

**Happy Labor Day and greetings from Green Acres RV Park in Redding, California.**

After a brief visit to Yellowstone National Park, we headed back toward Northern California. We left Yellowstone via the South entrance which took us back into Grand Teton National Park. We picked up Highway 26 going West and headed for **Jackson, Wyoming**. This area is also known as Jackson Hole and is quite spectacular. This route takes you right by Grand Teton.



**Grand Teton is the tall peak in the center.**

Donna was very anxious to see Jackson, but the little scenic town was packed with tourists. The shops were overflowing with people, the sidewalks were jammed, and there was no place to park our rig. Rats, we had planned to have lunch in Jackson.

Chuck gave up and drove straight through.



Chuck driving through Jackson. Notice the antler arch entrance to the town park.

Leaving Jackson we followed the Snake River west. We parked along the Snake and had lunch while watching kayakers come down the river. It was a very nice stop. From there it was an interesting drive to the Palisades Reservoir. The reservoir had some interesting camping, but it was just too early in the day to stop. We pressed on to **Idaho Falls, Idaho** where we knew we could stay at an Elks Lodge. The lodge had power and water. We had enough power to only run one air conditioner, but that was good enough. Hey, the bar was cool and the first drink was free.

The next morning we continued on toward **Boise, Idaho**. Our hope was to hook up with **Diana**, an old friend of Chuck's from Trinity County, California. Happily, we tracked her down living in the town of **Meridian**, a little West of Boise. We settled down at the Playground RV Park in Meridian and Diana picked us up in her car and took us to dinner at Outback. What a lovely evening. For Chuck, it was really fun to see Diana again and it was Donna's chance to meet her. We had a great time.

It would have been great to detour north to **McCall, Idaho**, to see our old friends, **Tim and Marilyn**. But, alas, time was running out and we needed to get back to California to take yet another class. California requires an additional class if you wish to sell annuities which is our primary business.

So, on the morning of August 8, we left the Boise area and headed for **Baker City, Oregon**, via I-84. The freeway to Baker City is a bit desolate, but Baker City itself is a very interesting little historic town on the original Oregon Trail. We would have liked to spend more time there, including visiting the

National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, but once again we needed to press on. Our intention was to head up into the mountains looking for greenery and cooler weather. So we loaded up on very expensive diesel and headed west on Highway 7 and then 26. Folks, this is two lane back road country and if you're in a real hurry, you don't want to go this way. On the other hand, it's beautiful, high, green, and has plenty of logging trucks. Along this route there are many small campgrounds. Unfortunately, small is the operative word. We spent hours driving through this country and couldn't find any camping spots big enough to take our rig. Finally, we came down out of the mountains to the interesting little town of **John Day, Oregon**.

Everything in this area is named John Day. There's the John Day Highway, the John Day museum, the John Day River, etc., etc., etc. But you know what is weird? John Day never got to this area. Hey, there is an interesting story here. More later. Just a little west of the town of John Day is an absolute oasis of an Oregon State Park. It's called **Clyde Holliday**. It's small, green, and gorgeous! We immediately got a beautiful pull through, settled in, and then the rain poured down hard. Unfortunately, we didn't get any photos as it was raining too hard to go outside. Yes, it was beautiful in the morning, but we forgot to take pictures. The park is on a gorgeous river also. This is one of the nicest parks we've ever been in.

In the morning we fired up our trusty diesel and continued west on Highway 26. We hadn't gone very far when we saw a sign pointing to the **John Day Fossil Beds** visitor center. What the heck. It was only a few miles off the highway and sounded interesting. Wow! Interesting is an understatement. The visitor center is actually a very modern, first cabin, paleontology research center. This is an incredibly interesting stop. Great movie, wonderful exhibits, and live work going on behind glass. If that's not enough, it's all free! Don't miss it. The research center is part of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Folks, this is a big deal.

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument protects one of the longest and most continuous records of evolutionary change and biotic relationships in North America. Here scientists have unearthed countless fossils of land plants and animals dating back 6 to 54 million years as well as evidence of the dramatic climatic changes that have occurred. The monument includes over 14,000 acres found in 3 widely separated units, the Sheep Rock Unit, Painted Hills Unit, and Clarno Unit. All 3 units are in the John Day River Basin, a major tributary of the Columbia River and the longest undammed river that flows into the Columbia today.



