

We wish you a happy and prosperous New Year!

Greetings from Yuma, Arizona. We've been on the road full time for just about a month and what a month it's been. The last time you heard from us, we were on our way out of Northern California. We made a one night stop at the Elks Lodge in **Lodi** which was very nice, and then a one night stop in a truck stop in **Bakersfield** which wasn't so nice. The third and fourth nights, however, we spent at the Silver Saddle Resort and Spa which was incredible. The resort is in the middle of nowhere in the Mojave Desert, 12 miles northeast of **California City**. This area is barren desert filled with motorcycle riders. Actually, it's not too far from Red Rock Canyon where Chuck and his old buddies used to ride their dirt bikes. The Silver Saddle is literally an oasis with lakes, streams, trees, and green grass. It's a full service resort and spa with every amenity. Nice bar, good food, hair and nail salon, facials, massages, hotel and RV park, boating, horseshoes, swimming pools, horseback riding, bicycle rentals, tennis, archery, skeet and trap shooting, petting zoo, and more. We both got great, but rather pricey haircuts there.



Chuck and Annika



Restaurant and duck pond at Silver Saddle Resort

The next day was an extremely interesting drive through desert and mountains on Highway 247 to the Elks Lodge in **Yucca Valley**. This is a very friendly lodge and we had good drinks and an excellent short rib dinner. The bartender was a wealth of local information. This area is interesting and we were tempted to stay a few days and look around, but the urge to travel overwhelmed us and we were off in the morning.

The next stop was Catalina Spa and RV Resort in **Desert Hot Springs**, right next to Palm Springs. This is a truly great park with natural hot springs feeding two nice swimming pools and hot tubs. We had made reservations for 4 nights, but we had so much fun we stayed for 7. Our old friends from Weaverville, **Jim and Pat Augustson**, have a winter home in Palm Springs and they picked us up in their car. We had a great lunch with them and toured around Palm Springs. Another afternoon we took the motorcycle and drove to the **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway**. The tram is spectacular and rises 6,000 feet in 10 minutes up a sheer cliff. At the top, which is about 8,500 feet, is a bar, restaurant, and interpretive center for the lovely San Jacinto National Park. It's all quite unusual. One minute you are in the warm, dry desert and 10 minutes later you are in a green and lush National Park with lakes, streams, and snow. The tram car that takes you up is extremely unusual in that it slowly revolves as it makes the climb. So no matter where you are in the tram, you see all of the sights. Since Chuck is afraid of heights, it was a whole lot more than he wanted to see.



Tram car at the base station



Looking toward the Salton Sea from the top of the tram



Palm Springs from the top of the tram

Another afternoon, we took the motorcycle into Palm Springs for a matinee performance of the **Palm Springs Follies**. This is one wonderful show, in a beautiful old theater. It's sort of a cross between an old Vaudeville show and a Las Vegas showgirl production. The cast is incredible. They can dance and they can sing, and they entertained us for 3 1/2 hours with two 15 minute breaks. If you like real talent and "long legged lovelies," this is the show for you. But there is a catch. All of the men and women in this production are professionals from a bygone era. In short, they are old and damn proud of it. Their ages ranged from about 60 to 82! Both the men and women are extremely attractive, energetic, and vivacious. These hotties do 8 shows a week! It's mind blowing! If you get to Palm Springs, see this show. It's pricey, but worth every penny.

Another afternoon, we took the motorcycle to Palm Desert and then on to Highways 74 and 371. Highway 74 climbs straight up on a narrow, winding path through the San Fernando National Forest. On the map, it didn't look too tough or too far according to Donna. Good grief, was she wrong. This wasn't a motorcycle ride, it was a Kamikaze adventure. We darn near froze to death. We wanted to go see an Escapees RV park near the town of **Aguanga**, California. To call Aguanga a town is to really exaggerate. The nearest real town is Temecula which is about another 20 miles west. Our motorcycle/RV friends, **Earl and Virginia**, whom we met in Redding, are trying to purchase a spot in this park and raved about it. That's why we had to see it. But foolishly, we left Desert Hot Springs at about 2:00 in the afternoon. We didn't get to Aguanga until after 4:00 and the sun was starting to set. We spent 10 minutes in the park and then headed for home as fast as we could go. We didn't want to make the ride down into Palm Desert in the dark. The road is steep, winding, and has thousand foot drop offs without guard rails. The ride up the mountain was cold, the ride down was freezing. We were really happy to get back to the coach in the dark, but alive. Boy, we haven't had that much fun since we went on a dinner ride in Redding with Earl and Virginia and got absolutely soaked in a killer downpour.

While we were at Catalina RV Resort in Desert Hot Springs, we met a super fun bunch of Canadians that were very experienced in RV fun. They took us into their group and we just had a ball. **Lyle and Marge**, thanks for the education and please say hello to the rest of your gang. Lyle and Marge told us about another fun resort that was only about a mile away. So after we had used up our week at Catalina, we moved to Desert Pools RV Resort.

We had a referral coupon from Lyle and Marge and so we got 4 free nights for taking the tour. We have looked at a lot of ownership park deals and generally we have been unimpressed. This was very different and we actually bought into Western Horizons Resorts. This has been a great deal for us. Western Horizons owns 23 resorts and is associated with Resorts of Distinction which gives us access to another 70 or so. Here's the great part. We can stay for up to 21 days in one of these resorts for free. Then we can move to another resort and spend 21 days free, and on and on. If we're crazy about the first resort, we can stay out a week and then go right back for another 21 free days. There are almost no limits to this, and these are deluxe 5 star resorts with all kinds of amenities. Wow, for a full time RVer, this is an unbelievable deal. We put down \$800 and financed another \$4,000 at 8%. Our monthly payments are less than what our park fees would have been! We're saving money now and in 18 months, we'll be living free all over the U.S. and some parts of Canada and Mexico. **If you would like a free 5 day, 4 night stay in any Western Horizon Resort, drop us a note and we'll mail you a free referral pass.** You can check out these resorts online at www.westernhorizonresorts.com.

Finally, if you think that living in an RV prevents decorating for Christmas, think again. The parks we've visited in December were not short of Christmas spirit.



Just a taste of Christmas the RV way

We have so much more to share with you, but this letter is already getting too long. In the next issue, we'll tell you about our 10 day adventure in Mexico.

Until next time, our home is where we park it.

Chuck & Donna