

Dear Friends,

Greetings from **Pahrump, Nevada.**

We apologize for worrying some of you in that you haven't heard from us for more than two months. Chuck is fine, Donna is fine, and our dog, Annika, is fine. Last time you heard from us, we described our last trip to Mexico and the fun activities in the Palm Springs area. But for the most part, we worked.

We took a long term lease on our space in Desert Pools RV Resort in the town of Desert Hot Springs which is next door to Palm Springs, CA. We really dedicated ourselves to helping other RVers protect what was left of their nest eggs or retirement funds. It was sad, very sad indeed, to work with older couples who had watched their retirement funds decrease by 30 to 50 percent. In only 3-1/2 months, we moved more than 1.3 million dollars from the stock market to safety. Not only did we remove all market risk, but in most cases we earned these folks more than 13 percent return in their first year.

Many were in such a state of denial that they were literally paralyzed and couldn't make decisions. No Dear Friends, this is not a little recession. This is not just the normal cyclical economic environment. This is not just the ups and downs of the stock market. This is a full blown recession much like the Great Depression. We have massive unemployment and it's getting worse. Bankruptcies are commonplace. The banks are in trouble, the market is in trouble, bonds are in trouble, housing is in trouble, the mortgage industry is in trouble, Chrysler is in bankruptcy and in about two weeks General Motors will probably also be in bankruptcy. We are in the middle of the perfect economic storm. We hope you will forgive this rant, but working with people who are in great financial trouble has had a profound emotional impact on us. We have become far more compassionate, and certainly more financially conservative.

But we are not doing any of our financial seminars here in Pahrump. We needed a break. We are taking good care of our existing clients, and helping anyone who asks, but we are not going out of our way to help a half dozen troubled couples a week. We will probably also take all of May off.

Well, let's get back to fun. A couple of weeks before we left Desert Hot Springs, Chuck's cousins, **Paul and Ellie**, came to visit with their camper van. We got them three free nights and so we had the great pleasure of their company for several days. What an inspiration they are. Eighty years old and still rolling down the road. Chuck says that they give him hope.



Paul and Ellie with their camper van at Desert Pools RV Resort.

Just before we left Desert Hot Springs, our old friend, **Tim**, from Redding made a surprise visit with a camper van, motorcycle, and motorcycle trailer. He announced that he was going to follow us around the country for awhile, and so he has. We left Desert Hot Springs and took the shortest route through the desert via Yucca Valley, Barstow, Baker, Tecopa, and Shoshone. All in all, a long hot day through barren, but interesting terrain. Certainly no place along the way you would want to break down. We got Tim four free nights at our Western Horizons Park in Pahrump (**Charleston Peak RV Resort & Winery**) and we all rested up and fixed a few things. Our first adventure was to take a motorcycle ride to give Tim a brief introduction to **Death Valley**, California.



Tim setting up to make a video at Artist's Palette in Death Valley.

If you would like to learn more about Death Valley, take a look at our Great Escape #26. Leaving Death Valley, we made a northern loop so that we could see the ghost town of **Rhyolite**, Nevada. In its heyday, Rhyolite was a thriving gold mining community of more than 10,000 people. Today it is a ghost town of perhaps 10 people. Rhyolite is right off of highway 374 about four miles west of the town of Beatty, Nevada. You can get on highway 374 from Death Valley or from Highway 95 near Beatty.



Rhyolite, NV, January 18, 1909.

There was a shortage of building material in Rhyolite, but there was no shortage of saloons, perhaps as many as 50. Thus, there was no shortage of bottles. A creative citizen built this three room cottage from bottles. All exterior walls, floor to rafters, are bottles laid on their sides with the bottoms facing outward.



Tom Kelly's Bottle House, Rhyolite, NV.



Rhyolite Mercantile building.



Rhyolite train depot.

The rest of Rhyolite is almost completely gone. The gold towns of the west were in constant need of building material, so as the gold petered out in one town the residents would move to the next big strike taking as much building material with them as they could.

From Rhyolite we rode on to **Beatty** which is another old mining town, but still survives. Our first stop was the museum which was fun and informative. A great stop to learn about the history of this old town.



Just one of the many rooms in the Beatty museum.

Our last stop in Beatty was a modern marvel, the **Death Valley Nut & Candy Company**. Right in this tiny desert town is a huge and modern nut, candy, and ice cream store. When we say huge, we mean gigantic. The biggest candy store we have ever had the pleasure of visiting. Do you like peanut

brittle? In this store, the brittle section has every kind of brittle you can imagine. It had Chuck's favorite which is cashew coconut brittle. Not only is there a huge selection, the quality is very high and the prices are very low. The entire building below is the store.



Death Valley Nut & Candy Company, Beatty, NV.

From Beatty, we got back in the saddle, took highway 95 south to highway 160 where we turned toward Pahrump. About 20 miles before we got to Pahrump, we took a little detour into the very small town of **Crystal**, NV. The main attraction in Crystal is a bar that holds itself out to be a brothel museum. The walls are covered with old photographs and old newspaper clippings of the brothels in the area. Crystal, like Pahrump, is in Nye county where prostitution is legal. The museum is not a great stop, but kind of interesting. Right behind the museum are two low end brothels. Less than a quarter mile down the same road is a much nicer bar, clean and attractive. We were hungry, so we asked what kind of food they had. Well, much to our surprise, they serve a half dozen versions of meatloaf sandwiches. Nothing else. It's meatloaf all the time every day. Yeah, but in fact, it was darn good meatloaf. After meatloaf and more beer, we saddled up and rode the last 20 miles into Pahrump pretty much exhausted.



Brothel Art Museum, Crystal, NV.

Well, we have more to share with you, but we are running out of time and space. So we will get this newsletter into cyberspace tonight and perhaps we can crank out another in the next day or so. Please remember we like to hear from you also. Drop us a note. What's new in your life?

Until next time, home is where we park it.

Chuck & Donna