

Alaska 2016

Part Four GOING SOUTH



Heading home, from Prince Rupert, Canada to home... with visits along the way with friends and family

(117 days away from home)



Alaska 2016 Travel Journal Part Four "Going South"

96 Date: 9/17/2016

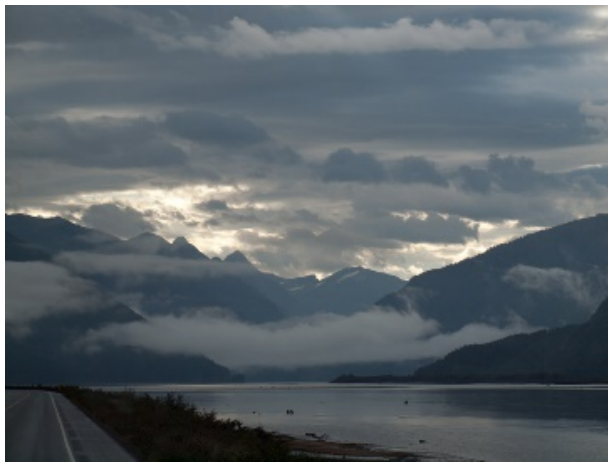
Time: 7:30 pm

Mileage: 41659

Location: Hazelton, BC

Headed out of Prince Rupert

The ferry got to Prince Rupert about 5 am Alaska time. It was dark! I drove the motorhome off the ferry and passed quickly through Customs and drove up the road and parked waiting for Jill and the Tracker. And I waited, the rain began and I waited. Finally Jill drove by and we went up the road a little further to a parking lot for an RV park and we waited there until it got light enough to see where we were going. We

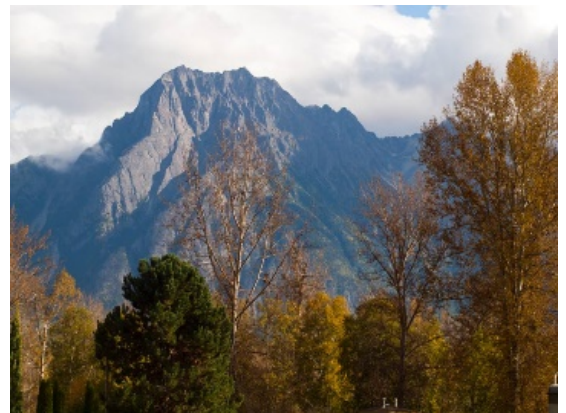


drove into town and had breakfast. It was still raining when we went into the restaurant. When we came out, the rain was mostly stopped. We were tired from getting up so early, so we hooked up the Tracker to the motorhome and headed out of town. We really didn't feel like exploring Prince Rupert. I guess you could say we were museumed out!

Heading east, we traveled along the Skeena River most of the way. We stopped at the visitor information center

at New Hazelton at noon and decided we had traveled enough for the day. So we drove to Havelton and got a camp site at the Ksan RV Park. Very nice place with lots of grassy space between sites. Wish all RV parks are this nice. We tour the Ksan village tomorrow.

Unlike the Inland Passage, driving east, we found fall color again. From the campground, we have a great view of the mountain to the northeast.



Time: 4:30 pm

Mileage: 41844

Location: Fraser Lake, BC

Three Hazeltons

It rained hard last night, but by morning we had broken clouds and no rain. The big mountain to the south had fresh snow this morning. After breakfast, we took a walk around the town of Hazelton. Out on the highway is New Hazelton and we passed through South Hazelton a mile west yesterday afternoon.



Hazelton itself is a very nice little community with very little junky places. There are two churches in town and both rang their bells this morning, as it is Sunday. As we came out the other side of town, we found the entrance to Ksan Campground and the village. The village was built as a tourist attraction. It has a very nice museum and gift shop, several clan houses and a number of totem poles.

After looking at everything in the village and making a purchase in the gift shop, we returned to the motorhome. We left and went across a one lane bridge over a very deep gorge back to Highway 16 to continue toward Prince George. We had some spots of light rain, but it was mostly just broken clouds.



We stopped for lunch at a rest area at Topley. We continued through the town of Fraser Lake to Piper's Glen RV Resort, overlooking Fraser Lake (the actual lake). Jill & Sam walked around and around the park, to make her goal.