**Blue Basin in John Day Fossil Beds.**



**Cleaning fossils at the visitor center.**

Okay, so who was John Day? At the visitor center there is a short cryptic sign that says that John Day was "a person of no importance" to this region. We almost dropped our teeth. Talk about blunt!

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument is named after the river and not the man. Still, how was the river named? John Day was born in Culpeper County, Virginia, about 1770. It was said that John Day was well over six feet tall and an expert shot with a rifle. In 1810, at the age of 40, he joined an

overland expedition to establish a fur trading post at the mouth of the Columbia River. The party became divided and widely separated. Experiencing hardships, John Day's group dwindled to two people. He and Ramsey Crooks eventually reached the mouth of the Mah-hah River along the Columbia. There, a band of American Indians took everything they had, including their clothes. They were rescued and reached Astoria (Oregon) in 1812, where he settled nearby. Due to this incident, people traveling along the Columbia River would point out the mouth of the river where John Day was robbed. By the 1850's, the Mah-hah River was referred to and renamed the John Day River. If you name the mouth of a river, you name every stretch of it upstream. It appears John Day never came within 100 miles of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, or the town of John Day for that matter. The truth is stranger than fiction in this case.

So, we left the fossil beds in the afternoon of August 9 heading for **Redmond, Oregon**. At Redmond, we turned south on Highway 97 heading for **La Pine, Oregon**. La Pine is our official Oregon residence and we wanted to visit our "home." It was a long shot, but we called our friends, **Marty and Diane**, in Hillsboro, Oregon to see if they were coming south to La Pine. By golly, they were. So we settled down in La Pine and sure enough, our friends showed up the next morning. We all had dinner together that night and it was just so much fun. So after two nights in La Pine, we headed back to Northern California.

After leaving La Pine, we went straight to **Trinity County, California** and settled into the Indian Creek RV Park in **Douglas City**. That gave us the opportunity to visit with our old friend, **Dave**, who lives in the park. The next night it was off to **Weaverville** to celebrate with our friends, **Dan and Gail**. It was Dan's 50th birthday and it was quite a party. We can't tell you more. We have to protect the guilty.

Are you seeing a trend here? It's been amazing. We sold our home a couple of years ago and went on the road full time, but we've seen more old friends than ever before. What a treat this traveling is. Our friends, **Dean and Tere**, said that they thought we were having the time of our lives, and that turns out to be exactly true.

The next morning we treated our hangovers and drove ever so carefully over Buckhorn Summit and back down into Redding. We fueled up, loaded up on propane, shopped for groceries, and finally arrived at Green Acres RV Park and our park host space number 25. Since it was Sunday afternoon, and Sundays are normally our days to cover the park, we sent our boss, **Ron**, home and settled back into taking care of the park. So that's where we are now and we welcome any and all of our friends to come and visit us. We expect to be here for at least six weeks and perhaps a lot longer.

Once back in Redding, we have gone back to selling more of our stuff from storage. We still have a professional, heart rate controlled treadmill, and a large professional copy machine with all the bells and whistles. We are ready to cut super deals on these two items. It's better for us to sell them very cheap than to continue paying rent on the storage shed. If you're interested, we have flyers.

Donna has completed the California class in annuities and so she is up and running in the insurance business. Our RV friends, **Jerry and Judy**, were gracious enough to allow us to show them our retirement plans. They were impressed enough to become our first customer. This was a very exciting and emotional moment for us. We have spent seven months and over \$10,000 getting this business off the ground. It's a good feeling to see it work, at least for Donna. The State of California lost Chuck's fingerprints and then did nothing about it. We tracked down the problem and had a second set submitted. Guess what? They appear to have lost a second set. Chuck is in limbo. He can't get a California license until they process the fingerprints. Without the license, he can't take California's special class on annuities. So far, California always manages to take the money, but they sure haven't been delivering the goods. So what else is new? Oh well, we will straighten it out somehow no matter how long it takes. In the meantime, Donna is helping clients achieve their retirement goals and minimize their taxes.

Until next time, home is where you park it.

Chuck & Donna