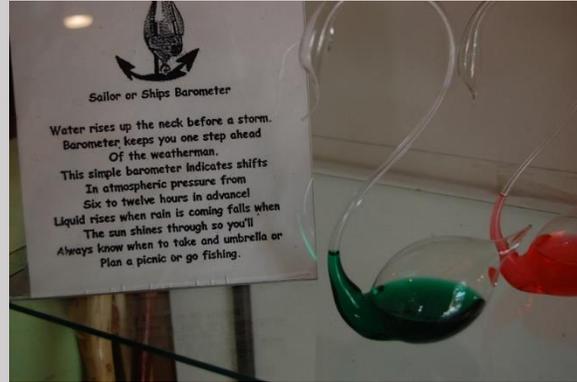


JULY

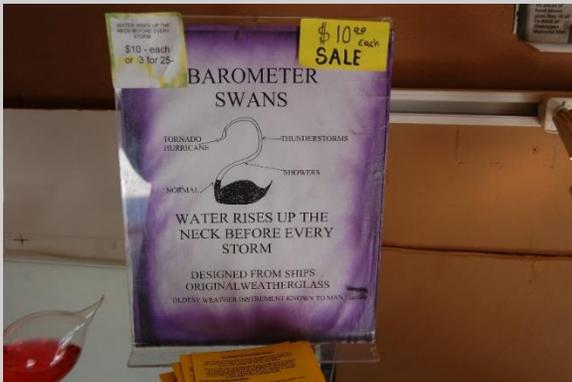
1st. JULY – PLYMOUTH, WI

Monday morning means another travel day, sooner or later it comes, and it's time for us to bid farewell to Arrowhead. Plymouth WI is not that far away but unlike most of our trips this one would hold a surprise or two.

2nd. Jim Braun- Glass Creator



This is Jim Braun. Today he'll be demonstrating hand blown "Swan Barometers." If the liquid inside (colored water) goes up the swan's neck- expect a change in the weather.



The picture above gives everyone ample notice as to whether we should close the windows, bring in the awnings or in a worst-case scenario, leave the RV and head for a shelter. I believe he told us this flame was 5000 degrees. Stretching glass. Awesome! Not really glass, it's Pyrex glass. Especially useful in an RV. Cooling this baby down.



Colored water is sucked up into the glass swan because the pressure inside the swan is lower than the outside pressure. Without a doubt this is one item everyone traveling the mid-West should have. He knocked one of his swans over on the countertop, and it did not break.; We bought two, should have bought three.

July 3rd, 2015 Mom rejoins my dad today.



This is a blog about a matriarch. In the picture above, one could hardly imagine this young girl as anything but a loving mother and devoted wife. Well that's how her story begins. In her early the twenties she met and fell in love with the handsome guy in this picture, and, of course they got married. She married Leo Oscar Grenier and together they produced me, the little guy in the picture, but that's another story. Life went on, as most lives do, and soon the family numbered five. But no one expected at fifty-five that my father would be taken away and our mom would be the sole provider with three kids to care for. Now to make matters even more challenging she had two of us in college, one attending a private high school and a relatively new twenty-year mortgage on the home we lived in. Thankfully she had the same work ethic as my father possessed; For every other part of our lives to survive and grow, she would have to evaluate every facet of her life and make some additional income. We were not destitute; my parents were both frugal. They had some savings, a pittance by today's standards, but still a bit more than most had in those days and my father had a small life insurance policy through the service, but she knew these funds had to remain a "cushion" for whatever might lie ahead. At this time in her life she was a secretary to a department head in the Brockton School System, and an excellent one at that, but that would not cover the day to day expenses, so she would investigate a part time job after hours. The Good Lord was watching out for her. A secretary was needed to take notes for the Superintendent of Schools at board meetings, sometimes three or four nights a week and then transcribe and type them up before the next meeting. Even though this was paying well, she knew she would still be coming up short; it's difficult, if not impossible to cover a husband's paycheck. About thirty days later she found a posting for someone to handle teacher-call-ins. She would find substitutes for them prior to the start of each school day. This job began at around 6 am and would go on until the last teacher had a sub for their classroom that morning. Both these jobs, insignificant as they were at the time, would qualify her in a few years to be the Executive Secretary to the Superintendent of the Brockton School System, a job she held until retirement. Upon retirement she would leave her home to reside at Century Village in Boca Raton, FL. There my brother Dennis would soon join her, and they would enjoy the Florida sun as so many other retirees do. However, her happiness in Florida would last only about twenty-five years.



