. It was wonderful, piano music, great service and wonderful food. I had a lot of fun on the machines and it was nice not to have that mountain drive home. One morning we awoke to about five inches of snow on the ground. It sure was beautiful. We were glad it wasn't a travel day. By mid afternoon, most of it was gone. We took the Coors Brewing Company tour which we had done before. It was still interesting. The brew one and one half million gallons of beer a day. Seventy percent of the beer they brew at that brewery is Coors Light.

On May 13, after a week at Golden, we headed to Grand Junction where we spent one night. Then it was off to the Canyonlands campground in down town Moab, UT. The first day, we took a drive through Manti-LaSal National Forest. It afforded nice views of the LaSal mountains which were still covered in snow. Saw a deer which stood still long enough for Roy to get a picture. The drive took a loop and ended up going down a canyon beside the Colorado River. Here we saw lots of people river rafting. We then drove into Arches National Park to see as much as we could before it was time to head home. The next day it rained all morning so we didn't get started until noon. We took a long drive to the south end of Canyonlands where we drove as far as the Newspaper Rock, which is famous for a large petroglyph panel. No one can say what all of the drawings mean but they are still interesting to look at. After that we took another road into Needles overlook which affords a fantastic view of the Canyonlands National Park. It was absolutely beautiful. The next day, we finished our tour of Arches with a nice hike to Landscape Arch. The weather was perfect. We ended the day with a trip to Dead Horse Point State Park, a small park with great views of Canyonlands. According to one legend, around the turn of the century the point was used as a corral for wild mustangs roaming the mesa top. Cowboys rounded up these horses, herded them across the narrow neck of land and onto the point. The neck which is only 30 yards wide was then fenced off with branches and brush. This created a natural corral surrounded by precipitous cliffs affording no escape. Cowboys then chose the horse they wanted and let the culls or broomtails to free. One time, for some unknown reason, horses were left corralled on the waterless point where they died of thirst within view of the Colorado River 2,000 feet below. Guess the last cowboy out forgot to open the gate. Although we didn't actually make it into Canyonlands, we did have breathtaking views of the park.

On May 17, it was off to the Ruby Inn campground near Brice. In the two and a half days we were there, we were able to see most of the park in spite of the rain on the second day. They have a shuttle service so the first day, we didn't even have to drive in. Unfortunately the service had not expanded out to the Bryce Point so we took that drive the third day after things dried out from the rain. We got some hiking in along the canyon rim and also through the hoodoos at Fairyland. Brice is known for it's hoodoos, which are tall pillars of rock formed by weathering and erosion.

On May 20, we headed for Zion. We had to go through the east entrance of the park to get to the Zion River Resort in Virgin, UT, a small town about 15 miles from the south entrance of the park. We had to pay \$10.00 to go through the 1.1 mile long tunnel. The reason being that due to our height and length, traffic must be stopped at the other end in order to let large rigs through. To keep from scraping the top of the tunnel, it is necessary to drive down the middle of the road. I guess the \$10.00 helps pay for the two rangers who have to coordinate the traffic through the

tunnel. It was quite an experience driving down the middle of the road in the dark tunnel which had several turns. They had us disconnect the Jeep so Roy had to follow and wasn't able to experience the drive with me. After we got settled at the RV park, we drove back into the park and back through the tunnel taking a hike which gave us a great overview of the winding road leading up to the tunnel. The next day, we drove into the park and caught the shuttle which took us up Zion Canyon to the River Walk and all points in between. No cars except those going to the Lodge are allowed on this road. Our first stop was the museum where we saw two little bucks...the velvet still on their little horns. So cute. We were able to listen to a ranger telling how the canyon was formed which was real interesting. After a lunch stop at the Grotto picnic area, we hopped back on the shuttle and headed for the river walk. It's neat walking up the canyon along the Virgin River watching the canyon narrow. Finally the trail ends and those who wish to continue to travel up the narrows, do so in the river. On a day where rain is possible, this is not advised due to possible cloud bursts and flooding. The sad part of Zion is they are in their seventh year of drought and many of the beautiful ferns that cover the canyon walls are dead or dying due to lack of water. The remainder of the day was spent hopping on and off shuttles as they made their way back to the information center where we started.

