

Dear Friends,

Greetings from **Rapid City, South Dakota.**

Sturgis Bike Week has come to an end and we have moved about 55 miles south to **Hart Ranch Camping Resort** which is about 15 miles southeast of Rapid City, South Dakota. For years RV friends have been telling us how much they like Hart Ranch. Sure enough, they have all been correct. We like it so much that we bought into this member owned park.

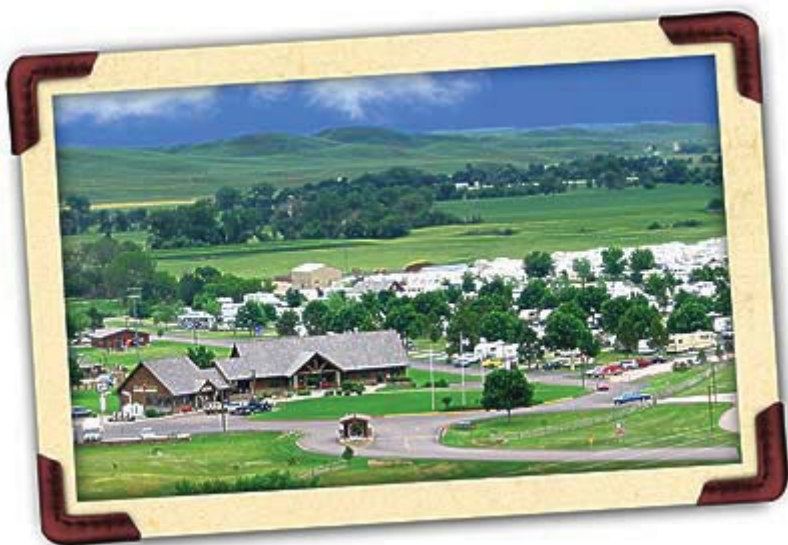
Travel Plans

Now to Sept. 4 -- Hart Ranch, Rapid City, South Dakota.

South Dakota Insurance Licenses

Beyond Sept. 4, our plans are up in the air. We have just received insurance licenses in the state of South Dakota. Hart Ranch has agreed to let us do our weekly "**Protect and Grow Your Nest Egg in a Down Economy**" retirement seminars here. However, the park starts to wind down September 12, so we may only have time for two or three seminars.

Hart Ranch



Hart Ranch Camping Resort

The Resort is a 195-acre membership-owned property nestled in the 13,000 acre working Hart Ranch. This is a large RV park with 419 full hookup sites, 48 partial sites, 24 tenting sites, and 71 rental units. There is a lovely lodge, a beautiful swimming pool with two hot tubs, a restaurant, snack bar, a market, gas station, a weight room, and many bathrooms with showers and laundry rooms scattered around the property. Hart Ranch is a nonprofit corporation and really provides an excellent bang for the buck; a

better value than any other park we have visited. It's a short drive from Hart Ranch to many major tourist attractions such as: Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Custer State Park, Jewel Cave National Monument, Wind Cave National Park, and much, much more. We have other motorcycle friends here and so we plan to start seeing the sights soon.

Sturgis Bike Week

Oh what a gas that was! About half a million motorcycles. Almost all of them were Harleys ridden by people who don't wear helmets. What can we say? I guess they know what their brains are worth. Businesses spring up all around Sturgis just for the motorcycle rally. Bars, campgrounds, entertainment, vendors, restaurants, all open for no more than two weeks. We stayed at Shade Valley Campground which has a huge beautiful lodge, an indoor bar, an outdoor bar, a convenience store, a restaurant, 275 full hookup RV sites, tents and cabins. All in all, a very large capital investment and yet, they are only open two weeks a year. But during Bike Week, things get very expensive everywhere you go, and so even two weeks a year is profitable.



Sturgis Main Street, August 3, 2009.

Donna took the Sturgis Main Street photo. Notice that there are no cars. During Bike Week many streets in every nearby town have parking reserved exclusively for motorcycles. It was really neat for us to be able to ride right into the center of town and have a free place to park.

Lehman Trikes

Not far from Sturgis is the **Lehman Trike Factory** in the town of **Spearfish**. If you buy a three wheel Harley motorcycle through a Harley dealer, then the three wheel conversion was done by the Lehman factory. Harley ships their bikes to Lehman minus the rear wheel. Lehman converts them to three wheelers and ships them back to Harley. Lehman also builds conversions for Honda, Victory, and Yamaha. This is no backyard operation. This is a serious assembly line factory. We took a tour of the factory and signed up to ride a Honda Goldwing trike. The ride was interesting and completely different than riding a two wheeler. These trikes don't lean at all so cornering was a completely different ballgame. Still, if your balance is shot or you don't have strength in your legs, a trike might be an alternative for you.



Chuck on a Honda trike.

Chuck Got Lonesome

Just before **Keith and Vicki** headed back to Missouri, Donna hurt her back. For a few days, all she could do was lay on the sofa and consume pain medication. So Donna was out of action and Keith and Vicki were gone. Chuck didn't know what to do, so spent his time trying to make new friends.



Chuck's first new friend.



Chuck's second new friend.



Michelle Manhart, Playboy Centerfold, February, 2009.



More fun friends.

It was quite amazing. Chuck can be quite gregarious and it was interesting to see how many new friends he made in just a couple of days. But, don't worry, we won't bore you with photo after photo. We know you prefer our usual intellectual reporting.

All in all, Sturgis was just a lot of fun until three cops busted us for riding a BMW at what is basically a Harley rally.



Sturgis Police patting down and handcuffing Donna.

These three young ladies had airbrushed tops which said, "Sturgis Police," on their backs. Yep, just paint from the waist up. Fortunately they could be bribed and for the price of a few beers, we got off.

Sturgis had all kinds of entertainment. Some of it you might expect, such as motorcycle riding

demonstrations, and some of it was completely unique.



Freestyle demonstration.

One of the more unusual bits of entertainment just walking down the street was a very mellow dog with a cat on its back. Well, not too unusual you say and you'd be right. But here is the kicker. There was a live white rat draped around the cat's neck. Trust us. We checked closely. All three animals were alive and well.



Dog, Cat, and Rat on a Sturgis street.

South Dakota Weather

South Dakota weather can be extreme and it can change very quickly. If you're coming here for a vacation, don't do it in the winter when temperatures can drop down to 30 below zero. It can also be hot in summer. Today topped out at 96 degrees. Tomorrow is scheduled for a high of 89. On the other hand, we had days with a high of 65 degrees just a week ago. The motorcycle riding in the Black Hills of South Dakota is absolutely spectacular. But if you come to ride, bring your rain gear. The mornings are usually cool, clear and beautiful, but you can be in a rain storm at 4 in the afternoon. A week ago, our motorhome got hit with a 30 minute hail storm. Hail the size of golf balls which destroyed the plastic covers on both air conditioners. Ten miles southwest of us, there was hail the size of baseballs. Two thousand cars were damaged at the Buffalo Chip Campground. Two days after the hail storm, we were trying to move out of Shade Valley Campground, when we got hit with a torrential downpour. Our beautiful, grassy campground turned into a sea of very slippery mud. We couldn't get traction and the motorhome was stuck. We called a tow truck and two hours later, he showed up and got stuck also. Fortunately, the campground had a backhoe and the backhoe got the tow truck out and then the tow truck winched us out. Just 55 miles south at Hart Ranch, the weather was beautiful. Well, that's how it is in South Dakota. Beautiful, but unpredictable.

In the next issue, we will be sharing some of South Dakota's major attractions with you. But until then, home is where we park it.

Chuck & Donna
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