



Lone Star Eclipse



A Travel Book By



Quail Run Tripping

Lone Star Eclipse

March 28 – May 7, 2024



Flags collected



Traveling to Dripping Springs TX and beyond. Will be traveling with Robert and Irene to see Les's family and the last total eclipse for more twenty years.



49

footprints



1

countries



41

days



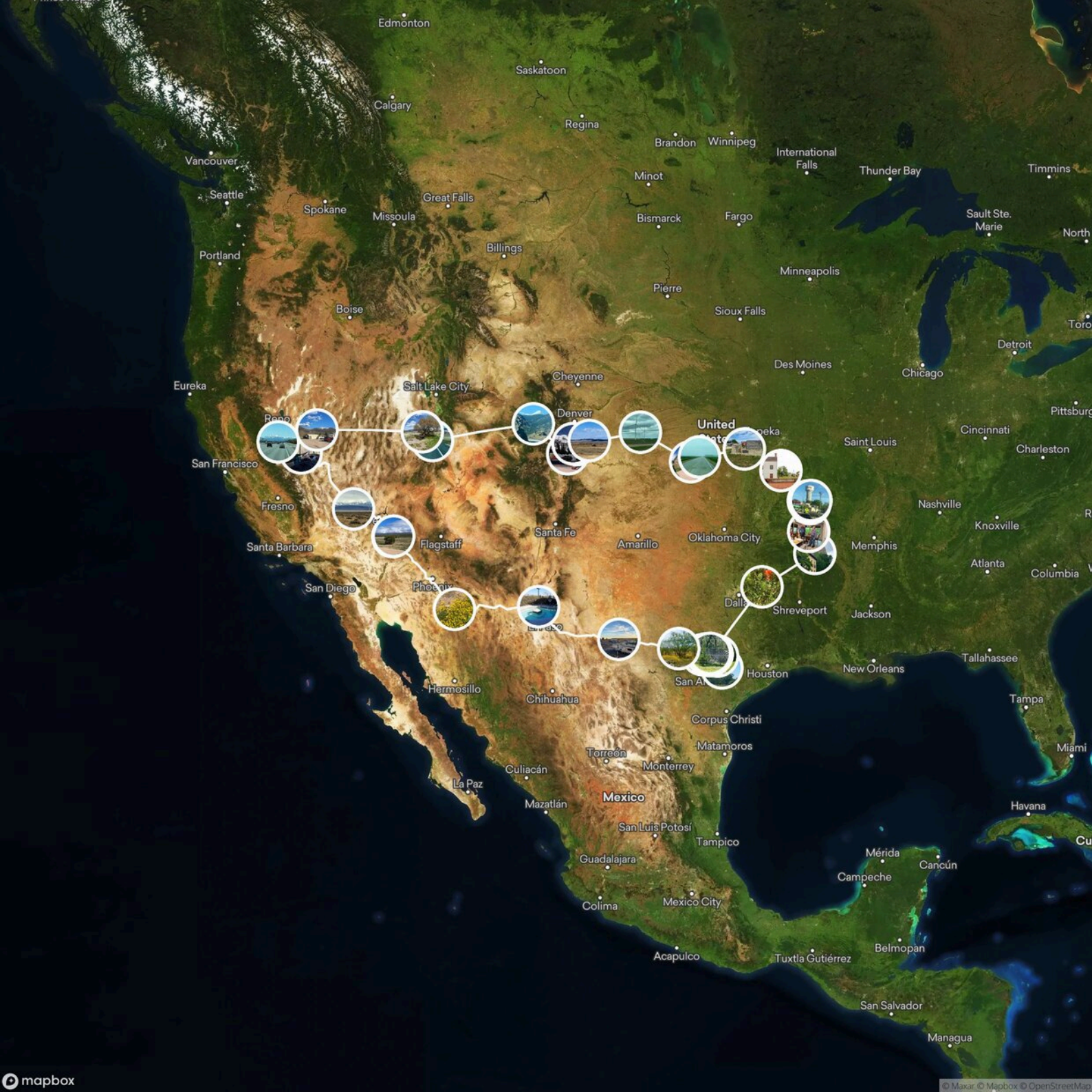
280

photos



4,147

miles



Day 1-2



Heading out

 March 28, 2024 in the United States, Hawthorne Municipal Airport

Left home at noon as we had to wait for the dishwasher to finish. Leaving early as worried about tomorrow's storm at home. Very windy today. Stopped for Lunch along the Waker River in Wilson Canyon. The wind is slowing us down think we will stop in Hawthorne at Whiskey Flats RV park for the night

Time

3 pm

Partly cloudy

 55 °F

Altitude

4,219 ft



Tiny house on the move.



Ready set go



Thank goodness Les is driving in this wind.



Walker River in Wilson Canyon west of Yerington, NV



Lunch spot Wilson Canyon, NV



Southward bound



March 29, 2024 in the United States, Johnnie Mining District

South to Las Vegas

Started early, wind light until the afternoon. Light was overcast, so no stops for photos. Stopped in just north of Beatty for Lunch and played with Indy under the cottonwoods.

At 2:30 Decided to go to Pahrump, instead of Las Vegas no traffic. Very nice RV park at the north end on Leslie street! They have hot tub. After fighting the wind Les is interested.



Di Williams Heron Where are you headed? A stop Havasu area stop? Love to see you guys!



Quail Run Tripping We thought about coming to LHC, but the wind predicted changed our minds. Les fought the wind for the last two days, so we will hang here in Pahrump today. We will meet up with Les' brother tomorrow in Kingman then head on to Texas. Thanks for the invite. Hope we can see you soon.

Time

3 pm

Windy

 63 °F

Altitude

2,651 ft



Backside of the White Mountains.



Nevada Treasure RV park pool area



Les in hot water

Day 3



A Rainy Day in Pahrump

 March 30, 2024 in the United States, Johnnie Mining District

It is raining today and we don't need to be in Kingman, AZ (166 miles from here) until tomorrow. So we decide to stay put for the day. I checked the cameras at home and we got about 2" of snow last night. The plan was for us to leave home this morning, but glad we left two days ago.



Traveling Bee Safe travels

Time

12 pm

Foggy

 45 °F

Altitude

2,648 ft



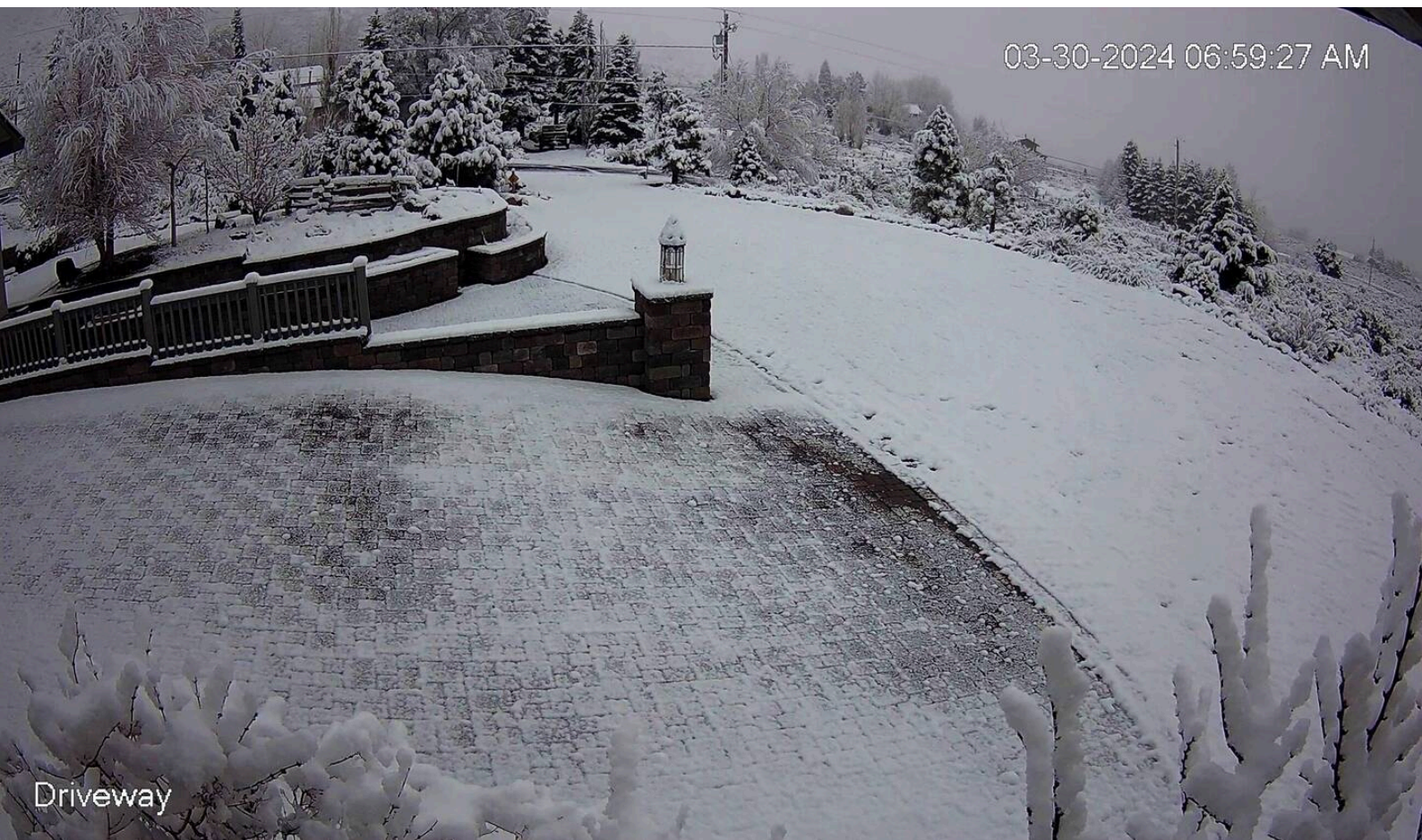
Cinnamon looking out the window, glad to be inside and dry.



Indy is bored.

03-30-2024 06:59:27 AM

Driveway





Rough Road



March 31, 2024 in the United States, Foothill Vista Mobile Home Park

So awoke to fresh snow on the east side of Mount Charleston for Easter Sunday. So pretty. The road from Pahrump to Las Vegas has improved, but Highway 93 from the Colorado River to Kingman, AZ is really bad. It was full of potholes. We were really glad to get to Kingman. Ate out tonight at a really nice Italian restaurant in old town Kingman. Nice sound of rain on the RV roof tonight.

Time

3 pm

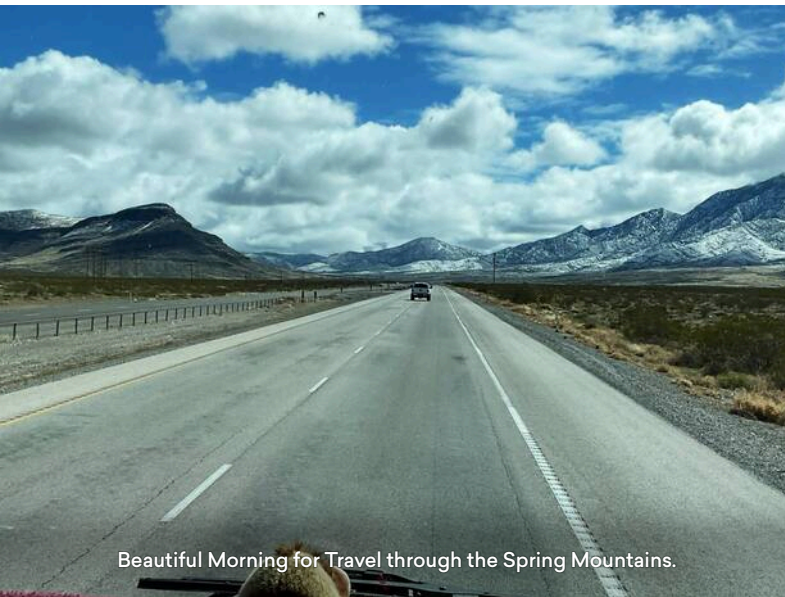
Partly cloudy



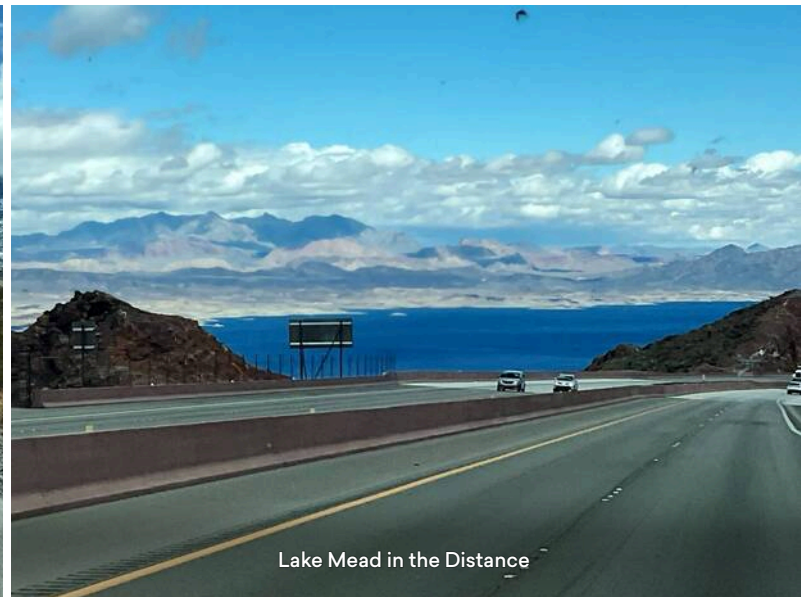
54 °F

Altitude

3,481 ft



Beautiful Morning for Travel through the Spring Mountains.



Lake Mead in the Distance



Mount Charleston snow.



Kingman meeting



April 1, 2024 in the United States, Kingman

We arrived a day early, so spend this morning doing chores like Laundry. Would have gone out painting and photographing but the clouds kept changing. Finally started raining after lunch. Around 4:00 pm, Robert and Irene pulled in. The restaurant we went to yesterday was so good that we went back with Robert and Irene. They agreed it was fabulous. Tomorrow we all head towards Texas.

Time

4 pm

Clear day



59 °F

Altitude

3,389 ft

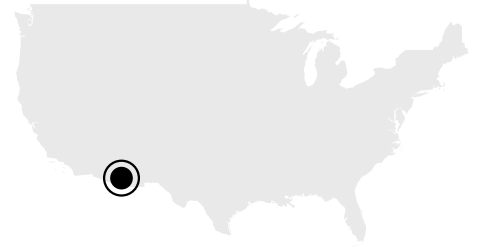


Robert and Irene's rig



Our rig.





Saguaro Nation Park



April 2, 2024 in the United States, Desert Pueblo Mobile Home Park

Left Kingman and traveled 93 south to Phoenix and beyond. "Closure" on I10 had us finding a back way to our evening campsite. We went through the west side of Saguaro National Park. We arrived just in time to stop at their Red Hills visitor center. Nice stop. No RV site tonight but a BLM dispersed camping area. Rough entrance, but the campsite is a find around Tucson. On to Las Cruces...

Clear day



68 °F

Altitude

2,448 ft



View from Red Hills VC



Lunch "wild flowers" ok weeds



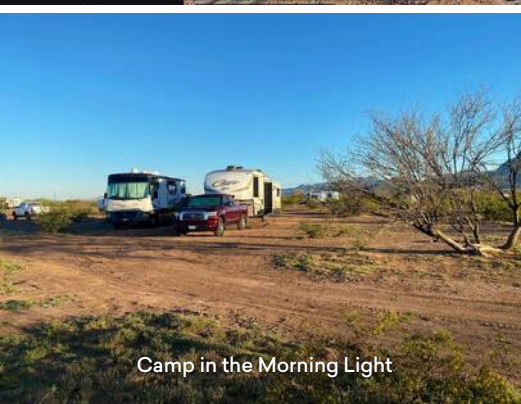
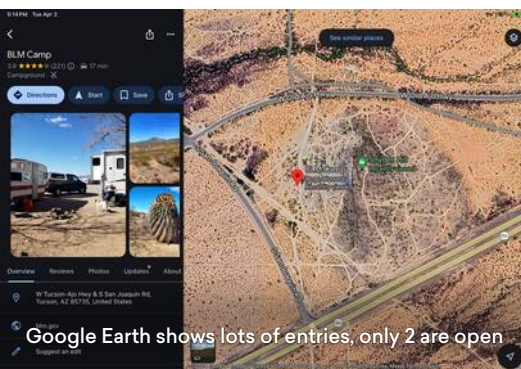
Love the Saguaro Forrest

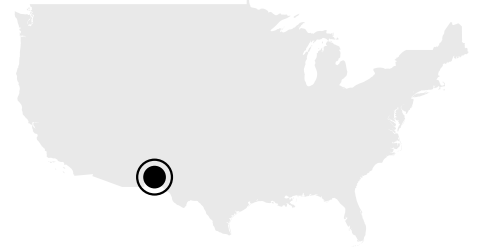


Saguaro warning about space aliens



Death comes to every thing





Nothing but driving.

 April 3, 2024 in the United States, Gillem Lateral

So today was so boring. Drive Drive Drive. Some lovely wild flowers, but going at 60 miles an hour hard to get pics. But once at Las Cruces it was a nice night, The four of us went out to dinner for New Mexico food. The place was called Hacienda del Mesilla. Great Margaritas and enchiladas. We left Robert and Irene watching Baseball, while Les and I hit another Walmart. Then Les and I hit the hot tub at the Hacienda RV park (every thing is named Hacienda here) When we came back to our RV, both the Cat and Dog were sitting on the Dash together waiting for us to get back.