From the time she turned ninety her knees began to degenerate slowly. We all just assumed "old age." By ninety-five all of us realized she would be facing challenges every day, just to perform even the simplest of tasks. Each child is molded and takes on characteristics that their rearing and life's experiences. Youngest brother Richard was very intelligent and very successful. Me, on the other hand, always walked the safe conventional path, however my brother Dennis challenged life at every stage and justifiably was equally successful but also developed a compassionate attitude toward people in general, possibly because of the renters he had to reconcile with on a daily basis and the friends and neighbors he lived with in Century Village. He realized not everyone is given all the opportunities we were given, and he exemplified that and never judged. Thankfully for Richard and me, Dennis would fill a void we were logistically unable to fill ourselves.

Do not be sad, because a life lived well is rewarded, if not in this world then in the next. In this new world she walks hand in hand, once again, with that handsome guy she met so many years ago.

She lived the next two years with Dennis by her side, once again providing compassion and assistance, twenty-four hours each day. The day she left us was one of anxiety. Carla and I were on the phone with Dennis however, we were in Wisconsin, Richard and Christine live in San Jose, but Dennis had to bear witness to the actions of the paramedics who worked feverishly trying to give my mother any additional time possible. But in the end, she completed her calling as the Matriarch of our little family, a Leader and Ruler of her life and Head of this family.

She left us without pain and with full knowledge that within a few anxious minutes, the most rewarding part of her life would soon welcome her in with his open arms.

Your loving sons,

With Love forever,

Richard, Dennis and Paul

July 3, 2015

14th. 25th Anniversary

Well today is July 14th, 2015. As Carla was saying last night; it's so hard to believe that we've come so far so fast in just the last twenty-five years.



Since our early days in Greenacres, FL, when we owned our first childcare center, Applebee's has always been a Saturday evening affair, right after Mass, and prior to a movie. Life was so hectic then, but this restaurant calmed us down and kept us from cracking up. Seems there's always been an Applebee's around to provide us with a perfect evening. This visit proved to be just what we needed to complete an otherwise simple anniversary celebration. As like all Applebee's, they all look the same, however.....

We were greeted by Jenn, the Applebee hostess for the evening. She showed us to our table and left us with our menus. Carla could not resist asking her about local points of interest, even though we were only going to be here seven days. She volunteered Chrysler, General Mills and a minor point that Belvedere was known as the Town or Murals, or something like that. As seniors we had to interject that that title belonged of a town in Florida called Lake Placid. She politely said "OH!" and said she'd be back for our orders. Not looking much older than 19, she quickly came back and inquired the name of the town in Florida once again and its location in Florida. She made this connection with us happen so nonchalantly...*Priceless!* Our conversation lasted quite a few minutes, until another hostess came on the scene to deliver our meals. Just before letting her go so we could begin eating, we asked her to take our picture, to mark the occasion. It would have been easy for her to take the picture and give us back our camera, but she wanted to take another which turned out to be much better. Jenn was personally responsible for turning a quiet 25th anniversary celebration into an evening we will find hard to forget. As she was bidding us safe travels, we also learned that she had a five-year-old daughter.

The minutes she spent with us, we know, added a little more stress on her to care for her other customers, but given the opportunity to meet her and get to know her, even just a little bit, re-confirmed in our minds how responsibly Applebee's takes in hiring and training their employees. Applebee's will continue to be our number one choice for excellent dining with a staff equal to the dinners they serve.



7.15.15

I look back at all that has happened that will alter my life in so many ways, for the rest of my life. July 3rd, mom passed, and we travelled on the 4th to be with my brother Dennis. The seventh we celebrated her passing with a beautiful Mass ceremony at St. John's Catholic Church in Boca Raton, FL. We spent the next seven days with Dennis for the reading of the will then helping him sort mom's belongings. We flew home the following Monday getting up a 3am for a 5am flight back to Wisconsin, where both the coach and Scoots remained. An awesome young family agreed to watch over Scoots while we were away.



From the picture above you can see just how distraught Scoots was during those ten days at home alone. Daily she studied her map trying to determine where we had gone and why we left her.

7.16.15-Pine Country Campground, Belvedere, IL

The following day we had to travel to Pine Country Campground some 150 miles south in Belvedere, IL.



The following day, after a great night's sleep, we quietly celebrated our 25th Anniversary. Last night we both slept very well. We'll only be in Belvedere, IL a mere 7 days when, next Monday, it will be jacks up once again. Today was studying our trip on the computer and a very quick, short dip in the pool.

7.17.15-St. James Catholic Church.

Only two days to go and, for this stay, it's jacks up again. Yesterday we had heavy rains all day. Saturday, once again, which means its Mass, Pizza Beer and movie night. In Belvedere we'll be going to the St. James Catholic Church.