On May 22, we left National Park land and headed to Las Vegas. The next day, I played a little at Boulder Station which is two long blocks from our campground of Boulder Highway. That night we drove to Sam's Town about a mile and a half in the other direction. We enjoyed a nice meal in their restaurant at the Mystic Falls Indoor Park. We have eaten there many times and always enjoy it. On Saturday we took the bus into downtown where we transferred and continued down the strip. Boy it was crowded and hot. It was however the Memorial Day weekend. We played a little and then had dinner at Wolfgang Puck's Chinese restaurant in Caesar's Palace. It was getting dark after dinner so we caught the bus back to downtown where we enjoyed playing some more and watching the Fremont Street Experience a fantastic light show. We ended up seeing three of the shows. Roy's Chinese dinner wore off and he had a need for something spicy. Soooo, we got back on the bus and headed home, making a burrito and gambling stop at Boulder Station. After his second dinner we took the short walk home, arriving back at the RV park after noon. It was a long day but it sure was fun. On Sunday we enjoyed the Sunday Brunch at Boulder Station. After brunch I walked over to Sam's Town to play some more. Boy was it hot. I was doing pretty good so played until seven. Roy picked me up which was nice. It was still very hot outside. Monday, we jelled except for me doing the wash, cleaning the house and getting ready for the drive to San Diego the next day.

On May 27, we arrived in Poway at the Elks Lodge. It was quite a challenge getting Windy parked due to the narrow driveway but we made it. Had dinner at the Hamburger Factory in Old Poway with Jess, Karin and Eric. It was good to see them. We hadn't seen them since October. The next day, we had a very nice dinner with Jason. He was looking pretty good and things seem to be going well for him. On Thursday, we drove over to see Bruce and view his DVD project, converting the old 8mm films. It was neat seeing Jess as a baby and toddler. Bruce has also done our old movies and is still on the process of putting the package together. After that we joined him for a quick lunch after which we walked over to the Social Security office where we both applied for replacement Social Security cards. We had both lost ours. Then it was over to Del Mar to meet Derald and Kim for dinner at the Poseidon restaurant on the beach. I love that place. Roy and I shared their famous Pogo burger. It was just as good as I remembered from my single days. We had a very nice visit Derald and Kim. Friday, we met Bruce & Teri at the Brigatine in

Poway. They came over afterwards and we played Mexican Train. It was fun. Saturday Jess and Karin picked us up and took us to Carver's in Rancho Bernardo for a late celebration of our birthdays. It was great. We ended the evening enjoying a group in their lounge who played old rock and roll. Roy said they sure were good but boy were they ugly. Sunday night, we enjoyed a nice dinner at Dennis and Brigid's. They are such nice friends and we always seem to enjoy each other. Maybe they will meet us in Laughlin this winter. Monday, we had Marion, one of Roy's girlfriends from his single days, over for dinner. Interesting!!!!

June 3 was a day on our own so I tried to get caught up cleaning, washing, etc. Wednesday, Roy dropped me off at the Mall and he drove over to Bruce's to work on the computer. At 1:00pm, Roy, Bruce, Teri and I all met at the Maccaroni Grill at the Mall for a great lunch. The food and service was outstanding, however until the large lunch groups left, the noise was such that conversation between us was almost non-existent. After the crowd thinned, we really enjoyed our lunches and the great conversations the four of us always seem to have.

Thursday morning, we had to move the coach away from the Elk's building. The roofers were coming and keeping her near the building could have caused damage to her paint, etc. Derald and Kim came over for dinner on Thursday, two hours late. She didn't remember telling us they would be there at 2:00pm. Because of past experiences, we now realize that a call the day before we are getting together, just to confirm, will probably be prudent. By 5:00pm, we were able to move back to our parking spot.