Time

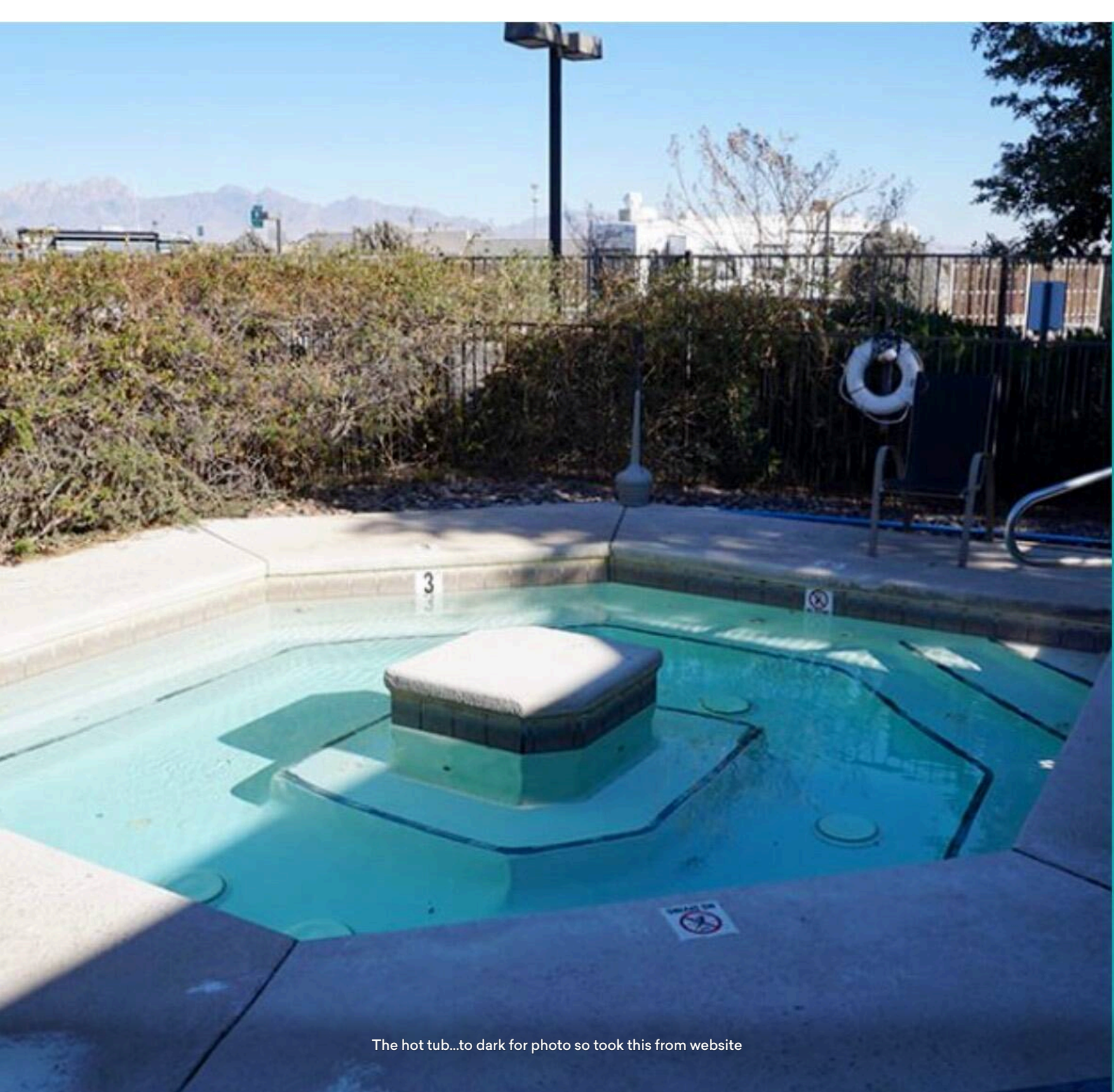
4 pm

Clear day

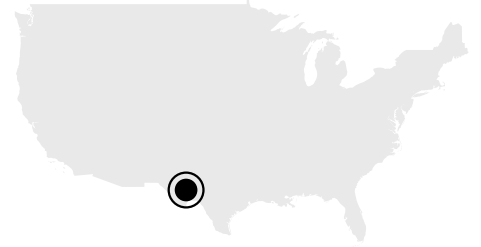
 77 °F

Altitude

3,898 ft



The hot tub...to dark for photo so took this from website



West Texas and Fort Stockton

 April 4, 2024 in the United States, City of Fort Stockton

And we thought yesterday was boring...WEST Texas beats it. Started with freeway construction in El Paso. Lots of slow bumper 2 bumper driving, messy roads and Texas drivers during the end of morning commuter traffic. We did see Mexico to the south. After that we hit the wide open boring spaces, flat with a few small mesas and no wild flowers. Each gas station we used was packed with RV traffic. Les noticed the RV were all going East for the Eclipse! Thank goodness Robert has made reservations a RV parks before hand.

Time

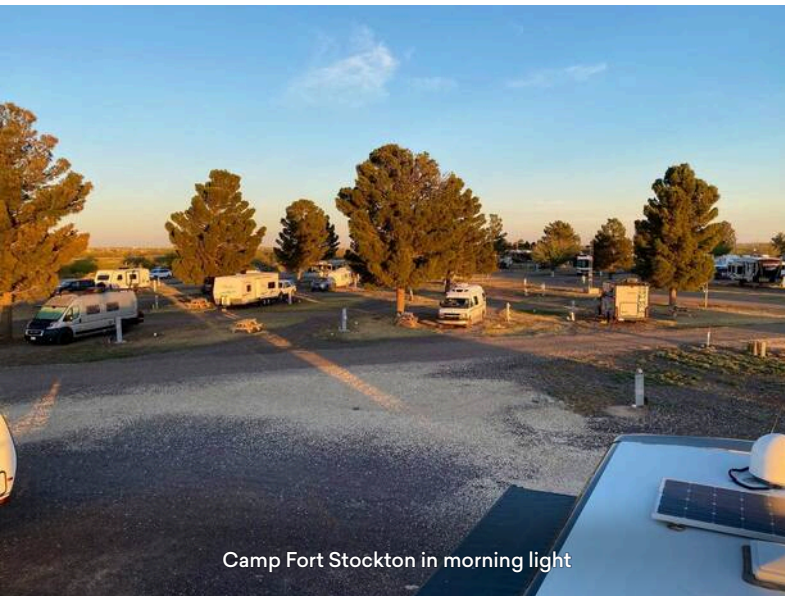
5 pm

Clear day

 86 °F

Altitude

2,943 ft



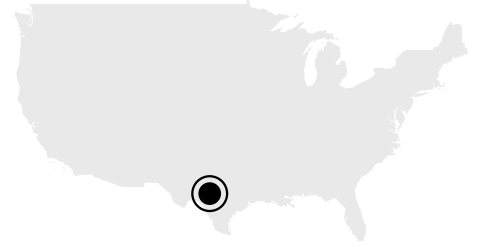
Camp Fort Stockton in morning light



The RV park from the roof.



A west Texas' mesa in the distant



Henly and Home for few nights



April 5, 2024 in the United States, Falls Creek


So last day until we get to Dripping Springs and Les' sister's place. We are staying at a near by Henly RV park. The drive was a little tiring for Les, especially in the afternoon when the wind picked up. At least there are lots of wild flowers along the road. As we headed into hill country the mesquite got larger, then oaks became the trees around us.

Once at the RV park resting, the to Nancy's.

Time

12 pm

Windy

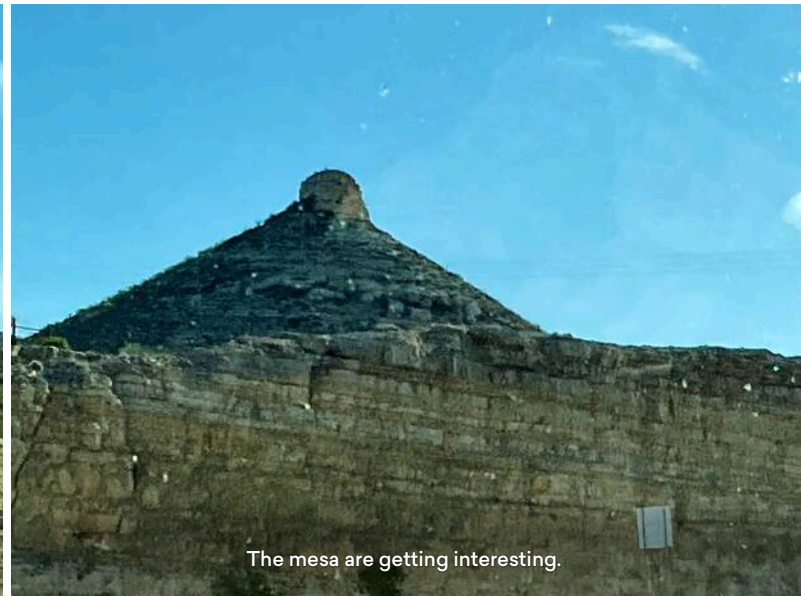
 81 °F

Altitude

1,811 ft



Leaving west Texas, saw the mesas get bigger and useful



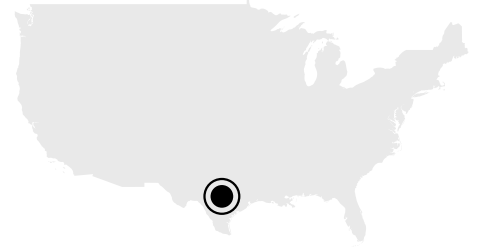
The mesa are getting interesting.



Wildflowers and Mesquite at Lunch stop




Interesting cactus



Crawdads

 April 5, 2024 in the United States, Henly


We went to out to eat at Henly Boil, with the family. The restaurant had Crawfish. Jill never had it before, ordered a pound for the table. Everyone else ate one...Jill felt she couldn't waste them. They were spicy, and your lips burned for a while. Lots of mess, and not much "meat." Jill sticking to lobster...

 Fun-funny [Angela Gatto]

Time

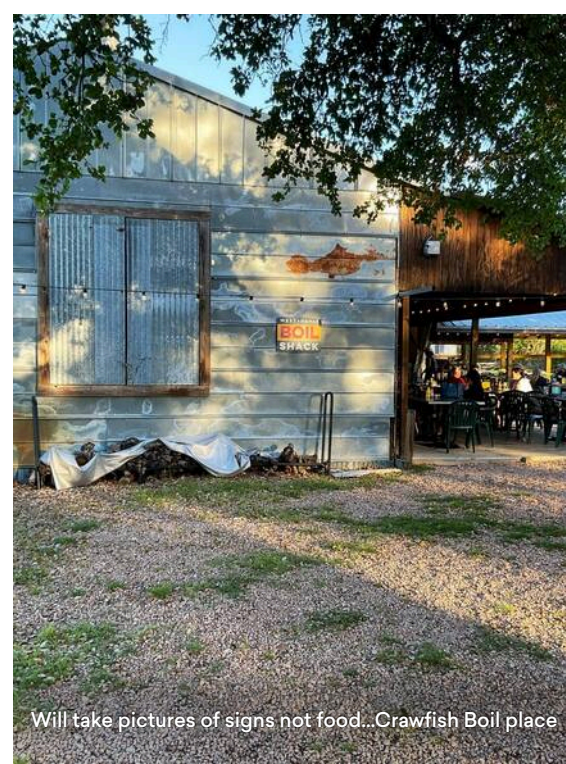
6 pm

Clear day

 82 °F

Altitude

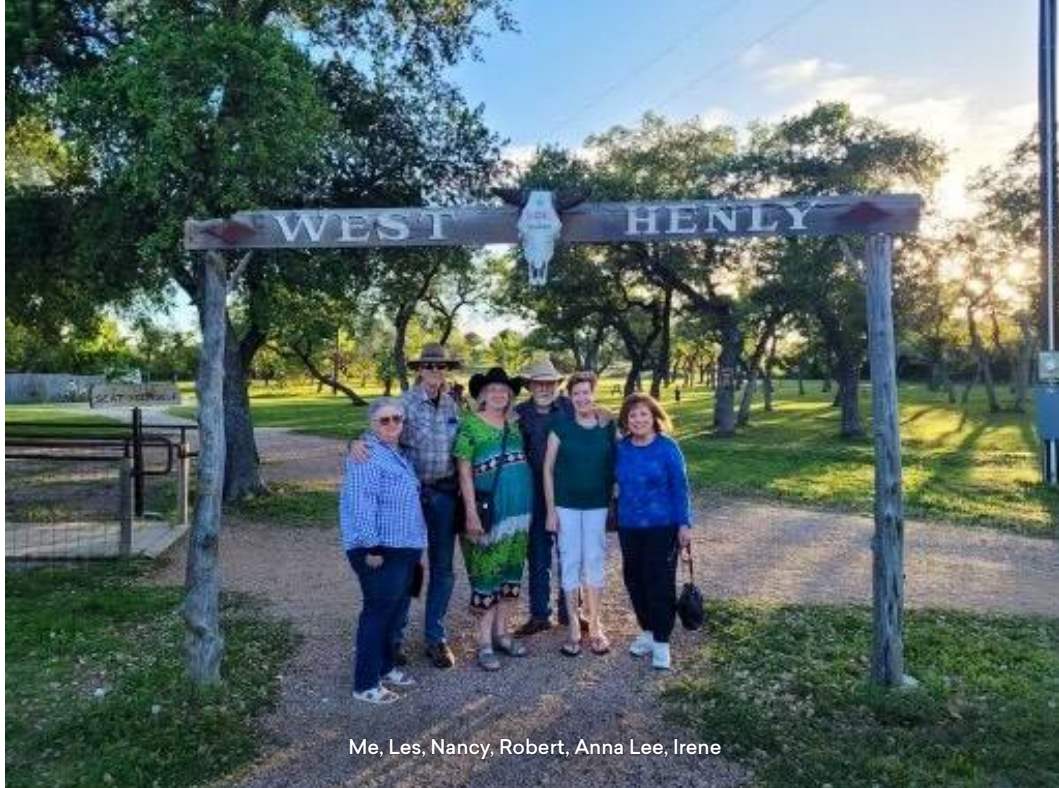
1,339 ft



Will take pictures of signs not food..Crawfish Boil place



Al, Nancy, Irene,Robert, Anna Lee, Les



Me, Les, Nancy, Robert, Anna Lee, Irene



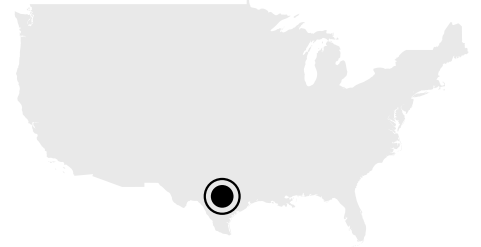
Guess who who

Day 10

Family Day 1



April 6, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport



Spent the day with all the family...of course eating! Mostly, we just relaxed and talked.

Time

11 am

Cloudy

☁️ 68 °F

Altitude

1,293 ft



Irene and Nancy fixing to boil the little quail eggs



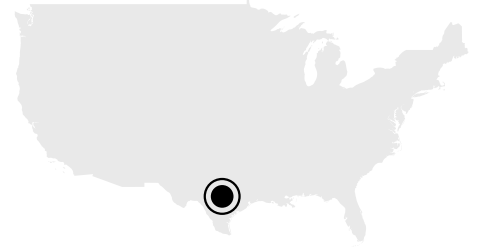
Cousins Beth and Tommy, and more food!



Quail eggs for breakfast?



Mostly seating and talking.



Family day 2 and pretty country.

 April 7, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport

So while visiting family, we are also seeing how pretty the Texas hill country is! Les fell in love with stacked rock walls to photograph and Jill blue bonnets and Indian paint brushes.

Time

3 pm

Cloudy

 79 °F

Altitude

1,306 ft



Quite a few walls



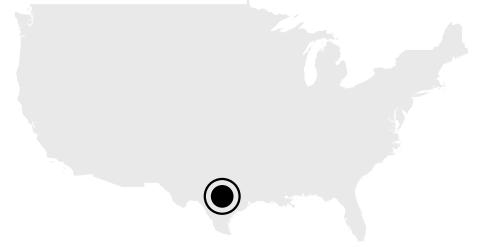
Blue Bonnets



Everyone said we were to late for field of flowers, but we found a few.



Dry stacked walls...Les was impressed



Pek-a-boo Eclipse

 April 8, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport

So the morning of the Great American Eclipse, cloudy and dripping in Dripping Springs. But we all gathered outside and waited. There is the sun...oops clouds, the sun, it's the sun with a bite out, clouds..more sun with more shadow, cloud, 3/4 sun covered, then clouds. One minute here it comes.. WE GOT TO SEE THE TOTALITY !!!!?



Traveling Bee An Olympus!!

Time

12 pm

Cloudy

 79 °F

Altitude

1,286 ft





Do you see the sun?



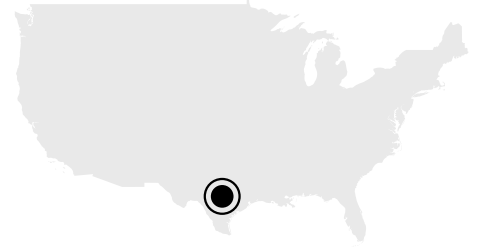
No now...



Take a picture.



The crowd...of the only kid..looking on his phone...
he'll be here for the next one.



The Eclipse!

 April 8, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport

Les' photo's through a telephoto lens with a clock drive.



Fantastic! [Angela Gatto]



Glad you got to go, nice pictures. When I was watching the 2017 one in Oregon, this Japanese guy had a clock drive too. Hugs to you both! [Linnae]

Time

1 pm

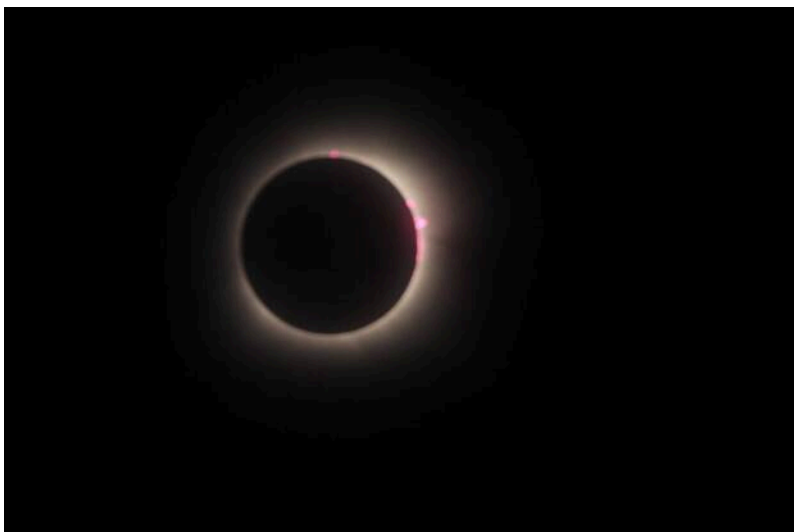
Cloudy

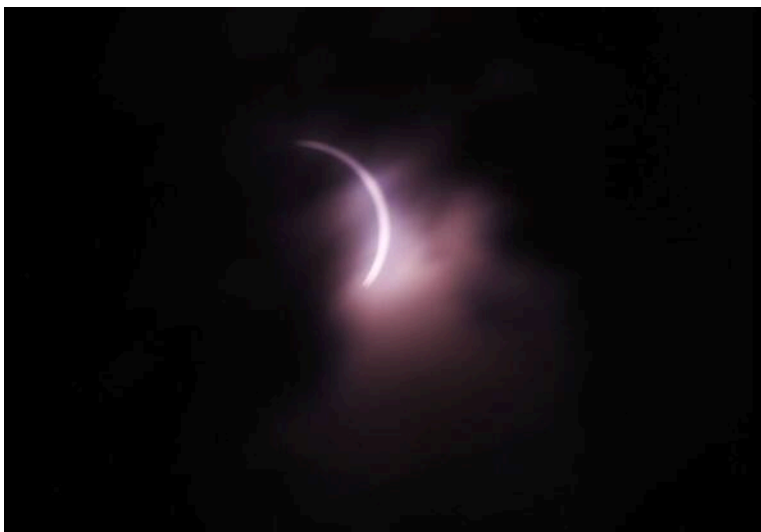
 79 °F

Altitude

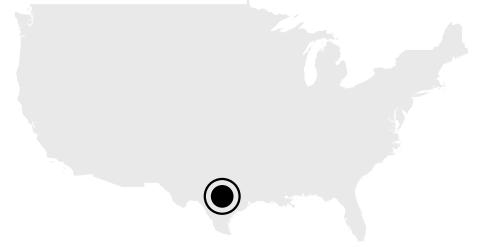
1,293 ft











What's a party without Texas Barbecue

 April 8, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport

So Nancy's daughter June and her husband Michael, cooked us a true Texas smoked Barbecue...Food, Food, Food...



Traveling Bee Nice!