98 Date: 9/19/2016

Time: 4:00 pm

Mileage: 42056

Location: Wells, BC

Fog, Poor Signing and it's Closed

All driving day, no pictures. Awoke to sunshine with fog on nearby Lake Fraser, we hurried to get back on the road, hoping for some nice driving. About six miles up the road, we got into pea soup, so for a couple of hours we were limited on our speed, and our view. We thought we take a 60-mile side trip to Fort James, a National Historic Park. First we stopped in Vanderhoof on Highway 16 at their Museum/Info Center. Didn't look good, the Museum was closed for the season, but luckily the info center wasn't. They told us that the Fort James Historical Park was closed the season as well. No side trip for us. On down the road, and the sun came out. At Prince George (4th largest city in BC) we stopped for gas at a Costco. Yeah...boo. They would take our Costco Visa Card as proof of membership, but not to pay (Canada went MasterCard?), no gas there. Big cities are not for us, so we continued south to Quesnel on B.C. Highway 97. Their signing was horrible, and we had to go around in

circles to find their Visitor Information Center and it was closed as well! In 1995, we went to another Historical park, called Barkerville, another side trip, 50 miles east of Quesnel. Is it closed? No info at the center, but a sign on the highway said "Open to September 25." Taking the sign's word for it we have traveled to RV park in Wells just outside of Barkerville. Our host said its all open. We will see tomorrow. Oh, ya it's raining again.

99 Date: 9/20/2016

Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42056

Location: Wells, BC

Barkerville on Our Anniversary

This morning was lightly overcast, but not raining. It is our 36th anniversary today so we are eating out all day. After feeding the pets, we headed up the road 4 km to Barkerville by Tracker. If we had gone into Barkerville, they would have charged us a regular entrance fee, but starting today, they only asked for a "contribution", not a "donation". Tomorrow we can go in for free. So we ate breakfast at Wake Up Jake's, one of 20 businesses in this Provincial Historic Park. The interpretation is done as "Living History", so the people here are all in period clothing and speak in present tense of the gold rush.



The park has 107 original buildings and 62 replica buildings. Since there were several photographers here during the Caribou Gold Rush of 1858, recreating the lost buildings has been possible. There was also a barber here that kept an extensive diary of daily weather, comings and goings on the stage as well as general gossip. The town was named for one Billy Barker who after not doing good on previous claims nearby, discovered the largest placer gold deposits in the world on Williams Creek. The gold here is down on the bedrock about 50' below the surface of the creek then, under 2' of blue clay.

After breakfast, we meet the first librarian/publican in Barkerville. A publican is a person that runs a pub or saloon. We were here only visitors and she gave us a great tour of the town.

The original town was typical of a lot of gold rush towns, with canvas roofed buildings in close contact with each other all crowded around a narrow street. Consequently, one of the saloons caught fire in September in the late 1860's and within 2 and ½ hours the entire town



burned to the ground. Within three months they had rebuilt the entire town, but this time they widened the street so that two stage coaches could pass and all the buildings were spaced apart to reduce the spread of fire.

The creek was altered because of all the mining activity and the town would flood every year. So when they rebuilt after the fire. All the buildings were built on piers and each spring all the buildings were raised out of the flood zone. All except the fire house. The new fire house also had the theater on the second floor. So after the fire house was filled in with mud, they cut a new front door to the theater and continued to use the theater.

We moved on to listen to Billy Barker, who is now 199 years old and "much of that time he has been dead." He told us how he and his 7 partners discovered the gold. It was a fascinating story. Billy did not manage his money well and after losing his second wife to cancer, he ended up dying penniless, down in Fort Vancouver.



After that we were frozen, so we returned to the motorhome, let the dog out, changed shoes, adding an extra pair of socks and donned our heavier coats. Returning to Barkerville we went to the theater to watch a one man show about Fred Wells, the founder of the town of Wells, where we are staying. Fred himself tells about coming up to the Caribou during the Great Depression and discovering gold through hard rock mining in Cow Mountain, a few miles from Barkerville. He became very rich and built the town of Wells. Then we had lunch at the Lung Duck Tong restaurant in "Chinatown" portion of the town.

After the lunch, Jill took the tour of Chinatown while I went to get the large format camera, since the sun was finally coming out.