Friday, we had to move again as the roofing job was not finished. We went to Costco to get supplies for the Smith/Leggitt picnic. We also stopped by Instant Reply hoping to run into Ted Gaasch. As it turned out we just missed him. He called later so we planned on meeting him and Connie at the Elephant Bar late afternoon. After a nice visit, we rushed back to the Elks Lodge to get the coach moved back into the parking spot. It was then time to huff it over to the bowling alley where we were meeting Jess, Karin and Eric. They passed us on the way, so waited for us at the next driveway and drove us the rest of the way to the bowling alley. We had such a grand time bowling with them. It was Karin's first time and she truly enjoyed the experience. We chose to use the rails which keeps the ball from going into the gutter. With Roy and I not having bowled for over seven years, Jess probably not for a long time, Karin never bowling before and Eric being a kid, it made the game much more enjoyable for us all. After bowling, we walked over to the Mexican restaurant next door for a nice dinner.

Just re-reading our visit to San Diego wares me out but our visit with everyone was great.

On June 7, we drove up to Wilderness Lakes and began getting ready for the Smith/Leggitt picnic the following day. The picnic went pretty well and we had quite a group of people. Bruce and Teri arrived early so that they could help us with the final duties like getting picnic tables moved over to the picnic area. Roy's pork burritos went over real well and all of the food brought by everyone else was delicious. We had time for a pretty nice visit with Roy Dean and Alan. Little Degan and Shane are growing into really cute boys. Even tho we don't see them very often, they act so loving to us and call us Grandma and Grandpa. Their big sister Kiona is turning into a very pretty and loving girl. Roy's Mom seemed to enjoy herself as did most of the other family members and friends. On Monday, we picked up Clara, Roy's mom and drove over to visit Uncle Jack and Aunt Maxine. Even tho she is pretty weak, she seemed real glad to visit with us all.

On June 11, it up to Acton where we were very lucky to find a parking spot right across the road from the trailers Kathleen, Vic and Mama will be staying in during the mini reunion. That afternoon to drove over to see Johnnie and Richard Wygant. Johnnie is Roy's cousin and the sister of Helen, who we had seen in Denver.

The next day we drove to Sylmar to see Mama. I took her shopping while Roy stayed in her room to work on his computer. That night we had dinner with Johnnie and Richard at the Sutter's Mill restaurant in Acton.

The next day Roy and I visited Costco and Albertson's to stock up for the reunion. That afternoon I drove over to pick up Mama and bring her back to stay with us for the next two nights. On Saturday, Dan and Haydee got in about 2:30 and found a spot quite near us. The five us enjoyed a nice BBQ chicken dinner that night.

On Saturday, Father's Day we all waited anxiously for the arrivals of Jess, Karin, Eric, Jeremy and Kristie.....Bruce and Teri.....Vic and Kathleen. As each car arrived, it was hugs, kisses and much activity as food, food and more food was brought out. We had a champagne toast to celebrate Jess and Karin's 15th wedding anniversary, Vic's graduation from the University of Arkansas and to all of the fathers. Eric popped up and said "and my birthday next month". He is turning 12 on July 2nd. We got him a 3/4 guitar which he seemed quite pleased with. After a dinner featuring Roy's pork burritos, we all shared in a Happy Father's Day cake. Mama who had been having a lot of pain in her neck previously, had no pain at all this day. She was having too much fun with everyone.

Kathleen stayed with Mama in her trailer. Not only was it good that they had quality time together, we didn't have to worry about something happening to her alone in the trailer and us not being aware that maybe she needed help.

On Tuesday night, we treated everyone to dinner at Sutter's Mill in Acton. It was a nice time. The next day, Dan and Haydee had to leave and then it was down to five.

On Thursday, June 19, it was time to take Mama home and head for Dan's. Poor Mama, she didn't want the reunion to end so she wasn't in any hurry to get ready to go that morning. By the time I got her home and got back to Roy and we got on the road, it was 11:00am. Even at that, we got to Dan's by 6:00pm which was pretty good time.