I might be wrong, but I think this might be new construction. All the sidewalks and steps to the church are all newly poured concrete. Inside, the church is very simple but as beautiful as one would like it to be. Very humid today, even though the temp is only 81, far better than yesterday's 106 degrees. I've just finished washing the front of the coach and windshield and the bikes are, once again, secured to the Chevy. All that's left for tomorrow, Monday leaving day, is to disconnect water and electric and then store the jacks. Our trip will be around two-hundred miles and will take about four hours, we take a breather about halfway. See you next in Buchanan, MI.

7.20.15-Bear Cave Resort in Buchanan MI

I would like to welcome everybody to Bear Cave RV Resort. Unlike Pine Country, there aren't any resident mosquitoes living here. You have the option to take a walk, go to the pool or just sit under your awning with no fears of being eaten alive. This walkway will take you to the park office. Hard to believe you're only a few feet from the parking lot when you are going to the office.



This is the office and park store. Digital makes it look bright and sunny down here but at this point you are completely encompassed by trees...*awesome!*



The system here is a little different. The camp manager called us earlier this morning to clue us in on the check in procedures. You arrive at the campground, punch in your code and then drive to the top of the hill into this typically large parking area. Then look for the Bear Cave "office" sign, walk down to the office and sign in. As you can see the park roadways are very generous, with no overhanging tree limbs to welcome you here.



In the distance you can see the coach, upper left-hand corner. There's a coach to our right and then you see some bungalows. Dennis will be arriving in a couple of weeks and will be staying in the first cabin on the left. This is us, of course. This site, as with most of the sites here, is a back in. With all the space we have here, backing in was a breeze. This green is all grass. Great place for families and kids to play and not be in harm's way of the big rigs.



Play area and game room for the kids. Inside the game room. Once again, everything here requires money. Some pictures of the rec hall.



Card tables with a fireplace in the back of the hall.



Pool table looks brand new. Possibly because it requires money to play. At this rate it will always be new. A juke box, the expensive kind...*awesome!*



A closer look at the fireplace and the knotty -pine wall boards. I'm sure I mentioned this, but this is a Thousand Trails Campground all part of Equity Lifestyles Properties.



So many of these campgrounds are built around bodies of water. This is the pathway going down many feet to the river. Take the path, once again, and climb up the path, to eventually find the pool, pool house and another clubhouse for kids.



On our way back to our site we will again walk past the office/store, from another direction. I could remain in this area for the rest of the afternoon just doing a little contemplation, *how about you?* That's about it. The dime tour on Bear Cave RV Resort.

7.26.15-Red Bud racing in Buchanan, MI.

Today we surprised ourselves with a pleasant afternoon at Red Bud MX racing in Buchanan.



Carla and I have no experience with this sport but that does not stop us from enjoying a beautiful afternoon watching the younger generation race and fly all day long. This course reaches forever, it seems.



The race begins in the back of the field and then, as you can see below, race by us less than ten feet off the racetrack. Above, in the upper left-hand corner, is a little racetrack way to the front of this property, not connected at all to this track is the "WOBBLER TRACK" for three to six-year old's. Don't know about you but that's a bit extreme, but this is where they learn this sport. I tried cropping it but with no success.



Now we're looking at the front end of the track. This would be roughly where we were standing. Below is another race, one of eighteen, going by us well over our heads.



Above is the far end of the track and approaching the finish line about four-hundred feet ahead. Below is the back end of the course just before reaching us. These kids really know how to fly.



We don't know no anyone racing. This is the winner of one of the races, a twelve-year-old girl. I would have a hard time letting Cheryl, my daughter, race in one of these go carts.



Above is the finish line, and believe it or not, they're still in the air.



If you don't like getting dirty, this is not your sport. These kids put their hearts and souls into each race, and this afternoons race were for trophies only, no money. The pro's raced yesterday, but we thought we'd prefer seeing the amateurs best. Motorhomes, travel trailers and car carriers abound. This is not a sport for the average family. Moms and dads all over lending both moral and financial support to their kids, both boys and girls, young and older. We had the tail pipe to the coach fixed just down the street here in Buchanan. Then on Wed, the 29th, we traveled to Elkhart, IN to have the refrigerator fixed. Out of nowhere it just began a pinging sound and would not chill. The only place we could find to try to fix the situation was Total Value RV of Indiana.

7.30.15-University of Notre Dame



Next day we had an opportunity to tour the University of Notre Dame; to say the least awesome!

Only a few days left before Dennis, my brother, will be flying up to spend a week with us savoring the camper lifestyle. This is basically a small enrollment university but has a very big physical presence. Even this day there is construction on three new buildings. Enrollment hovers around eighty-five hundred for undergraduates, both male and female and about three-thousand graduate students from fifty states and one-hundred countries around the world. The campus supports one-hundred thirty buildings including one state of the art football stadium with a capacity of over sixty thousand. We begin our tour from the Eck Visitors' Center. We had an excellent tour guide.