That looks like a rainbow of healthy with side of TX bbq- yum [Angela Gatto]



Rose Hill What a spread! YUM

Time

5 pm

Cloudy

 77 °F

Altitude

1,286 ft



Chicken brown before cooked in Barbecue

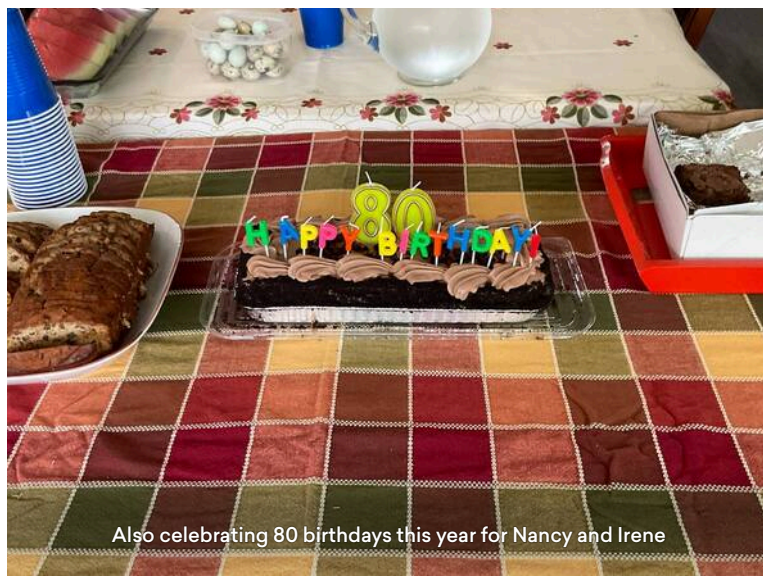


Michael made perfect brisket, ribs and June chicken.

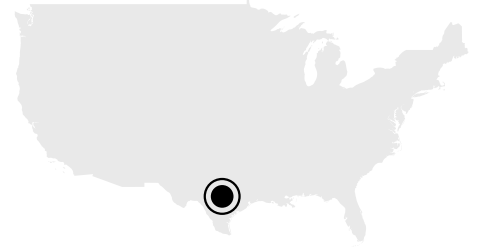




Food ready for after the eclipse



Also celebrating 80 birthdays this year for Nancy and Irene



Clouds over Henly

 April 9, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport

We are recovering from being with lots of family yesterday. The RV park is about a one mile drive to my sister's place. The sites were rented for the month. In addition, Les had a side effect from a new medication. We had rain showers several times today, so the humidity is 100%.

This evening we saw the clouds darken and the wind start to increase. There was lightening headed our way. I went out looking for funnel clouds, but could not see any. A few minutes later the squall line brought us heavy rain and hail. The attached video is from our front window. It includes the sound of hail on our roof. I don't think we had any damage, but I will check the solar panel on the roof in the morning.



Traveling Bee Yikes

Time

7 pm

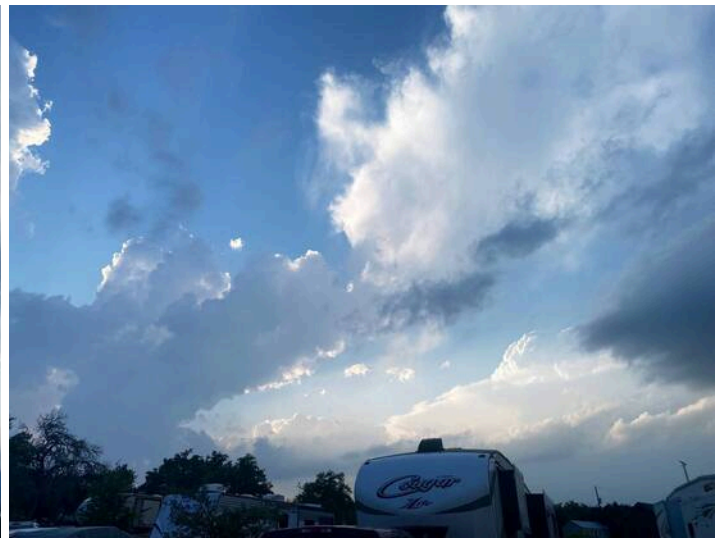
Clear day

 79 °F

Altitude

1,306 ft

Video







Johnson City, TX



April 10, 2024 in the United States, Johnson City

Les' side effects went away, so we went sightseeing. We took Indy over to my sister's place to see if we could leave him during hot weather. We went to Johnson City for lunch at "Picnic". After lunch, we went to the LBJ National Historic Park and toured the house LBJ lived in from age 5 until he left for college. The town was named for the Johnson family as they were early settlers long before LBJ became a Congressman.

Time

2 pm

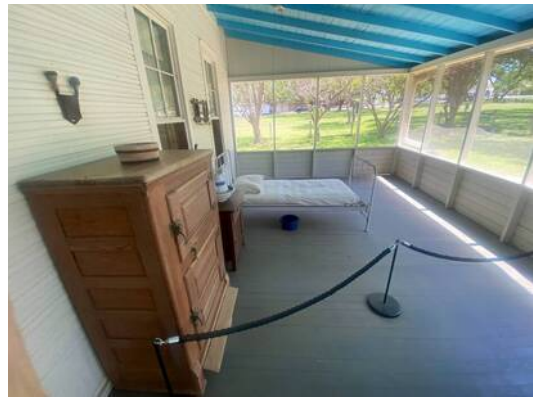
Windy

 66 °F

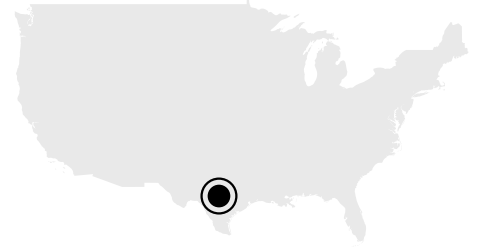
Altitude

1,234 ft









LBJ State Park and Historic Site



April 10, 2024 in the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson State Historical Park

Next we visited the State Park that includes the ranch where LBJ was born, had the Western White House and died. There are long-horned cattle, buffalo, a visitor center and a living history ranch.



Di Williams Heron Are you going to visit the Levi Deike ranch? You gotta be close!



Quail Run Tripping I forgot he is in the Hill Country. Do you know his address?



Di Williams Heron He's in Hye TX - everybody knows him, of course! No address just PO Box & cell phone: 830-992-0810

Time

4 pm

Windy

 68 °F

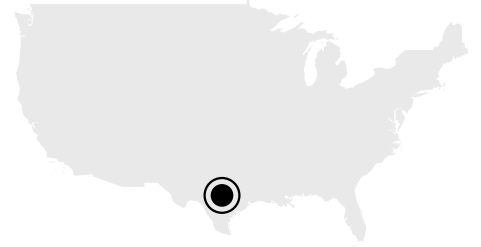
Altitude

1,378 ft









Zebras and Waterfalls

 April 11, 2024 in the United States, Pedernales Falls State Park

Morning started out looking for the perfect Texas Live Oak for Jill to paint, Jill found a couple of small parks on google maps...they turned out to be Members only for housing developments. Moved on to "Texas Hill Olives", nice place but the Olive Trees were small and Les felt sick. Back to RV. After a nap Les felt better, so to Pedernales Falls State Park. We took a little walk to the overlook of the "Falls." Interesting, but more waterfalls when there is rain. We also stopped at the park's bird blind. Les had fun photographing the Black-Chinned Hummingbirds. Then heading back home late afternoon...found that perfect Tree, but both of us too tired.

Why the name of this foot print..."When you hear hoof beats, think horses, not zebras." Not in Texas! As we were leaving the RV park what should we see...

Time

4 pm

Clear day

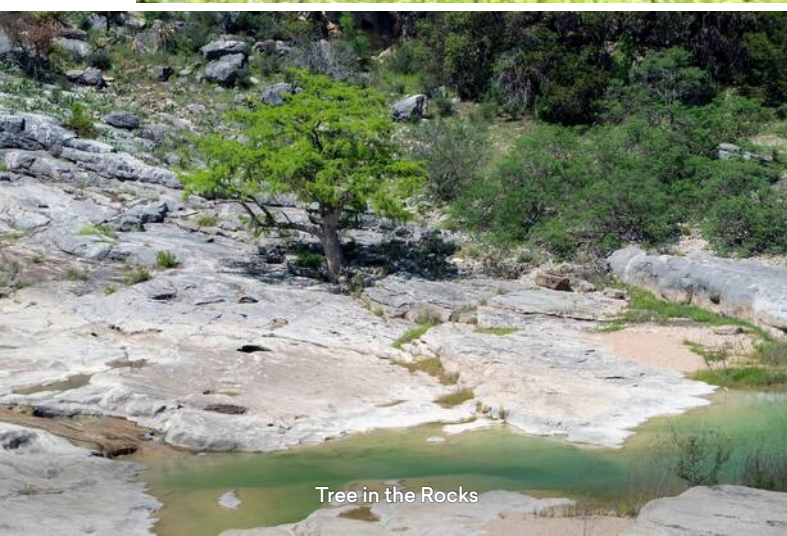
 81 °F

Altitude

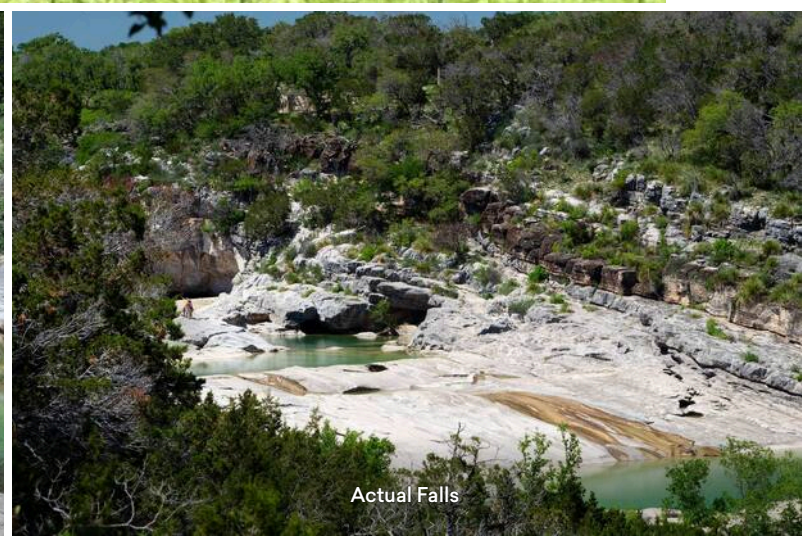
896 ft



Pano of Falls area



Tree in the Rocks



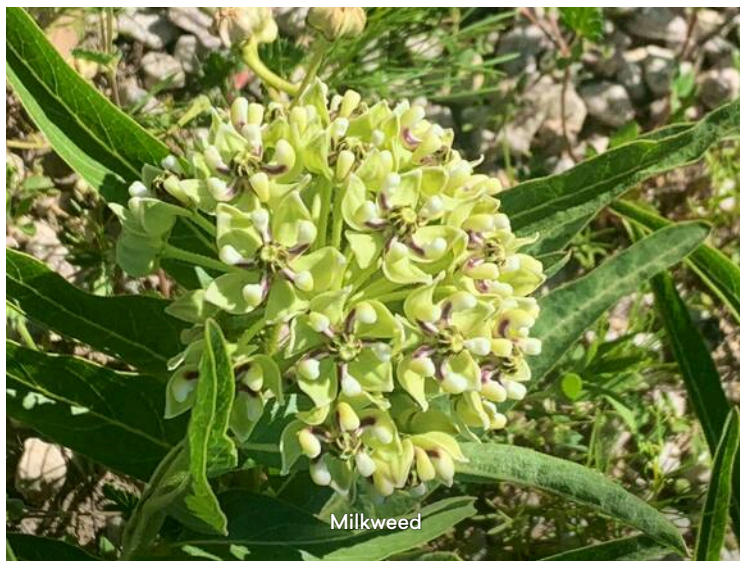
Actual Falls



Black Chinned Hummingbirds



DYC which covers the fields here



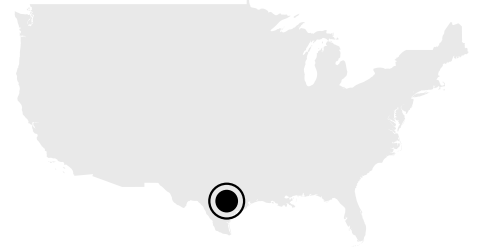
Milkweed



PaintBrush



Perfect Live Oak in field of Flowers



Gonzalas, TX



April 12, 2024 in the United States, Longer Park

We got up early and headed down to Gonzales to meet up the Les' brother Robert and Cousin Anna Lee. Anna Lee had found a bill of sale that suggested we might have mineral rights that we did not know about. We checked it out with the County Clerk and the Surveyor. It turn out that the mineral rights expired it 1990. So we had some lunch and returned to Henly. On the way back, we passed through the little town of Luling, TX, the Watermelon Capital of the World! Thus the water tower was painted as a watermelon.

Time

10 am

Partly cloudy



66 °F

Altitude

413 ft



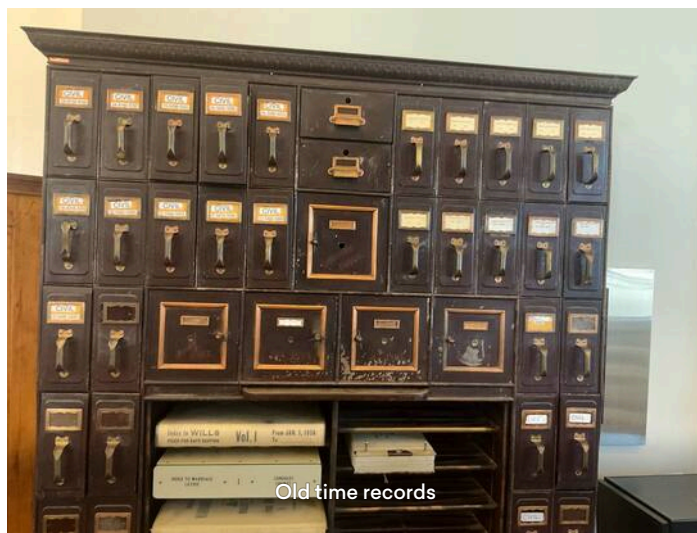
Downtown Gonzales shades of yesterday



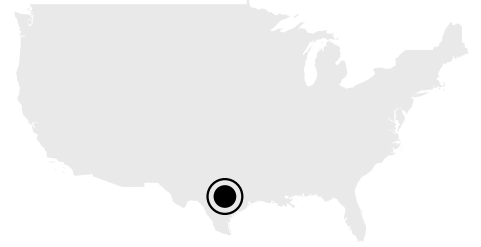
We came to see the Tax rolls



Map of old Gonzales County



Old time records



Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



April 13, 2024 in the United States, Shady Hollow

We left Indy with Les' sister again and went to see wildflowers. Because it was a Saturday and there was a plant sale, it was crowded. We parked about a quarter mile from the entrance. The gardens were very nice. There were lots of benches for sitting and enjoying the views.

Time

1 pm

Partly cloudy



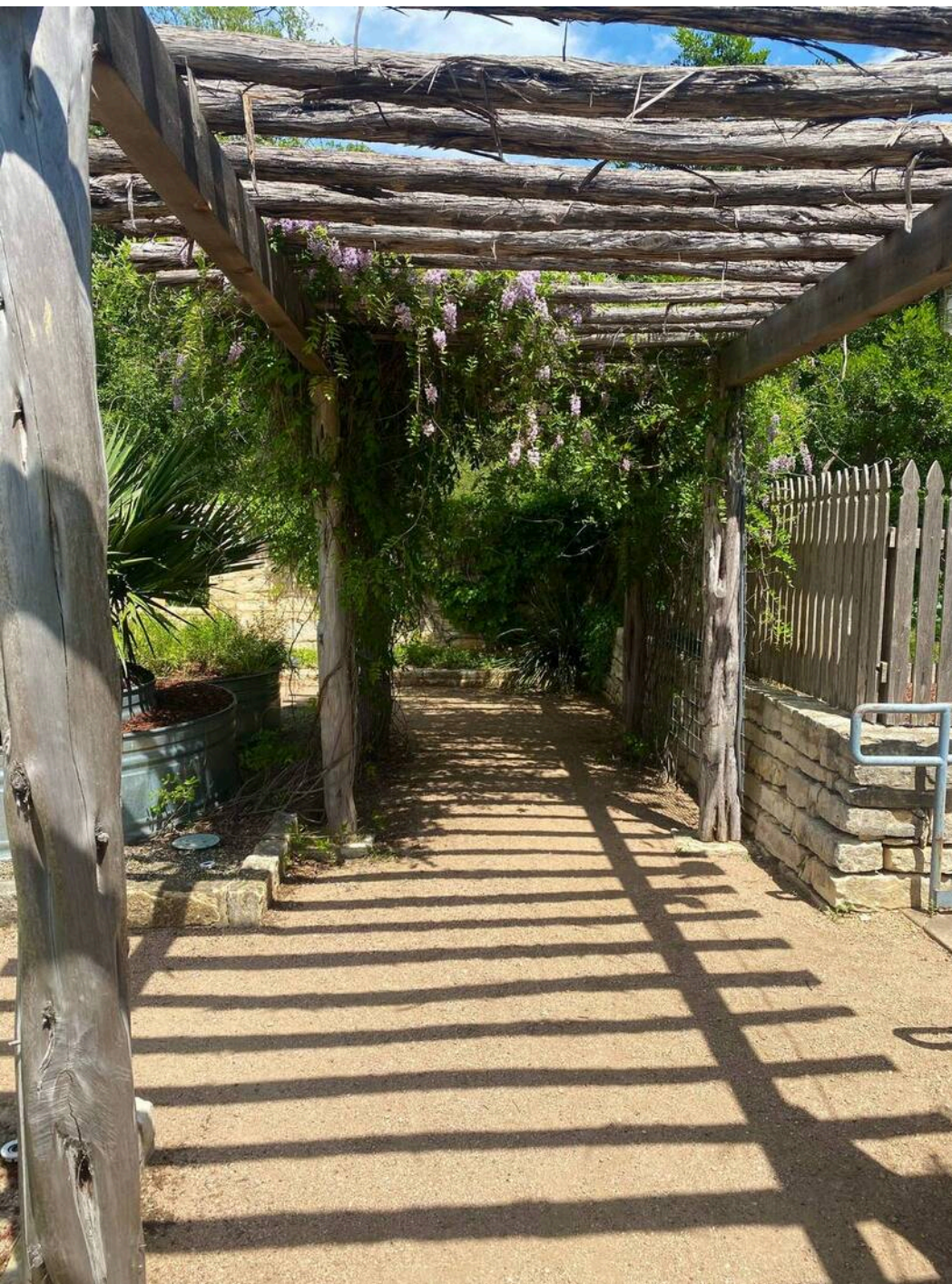
77 °F

Altitude

843 ft



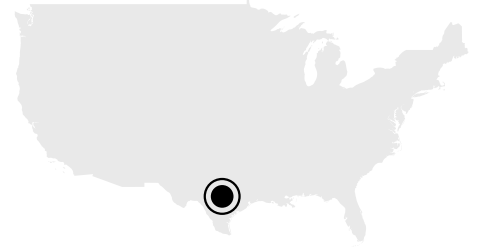




Les under a Mesquite Tree




Winecups



Staying in place

 April 14, 2024 in the United States, Halm Ranch Airport

Another day here in Henly. Had breakfast out with the families and then shopping. Only big thing was that we left Indy in the RV while we went to the post office. He was quiet whole Time! He just stared out the front window with the cat (we have Furbo camera to watch him).