The next day it was off to Costco to stock up for the Osborne reunion and Daddy's 84th birthday party. We got over to Daddy's and began setting up the food, etc. We had promised Mom that she would not have to lift a finger and that us kids would take care of everything. Other than asking her things were after searching in vain, we kept our promise. In addition to food we brought from Costco, Vic had cooked up two pans of ribs. Boy were they good. Us kids had gone together to get Daddy a three wheel bike and it had been delivered in time for his birthday. In fact, he had already assembled it. He looked so cute riding it around while we all took bunches of pictures. Sege even took a ride in the basket.....sooo cute. Vic and Kathleen, Jeff's family, my cousins Drew and Stanley, Uncle Roy and Aunt Jean, Dan's, us and of course Daddy and Mom all enjoyed Daddy's birthday celebration.

The next day, we enjoyed steak on the BBQ. Jeff was nice enough to take over the cooking duties. That night, we gathered at Dan's dining room table for a game of Mexican Train. Roy was the first to peel off and head for bed, Jeff the second. The rest of us hung on till the bitter end. I sure do enjoy that game. On Sunday we went to Dan's church where Dan, Kathleen, Haydee and I sang a song that Mom had requested. I, coming down with a cold or allergies, had a real horse voice, so I stayed in the background, trying not to be heard. Dan, Kathleen and Haydee had insisted that I not back out. After church we got going with an early dinner/late lunch as Jeff, Kelly, and Amanda had to leave early. Daddy and Mom tired from the three days of activities also left early, leaving Kathleen with us. It was off to the casino for gambling fun with my brother Dan, Haydee and sister Kathleen. We took separate cars as Danny and Haydee couldn't stay too long as he had paper work to catch up on. Kathleen did real well, not winning but not losing either. I lost \$170 but sure did enjoy the evening.

On Monday, all of the reunions, picnics, parties and get-together's behind us, Roy and I get on the road again and head over the Sierra Nevada Mountains, across the San Joaquin Valley to the foot hills and the Morgan Hill Thousand Trails Preserve. Four days later we drove the 50 miles to the San Benito Preserve near Hollister.

After finding our spot, and got set up, we started to experience problems with the air conditioner. It kept cutting out. It was about 105 degrees and this was not a good thing. After checking several things, Roy discovered that we were not getting enough volts from the power box to run the air conditioner. So, we started the generator which we kept going all afternoon. That evening, after learning that the temperature was going up to 108 degrees the next day, we discussed moving to the coast. Unfortunately, we were looking at trying to find a place during a holiday weekend and the mail had already been sent out to arrive the following Monday. The next morning, with trusty volt meter in hand, Roy set out to try and find a spot with adequate voltage to keep the air conditioner running. He was successful so we moved. Luckily, the heat wave broke and the temperatures dropped to the mid 80's. Much more comfortable I must say. I'm glad we stuck it out as we have really enjoyed this park. It has a real nice adult pool and nature trails. We tried to walk by 8:00am which was very comfortable.

One day after arriving at the adult pool, and getting settled down with our books, we noticed a young couple in the pool that were doing a lot of thrusting and moaning. The several other couples at the pool were trying hard not to take notice. After the pool, they moved to the spa which really upset an old gentlemen. They were depriving him of his therapy. After they finished, they both left and you could almost hear a great sound of relief coming from all of us old folks. Pretty soon the girl came back asking each couple if they had jumper cables. Even tho we thought we had.....Roy shock his head no. I thought I had heard her say she had some that maybe would work. My thought was to help them so they would not come back and repeat the previous exhibition. I went out and positioned the Jeep for the jump. We'll, her cables were in such bad shape, we couldn't get enough juice to turn over her starter. When we went back to retrieve our cables they were not there. Guess we had left them in the Talon two years earlier. Luckily, someone came along in a truck with cables. In two shacks they were on their way. The next day we decided to try the family pool. Of course it was full of screaming, wild eyed kids. Roy went in briefly. When he got out I asked him, which was worse, a swimming pool with kids pee or adults semen. A wicked grin crossed his face.