We met up again at the Cornish Water Wheel and watched the explanation of how it was used. Of course it was done in period language. The two people included the college educated daughter of the dead owner of the mine and her mining engineer were trying to entice us visitors into purchasing the last 3 shares in the mine. They explained how the gold, found 55' below the



surface was mined and how the Cornish water wheel was used to pump the water out of the shaft and also to bring up the gravel and the pay dirt. Finally, they showed how the sluice system worked and they got Jill involved in holding the water back and crossing her fingers for good luck. After finding a gold nugget in the pay dirt, the daughter was showing it around to us potential investors. The mine engineer pulls several more nuggets out of the sluice and dropped them in her pan and that was when they informed us they no longer needed our investment and that we were on private property and ordered us to leave!



We took more photos around town and headed back to the motorhome as the park was closing up for the day. We ate dinner in Wells ate one of the only places still open for dinner and returned to the motorhome for the evening.





Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42110

Location: Quesnel, BC

The Last of Barkerville

Getting up this morning, we ate, dumped the tanks and pulled out of the campsite and parked in the RV parking area at Barkerville. The sun is out in full force today. I took the last of my large format photos and Jill wandered around to find a place to draw. Not finding anything that drew her attention, she bought a Barkerville pin for our Wall Quilt.



We had lunch and then took a ride in the stage coach. We had a good conversation with the stage driver. At 1 pm, we took in the musical show at the theater. During part of the show two visitors were DRAGGED up on stage to embarrass themselves. One of these was me!

After the show, we walked to the court house in Richfield about a mile upstream from Barkerville. Actually,

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court house is the only building left in Richfield and they hold "court" at noon. So we missed that, in fact the interpretive staff was heading back to Barkerville as we were walking uphill to the court house.



Returning to Barkerville, we went back to the motorhome. After I recovered from having my feet walked off, we left and drove just 60 miles to Quesnel and camped to do laundry.



101 Date: 9/22/2016

Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42312

Location: Cache Creek, BC

Flying South

Approximately 100 days out on this trip so far. Even though the rain has eased up a bit, the temperatures are still declining. After most cloudy days, we usually see fresh snow on the peaks around us. This morning there wasn't a pumpkin in sight, but the trash can in the campground had a good coating of dew ice on its lid. So we continued heading south today. After the fog burned off, we had a wonderful sunny fall day to travel. We didn't take photos too busy just following Highway 97 which basically follows the old wagon road to Barkerville. All the towns are named after the miles from the town Lillooet, an old steamboat stop on the Fraser River and not the current highway. Jill and Sampson got a short walk at a picnic area just north of 108 Mile House.

The Mile Post book said 108 Mile House, a nice historic site was closed, so we weren't planning to stop there. We did that going north in 1995. But as we drove by, there were lots of vehicles there and it appeared to be open. Unfortunately, we were going too fast to stop, so we by passed it this trip. Stopped just 1 km to the east of Cache Creek at Brookside Campsite. It is tucked down along the creek under some beautiful big willow trees.

102 Date: 9/23/2016

Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42468

Location: Harrison Hot Springs, BC

Sasquatch

Leaving Cache Creek, we continued south on BC Hwy 97/Can Hwy 1 through the Thompson River Canyon. This is a steep and narrow river canyon with the highway on one side crossing to the other at Spencer Bridge. There is also a set of railroad tracks on both sides of the river. At one point on the west side, the tracks went through about a half dozen tunnels and then further south we spotted Rock Sheds over the tracks. It appears the rock slide here continually try to cover the tracks, so they built these two shed roofs to guide the rocks across the tracks and into the river below.



Downstream, the Thompson River joins the Fraser River. The canyon gets extremely narrow at one point, named Hells Gate. We stopped there in 1995 and took the tram ride down into the canyon. Before the railroad blasted through this section of the canyon, the salmon could swim through this narrow. But the huge boulders the railroad dumped into the river stopped the fish, so they had to build a fish ladder to get the salmon past the extremely strong current in the main channel. We didn't stop this time and we didn't get any pictures.