 Oh yay he has come so far, what a good boy. Does he still sing while driving ? [Angela Gatto]

 Quail Run Tripping His singing in the motorhome is less, but in the Jeep and RAV4, he still sings.

Time

12 pm

Partly cloudy

 79 °F

Altitude

1,306 ft



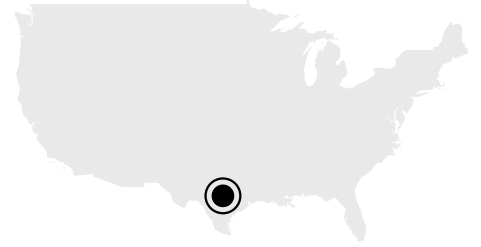
Dashboard Cat



What you doing Dad?



Want to play with my squirrel!



Texas Hill County Olives


 April 15, 2024 in the United States, Schoolhouse Hollow

Took Nancy and Al out to lunch at the Olive place, not very many choices on the menu but fun. Then Al drove us around a long loop back to Henly. Getting rested up for tomorrow's long drive to Sulfur Springs, TX.

Time

12 pm

Cloudy

 79 °F

Altitude

1,230 ft



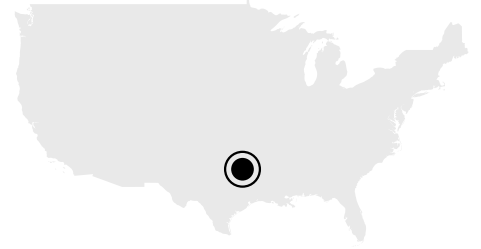
The olive trees are very young.



Restaurant gift shop is nice



Motley crew



Halfway to Hot Springs



April 16, 2024 in the United States, Rockdale

So not much to report. Left by 8:30 and traveling in the morning on US 281, through wonderful country sides. The blue bonnets may be over, but there are fields of paint brush and evening primrose. Afternoon freeways and traffic as we skirt Dallas. Noticed a lot of RV parks along the freeways. The one we are in tonight is fine for a night, but one of the long term guests doesn't know how to play their vehicle's music without rocking the neighboring vehicles.

Time

4 pm

Cloudy

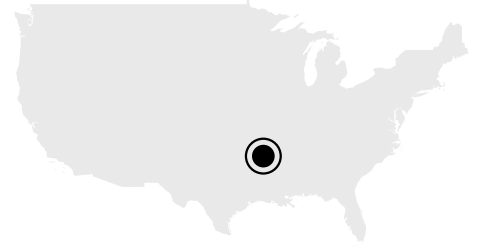
 77 °F

Altitude

548 ft



A paint brush...from another day.



We saw Paris



April 17, 2024 in the United States, Middle Branch Gulpha Creek

Started with humid foggy day. On the way to Hot Springs AR, we saw Paris TX complete with an Eiffel Tower, in a Texas Cowboy hat. There was also a nice memorial to all those locals that had served in the military. They had black marble pillars for each war (starting with WWI) with the names of locals who had made the ultimate sacrifice. What bothered us was they had three or four more empty pillars. Please God let's not use them. Long day driving, from Texas thru corner of Oklahoma, to Arkansas.



Ugh, those empty pillars are both sad but creepy/scary too, hope they stay empty. [Angela]

Time

4 pm

Cloudy

☁ 82 °F

Altitude

528 ft



Their memorial for Service Men and Women



They also had pillars describing each conflict



The hat really makes it Texas



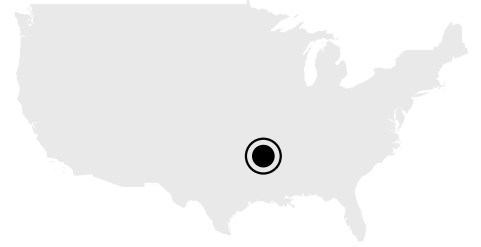
Pillars for the ultimate sacrifice names



Also had military equipment



Our campsite in Hot Springs KOA.



An unusual National Park



April 18, 2024 in the United States, Middle Branch Gulpha Creek

Yesterday, we arrived at the KOA outside Hot Springs, AR. This morning, we went into town to explore Hot Springs National Park. This was first designated as a Federal Reserve in 1832, 40 years before Yellowstone became the first National Park. Hot Springs became a National Park in 1921. Unlike most National Parks, this one is integrated into the town. As we started a tour, our guide pointed out that one side of the street is commercial while the other side is the National Park. This town is where President Clinton graduated high school. President Franklin Roosevelt came here often to “take the waters”. Before arriving here, I was wondering why the hot springs were here. There is no volcanic activity anywhere in the part of the country. As it turns out the water is from 8 miles deep in the earth, and is heated to over 140 degrees as it is forced to the surface through the rock. The water is believed to contain healing properties and has attracted millions of people seeking these healing properties. While the park has a natural geological side, it is more about the history of the area.

Time

10 am

Cloudy



73 °F

Altitude

545 ft



Standing tall in the background is the Army and Navy Hospital. It is now empty and for sale.



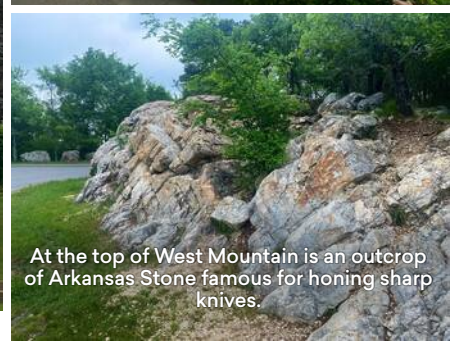
Several Bath Houses line Bath House Row. Buckstaff Baths still operates.



Quapaw Baths also still operates.



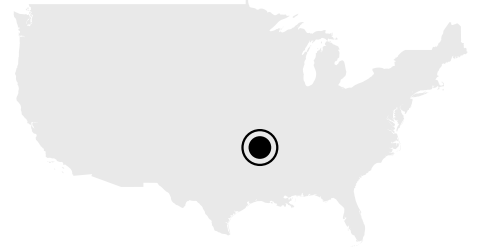
Oxark is now a NPS Cultural Center and Fordyce Baths beyond the the NPS Visitor Center.



At the top of West Mountain is an outcrop of Arkansas Stone famous for honing sharp knives.



Robert and Irene enjoy the VC porch.



More Cousins

 April 19, 2024 in the United States, Piney Bay Recreation Area

Traveled to Russelville, AR to visit Les' cousin Scott. From Hot Springs, we drove Scenic 7 Byway. It is a beautiful, windy, twisty two lane highway through a dense deciduous forest with no turnouts. This route added an extra hour to the one hour drive. We camped at Piney Bay Campground managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The sites have electricity and some have water as well. Scott and his wife served us a great steak dinner. We had a wonderful time catching up on family activities.

Cloudy

 64 °F

Altitude

394 ft



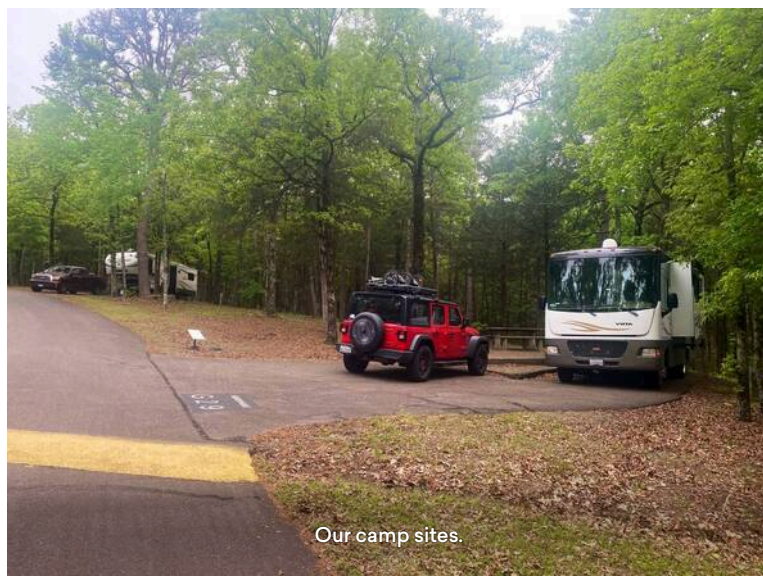
Beverly making salad dressing.



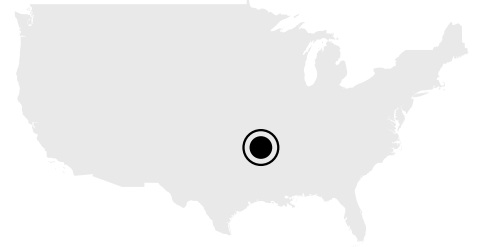
Robert, Beverly, Les, Jill and Scott at the dinner table. Irene took the picture.



Scott and Les talking while Beverly preps.



Our camp sites.



Piney Bay

 April 20, 2024 in the United States, Piney Bay Recreation Area

This morning we went to Russelville and had a big breakfast at Stoby's with Robert, Irene, Scott and Beverly. Before returning to camp, we shopped at a Krogers and topped up the Jeep's gas tank. In camp, we looked at maps for where to go next. Les' brother has less time to travel and has elected to go see Mt Rushmore before heading back to California. For us, we have other places to visit. So tomorrow we will leave camp and head in separate destinations. It has been great traveling together.

Time

3 pm

Cloudy

 63 °F

Altitude

377 ft



Lake Dardanelles on the Arkansas River.



More of the lake and into Piney Bay.



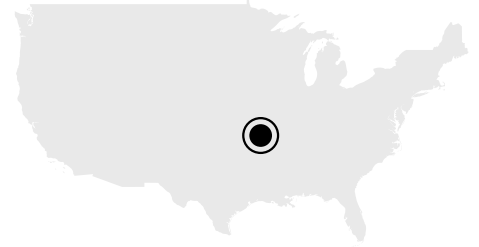
Breakfast crowd



Piney Bay.



A pretty flower in the grass by the bay.





Traveling on ...

 April 21, 2024 in the United States, Indian Point Park

So we said goodbye to Robert and Irene, and decided to go north to Branson MO. All the routes going north were curvy, up and down. So we picked the Ozark Ridge Scenic Byway. Very nice, lovely spring trees, dogwood in bloom, farms and cows. It was definitely curvy. Again no pullouts for most of the way. We found a “brake check” stop for lunch. Of course as soon we started up we found a nice pullout for the National “Buffalo Natural River.”

Camping at another Corp Of Engineer campground on TableRock Lake, not as nice as yesterday’s but has level sites, with electricity.. This is a more popular campground, and they have squeezed a lot of sites in small area. Still better than the “parking lot” RV” resorts we saw coming here.

 I didn't realize COE had campgrounds, note for the future- thanks [Angela Gatto]

 **Quail Run Tripping** Jill and I were park rangers for COE for about 8 years. California has about a dozen lakes and a river with campgrounds. In the Midwest, COE has a lot more.



 **Traveling Bee** Dogwoods are my g

 **Traveling Bee** Favorite spring tree! They are booming along Hwy 50 too.

 **Quail Run Tripping** 😊

Time

2 pm

Clear day

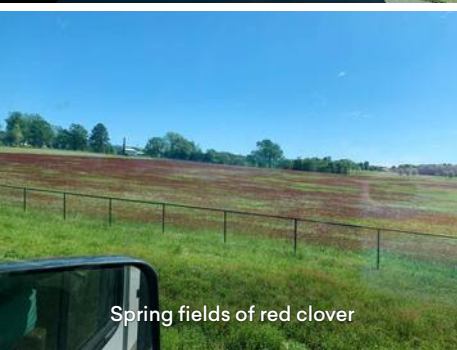
 59 °F

Altitude

971 ft



Ozark Ridge Scenic Byway worth a drive



Spring fields of red clover



Interesting cabins



Day curvy roads ahead.



And Farms



And dogwood in bloom



Took this pic in our campground..no pull outs on drive



Another Corps of Engineers Dam





Corp Campground Indian Point



Our choice for “tourist” tour



April 22, 2024

We thought we found a local museum. We found it was part of “Ozark’s Heritage Preserve” a tourist destination with a golf cart 2.5 mile tour of the area. They just pointed you to a cart, and said follow the “trail,” Of course we had never drive a golf cart and need a little help getting started. It was actually kind of fun. A great “ride” for us seniors. As for the museum it was mostly Native American artifacts from all over. I always question who and how they got those pieces. It was well done, but because we took the cart tour, we didn’t have time to do it right...dog back at RV.

Time

10 am

Cloudy

☁ 55 °F

Altitude

1,348 ft



One of several bridges we crossed.



Jill standing with our golf cart.



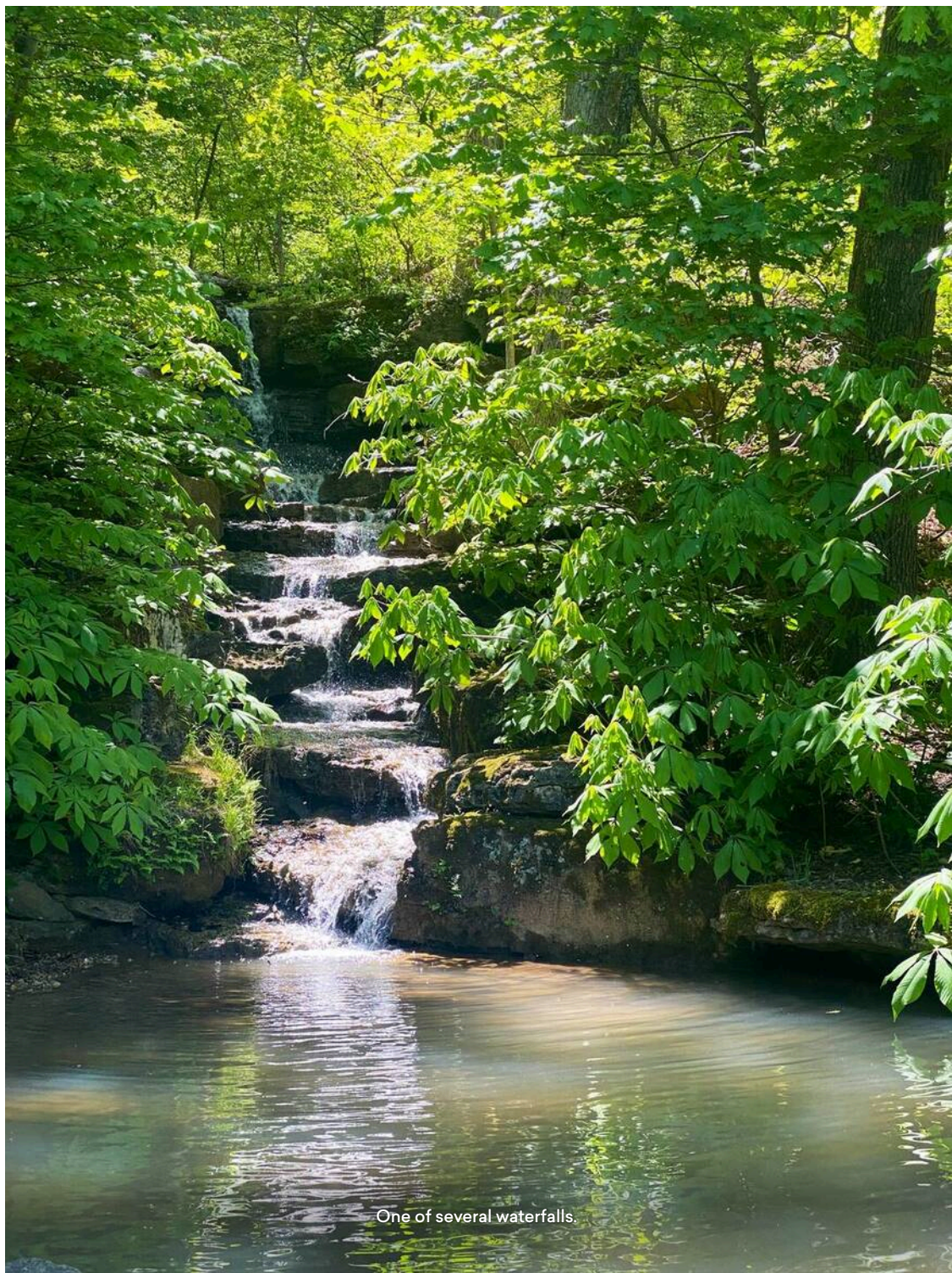
We drove through this natural cave and bought carmel corn at the bar inside.



Another waterfall. We think the water may be recycled.



A wooly mammoth skeleton at the beginning of the museum.



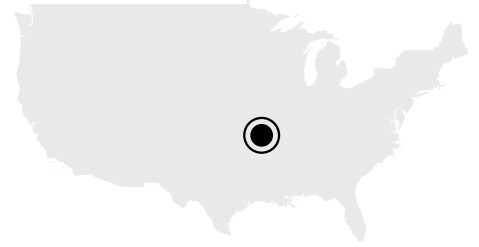
One of several waterfalls.



This beautiful church is only used for weddings.



Indy and Cinnamon are standing guard in the motorhome.



Tacky Town



April 22, 2024 in the United States, North Beach Park

So we heard that Branson, MO was full of theaters and music. We thought it was started by famous singers like Andy Williams who were tired of touring. Now mostly they are cover bands, Elvis impersonators, and groups singing songs from the 50-90s. Still lots of theaters, but we found that they are closed on Mondays! We did find one show open Monday Evening, a magician who had his own theater. It was a good show.

The whole town is a tacky family Las Vegas, with “creation zoo”, numerous places to Zip-Line, at least 4 amusement parks, rides of all different types, pink Jeep tours, and museums of dubious nature (the world’s largest toy museum, and Titanic museum). Not much of it about local history. ..

Time

5 pm

Partly cloudy

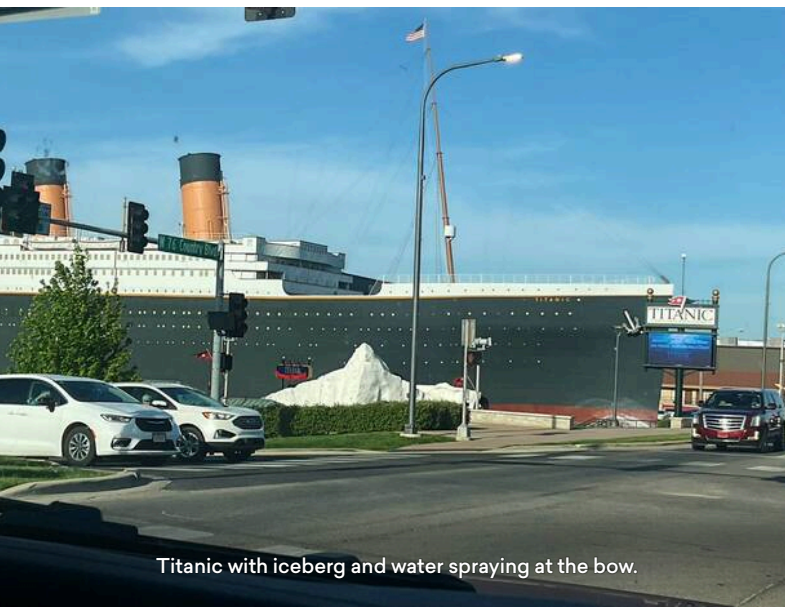


68 °F

Altitude

732 ft

Video



Titanic with iceberg and water spraying at the bow.