The preserve is teeming with critters, furry and those with feathers. Lot's of different birds which include hawks, quail, the curious magpies and cute black and white woodpeckers with what resembles a scarlet yarmulke (skull cap) on top of their heads. We've see countless Cotton tail rabbits, ground and tree squirrels, several deer and a fawn, and even a bobcat. Our first sighting of the bobcat was his tail end as he stealthily creeped into the brush. Our approach had interrupted his stalking of several quail. The next sighting however was all of him doing what looked like "the bobcat gallop" as he crossed a field and then the road right in front of us. Roy managed to get his picture before he disappeared behind some trees.

On July 10, it was back to Morgan Hill for four days. On Friday we drove to the Monterey Peninsula to see the Monterey Bay Aquarium. We enjoyed the exhibits and the program held in the auditorium with movies of the aquariums exploration of the deep sea. The Monterey Canyon off the shore runs two miles deep. They do the exploration using a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) which was guided by operators in the control room on the boat. Using their trusty joy sticks, the guide they ROV down through the canyon reaching depths of two miles. There was one wing of the aquarium devoted to deep sea critters and the exploration of the canyon. Quite fascinating. Before heading home, we had an early dinner at Fish Hopper, a nice restaurant overlooking the bay. We were kept entertained watching the sea lions, trying to nap on the rocks. The tide was coming in so the waves were getting higher. As they heard the waves approach, they would lift their tails trying to keep them dry. It was just too funny.

On July 14, we left Morgan Hill and headed for Windsor, which is a little north of Santa Rosa. The plan was to travel east and then north of the bay and rejoin Hwy 101 after San Francisco and the Gold Gate Bridge. Well, as I said the plan was.....that is not what happened. Somehow we missed our planned route and ended up on the Oakland Bay Bridge. We asked the very nice toll taker if there was a way we could get turned around. Since our destination Windsor was on 101, he advised us just to continue over the bridge into San Francisco and follow the signs to the Golden Gate. Well, getting through the streets of San Francisco was a puckering experience. The lanes are not wide enough, especially with trucks and cars parked along the entire route. Thank gosh the route was well marked pointing out in advance every turn we needed to make. To avoid side swiping parked cars, I took more than my share of the road and needless to say, no one tried to fight me for it. We made it without incident and were very glad to get parked in Windsor. CA.

Our stay in Windsor, 50 miles north of San Francisco was nice. We were invited to go sailing with one of Roy's OCS buddies on Saturday. The boat was about 27 feet long and had a galley area, bathroom(head) dining area and living area combine plus sleeping areas both forward and aft. We sailed out from their marina at the north end of San Francisco Bay to Angel Island in the Bay. Angel Island was the west coast Ellis Island, only at Angel Island, the immigrants were oriental. We didn't sail as long as originally planned as the winds were quite high and Phillip, the skipper, finally had to bring the sails in and do the remainder of the trip on engin power. Just before he made this decision, a gust hit us laying us on her side. We found ourselves hanging on for dear life staring at the icy cold bay about a foot from the railing. We all breathed a sigh of relief when the sails were safely in and we were under way via the motor. That night, we enjoyed a delightful wine tasting dinner at Phillip and Katherine's Yacht Club. It was fun hobnobbing it with the boat folks