We turned north on BC 7 to Harrison Hot Springs. Just beyond Harrison Hot Springs is Sasquatch Provincial Park. I think we may have camped there in 1995 on our last trip to Alaska. They now have an online reservation system, just as confusing as most other reservation systems. Jill looked at it last night and it appeared that they had a

bunch of first come – first serve sites and she was not able to make a reservation. So we went up to the park along a very narrow paved road along Harrison Lake. At the park it became a dirt road that was worse than anything we found in Alaska. We saw a sign along the paved road saying “Save our Park”. I think they have had severe budget cuts so maintenance of the road is a very low priority this late in the year. After driving 3.5 miles, we finally found the first of the campgrounds, but every site had a permanent sticker saying RESERVED. We returned to the bulletin board to find a list of reserved sites. All but 5 were reserved and the 5 could only be reserved for one night, but we needed two nights. I was frustrated by the road conditions and the fact we had been suckered into driving out there only to find no place to camp for two nights, that I refused to go further out to the other two campgrounds, so we returned to Harrison Hot Springs.

This is a small resort town that seems to be extremely popular. Parking is a major pain for the locals, as they have to put up their own NO PARKING signs in the street to keep their driveway open. We found a dinky RV park and got a site for the next two nights. It is pricy and tight, but it has full hook ups including cable TV and Wi-Fi and it is right in the middle of town, so everything is within walking distance.

103 Date: 9/24/2016

Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42468

Location: Harrison Hot Springs, BC

Massage and a Soak

While in Cache Creek, Jill made massage appointments for us for this morning at one of the Hotel Spas in town. So we set the alarm and got up early and made it to the appointments and spent time sitting in their hot pools too.

We went to lunch before returning to the motorhome, where I fell asleep on the couch for a while. When I woke up, Jill told me she had to take a walk so we used the local hiking guide to find a trail. Most were 5 km or



more and neither of us were up for that. We found one trail called the Spirit Trail, only an easy 1 km trail through the forest on the east side of town. It was indeed an easy hike, but what made this trail very special were the clay masks on about 20-30 trees along the trail. A local artist was walking his dog a few years back and talked with some met along the trail, who commented that the trees seemed to have personalities. That triggered the inspiration of making

and hanging clay mask of interesting faces on the trees. Each mask is different and there are no signs pointing them out, so it is fun finding them. Some are new and show no sign of age, others are weathered and started to grow their own moss, helping them to blend into the trees. They had a wind storm recently and there are a lot of downed trees so in a couple of places the masks have been knocked down. Though the trail was short, it was really fun.



104 Date: 9/25/2016

Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42536

Location: Birch Bay, WA

Back in the USA, Lower 48

We left Canada today, entering Washington. We didn't go far, as we stopped at Birch Bay State Park on the north coast of Washington. Nice campground with power in some of the sites. Took a short walk on the beach with Sampson. We saw birds, shells, people crabbing and the Sun!

We made calls using our AT&T accounts on our phones to relatives. For everyone, IRoam sim card for our iPhone, didn't work



well
and
we



are so happy to be back to our cell phones in good old USA. Best thing is that every visitor center in Canada usually had Wi-Fi. I wouldn't use it IRoam again.

My sister and brother-in-law drove up from Everett and we went to dinner together at a nearby restaurant. We sat out on the porch, enjoying the sun and bay. Nice quiet day.



105 Date: 9/26/2016

Time: 7:00 pm

Mileage: 42624

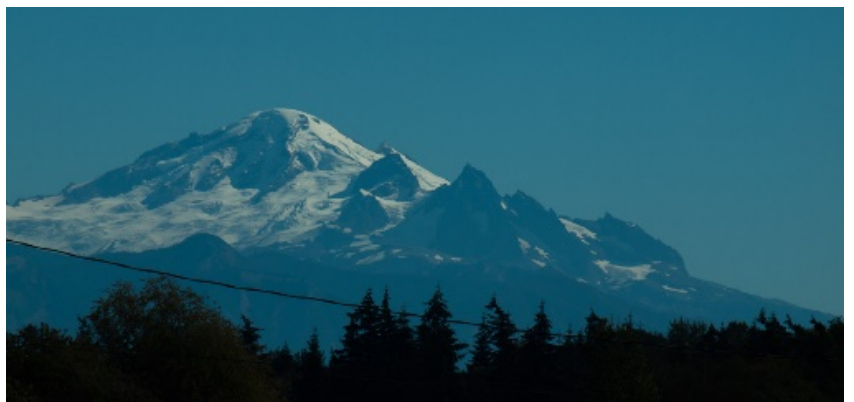
To See Family

We got up and ate breakfast in the motorhome. Then Jill went for a walk on the beach with Sampson. I got the motorhome ready to head down to the Everett area to spend time with my sister and brother-in-law. Then I sat and read, waiting for Jill to get back. I am a slow reader, so I got through about 3 chapters before she walked back from town where she found a cup of coffee.