The buildings at the beginning of this tour are mostly dorms. Each hall has its own adult resident priest or lay person to watch over things. Most of the other priests live at Colby Hall. Faculty members number over one thousand.



This building is basically administration. Unique to this building is this sphere, weighing thirteen-hundred pounds, which floats freely on this fountain of water.

It only takes a gentle touch to send it revolving in another direction. The Coleman-Morse Center is very important for mostly freshmen students. This is where you go for scheduling and financial assistance if needed. Another look of the grounds and additional dorms. These are all single-sex dorm halls. Each hall, as they are called, has their own sport activities including their own mascots.



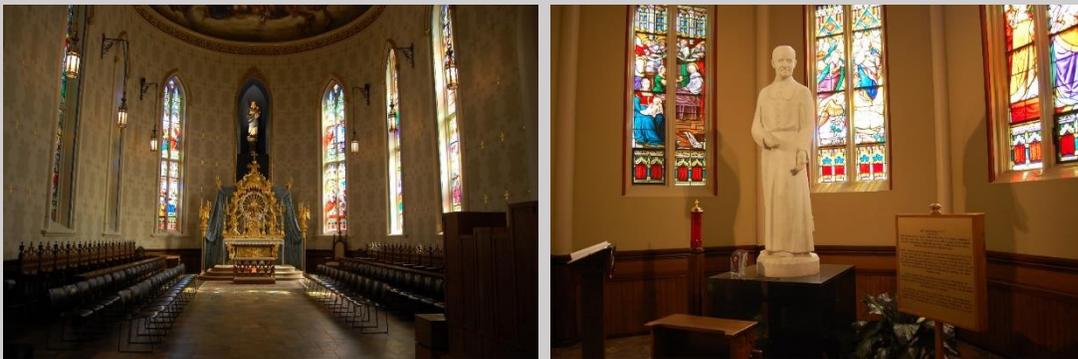
There's a story of Fr. Sorin concerning this lake. I believe in the beginning this was one big lake. Then, local zoning was changed and a lake this size would have to make accommodations for the public, including additional roads. So, all the priests and anyone else with time on their hand was asked to volunteer to help add additional soil and vegetation to turn this one big lake into two smaller ones which would bypass the new zoning.



If you look closely to the center of the last picture you will notice a building. This small building was the college's first teaching building. The first priests to serve here would sleep in the attic area of this building. Notice also the yellowish brick used to build this building, it is the same brick used for the first three to four buildings. The first priests here had very little available for their expense and expansion plans. They made their own bricks in order to conserve the few dollars they had. A priest wanted to create a monument to the Blessed Virgin like Lourdes in the South of France. It did take time but eventually, thanks to a generous donation, a grotto one-seventh the size of the location in France, was created. This venue with its hundreds of votive candles, is heavily visited especially during exam weeks.



The Basilica of the Sacred Heart. This basilica replaced the first church built by missionaries many years before. It was very modest measuring ninety by thirty feet wide. Its replacement is substantially bigger. The new church was started in 1870 and the first Mass was celebrated in 1875. The current Basilica measures 275 by 114 and its tallest tower is 275 feet high.



Above is the Chapel of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. On the ceiling above is a depiction painted by the famous painter Luigi Gregori, who had also painted nearly everything else in this Basilica, as well as other buildings on campus. This Chapel was added in 1886. The tabernacle doors contain a fragment of wood believed to be from the table on which St. Peter celebrated Mass in Rome over 2000 years ago. This Minor Basilica was the brainchild of Fr Sorin.



This Church had been designated by the pope as a Minor Basilica. Minor Basilica's are churches reflecting their antiquity, dignity, historical importance or significance as places of worship and devotion (as taken from the Self-Guided tour of the Basilica pamphlet)



The building above is the "Main Building." The building construction began in 1864. It's over ninety feet tall. This would be the school's first major building. For this construction to be financially feasible the Brothers of the Holy Cross, CSC otherwise known as Congregation du Sacre Coeur, would, once again, be asked to make all the bricks needed for this building. Shortly after construction it succumbed to a devastating fire. Since it was the only teaching and dormitory building at the time, Fr. Sorin promised all the current students that the building would be completely restored by the next enrollment period, and it was. Contractors, volunteers and priests worked diligently to rebuild against all odds and were successful. Father Sorin was adamant that his new building has a golden dome and above the golden dome he expected to have a statue of Our Lady of the Lakes. The Board of Trustees felt otherwise. It was an expense they felt they could not afford. Over the next couple of years Fr. Sorin, as the story goes, got himself elected to the Board and eventually became President of the Board. As President he abstained from Board meetings thereby tying their hands to make any decisions, until they agreed to give him the statue of Mary he had been asking for. Even today, the statue stands tall amongst the buildings of Notre Dame and is probably the most televised and photographed venue on campus.