The following Tuesday we drove the jeep to Larkspur where we parked her in the parking lot and took the ferry into San Francisco. We stayed about two blocks from Fisherman's Wharf. Of course we had to do all of the touristy stuff, like having a bowl of clam chowder on the pier, a ride on the trolley car, dinner at Tarantinos on the wharf, listening to music at a night club, using the street cars and the subway getting to and from down town and China Town and a city tour in a motorized cable car. We also visited the historic vessels at Hyde Street Pier. Five vessels, Alma, Balclutha, Eureka, Hercules and C.A. Thayer, all designated National Historic Landmarks, are on display. We had a nice early dinner in China Town at the Cathay House. The walls were covered with pictures of the owner and lots of VIP's like President Clinton, President Bush, Mayor Willy Brown, Governor Pete Wilson along with sports stars and movie stars. As we sat looking out the window, a SUV pulled up and parked. I was a little concerned as the driver didn't turn his wheels into the curb. The street was extremely steep. All four people piled out and went to the back to get their stuff. As they opened the hatch, suitcases and brief cases tumbled out, smashing to the ground while papers were sent flying all over the sidewalk and street. Even tho I felt badly for the people, I couldn't help but smile as we watched everyone running about snatching papers out of the air and off of the ground. After our meal, we caught the street car back to the wharf, picked up our luggage and caught another street car back to the ferry. We decided that one night was not enough so next time, we'll spend at least two nights. It was a great little get-away. The day before we left Windsor, we took an 80 mile loop drive through the Russian River wine country area, over to Bodega Bay where we had an early dinner at The Tides restaurant on the bay.

On July 28, we continued north up the coast of California spending one night on the beach at a State Park. The next day we stopped for breakfast at a casino just south of the Oregon border. After breakfast, we played for a short while before continuing on into Oregon. We arrived at the South Jetty Thousand Trails where we spent six nights. One day we drove into the old section of Florence which is located on the bay and spent some time walking down the streets of this quaint little town. The fishing boats were coming in and the fishermen were bringing off their catch of salmon, handing them over to the salmon butcher who cut them up into what ever the fishermen wanted. The Sea Lions anxiously waited for the guts to be tossed into the water. The heads were saved for the crabbers who use them in their traps to attract the crabs. There were several crabbers tossing their traps into the bay and after waiting a certain amount of time, would haul them up hoping for a good catch. While we were watching however, more were being tossed back then those that were kept. The Sea Lions lounging on floating docks were, as usual, very interesting to watch. There was always one trying to squeeze into a spot of the dock causing the ones already in place to bark and snap at the newcomer, usually causing him to fall back into the water.

Our next stop was Whaler's Rest, south of Newport. We were able to visit with Roy's Nephew Lance and family and niece Shelly, and her husband. My son Jess and Karin decided to refinance their mortgage we were carrying the papers for, and get some extra money to do some home improvements. We decided to take some of the money and get us a new Jeep Grand Cherokee Overland. The dealer in Newport only had one in stock, pearl black, and it was exactly what we wanted. After an afternoon of negotiations we finally settled on the price and since the kids escrow hadn't closed yet, arranged for a short term loan. We were so lucky to be in Newport where Lance was able to get us a new tow bar and get the hardware installed on the Jeep for us. We got the style where the actual tow bar stays on the coach. We were so busy getting the new

Jeep purchased and getting her ready for travel, we didn't spend too much time sight seeing. We did take the short drive to see the Sea Lion Cave which actually did have a few of them still there. The majority we down on the beach enjoying the sunshine. We also took an afternoon to see the Oregon Coast Aquarium. This was much different than the one in Monterey Bay Aquarium. There is a large section where the visitors walk through clear tubes allowing views of the fish and other critters, on the sides and above the tube. There are also sections where you can see down through thick glass. That was a weird feeling standing and being able to look down to see the sea creatures. We enjoyed the other exhibits as well, sea otters, sea birds, etc. Whalers Rest is across the street from the beach, so we did get a few beach walks in.