We called the RV Park we stayed in last time we were in this area, but they were booked up. So we called another RV Park that did not have as good reviews and got a site. When we got here, we found it to be fairly tight, but it was actually fairly nice, had the amenities we needed, it is closer to my sister's place than the other park. On the way to Everett, we got a great view of Mt. Baker.

We went over for a visit in the afternoon. My niece was also there when we got there. We had a nice talk and then went out for a Chinese dinner.



Time: 9:30 pm

Mileage: 42624

Location: Everett, WA

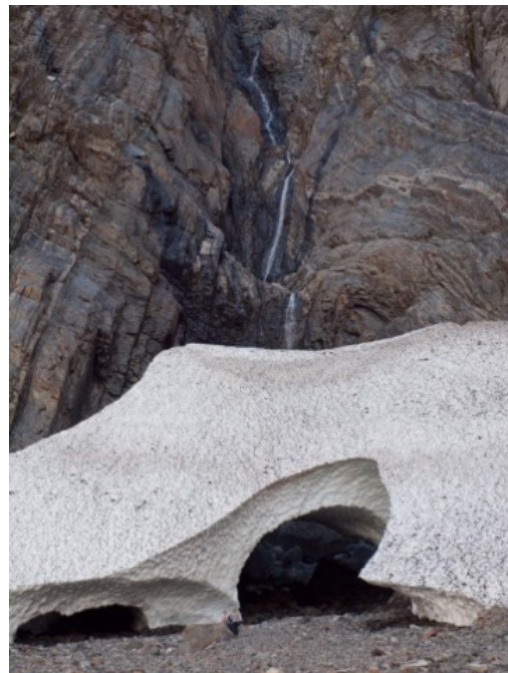
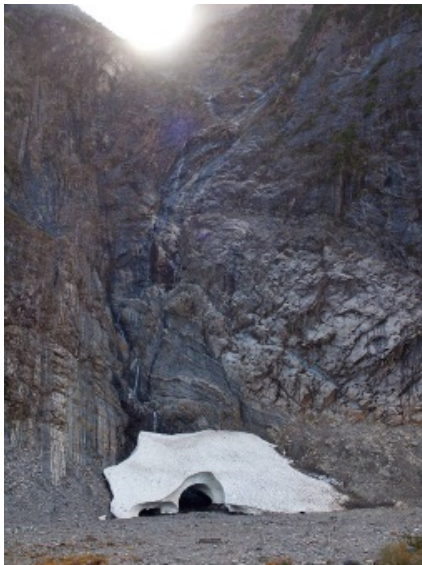
Title: Death of a Glacier

My sister and brother-in-law took us up to Mt. Baker – Snoqualmie National Forest to see the Ice Caves. We walked out a very nicely maintained trail to the bottom of the remains of a glacier on Big Four Mountain, part of the Cascade Range. I would guess it won't be too

many more years before this glacier will be completely gone. It no longer moves, but

the area gets enough snow each year to fill the basin between the trail end and the glacier itself. The snow caves are very dangerous as several people over the years have been killed by falling ice slabs.

We had a nice early dinner at an Italian restaurant in Snohomish on the way back to their house. Then we watched an Impossible Mission movie on Amazon, before heading to bed in our motorhome.



Time: 5:00 pm

Mileage: 42624

Location: Everett, WA

Seattle

Today, we went down to Seattle to have lunch at the Crab Pot restaurant on the waterfront. On the way, we stopped at DavidMorgan.com in Bothell so I could purchase a new Akubra hat. The Akubra Angler hat that I have worn for this entire trip has been well water logged several times and has not retained its original shape. So this time I bought a Lightning Ridge model. The rabbit felt feels thicker than the Angler.