This is the rotunda found in the interior of the dome. This again was painted by Luigi Gregori. It is said that after Luigi had finished the interior dome and the very intricate sixty-foot scaffolding had been taken down, that a fellow priest noticed that one of the angels was missing an eyebrow. The Board of Trustees refused to pay any more money on this endeavor. Luigi, being as stubborn as Father Sorin, was seen early one morning on the fifth floor with a long fishing pole with a paint brush attached to the end of the pole touching up the eyebrow of that poor angel. Luigi Gregori also painted all the murals in the Main Building. The mural above was one of his best.



It wasn't till years later that someone noticed the he had painted himself in the painting above. Last picture is a close-up of that section. You will find him halfway up on the right side of the mural. The handsome dude with mustache and receding hair line. A far away shot of the exterior of the Basilica from the Main Building. The edifice is so immense it is difficult to capture it in one frame.



These are the infamous steps of the Main Building. Back in the late eighteen hundred the teaching Brothers would gather on the its porch Main Building which was, back then, their only all-purpose building. The story goes that an undergraduate positioned himself at the bottom of the steps hoping to overhear a conversation on those students who may or may have done well or not so well in the last exam week. One of the Brothers noticed him laying at the bottom of the steps. He chewed him out, as we would say today, and then he swore that should another undergraduate be found on the steps of the Main Building again, he would block any chance of his graduating. Since that day NO undergraduate has ever stepped on those cursed steps. Even the student guide we had this day, excused himself, went back inside the Main Building and rejoined us at the bottom of the steps, using an inside stairway to rejoin our group on the main level. The University erected this memorial statue of Our Lord. It faces the Main Building we just talked about.



This wall mural is on the outside wall facing the football stadium. Students have no doubt that the scene of Our Lord, hands and arms raised, is symbolic of a referee denoting a touchdown for, of course, the home team. There is no truth to that entire story, however, the almost perfect scoring history of the Notre Dame team would make one think otherwise. The Notre Dame Football Stadium- There is an entrance for each "Winning" Coach in the past.

AUGUST:

BATESVILLE, IN

8.05.15-St. Joe, MI

We visited St. Joe in Michigan. A beautiful small town on the eastern tip of Lake Michigan.



This is our second trip here to St. Joe. This time we came with Dennis, my brother. Activities in the St. Joe area favor both young and old. For all the simple attractions here most everyone could be found on the beach. Behind this great looking couple is a "lake" not an ocean beach. Lake Michigan is just that big; Awesome! We will stay here awhile longer and celebrate Carla's birthday at Clementine's on the opposite side of the island. We picked up my brother Dennis a couple of days ago, nice to have him visit. Tuesday 4th, resting up. Enjoyed watching an RV movie that evening. Following day, we all re-visited Notre Dame U. That evening we ate out at Clementine Restaurant in St. Joe. Delightful evening. This would be Carla's' birthday supper. After twenty-five years we keep it simple but very nice. We have pictures for this event also, must find.



Re-visit Notre Dame with Dennis



This venue is just awesome one could spend an entire day writing about this beautiful and historical university. With the dozens of pictures, I took the first- and second-time visiting ND I only took one with Dennis in it. Here he is taking a picture of the crown that was supposed to be placed on the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary but, once again, the trustees decided to encase it instead. By looking at its size in relation to Dennis you can estimate the sheer size of the statue at the top of this building.

8.06.15- Elkhart RV Show

Today was the much-anticipated Elkhart RV Show. Nice but nothing to brag about. A trip to North Trail RV or Lazydays would have been much more exciting. The weekend to follow was typical except for Dennis' presence. He would be staying at one of the campground bungalow's, very nice inside.

Buchanan concerts:



Concerts on the green in Buchanan. Each Thursday evening the town of Buchanan host an evening of entertainment. This evening, a 50's- 60's evening and our last visit, with my brother, was a jazz evening.

8.09.15-Evening with the Krause's

Sunday evening, that weekend, was exceptional, as we spent it with our neighbors, the Krause's.