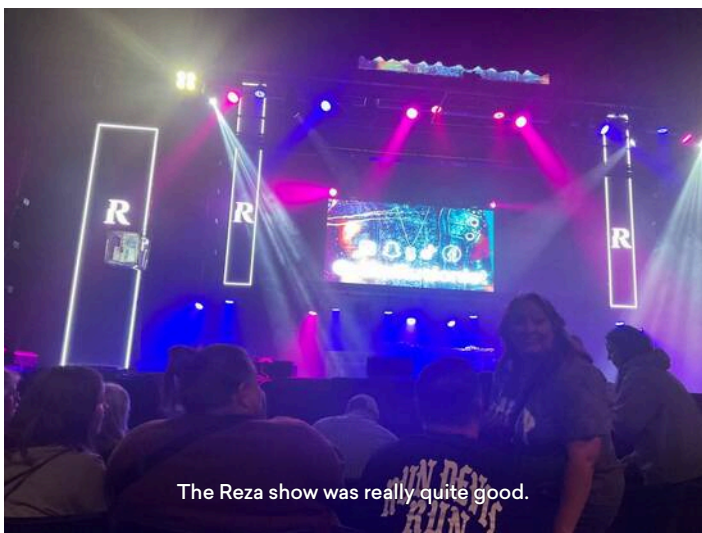
King Kong climbing a building at the wax museum. Zoning laws?



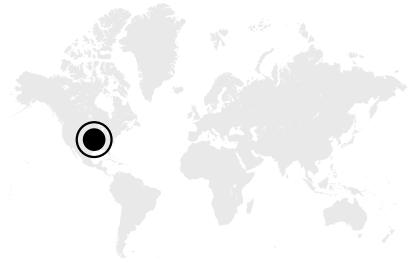
Watertank and military vehicle park.



We thought about about taking the showboat, but it was closed.



The Reza show was really quite good.



Fort Scott and beyond.



April 23, 2024

Left the campground after dumping tanks. The weather was sunny as we left Branson, but cloudy by the time we got to Fort Scott, KS. We toured the old fort, now a National Historic Site. It was very interesting how this fort played important parts in a lot of US history. We continued west and camped at another Corps of Engineers campground.

Time

4 pm

Cloudy

☁️ 70 °F

Altitude

840 ft



Fort Scott



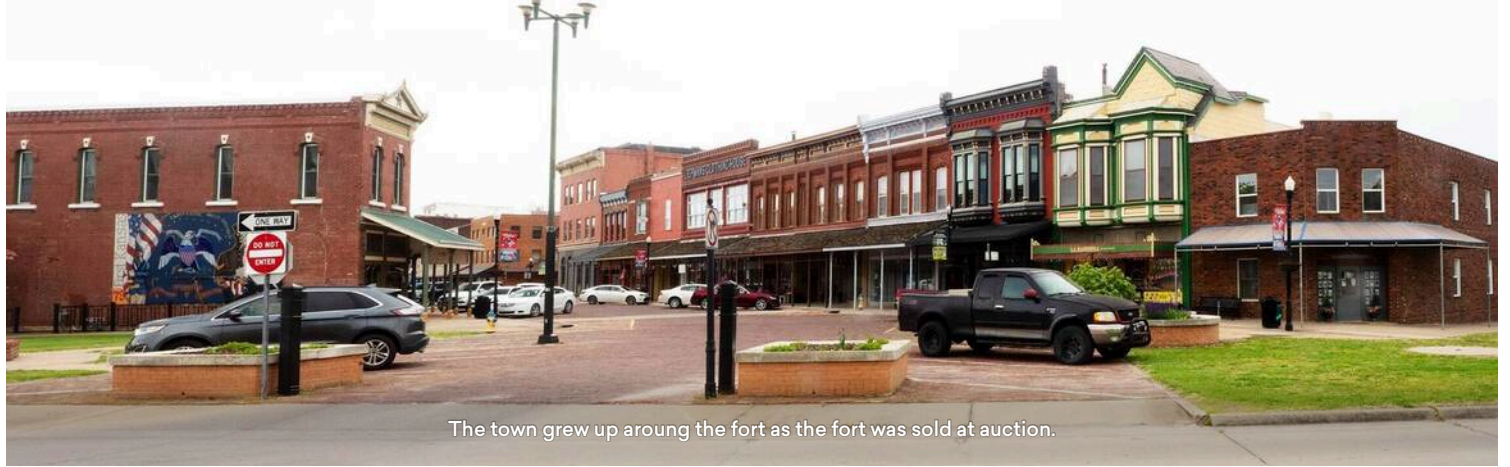
Infantry Barracks containing a displays and a movie.



Powder Magazine



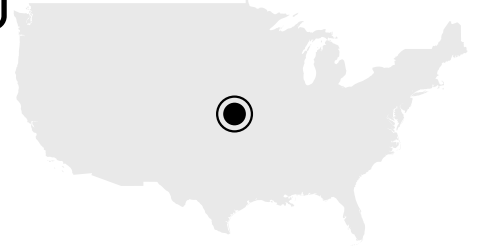
Officers Quarters #2 and #1.



The town grew up around the fort as the fort was sold at auction.



John Red ond Dam



Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve



April 24, 2024 in the United States, Canning Creek

So this is the place Jill really wanted to see in Kansas. We had a late start , but only an hour away, so spent most of the day there. While it was the wrong season to see the tallgrass (visit in the fall). We spent the morning walking around the historic Spring Ranch, which is the basis for the Preserve. There were also lots of trails to walk. Of course Jill's knee decided to pain her. You MUST walk out on the prairie. You really get a feeling for what life on the prairie was like, both for "First Nations" then the settlers. Both of us took an afternoon walk on one of the trails. Jill didn't get as far, but actually got her sketch book out. Les walked a couple of miles.

In Arkansas, every little town had one or two RV parks, not so Kanas. Thank goodness for those dam Corps of Engineers. They have lakes every where with wonderful campgrounds. Most have electric and even water hookups. They aren't busy this time of the year. So you can drive in, see if the site you want is available by scanning a QR Code on the post. You then pay through recreation.gov. Twenty-five dollars a night, half of that with golden age card. So we just went 20 miles north to Council Grove, and camped.

Thunderstorm



72 °F

Altitude

1,319 ft



Restoration project



The 3 story "Barn"



The house was built in 1881 for \$25,000. It has 3 and a half stories



Back of the house and smoke house



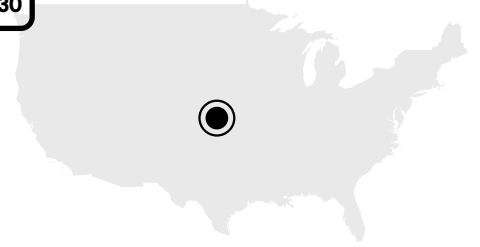
A view from the barn, 1880s ended open range ranching



Interesting topography



The original grazers of the prairie



Laundry and Walmart.

 April 25, 2024 in the United States, Button Airport

So we left Council Grove with the idea that we would travel to Great Bend, KS because it has a super Walmart and Laundromats. The route we are traveling is part of the historical Santa Fe trail. Last night we were at the location of a Council meeting with the Osage Indians to get permission to travel through their territory, along the Arkansas River. So today we are traveling to the “Great Bend “ in that River. We got a place in very small RV park probably the only one. Tomorrow we will do laundry and visit another fort on the Santa Fe historic trail.

Time

2 pm

Windy

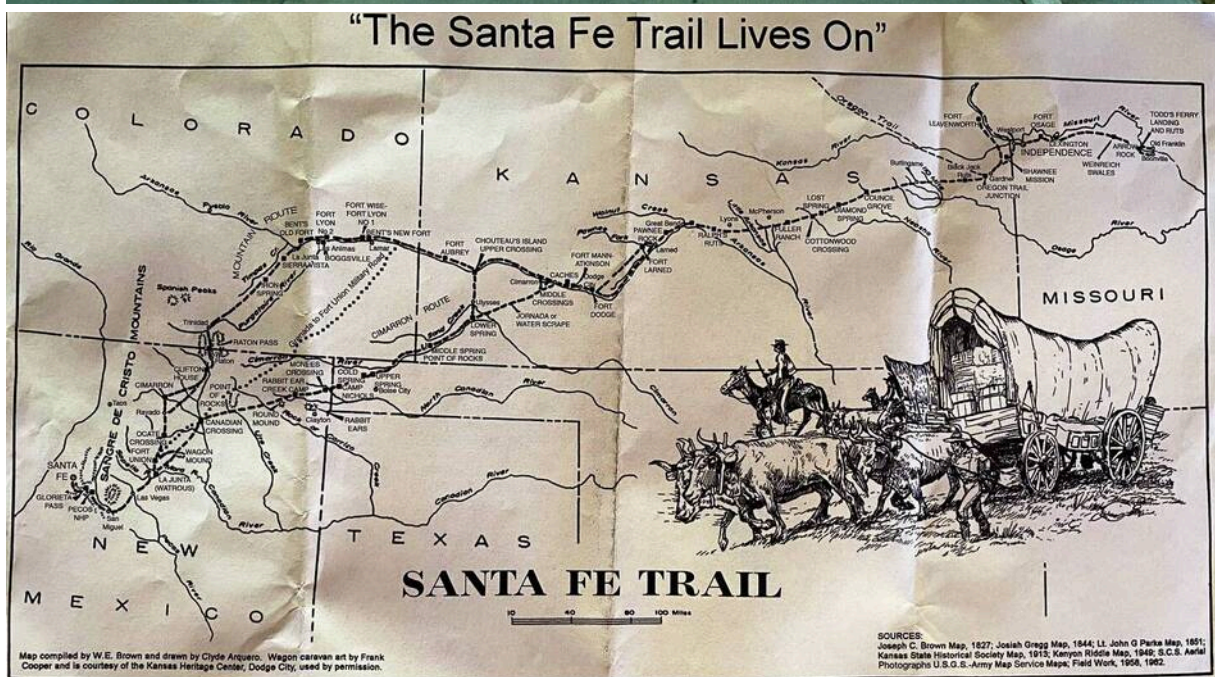
 64 °F

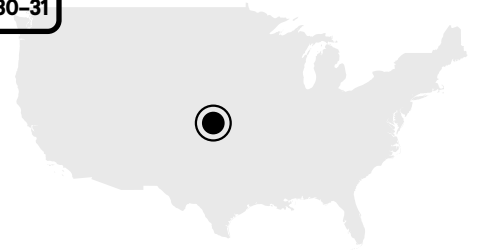
Altitude

1,834 ft



Cloudy day and ghostly trees in the distance





Fort Larned

 April 26, 2024 in the United States, Frizell

Les did the laundry this morning and after lunch in the motorhome, we took the jeep directly into heavy southwest wind and a little rain. We kept an eye on the rain clouds we were approaching, watching for funnels forming. Fortunately, they did not form. The destination was Fort Larned, named for the army paymaster in Washington. The layout of the fort is very much like Fort Scott, except the buildings are constructed of sandstone blocks from a quarry about 6 miles away. The purpose of the fort was protection of those traveling the Santa Fe Trail through Indian territory. The visitor center has very good displays, including a view out a window to military activities outside. The view was video made of in character activities projected on a monitor the same size as the window. The effect was very convincing. After leaving Fort Larned, we stopped at the Santa Fe Trail Center near by. They had a good museum too.

Time

1 pm

Windy

 70 °F

Altitude

2,060 ft



Company officer quarters



Flagpole with barracks behind



Well behind company officer quarters



Company pharmacist



Infantry barracks



Barracks bunks, each for 4 soldiers.



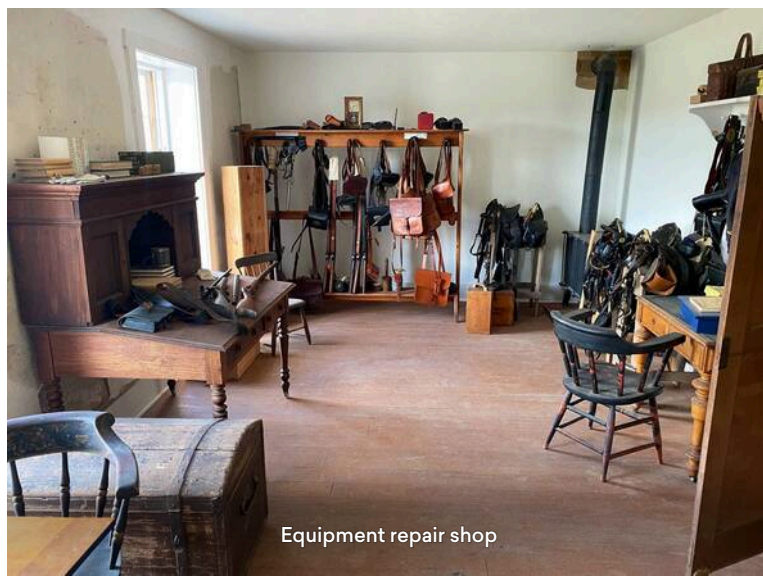
Barracks kitchen



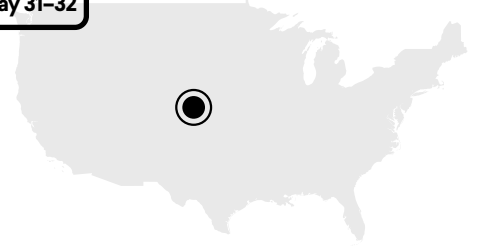
Shaving horse in the carpenter shop



The shop building



Equipment repair shop



Storm watch



April 27, 2024 in the United States, Goodland

So after using our storm watch app for the last two days we decided to take interstate 70 west, as a big storm looked like it was in our way west. The thing about the interstate is there is an RV park almost every exit. The Kansas highways going due west didn't show many campgrounds. We started early (for us 8:00) and drove for almost 4 hours. Stopping before any storm hit at 11:45 am or 12:45 pm, where central time meets Mountain time depending on the cell tower.

Goodland, KS is home to the "World's Largest Easel" and very cute Plains Museum. After doing the town we settled in our RV to wait out the storm.

Time

1 pm

Thunderstorm



Altitude

3,661 ft

Video



Van Gogh would be pleased how his art is displayed.

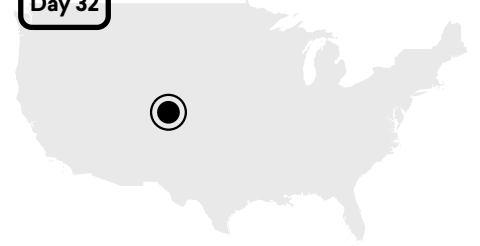




The storm is coming and the windmills are turning.



Spring is coming to the high plains.



Going West into Colorado



April 28, 2024 in the United States, Black Canyon

It was still cloudy when we left Goodland this morning. The wind wasn't too bad. The very flat plains gradually rose in elevation heading into the front range of the Rockies. The first part of the trip was on I-70. We last traveled this highway was in 2012 when we drove our motorhome home from Virginia. On that trip, there were no windmills. What a difference 12 year has made, windmills as far as the eye can see. Jill made a reservation at Pike's Peak RV Park for 3 nights and tickets for tomorrow on the Pike's Peak Cog Railway.



Day 32 of big time fun 🌟 [Christy]

Time

1 pm

Clear day



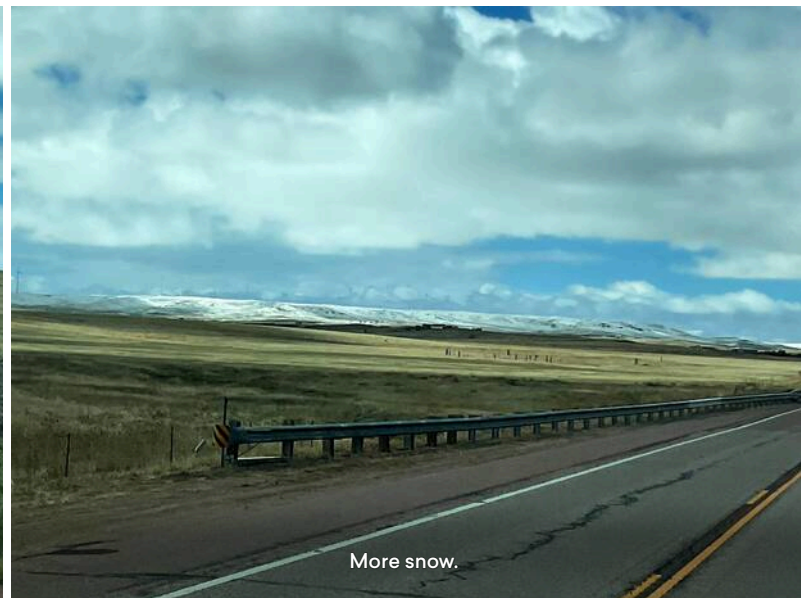
52 °F

Altitude

6,273 ft



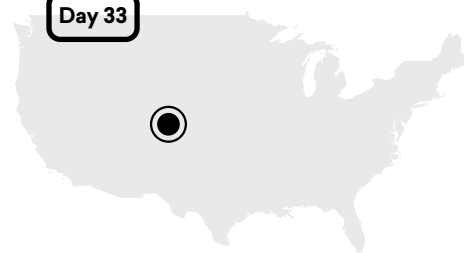
Fresh snow on the hills east of Colorado Springs.



More snow.



As the sun peaked out through the clouds, it highlighted a grain elevator and its silos.



Pike's Peak by Cog Railway

 April 29, 2024 in the United States, Black Canyon

Pike's Peak is just over 14,000'. The Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway is one of two Cog Railroads in the US. How does a cog railroad differ from all other railroads. The climb is way too steep (25%) for regular trains, so the cog railroad has a third rail in the center and the engine has a gear (cog) that engages with the third rail to provide traction. Initially, the engines were steam, but today the engine is diesel hydraulic. Unfortunately, there is still 20' of snow at 14,000', so we only went up to just over 11,000'. There was no place to get out at that elevation, so they stopped the train for 10 minutes to let us get up and take photos.

Time

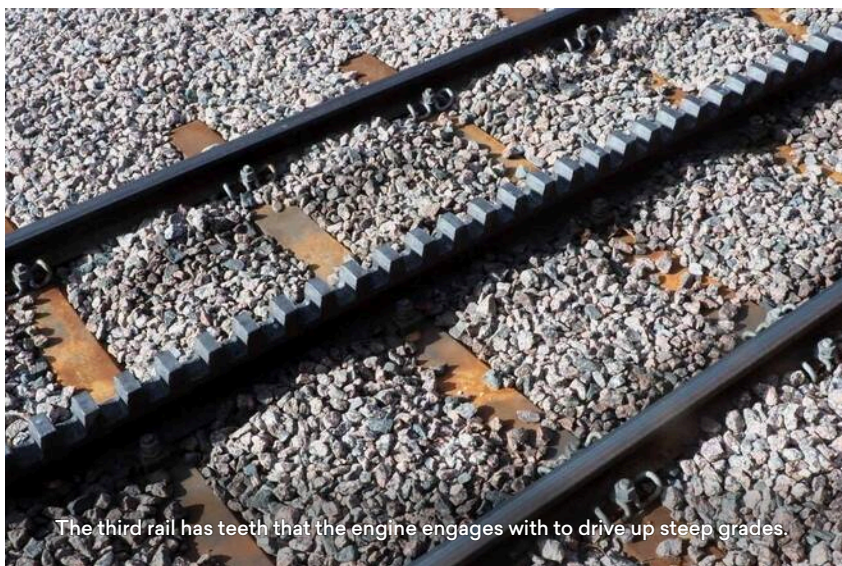
10 am

Cloudy

 54 °F

Altitude

6,273 ft



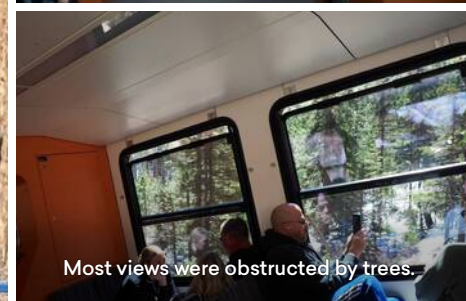
The third rail has teeth that the engine engages with to drive up steep grades.