We also stopped at a very nice camera

shop downtown to have my Zeiss Super Ikonta IV medium format camera looked at. More than a month ago, the screw that holds the film winding knob on came off AGAIN. The technician in the shop took a look at it under a microscope and said there are no longer any threads for the screw to bite into. So when I get

home, this camera will be unloaded for the last time and put on the shelf. It is an antique, about 8 years older than my large format camera.

Down on the waterfront, we paid \$30 to park for a few hours while we went to have a seafood feast. The Crab Pot has an interesting way to serve the meal. After donning a disposable bib, the meal was literally poured on to the table top. It is quite the presentation. We have a wood block and mallet and a small fork to eat with. It is quite messy.



We returned to Everett, where Jill and I searched for and finally found some gym bags. Jill packed up an overnight set of clothing for us for tomorrow. I downloaded photos and wrote two blogs. I also dumped the tanks and filled the fresh water in preparation to relocating tomorrow morning to my sister's place. Then we will head for another ferry in our tracker. Jill, Sam, Nancy and Al went to find a trail to walk on while I stayed in the motorhome working.





108 Date: 9/29/2016

Time: 9:30 pm

Mileage: 42627

Location: Everett, WA

Port Townsend

We moved the motorhome to my sister's place. Leaving the pets for Nancy and Al to take care of, we went down to Edmonds to catch the ferry to Kingston so we could drive up to Port Townsend to see my friend Sandy. Sandy's husband Bill was my first federal boss in Yosemite and we have kept in touch ever since. We had a nice lunch and dessert in town and walked the water front to see a square rigger called the Lady Washington.



Back at Sandy's house we learned a little about Ma Jong and saw several species of birds come into feed at the bird feeders including 2 Pileated Woodpeckers.



In the late afternoon, we headed to the local ferry terminal to go over to Coupeville, but we were too late for the 5:30 pm ferry. So We ate a Subway

sandwich in the car waiting for the 6:45 pm ferry. It was dark when we got to Coupeville and we drove on through the night to Clinton and caught the ferry from there to Mukilteo. Then it was a short drive back to the motorhome.

Sampson in the meantime went for walks and played in the ocean, having a great time without us.



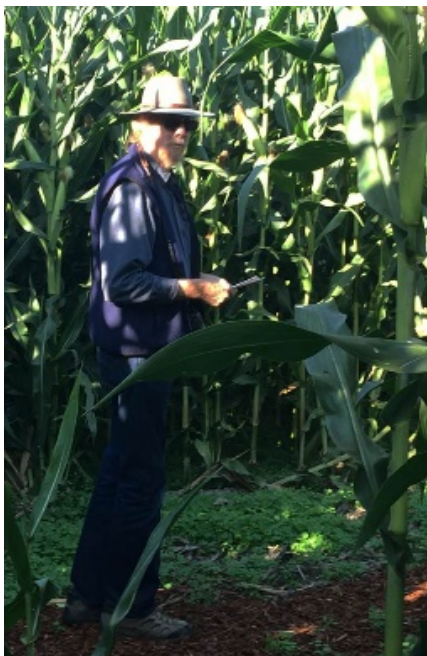
109 Date: 9/30/2016

Time: 5:00 pm

Mileage: 42627

Location: Auburn, WA

Auburn, WA



After a big breakfast at IHOP, we said good bye to Nancy and Al, hooked up the car to the motorhome and headed south once more. We planned to relocate to Auburn, WA to the KOA. But Jill looked in her Camping app, "All Stays" and found the City of Auburn had 18 campsites a Game Farm Wilderness Park with electricity for only \$25. So she calls the phone number and made a reservation for 2 nights there. The campground is very nice spacious and we are enjoying it.



Jill called her friend Linnea in Federal Way and she met up at the campground. We went out and had a pizza lunch nearby and then while touring the area, we found a pumpkin patch open to the public. They have a couple of big corn mazes and Jill and I walked both of them, finding all 12 punch stations. We punched our maze cards and dropped them in the drawing box. We don't know what the raffle prizes are, so we put Linnea's phone numbers on the cards and if we win anything, she is here to claim the prizes.

110 Date: 10/1 & 2/2016

Time: 8:45 pm

Mileage: 42717

Location: Olympia, WA

Title: Olympia, WA

This entry is for yesterday and today, because yesterday was a down day and all we did was a little shopping, Jill and Sampson took a walk and I read. So basically, nothing to write home about.