On August 18, we hook up our new Jeep to the back of Windy and continued up the coast to Pacific City. Again, we are across the street from the beach which afforded some nice walks. Pacific City is the home of the Dory fishing fleet. A dory is a sturdy fishing boat....the reason being is that when they dock, they come into the beach at full throttle which puts them past the water many feet onto the sand. Then the truck and trailer are driven down to the beached boat, hocking it onto the wench and pulling it up onto the trailer. One day, while we were waiting for some of the Dory's to come in, a large rubber boat with divers pulled close to the shore. One of the divers jumped of and walked up to retrieve a pretty red jeep and a trailer. He backed the trailer into the surf to retrieve the large rubber boat. The three remaining men with the boat tried desperately to get the boat onto the trailer. The waves were frequent and strong and the boat quite heavy. They signaled the man in the Jeep to back further into the surf. Not a good idea. He immediately became stuck. With the boat finally tied onto the trailer, the next task was to try and get the Jeep unstuck. Young burly men tried in vain to push and pull them free. Next a pickup came down to help and attached a rope to the Jeep. Now we have a stuck Jeep and a stuck pickup. Finally, another pickup came down and attached a winch to the other, pulling him free. In the middle of all of this, Dory's are beginning to come in. It was hard to know what to watch. Next, the pickup driver attached the winch to the Jeep, which by this time was pretty deep into the water. After failing to pull both of them out, they detached the Jeep from the trailer. After getting the Jeep free, the winch was attached to the trailer with the rubber boat. With all safe out of the surf, our attention went back to watching the Dory's beach themselves. It was an interesting afternoon.

One morning while in Pacific City, we took a three capes scenic drive which included Cape Kiwanda, Cape Lookout and Cape Mears. Unfortunately the sun didn't shine that day but the coast was still beautiful..The route took us into Tillamook so we decided to tour the cheese factory.

On September 1, we headed for our last coastal stop, Seaside, Oregon. Seaside is a tourist town with lots of shops, restaurants and amusement businesses. One weekend Seaside was hosting a huge hot rod show. There were sure a lot of old cars in beautiful condition. The RV park had a casino night and we enjoyed playing 21 with pretend money. After playing for a couple of hours, they had a auction so we were able to use our winnings to buy stuff. We got a coupon for dinner for two at a neat restaurant called Big Foot. We also got a pretty scarf which will make a nice gift. One day we had to drive into Astoria to get our travel pass renewed for the Jeep. Hopefully we will get the tags from Texas before we get back into California.

On September 21, we're off again, this time making a quick stop in Beaverton to meet with my

nephew Bobby and family. Bobby found a shopping mall next to a restaurant where we could park the coach. We had such a nice visit with them. After lunch, they came over to the coach for while.



Then, it was down to Salem where we attended the Monaco Rally. We got a call from Mary and Dan a couple we had met at Pacific City who were also attending the rally. We all went out to dinner that night at a interesting bar/restaurant.



The next three days, we were wined, dined and entertained by the Monaco Corporation. There were lots of seminars to attend, plus people available to make repairs to our coaches. By the last dinner, our party of four had turned into ten.



Everyone really seemed to



have a good time....I know we did.

On September 19, we left the Rally and headed for the Seven Feathers casino in Canyon Land, Oregon. We enjoyed an excellent dinner and fantastic service in their restaurant. The next day, after breakfast we drove down to Golden and the KOA RV park there. That night we had dinner on the Rogue River with Roy's half sister, Lucile. The next day we had Lucile and her daughter, Patsy, along with Roy's other half sister Meryle and her husband Jim over for dinner. We had a great visit with all of them.

On the 22 to drove over to Reno where we spent the night at the RV Park at Boomtown. The next day it was off to the Carson Valley Casino RV Park. Dan and Haydee stopped by after work and we all went over to Katy's for dinner.

The next two days were spent in Yerington, NV visiting my Daddy, Mom Tommi, Uncle Roy and Aunt Jean. We were able to park in the RV part of the Mobile Home Park where Daddy and Mom lives. They had just harvested a huge field of onions across the street. Daddy said that Yerington is turning into quite an onion growing community.

On September 26, we drove over to the Walker River RV Resort in Smith Valley, where we spent the weekend with Dan, Haydee, Jeff, Kelly, Amanda and two of Amanda's friends. The girls had games in Carson City to play and Jeff had one to coach on Saturday, so they were up bright and early that morning. They were back by late afternoon. Dan supplied the dinner on Friday night, Roy and I did the dinner on Saturday night and Jeff and Kelly cooked a huge

breakfast on Sunday morning. That worked out pretty well having each family in charge of a meal. It was a real fun weekend.