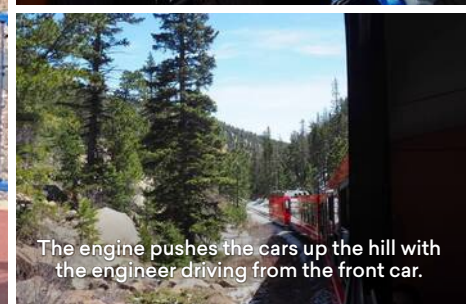
The engine and 3 cars emerges from it's engine house



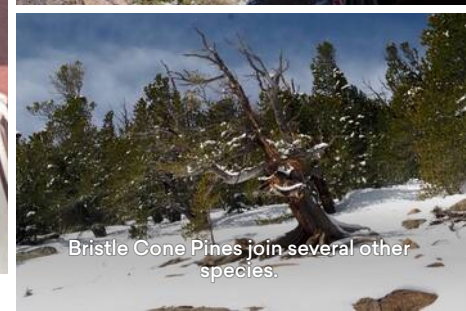
Inside the cars.



Most views were obstructed by trees.



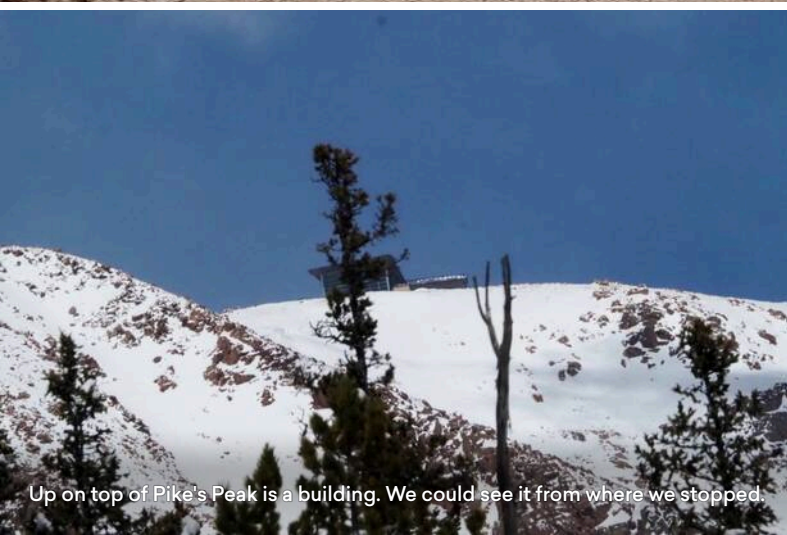
The engine pushes the cars up the hill with the engineer driving from the front car.



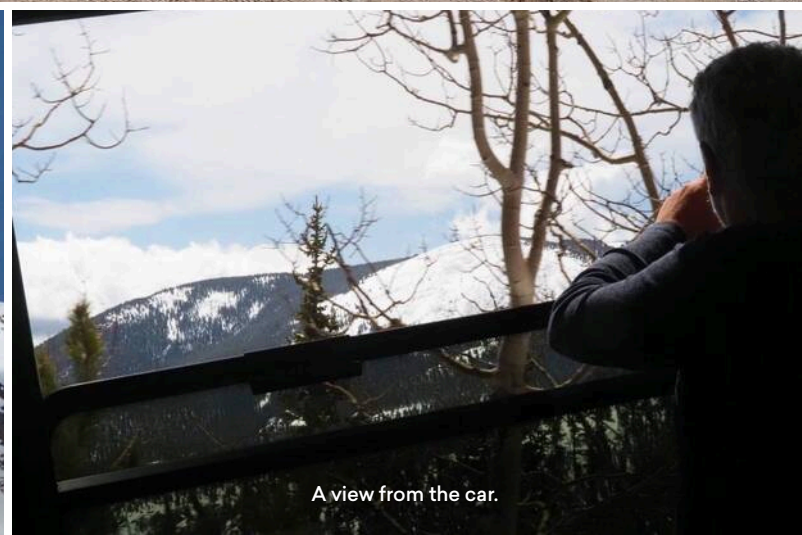
Bristle Cone Pines join several other species.



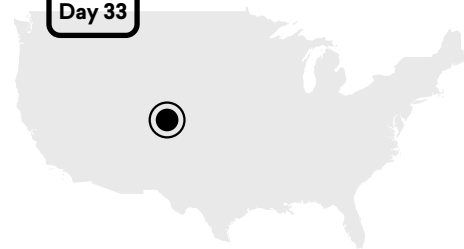
The stone along the railway is decomposed granite.



Up on top of Pike's Peak is a building. We could see it from where we stopped.



A view from the car.



Pike's Peak by Highway



April 29, 2024 in the United States, Town of Green Mountain Falls

After lunch at the our RV Park, we opted to drive back up Pike's Peak. The Pike's Peak Highway costs \$10 per person. The highway is open for the first 13 miles of the 16 mile road. We got up to 11,600'. The views were better and we could stop and get out of the car to take photos.

Two tries and we didn't get to the top, we will have to come back later in the season. But then again, the man the peak was named for never made it to the top either.

Time

2 pm

Cloudy

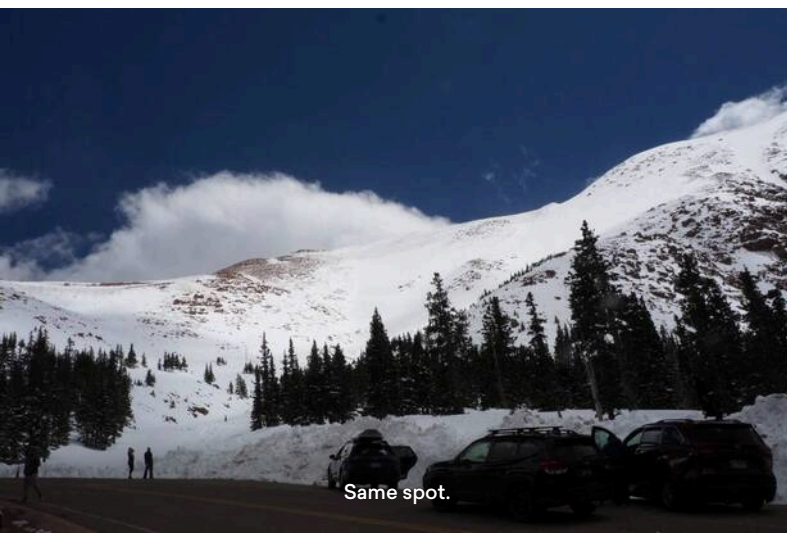
 46 °F

Altitude

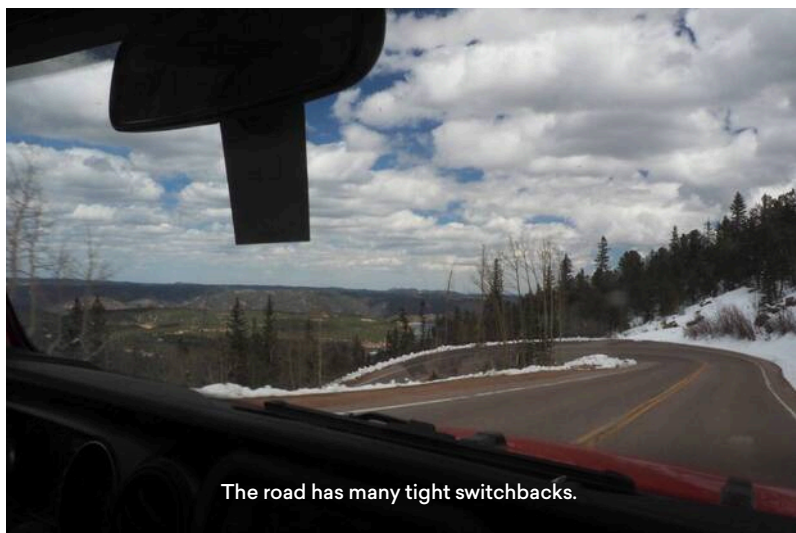
10,873 ft



The mountain above where we had to stop



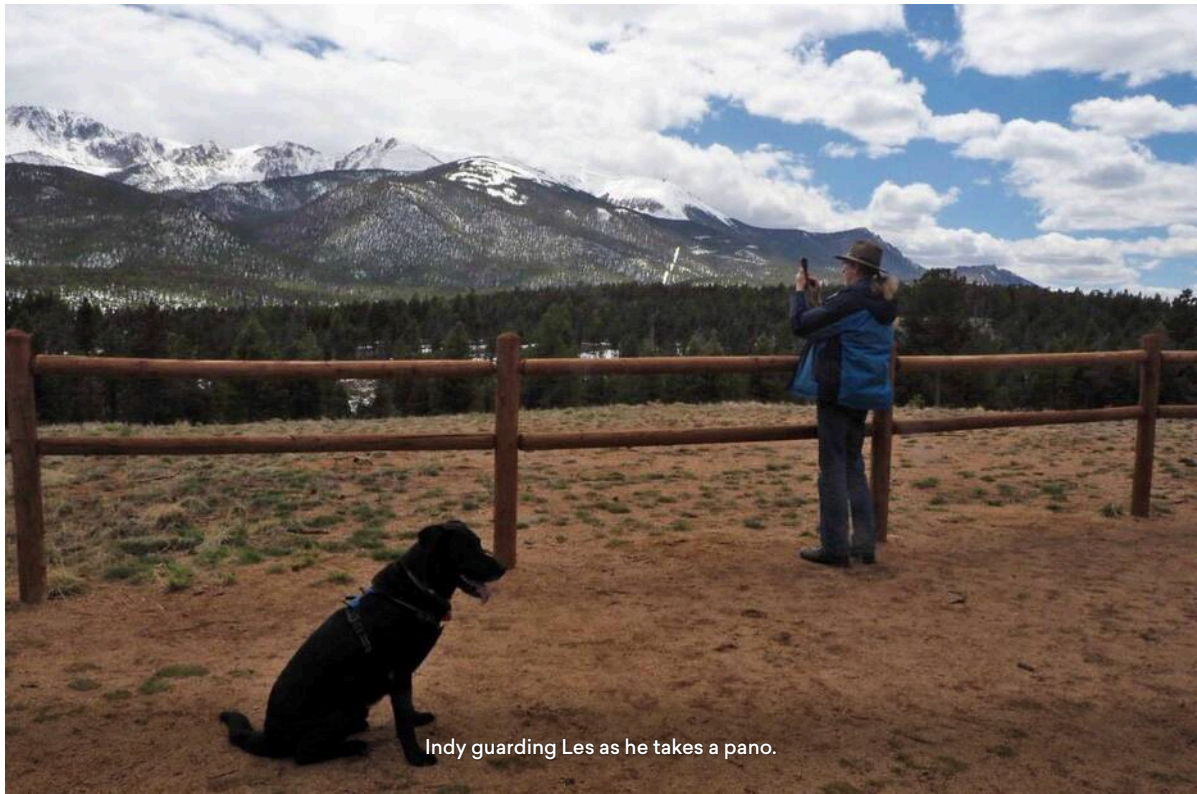
Same spot.



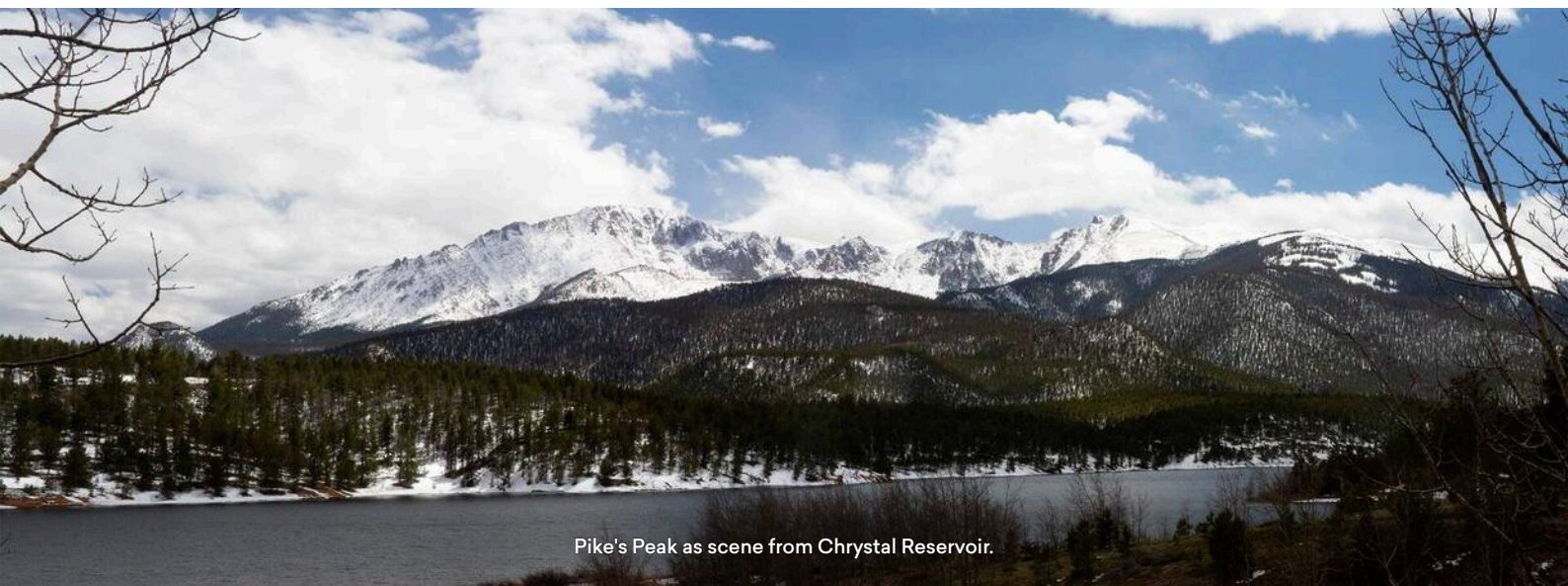
The road has many tight switchbacks.



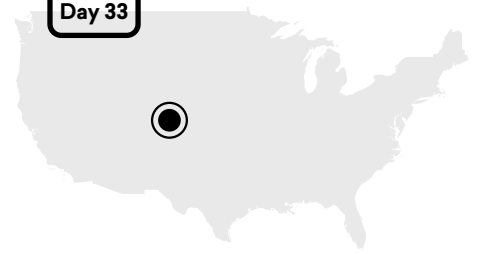
Looking back towards the top.



Indy guarding Les as he takes a pano.



Pike's Peak as scene from Chrystal Reservoir.



Downtown Manitou Springs

 April 29, 2024 in the United States, Black Canyon

After taking Indy back to the motorhome, we took a free bus back into town to do some shopping. Then Jill found a Fondue restaurant and wanted to try it. We ended up with a four course dinner. It was very expensive and Les said that since we had to cook it ourselves, there should have been a discount.

Time

4 pm

Cloudy

 63 °F

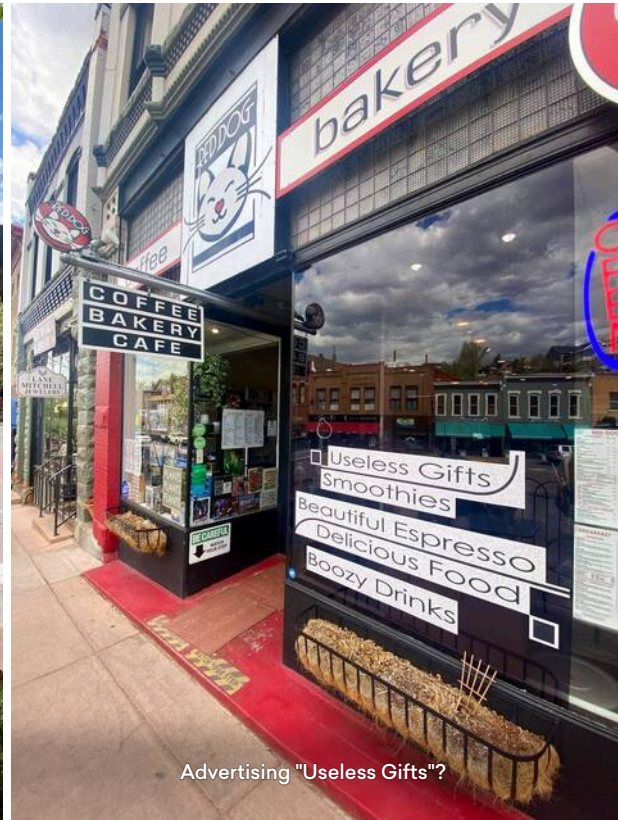
Altitude

6,273 ft

Video



Interesting sculptures line the main street.



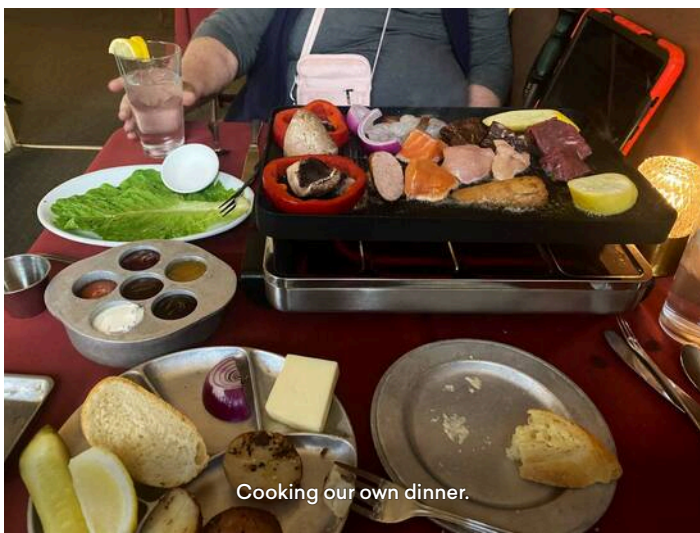
Advertising "Useless Gifts"?



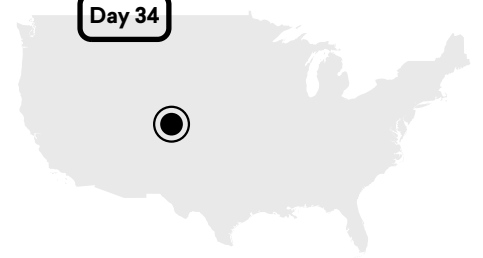
Barker House is one on many interesting buildings in town



Second course, fondue.



Cooking our own dinner.