This morning, we headed south again. We stopped at Camping World to do a little shopping for the motorhome. Then we stopped to see my friends Sue and Tom in Olympia. We are camped in their driveway for the night. We had a great late lunch in a restaurant on the bay. Then we walked around the State Capital area. We enjoyed talking about everything.



111 Date: 10/3 & 4/2016

Time: 8:45 pm

Mileage: 42890

Location: Salem, OR

Seein' Friends

Continuing south yesterday, we left Washington State. We bypassed Portland, OR and stopped on the north side of Salem, OR. Checking our phones, we found that the phone numbers for our friends here were out of date. We were able to call Roni and Asher, Sherwood & Lee's sons and leave a message to call. Roni was in town and called us back and gave us new contact info for the whole clan. So we went out to dinner with Lee, Sherwood and Roni.



This morning, we had to move the motorhome two spaces over, for some unknown RV park reason. We had a call from Na'ama in Oregon City and we made arrangements to go up and see her and the kids. We stopped for coffee for Jill and I left a message on Na'ama's phone that we are on our way. Then we got a call from Sherwood (Na'ama's mother) saying that she was not working today after all, so she is came up the the motorhome park and went up to see Na'ama together. We went out to lunch and then we drove to Roni's house to see his wife Annie and the three kids.

112 Date: 10/5/2016

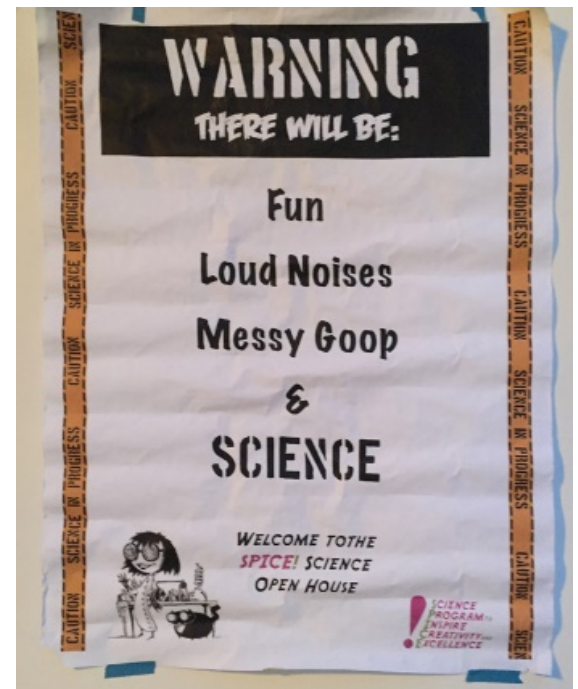
Time: 8:45 pm

Mileage: 42956

Location: Eugene, OR

Seein' More Friends

After a big breakfast in the motorhome, we once again headed south. The destination was Eugene to see another part of the same friend's family. We figured that being a Wednesday, after Labor Day we should have no problem getting a campsite at Armitage County Park. But what we failed to count into the calculation was the fact that the snowbirds from Canada are also headed south now. So, we rolled into the park and we greeted by not one but three "Campground Full" signs. So we turned around and headed across the freeway to Premier RV Resort. We stayed there back when we were here to photograph Na'ana's wedding about 5-6



years ago. We got a site there, but it was pricy, even with the Good Sam discount.

We sat around for a while, reading and watching TV, then went shopping at the Camping World on the other side of the freeway. From there, we headed into to to a "Fiber" shop Jill found on line, It turned out to be a cool shop with tons of spinning and weaving equipment. They teach classes there, so we will likely be back so Jill can take a class of two. We continued into town and found a Starbucks and got drinks.

We called Asher and made arrangements to meet at his house. Since we were here for Na'ama's wedding, he and his family had moved to a new place, but decided to return to the place they were in during the wedding. They made a lot of upgrades to the house to make room for their new daughter and added a "Tiny House" in the back yard for guests. We all went out for Thia food near the university campus and then walked over to the campus for a kid's physics night. The demonstrations we great and we enjoyed ourselves a lot.