Bear Cave was an excellent campground, but even without the company of this beautiful family we would have had a heavenly stay. We spent this evening with John and Svea with kids Charlotte and Hampton. These folks are an excellent example of a full-time family well before they turn seventy and home schooling their kids which rounds off each busy day. They do admit that some days are more challenging than others, but they never stop smiling and enjoying each other...Priceless! Did I mention their dog Zoey? Carla and I have been in Batesville, IN for three weeks now. As those that read my blog knows, we are full-time RVers. Everyone knows this is an awesome lifestyle. One small challenge we face is that, in order to keep our campground fees as close to zero as possible, we are faced with relocating to new campgrounds every two or three weeks. We look forward to this type of routine. We get to meet and know so many fellow RVers it's incredible. Our home is on for wheels and travels from state to state with ease. One small challenge is the quest for a Catholic Church in our next location. It's the primary reason we pick up and move on Mondays.



This gives us about four days to search out our neighborhood church before Saturday night services. There was one location, in Alabama, where we had to travel about forty minutes to find a church in a state with, were told, only three percent catholic followers.

8.10.15-Batesville, IN, Indian Lakes RV Resort



We arrived in Batesville, IN from Buchanan, MI around 2pm. As usual, thankfully, it was a two-hundred-mile uneventful passage. What made this trip so unique is that we had my brother Dennis this time. Often, we try to describe traveling in a coach, but it's an adventure that must be experienced personally. We were given the option, as usual with most Thousand Trail campgrounds, to choose the site we liked the most. We were advised by others that had visited here prior to giving Phase Four a serious look, and we agreed, this area was very nice.



Our site is very generous with a crushed stone pad, plenty of grass and an excellent picnic table, something we don't experience often.



The above pictures are of the adult activity building, pool house and bingo room possibly. The very large pool is just outside with, believe it or not, a lifeguard. This campground is also a KOA facility and their rules mandate the presence of a lifeguard.



Got a picture of the lifeguard, he did not seem overly taxed since no one was in the pool. No one under sixty-five was there either, or, the weekend is coming up. Kids in this area are back in school. Upper picture is another picture of this beautiful building. Next, Thousand Trails (TT), as well as, KOA, never forget the little people. This play module is awesome. Would have given anything to have been able to afford something like this at our childcare centers, at the time.



Below is a commemorative stone with flags in recognition of fallen soldiers. This, as you can see, is very simple in design, but it's so important to remember that their sacrifices made it possible for all of us to enjoy our individual lifestyles in peace.



This campground is like a small national park. At over five-hundred acres with over one thousand rv and camping sites, the biggest facility we've ever stayed at, and one of the nicest. As always, the staff are so accommodating and helpful. As always, TT campgrounds always provide incoming and outgoing RVers plenty of space to casually and safely park while they meet with the camp managers before proceeding to site.



The pictures above and below are of the inside of the office. Did I mention they have awesome ice creams and serve an excellent breakfast at very reasonable prices? This is also the location where potential TT members meet to learn more about the many advantages of camping the TT way. Carla and I, as you already know are TT/elite members.



We are full-time campers, the coach is our only home, and thanks to Thousand Trails and Equity LifeStyle Properties, we've spent less than three-hundred dollars on campground fees since March of this year, six months and counting; only way to really enjoy camping. It's in a room like this that the camp manager will hold meetings and offer this experience to anyone who might be more interested in paying fees to enjoy what these camps offer for rather than paying camp fees to sleep at a campsite. I hope you've enjoyed this dime tour of this lovely campground. There's so much more to see and experience here, but now, as always if you like what you've seen in this post, book some time here and enjoy it with family if possible.

8.13.15-St. Anthony of Padua,

Our current stay is in Batesville, IL. We are scheduled to leave this Monday for Kentucky, but it will be with mixed feelings. We have been fortunate this time to attend St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Morris, IL and our chances of finding another church with a pastor as awesome as Fr. Sean Whittington are next to nil. Carla and I have been going to church together now for over twenty-five years and never have we seen a parish with so many faithful going to Mass as a family. This is something we've never seen in Florida, regardless of the Mass times. We've travelled over six-thousand miles the last eighteen months and have never seen it, to the degree that Fr. Sean has in his parish. He humbly says it's just the way the parish has always been, but everyone knows that family worship is probably at an all-time low. Then again is the service he provides.



Founded in the mid 1800's and the new church was built in the early 1900's this venue is just short of destination. We will be attending church services here over the next three weeks.

15th. Saturday- Wounded Soldiers Tribute

The campground is doing a Tribute to Wounded Soldiers. It should be quite interesting, and I plan to take a few pictures of the ceremony.



Welcome to the wounded Warriors Celebration. This event is an annual event. At first, I thought it was a program that traveled from park to park, but no. In less than one day the two big cement display squares in the back-green acres were filled with tents, auctions, food and people from all over.

This campground sponsors this grand event. Normally I would say the park had about twenty golf carts both private and park owned.