On September 29, Roy and I were off to Acton and the Soladad Thousand Trails. On the 30th, I picked up Mama and brought her back to the coach and then shopping. That night we took her to the Outback. She enjoys eating there. The next day, she had an Angiogram scheduled which came out ok.

On October 2, we drove down to Lake Elsinor where we enjoyed camping with our Del Pacifico camping club for the weekend. It was so good to see everyone again. It had been almost a year since we were last able to join them.

On Sunday, the 5th, we got situated at the Wilderness Lakes Thousand Trails, we drove over to Roy's Moms for a family get-together. Unfortunately, Vince, one of Roy's nephew's fell through a deck floor outside causing a deep gash on his shin....Ouch! There was plenty of first aid givers so he chose not to go to urgent care until after dinner and a strong shot of booze and he is not even a drinker ...

On October 8, I drove up to San Fernando to pick up Mama and bring her back with us. Our new Jeep is such a delight to drive.

On October 9, we drove down to the Escondido RV Resort where we stayed for two weeks. That night Bruce and Teri came over for Pizza and we did the final planning for Mama's 84th birthday party which is being held at their home. The next day, it was off to Costco to get the party food, etc. That night, we took Mama over to Jess and Karin's. She spent two nights with them. The next day, it was back to Costco to pick up cake and the rest of the deli food for the party.



Mama's party was a total success with about 35 members of family and friends in attendance. She had such a good time as well as the rest of us. The weather was perfect....a beautiful day.

On Sunday I picked up Mama from Jess and Karin's and brought her back to the coach. We spent the afternoon with Jason, my youngest son. Roy cooked a nice prime rib, Jason's favorite dinner. It was a great visit.

On Monday, October 13, I drove Mama home, stopping for lunch on the way. She still was talking about her visit with us and her party.

The rest of the two weeks in Escondido, we enjoyed visits with Derald and Kim, Dennis and Brigid, Jess and Karin, Bruce and Teri and Ted and Connie. As usual our San Diego visit was packed full of lots of good times with good friends and family.

On October 23, it was off to Palm Springs for nine nights. We did the normal stocking up for the winter at Costco, and Trader Joe's. On November we left Palm Springs and drove over to Quartzsite for two nights of sitting in the desert. On the 3rd, we got back to our winter home at Emerald Cove and spent two weeks right on the river. It was very pleasant sitting in our patio watching the slow moving river flow by. The quite would periodically be shattered by a boat speeding by, some pulling water skiers.

After two weeks enjoying the river, we pulled up stakes and headed for Casa Grande where we met up with Ray, Martie, Ray, Vicki, Bill and Gail, OCS's RV'er friends. We had a nice get-together with the group. On the 19th, Roy and I took off for the Verde Valley TTN in Cottonwood, AZ. We played tourist one day, visiting Montezuma Castle and Montezuma Well not far from our campground. The castle was build by Sinagua farmers in the early 12th century. It's quite impressive clinging to the side of the cliff about 100 feet above the valley floor. I drove over to the casino a couple of afternoons and Roy and I drove over one evening and enjoyed a delightful dinner in their restaurant, called the Storyteller. The service and food were exceptional.

On November 24, we found our way back to Emerald Cove where we found a real nice spot with a nice view of the desert hills. Roy got me a spotting scope which is kept at the ready on the dash of the coach. We can see all four of our pyramids. We are hoping to catch a view of a burro or two before leaving.

On December 9, we drove over to Laughlin for two nights at the Flamingo. We had a spacious room with a view of the Colorado River. As usual I enjoyed playing the machines. They paid for our room and gave us a \$70 credit. I guess I don't put enough money into the machines to comped fully. Anyway we had a real nice time.

Christmas was quiet with me cooking our dinner as I have the past few years.