

Dear Friends & Relatives, Friday, May 20, 2005

Well, we finally did it. We actually took a trip just for the fun of it. No work issues, and no improvements to the motorhome. Wow, fun is a lot tougher than we realized. We know how to work 7 days a week, but partying 7 days a week is a whole new ball game.

We left Trinity County on Friday, May 6, and spent most of that day running errands in Redding. In the evening we went out to dinner with Redding area friends, Roger and Donna, and had a wonderful evening with them. The next day, we went to a dance party in Redding and wore ourselves all out. Sunday, we drove to Oregon House, California, and spent two nights checking out Lake of the Springs Preserve which is one of the Thousand Trails resorts. A membership to Thousand Trails is \$7,000 and we passed. Lake of the Springs is an amazing RV resort covering 950 acres plus 150 acre lake. It's really quite an interesting RV destination. However, if one really wanted to join, you can find memberships on Ebay at less than one half of the regular price.

On Tuesday, we rolled down to the Clear Lake area and spent a lovely evening with Chuck's cousins, Paul and Ellie. There are no two finer people on the planet. Their only fault was to overfeed us and make us drink too much wine. They set the tone for the rest of our trip.

On Wednesday, we drove west on Highway 20 to the wine country and parked for the night at Sho-Ka-Wah Indian Casino in Hopland. Parking is free, no hookups, generous slot machines, cheap drinks, and okay food. The 99 cent breakfast is a great bargain.

On Thursday we drove to Santa Rosa and set up camp in the little known RV park at the Sonoma County fairgrounds. Our purpose in Santa Rosa was to enjoy the wedding of Jason and Annika Clough. Jason is the youngest son of our old, but deceased buddy, Jerry. Thursday night Jason and Annika threw a wonderful BBQ at their home in Cotati. For us, it was an amazing event. Annika is half Swedish and half Japanese. Five of her relatives flew over from Sweden. Hearing the Swedish accents and trying a little Swedish was a trip down memory lane for Chuck as his mother was Swedish. Donna also had an unexpected treat. She had worked at IRS with Annika's father and some of the other wedding guests. So Donna also had a trip down memory lane. At least one of the retired IRS guys had also been in Chuck's class so more memory lane. It was hard to sleep that night with memories flying left and right. On Friday we all hopped in a huge chartered limo for a tour of the wine country. Wine tasting all day complimented by a ton of food in the limo was another super fun, but tiring day. We were worn out and declined to go to the rehearsal dinner that night. Saturday was the wedding and what a fun and beautiful wedding it was. The groom is a fireman and he and his men arrived in tuxedos on an antique fire engine. What an entrance. The bride was incredibly beautiful in her white dress and arrived in a white carriage pulled by a white horse. Hey, do these kids have a sense of drama or what? It was a beautiful outdoor wedding followed by a wonderful dinner and of course a lot more wine. They had a great disc jockey so we had to dance until the end of the day. This fun thing was

really tiring. We fell into bed exhausted.

Sunday morning we broke camp and headed north to the town of Windsor to see Ken and Sally Thompson, old and dear friends of Chuck for more than 48 years. We hadn't seen them in many, many years. We got a tour of their area and a nice lunch. The wine country and the nearby coastal town of Bodega Bay could easily have kept us busy for a week. We've got to go back and spend more time with Ken and Sally. Once again, it was another trip down memory lane. Sunday afternoon we headed back north to the Indian Casino in Hopland. Once again, fell into bed exhausted.

Monday morning it was north to Ukiah, then east to Williams on Interstate 5, then north to Redding. The next three nights were in the Redding Elks RV parking. We were trying to work, but it took about three days to recover from all the fun we'd had.

Well that's it for that trip. We learned that we need to slow up a bit and not book so much fun in so short a time.

Until next time, home is where you park it.

With love,

Chuck & Donna