Garden of the Gods Morning

 April 30, 2024 in the United States, Garden of the Gods

We went to this Colorado Springs park this morning. The trading post was the first stop, then on to a trail parking area. Les headed out on a horse trail with the digital camera, not knowing what to expect. Jill was going to do some painting, but needed a restroom. Since there wasn't one at the parking area, she took the jeep to look for one. After finding one at the next parking area, she went to the visitor center located on the far side of the park. The roads do a lot of looping around in the park. She found Big Horned Sheep grazing next to the road and got some great shots of them. Meanwhile, Les found another trail leading to the Siamese Twins. Jill was now looking for Les and finally returned to the original parking area to wait for him to come back.

Time

9 am

Cloudy

 57 °F

Altitude

6,289 ft



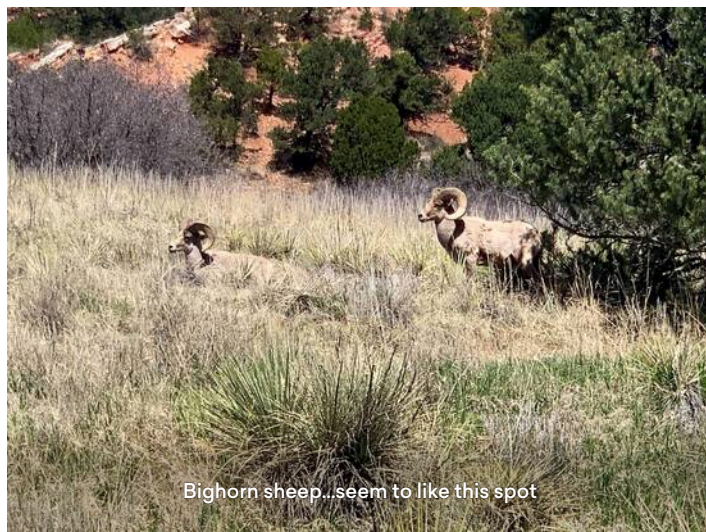
Balance rock (they cheated, add concrete to keep it balanced)



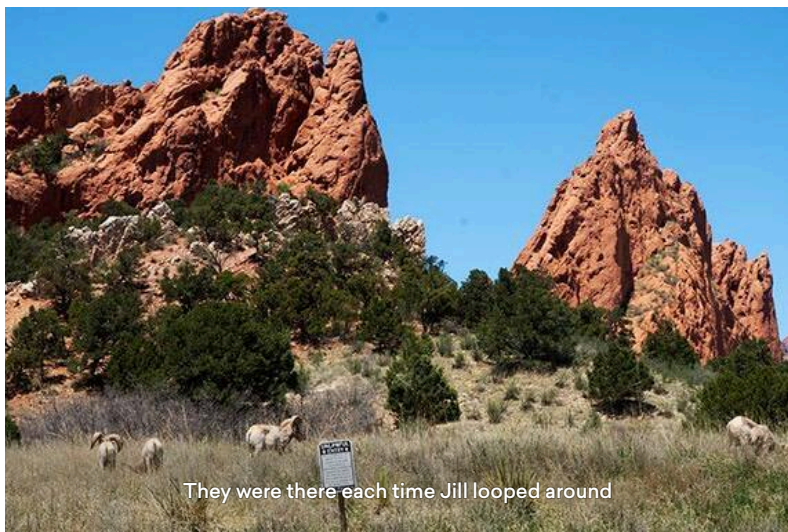
Another balancing rock



Big Horn hanging out



Bighorn sheep...seem to like this spot



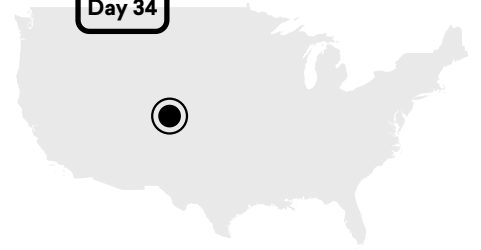
They were there each time Jill looped around




Loving the color



The Twins



Afternoon at Garden of the God

 April 30, 2024 in the United States, Valley Reservoir Number 1

So we went back to the RV had lunch and a nap, then returned to get pictures in the afternoon light. Jill finally got to start a pastel painting, Plenty of great shots just had wait the clouds out.

Time

4 pm

Cloudy

 72 °F

Altitude

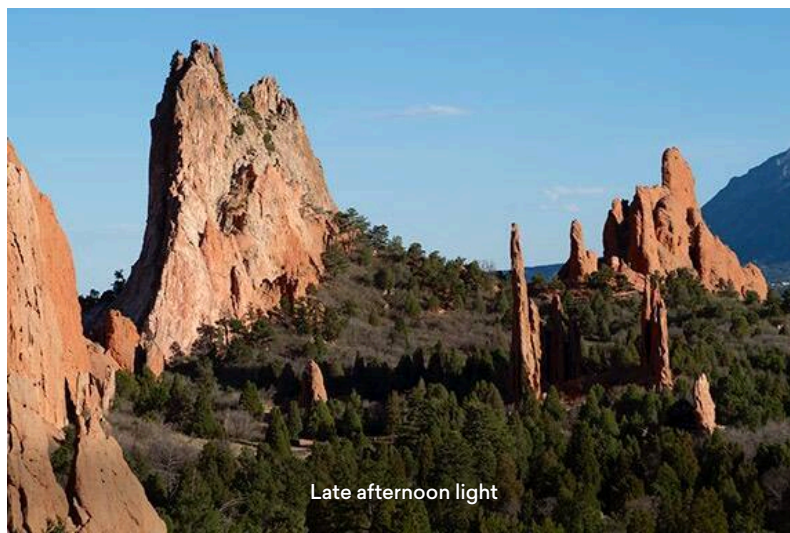
6,460 ft



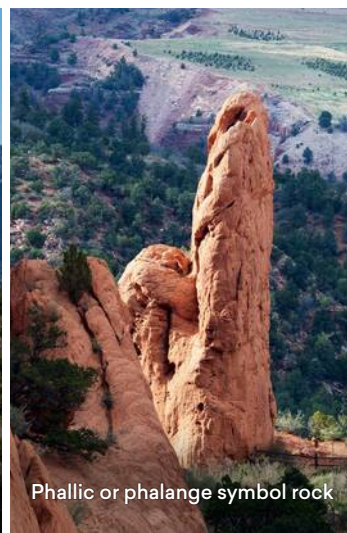
Jill and her pastels



Les and his camera



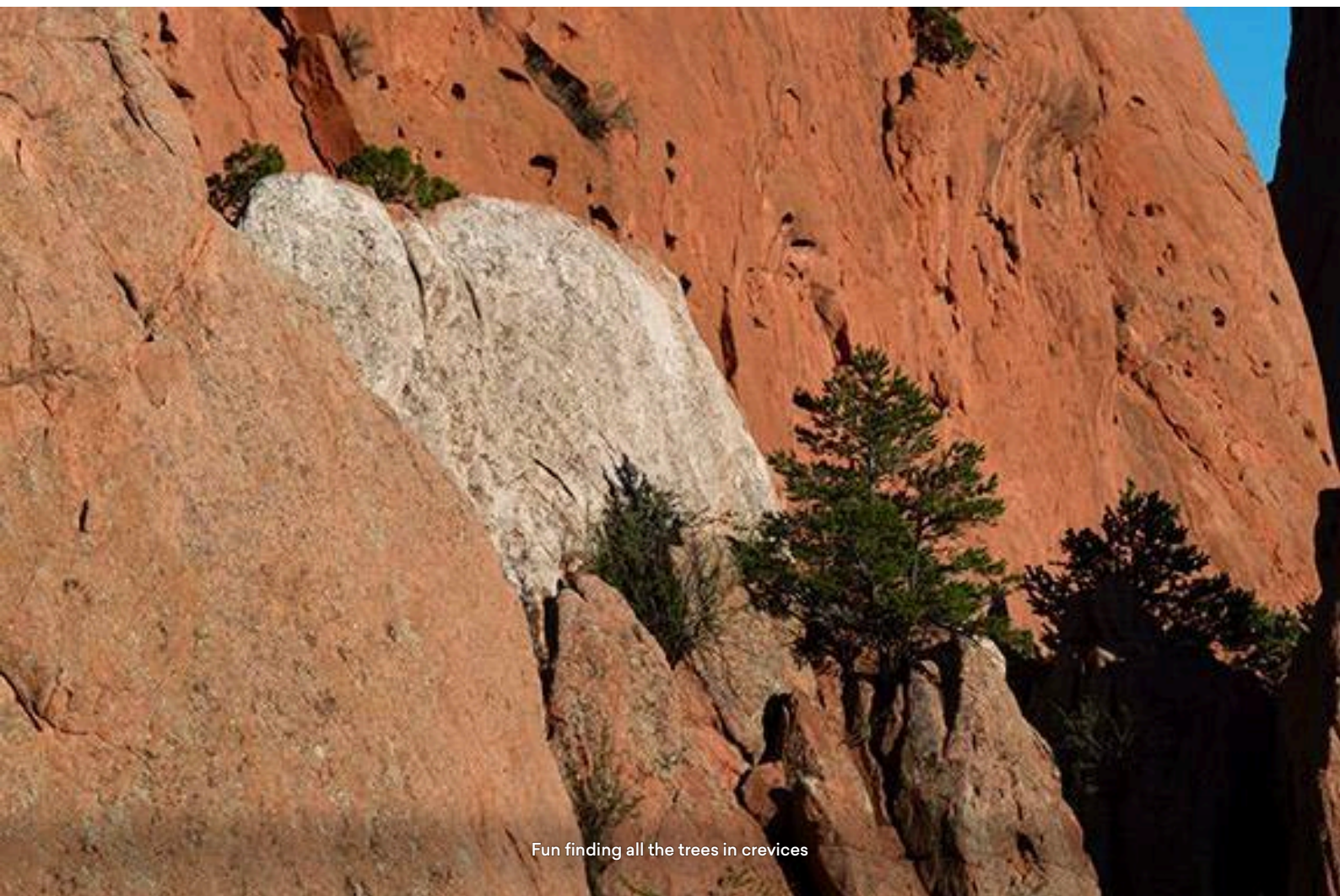
Late afternoon light



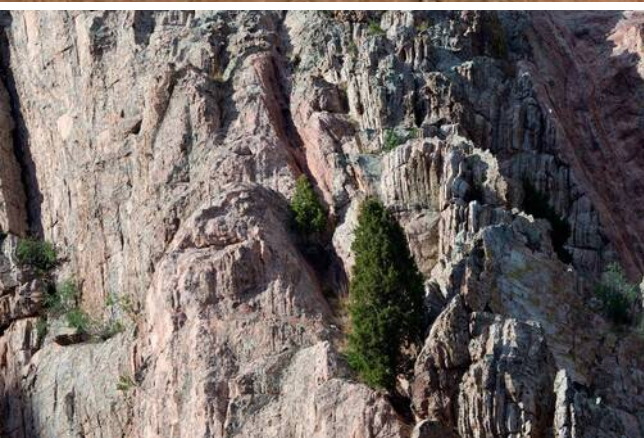
Phallic or phalange symbol rock



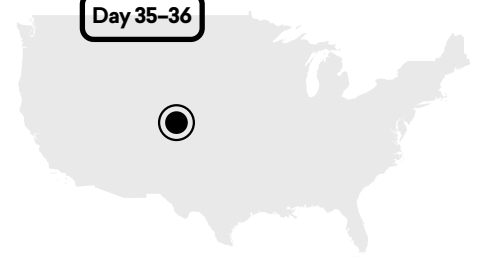
Silly goose just standing on top of rock



Fun finding all the trees in crevices



Trees finding places in the rocks



Paint Mines and Alpacas



May 1, 2024 in the United States, Calhan

We decided to spend one more night, to see Paint Mine Interpret Site. Jill found it when looking at Harvest Host for a place to stay. Harvest Hosts is an app, which list farms etc willing to host RVs for a night. The “Our Red Barn” had a couple of sites but because their dogs we couldn’t stay there. So we left the RV and drove out on prairie. The paint mine is a location which was used for 9000 years by the “locals.” Went to local grill in the small town of Calham. Then visited Our Red Barn which was an Alpaca ranch and had a fiber shop and artist. Jill was in seventh heaven and bought more fiber to spin.

Time

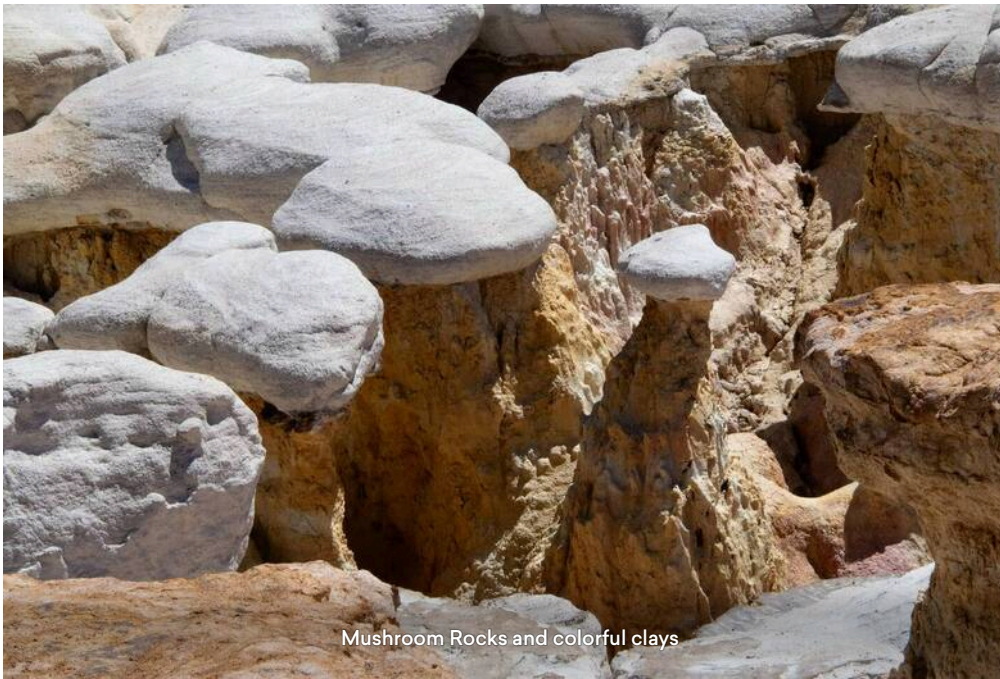
12 pm

Windy

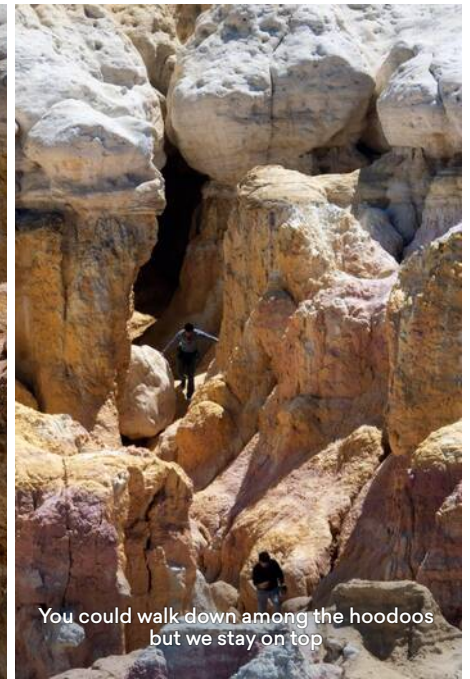
🌬️ 59 °F

Altitude

6,660 ft



Mushroom Rocks and colorful clays



You could walk down among the hoodoos but we stay on top



The prairie



Colorful clays



These belly flowers dotted the trail side



Alpaca farm friends



Goat not so smart, got head caught in fence



Didn't catch this one's name



Old school bus yard art?



Nope, chicken coop!



Unexpected side trip



May 2, 2024 in the United States, Eightmile Park

We left Manitou Springs for Gunnison. Jill saw on the map that Royal Gorge is near Canon City. We had seen the bridge over the gorge many years ago and Les had recently scanned the slides he had shot there. Jill found there is now a scenic train through the gorge, but didn't know where it started from. A few miles west of Canon City, we saw an electronic sign on US Highway 50 stating that US 50 was closed ahead. We pulled off the road to figure out an alternate route. It turned out that the bridge over Blue Mesa Lake just west of Gunnison developed a major crack and had been closed. Local traffic was using dirt roads to get around the closure. Jill also found the scenic train ride started in Canon City, so we did a U Turn and headed back to Canon City. We arrived just in time to get tickets and they were serving lunch on board. The car we were in was a dome car, so we could see up the cliff next to the train. Les finished his lunch about the time we reached the terminus at Parkdale. So he took the camera out to the open air car and shot lots of photos of the return trip through the gorge.

Time

11 am

Clear day



54 °F

Altitude

6,273 ft



The train is pulled by a diesel locomotive.



The dome car came from Canada.



Inside the dome car was very nice.



The train is in the bottom of the gorge next to the Arkansas River and crosses a hanging bridge.



Far above is the famous bridge, now only used by walking. See the people?



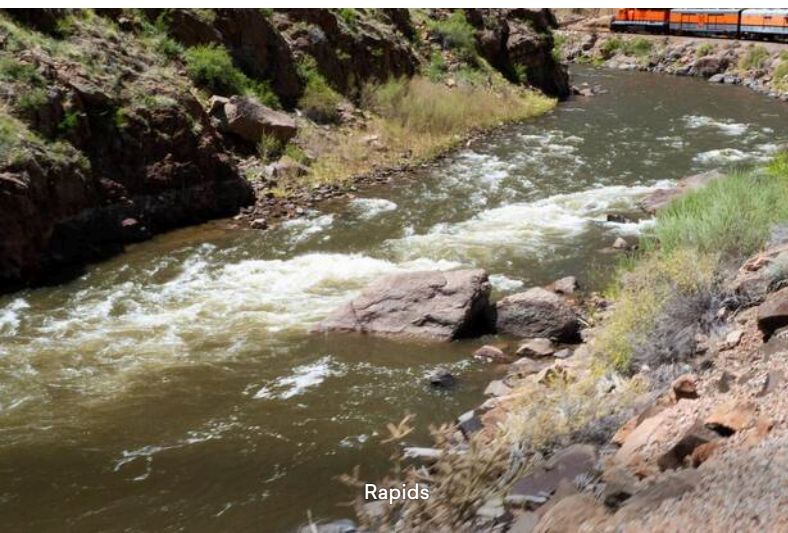
The river has class 3-5 rapids and has rafting.



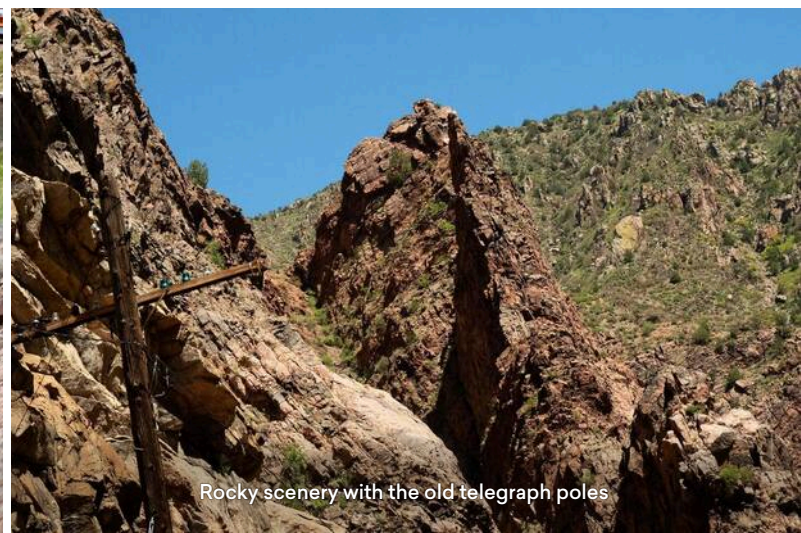
Some of the rock on the north cliff is wind coated with coal dust from coal trains.