113 Date: 10/6/2016

Time: 5:45 pm

Mileage: 43112

Location: Gold Hill, OR

Heading for the Barn

We had a McDonalds breakfast and got on the road south. We gassed up the motorhome at Costco in Eugene. We had lunch at a Mexican Restaurant in Myrtle Grove. We stopped for the night at Valley of the Rogue State Park. We found this place back in the early 1980's. It is a Rest Area and a large campground with hook-ups on the Rogue River. We took a walk on the trail along the river. Like the geese, we're heading south fast.



Time: 4:06 pm

Mileage: 43311

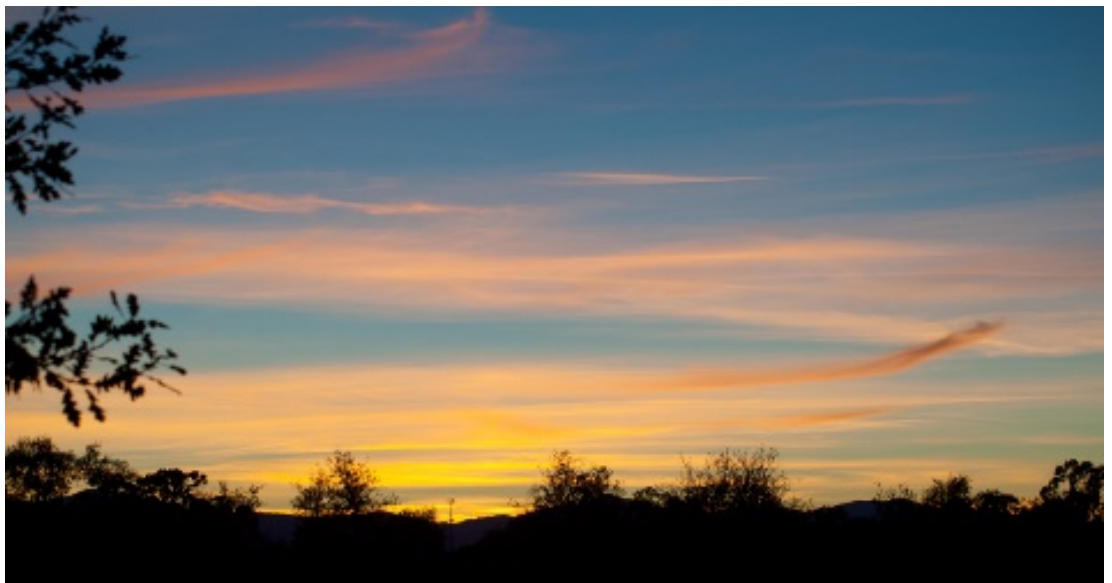
Location: Red Buff, CA

One More Night

We have made it into California. We were greeted by a great view of Mt. Shasta. We found this nice Mendocino Forest Service Campground called Sycamore Grove, just 2 miles south of Red Buff. Half of the sites have electric hook-ups! Which is nice because it is a little warm here. Plenty of walkies and no highway sounds. We will have to remember this one. It does take reservations but we are lucky this time.



We have a choice here, go east on CA Highway 36 and then 395 (258 miles to home) or continue down I-5 to US 50 over the mountains(259 miles). We think we will continue I-5 as it is faster.



115 Date: 10/8/2016

Time: 7:30 pm

Mileage: 43555

Location: Markleeville, CA

Title: Home Again, Home Again

After 117 days and 7,625 motorhome miles, 2-3,000 Tracker miles, and maybe 1,000 nautical miles we are home again. This trip has been a success. Our tiny home with the pets on board, and our small car behind has made it easy to feel at home anywhere on the road. We took about 7,000 digital photos in addition to about 100 4x5 photos. But it is good to see our place again.

Oh, what fun we had. We do need to work on "hanging" a while at places. We tended to sight-see and move on. A couple of places where we didn't, such as Denali and Sitka, we still had the moving on bug. So next trip we will try for more blogs of...just sat and watched the trees grow...

Anyway this trip was such a success that we might be on the road again next spring... who knows. For now we are going to just sit at home, take classes at the South Lake Tahoe, work and play in our yard and develop our art. That all starts after we clean up the Tiny Home.

Thanks for following our adventures, we will be blogging again when we take the next (long) trip...until then, HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU and Feel free to drop in at our place.