Tonight, you couldn't count them all. Easily, I would say, they numbered over two hundred. This was one of their prizes, I wanted to get extra tickets, but we passed on it. Needless to say, the booze flowed from all over. Kids wandered alone, made me a little nervous, but I'm sure parents were around. Everything was affordable from food to chances for drawings. We were there for the beginning, ate and went back to the coach. We wandered back around midnight where the dancing was loud and exciting. The event had an excellent DJ who kept the music and dancing going till well after midnight. The event is so big that the campground just leaves the campground gates open all day. With so many people coming and going, I don't think they could have taken the strain of opening and closing so many times. Ultimately the event was a grand success. Late in the evening they had over one-hundred Chinese drawings on everything you could possibly think of, from a cart full of booze to a truck bed full of firewood. The event sponsors had numbers by the end of the evening. In 2014 they took in over fourteen-thousand dollars and this year it was well over eighteen thousand...Priceless! Tomorrow, Sunday the 16th, it's Bingo at St. Anthony's in Morris, IN. It's a huge event with many money prizes ranging from eighty to two-hundred dollars. We took it in and spent forty-five and won fifteen...*whatever*.

8.17.15-Cheryl's birthday

My daughter Cheryl will be having another birthday on the 17th. *Yes, I remembered!* The rest of the week will be quiet until Friday when we will visit St. Peter in Chains Cathedral.

21st . St. Peter in Chains Cathedral, Cincinnati, OH

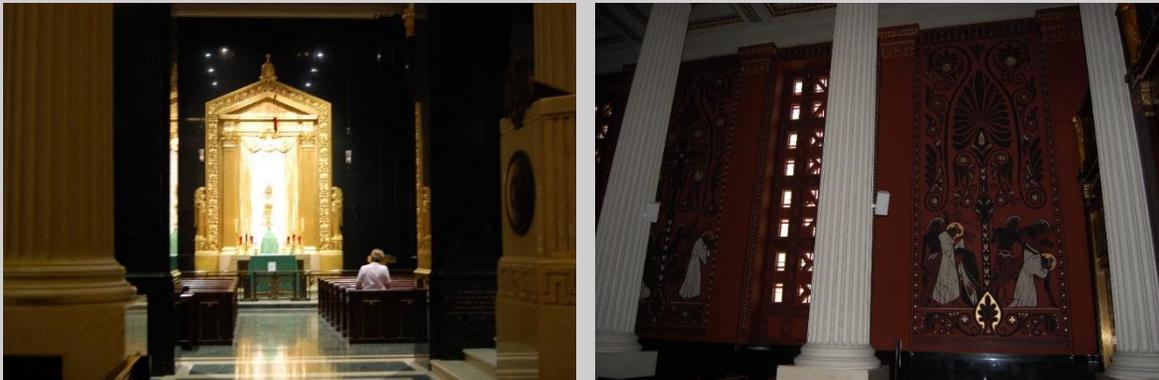


When we first pulled up to this building, I thought it was a bank or some other community building. The Synagogue across the street looked more like what I was looking for, but nevertheless, this was the right place. In the picture below is the vestibule as we enter the church. Once again, this is not your usual construction for a church. It was built in the classic Greek style.

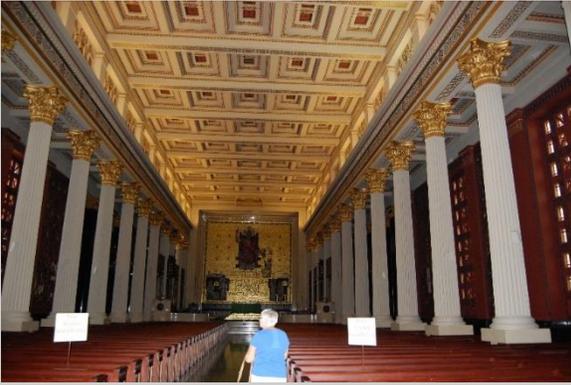
So impeccably well maintained it is hard to believe that this church was dedicated in December of 1845. Structures like this, so marvelous to look at, amaze me all the time. Hard to believe we had craftsmen so skilled over one-hundred-fifty years ago.



For years after its construction had been completed the church did quite well. Within the first hundred years both the church and the neighborhood surrounding the church began to show their age. As a result, the title of Cathedral was given to another church not that far away. In the 1950's urban renewal projects around the church had put the church in a new light. By 1957 a couple of additions were incorporated into the original structure and the church itself was totally renovated. St. Peter in Chains was a Cathedral, once again. As we entered the Cathedral, we were awed to discover that the left transept Chapel constitutes the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. It is dominated with gold leaf in the background. The bronze figures to the right and left of the alter are St. Thomas Aquinas and Saint Pius X, who were devoted to the Eucharist.



