

Dear Friends,

Greetings again from **Blaine, Washington**.

We are happy to report that we now have our Olympic games addiction under partial control. We've cut way back. Now we are only watching 4 to 5 hours a day. Since we use a digital video recorder to record everything first and then watch our own playback, we can fast forward through all the commercials. But even with that time saving device, we're still glued to the tube at least 4 hours a day.

We are now staying in a much nicer RV park in Blaine, Washington. This one is called **NACO West at Birch Bay**. There is the old section which is right near the swimming pool, dining hall, and clubhouse, and the newer, "second phase" section. The tent campers and those with small children want to be near the pool so they are mostly in the first section. That works out great for the old people with big rigs who want to be in the second section. This is a darn nice park with lots of grass and plenty of room between RVs. It's a huge improvement over last week.

So back to the travelogue. After the east side of the Cascades and the beautiful Columbia River, we grabbed Interstate 90 and headed southwest over Snoqualmie Pass and into the lovely fir and pine trees of Cle Elum and **Easton**, Washington. We spent three days in Easton. We had the pleasure of becoming friends with **Jim and Lynn** who were also camped there. It was a nice three day chance to cool down from the heat of the desert.

After leaving Easton, we went straight to **Tall Chief RV Resort in Fall City**, Washington. Tall Chief is part of our Western Horizon chain. It's a beautiful big park about 25 miles east of **Seattle**, Washington. The park is very wooded, hilly, and right in the middle of a very, very expensive residential area. The average home was way over a million dollars. It was a nice two week stay and the park was happy to have us give two of our seminars: "**Funding Your Retirement and Protection Your Nest Egg.**" It's always nice to be able to work while we are parked. The only downside to this park was the lack of sewer hookups. That was a nuisance, but twice a week the park runs its own honey wagon and so it's easy enough to get pumped out if you don't want to knock down and drive to the dump station. It's no problem for us to go a week without dumping.



Tall Chief recreation area, Fall City, Washington.

One of the joys of the Tall Chief Resort is its closeness to Seattle and the Seattle waterfront on **Puget Sound**. It's a beautiful area with lots of fun tourist activities. All in all, we prefer the Western Horizon parks to all others. (If any of you RVers would like a free 4 night, 5 day stay with 2 free dinners at a Western Horizons park, just drop us a note and we'll mail you a free pass.)



Seattle waterfront.

The Washington ferry system is truly wonderful. Nice ships and ridiculously low prices. We wanted to take a ferry ride so we bought a round trip ticket from Seattle to **Bremerton**. Bremerton is an old Navy shipyard town and there's not a whole lot there to see and do. But, the ferry ride is a wonderful introduction to Puget Sound. The round trip for two of us was about \$13. It would have been even less if Donna qualified for the senior rate. Hey, it was about an hour and fifteen minutes each way. What a deal! A commercial tour of the harbor is \$50 or \$60 each.



One of the many Washington State ferries.

These boats are big! They can take on hundreds of foot passengers, as well as bicycles, motorcycles, automobiles, motorhomes, and big trucks. Both ends of the boat are identical. They don't have to turn around. They have propellers on both ends and a wheel house on both ends. If you drive your car on, you drive straight through the length of the ship and park at the other end. Wow, it really works smoothly. As a matter of fact, they load the passengers on the upper decks via a hydraulic enclosed gangplank while they load the motor vehicles on the bottom two decks simultaneously. The cars may have to wait quite awhile to get a good place in line. And they do want a good place in line because frequently many of them will be shut out as soon as the boat is full. This is not fun because now they may have to wait another two hours for the next boat. The bicycles and motorcycles, however, don't

have to wait in any lines. You just drive by all the cars, go to the head of the line, and get loaded first. Wow! Special privileges for motorcycles. What a treat. This also means that you are unloaded first. We loved it! The price to bring our motorcycle along was also very reasonable. Typically about \$6 including the driver.

When we returned to Seattle, it was about dinner time and we were anxious to try a waterfront restaurant called **The Crab Pot**. There was lots of press about it and it sounded like lots of fun. On the other hand, it was pretty pricey. We had to try it, but we went in nervous thinking it might be a tourist scam. Friends from Bremerton came back to Seattle with us to eat at the Crab Pot. All four of us ordered one of their "seafood feasts." There are four grades and we ordered number 2 where number one is the least expensive and number 4 is the most expensive. Ours was about \$30 per person. You sit at a big wooden table and they spread a big roll of butcher paper on the table and then dump your dinner on the butcher paper. They put a bib around your neck, give you a wooden cutting board and wooden mallet and tell you to go at it. A most unusual presentation to say the least.



Seattle Crab Pot seafood feast.

We got corn on the cob, red potatoes, spicy sausage, clams, mussels, shrimp, snow crab, and Dungeness crab, plus a big loaf of just baked sourdough bread. But was it good? No, it was not good, it was magnificent. Everything was fresh and perfectly cooked. It couldn't have been better and it was impossible to eat it all. We took home what we couldn't eat and had another couple of meals. This is a must do restaurant! If you like seafood, you must experience this feast. Apparently, this is a chain, but the others may not be as good as the Seattle waterfront.

Only about 10 miles from Tall Chief is a gorgeous natural waterfall. **Snoqualmie Falls** is in and of itself a thing of beauty, but in addition, there is very beautiful park along the river bank. It's a lovely place to see the falls and have a picnic. If you want to visit longer, there is a lovely lodge at the top of the falls. You can see it in the upper left corner of the following picture.



Snoqualmie Falls, Washington.

It was a lovely motorcycle ride to the falls and after taking a few pictures and visiting the gift shop, we thought we would go explore a little more. First on the list was **North Bend**. When we got to North Bend, we got detoured around town. For some reason, the main street was blocked off. Well heck, we had to go find out why. Low and behold, there was a rather large antique car show. Hey, why not? So we spent a couple of hours seeing the show. As luck would have it, the town also has a railroad museum right next to the car show. Perfect, they were both free. There were hundreds of really neat exotic cars, but Chuck's first car was a brown '38 Chevy. Yep, there it was, a plain Jane, but nicely restored brown '38 Chevy. Well, of course, we had to have a photo of that car.



4 door 1938 Chevrolet at a car show in North Bend, Washington.

There may be a few people who remember Chuck and this model car. Why, you ask? Well, in the eighth grade, Chuck drove it to school every day. The only kid in grammar school that had a car. In those days you could get a restricted drivers license when you were 14 years old. You could drive to school, to work, and on errands for your parents. It was tough act for the other kids to follow. Chuck made it even tougher as he was the only kid in his high school to have a pilot's license. In both cases,

the chicks loved him, but he was every parent's nightmare.

Well, that pretty well describes our stay at Tall Chief. We're still not caught up, but perhaps we can knock out another travelogue this week.

Travel Plans:

We are scheduled to leave NACO West at Birch Bay on Friday, August 22. We may go to **Ferndale**, Washington for a week, but we haven't quite made up our minds yet. We are sure that we will be at **Diamond Point RV Resort** in **Sequim**, Washington, from September 2 through the 15th.

Until next time, home is where we park it.

Chuck & Donna