An early water system used redwood water pipes made in California.



Rapids



Rocky scenery with the old telegraph poles

Detour to I-70



May 3, 2024 in the United States, Eagle River

We started the drive from the KOA Campground west of Cañon City, CO. Last night we spent a hour online looking for an alternate to US 50, which is closed west of Gunnison. Canon City seems to be in a hole, as all routes out Hoover high passes, some of which are still closed for the winter. We downloaded the Colorado road conditions app and found an open route. So we continued west on US 50 to our planned gas stop in Salida, CO. Then north to Leadville at just over 10,000 feet. We descended the steep and windy US 24 to I-70 near Avon. Since winter is almost over, construction season has already started. We had a 15 minute wait at on spot, while a road crew was installing chainmail on the cliffside to keep loose rocks from bouncing into the road. We continued down I-70 to a newish KOA campground at Silt, CO.

Clear day



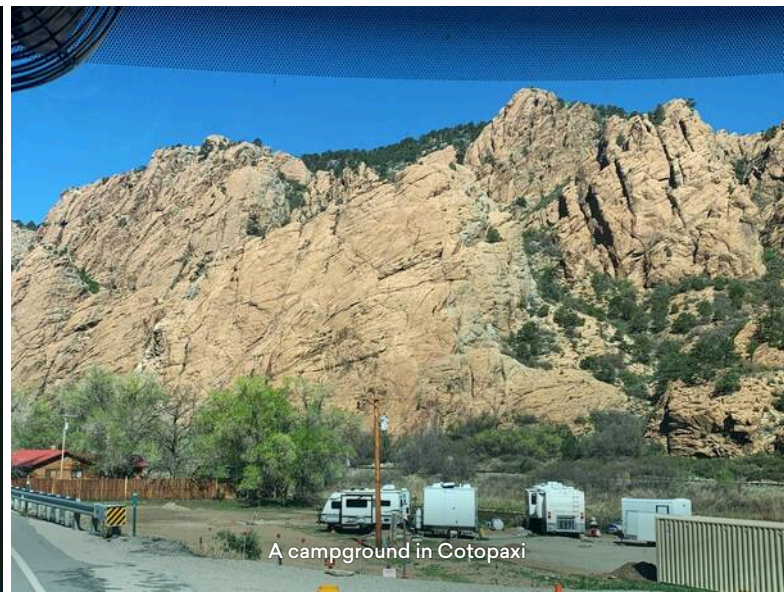
59 °F

Altitude

6,155 ft



Cotopaxi



A campground in Cotopaxi



Curvy road to the little towns north of Salida.



The upper part of I-70 follows Eagle River and then the Colorado River.



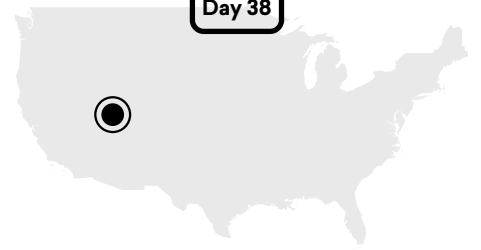
The canyon has lots of craggy cliffs.



If it gets any narrower...



So narrow that the downhill traffic is stacked on top of the uphill traffic. Then into one lane.



Maple Grove Campground

 May 4, 2024 in the United States, Rock Canyon

We gassed up just outside the Silt KOA and headed on down I-70. Last time we traveled this part of I-70, it was dark and we could not see how beautiful the scenery is. In Utah, we approached the San Rafael Reef and stopped at the Black Dragon Canyon View Point. We shot some pictures and continued on. We pushed on to a Forest Service campground “Maple Grove Campground”. We checked the weather forecast for the next leg of our journey to Ely, NV and decided to spend two nights. It is a pretty nice campground, but no hook ups and the trash is packed-it-in, pack-it-out.

Time

3 pm

Windy

 64 °F

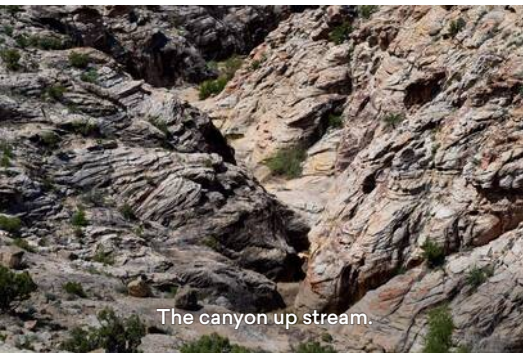
Altitude

6,529 ft

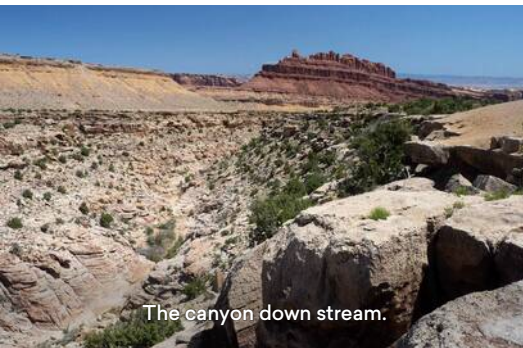
Video



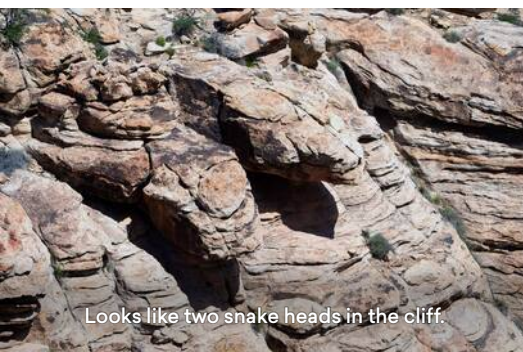
Three mesas from the Black Dragon Canyon View Point.



The canyon up stream.



The canyon down stream.



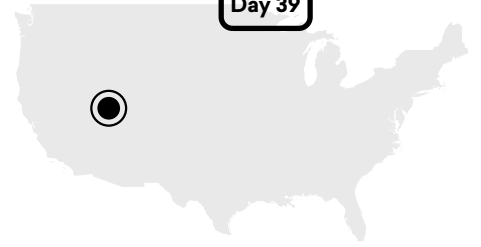
Looks like two snake heads in the cliff.



Campsite at Maple Grove.



Approaching San Rafael Reef



Dodging the Storm

 May 5, 2024 in the United States, Melville West Canal

When we woke, Les rechecked the weather forecast. It showed 1-3" of snow for tonight. Since we were not hooked up to electricity, our water system could freeze tonight. In addition we might need to chain up to get out of the campground. We opted to move on to Delta, UT. That was only a little more than an hour away, but we reserved one of the two last sites at Antelope Valley RV Park. So we left a day early and headed to Delta about 10am. The wind was not too bad . . . Yet! US 50 merged with I-15 south for 10 miles and the broke off the west. By this time the wind was up the 20 mph, gusting to 40 mph and coming out of the southwest. US 50 to Delta travels to the northwest, so the wind hit us broadside. This slowed us down to stay on the road and stay upright . By the time we got to Delta and sitting in our campsite, Les was spent. And we have been getting un-forecasted snow flurried this afternoon.

Time

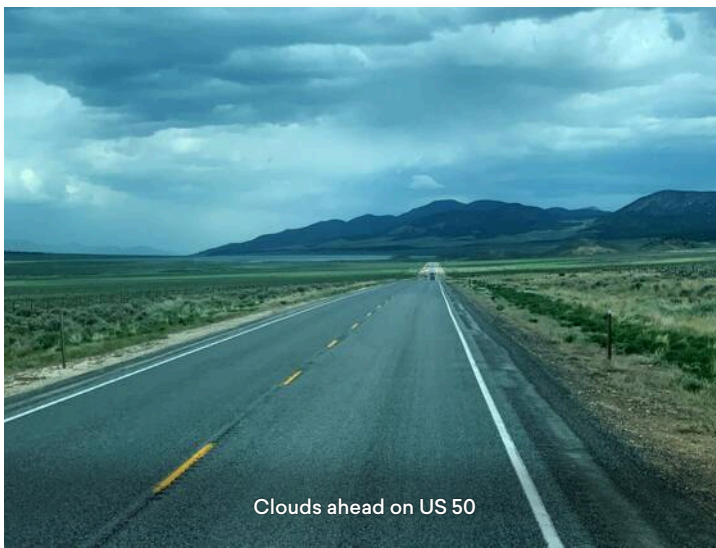
1 pm

Windy

 45 °F

Altitude

4,649 ft



Clouds ahead on US 50



Campsite at Delta 🤔



View from Maple Grove campsite.



Push for miles



May 6, 2024 in the United States, Cold Springs

Back in Colorado, we were concerned about planning the next day's route with an eye on the change in elevation. Most passes were over 10,000 feet. Curvy roads was a secondary concern. Jill could not get that kind of detail out of any of the navigation app she had, so she went online and found "inRoute". There several really nice features in this app. Mostly that you can fully describe your vehicle, including height, length, weight and max speed we drive. The best part was the app graphs curviness and elevation change.

However, in planning our several days from Delta, UT to home the app gave us bad data on how long each day would take. It estimated 4 hours from Delta the Ely, NV. We got there before noon and ate lunch. We went on, looking at a camp area a hour away and passed it in a half hour. We also passed Eureka, Hickison Petroglyphs, Austin, and finally stopped at Cold Springs. According to the app the final leg to home was still 4 and a half hours. But when we checked Google Maps it said 2 and a half hours. Jill altered the speed in the inRoute app, but the estimated time remained the same! We contacted their tech support and reported the error. We hope that will fix the issue, because this looks like it could be a great navigation app.

Nevada is a region known as "Basin and Range", which means the route west crosses LOTS of mountain ranges and shallow valleys. We have never stopped at Cold Springs before, but it is a nice small park. We had full hook ups and fast WiFi. We had dinner in their restaurant and it was great too.

Time

3 pm

Clear day



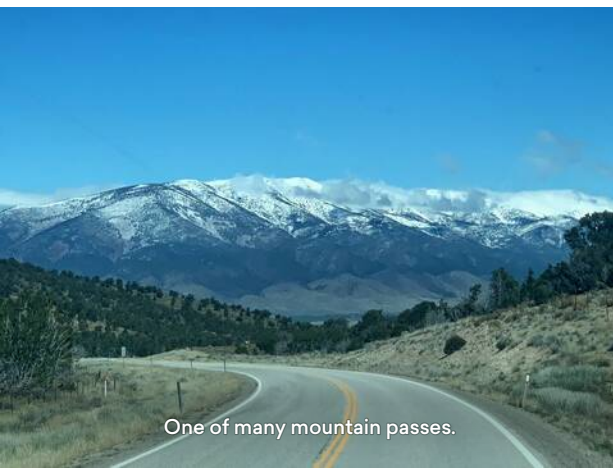
55 °F

Altitude

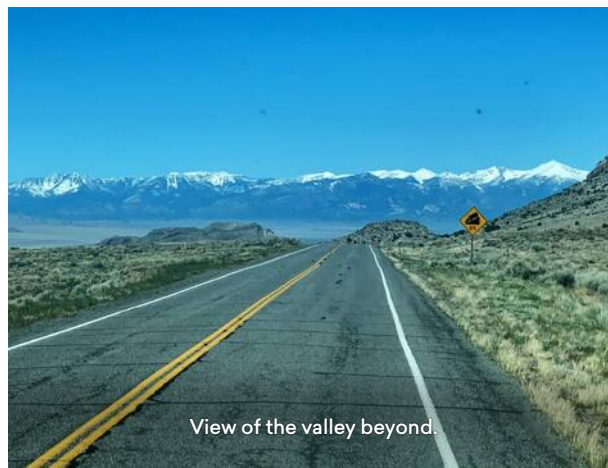
5,528 ft



Cold Springs with a view



One of many mountain passes.



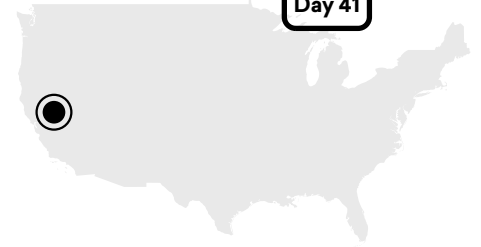
View of the valley beyond.



Another pass



And another pass



Horse to the Barn



May 7, 2024 in the United States, Cottonwood Slough

We got up this morning with Les chomping at the bit to get going, going to home, Indy has proven to be a pretty good traveler. Still wants to sings at stop signs but was able for the most part be left in RV, with him not barking the whole time. Cinnamon has taken over the couch while traveling. Getting close. Gas is high in Carson City Costco, but we like to be ready. Like all long trips we have a list of things to due to our tiny home get ready for our next adventure.



Did you make it home? 😊 [Christy]



Quail Run Tripping Yes and even though Cinnamon is 16 years old and tailless, she caught and killed two mice in the house last night.



Traveling Bee It always nice to get home



Quail Run Tripping 🍷👍



Di Williams Heron Glad you made it back! Great trip! 😊



Welcome home, yep Delta to you not terribly long. But felt you battling the winds 5/5 eek [Angela Gatto]

Clear day



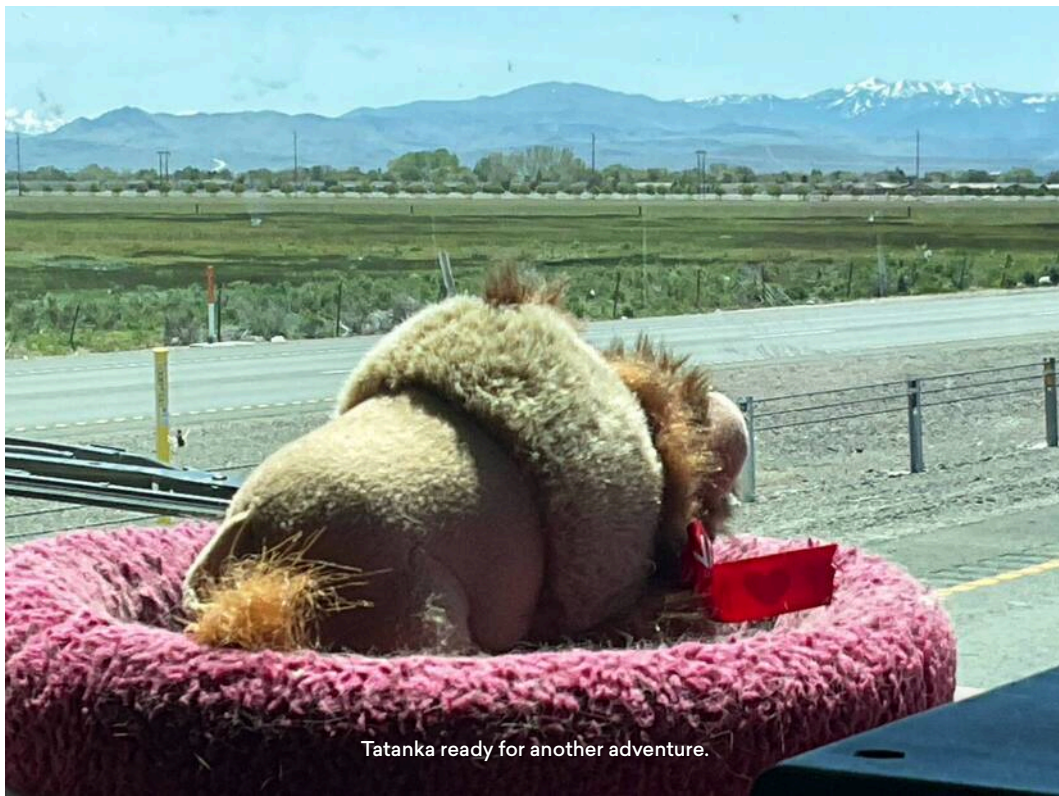
63 °F

Altitude

4,715 ft

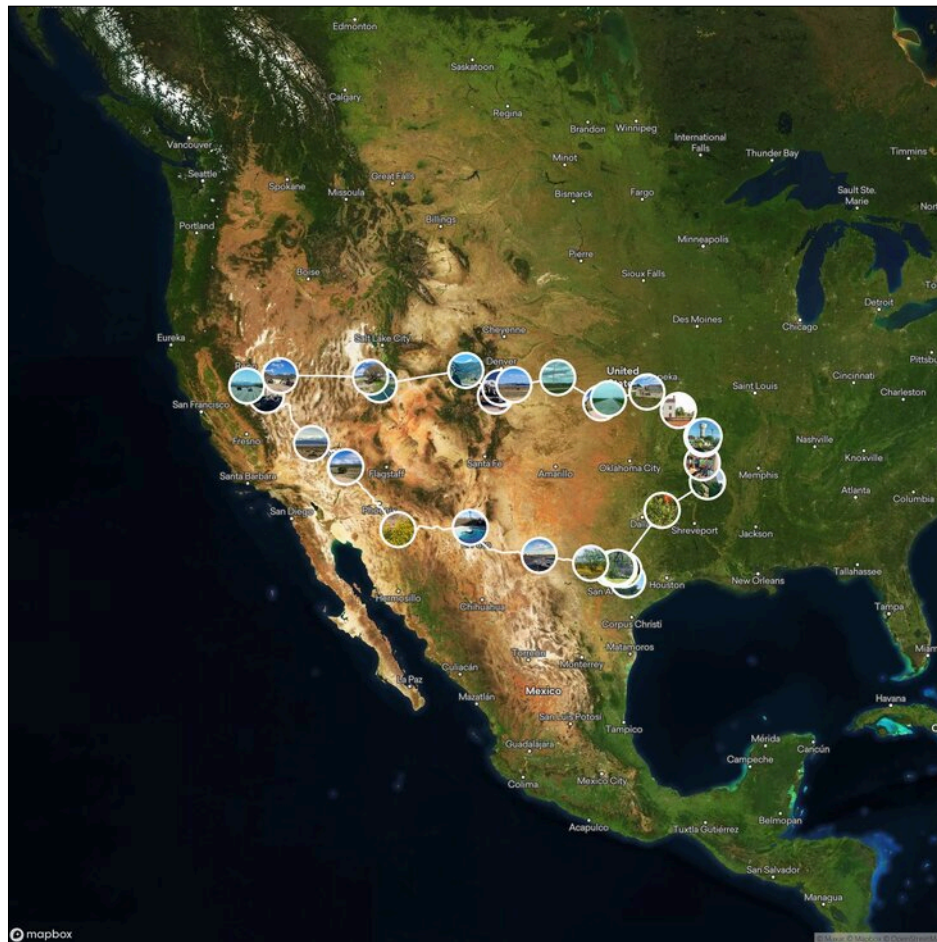


Sliver Peak calling us home.



Tatanka ready for another adventure.





Your FindPenguins Travels in a book.