This Chapel alter was having the exposition of the Holy Eucharist; we were not expecting that. As a result, we stayed a bit longer in prayer, but I wanted very much to take a picture of this alter. My Nikon has always performed excellently even in very dimly lit areas and this area had minimal lighting and I was fearful that a picture of this chapel area would be challenging. Using a flash was not an option. Being as reverent as possible, going to the far back of the chapel, I took the first picture; The chapel alter was ablaze in light. It should have come out barely viewable due to the light available. I then took a second and third picture, minimizing the light intake to the lens, and once again, the chapel alter holding the Blessed Sacrament was saturated with light. This picture could be one of my finest pictures. I could only venture to guess, along spiritual lines, the reason for the extreme light...magnificent!



In the picture above, difficult to fully appreciate due to the lighting available, are the Stations of the Cross. These murals begin from about three feet above the floor and rise stately to the ceiling, I would say at least sixty feet high. I cannot even imagine how beautiful these murals are in the daylight. Once again this was about all the light available in this church, makes one wonder how the Left Chapel area came out so magnificently. This is a better picture of the Cathedral in general. The ceiling is the object of interest right now. I would try to describe it, but I would come up lacking. This is one of those instances where it's best for the reader to spend a minute or two and admire such beauty.



Above are just a few of the cut-glass murals you see in the vestibule of this Cathedral. These also are awesomely tall and beautiful. There were six of these glass murals in the vestibule area. Insert in this mosaic, unable to be seen in this picture shows St. Peter imprisoned in Jerusalem and Rome, bound in chains. This mosaic is totally done in Venetian Glass. Lastly is a picture of the synagogue across the street from this Cathedral. I give thanks to the diocese for its brochure on this magnificent church. Much of the information I've presented was available in this brochure.

8.26.15-Metamora, IN



Do not feel bad if you have never heard of this town till now. Neither did I until our neighbors next door mentioned the two big attractions in this part of the world; Metamora, IN and the must be up at dawn for the flea market in Brooksville, IN. It may sound like all this mandate many miles to travel, not really, about 25 miles at the furthest. We chose Metamora, since we do nothing at dawn but sleep. Metamora was established in 1838 and to this date has not progressed much further, and it wants to stay that way. Picture below, railroad tracks, would not only be the industry that would stymie its growth but also bankrupt Indiana in the late 1800's.



In 1836 the Indiana Improvement Act established the Whitewater Canal System. This system would be 83 miles long and have 56 locks. Purpose of the canal system was commerce. Indiana was ninety percent forest at that time. The costs of the locks and feeder dams exceeded four-million dollars. Seventy-five-foot-long boats would transport both logs and passengers for several years. The trip from beginning to end would take as long as five days. By the late 1860's the canal system was terminated but not forgotten in Metamora, IN. Long story short in the 1870's the railroad expanded into Indiana and we're able to cover the same amount of distance, eventually, in a fraction of the time. This would, ordinarily, be an ending to this saga but it continues. The State of Indiana was left holding bonds it had sold in order to raise the millions of dollars needed for the canal construction. Bond holders wanted their money back. The State could not pay and, as a result, declared bankruptcy. The story actually ends in Indiana rewriting its Constitution in such a way that it would never, ever have to go through that again and it became a "Pay as you Go" State.

At the end of each fiscal year, even to the twenty-first century, its books must be balanced. The town, long ago, decided, except for a few modern conveniences like water and electricity, it would be a living memorial to the past. Some of the building here, are not indigenous to Metamora, but rather have been relocated to this town as opposed to, let's say Florida that tears down everything over fifty years old, so they could continue to be enjoyed for years to come. A few did experience fires and were rebuilt exactly as they had existed previously. What you don't see are buildings recently built that "represent" the architecture of that time.



This is the "Wood Shack" building.

A twelve-foot waterwheel provided the power to the grist mill. Prior to 1873 you would have seen a "lock" in place of the waterwheel. With the demise of the canal system the lock area was put to better use. Below is a picture of the insides of the grist mill. Whether paid or not, I'm not sure, but almost all the buildings have someone inside to explain in detail the purpose of the building. Many of these buildings are owned by individuals.



This is the Cookie Jar building for lack of the real name of the building. So as not to make light of the fact that this town is so small, this company and location was awarded the Guinness World Record Certificate for having 2653 types of cookie jars in stock. At present, we were told, they are up to over 2900 units, Priceless! If you look closely at the architecture of the wall-fixtures, you'll see that they are very representative of turn-of-the-century pharmacy style. I mention this only because I had been a Pharmacist and had seen firsthand fixtures like these in Littleton, NH where I first worked. What the picture below does not show are the huge ice cream cones we enjoyed at the Ice Cream Store while waiting for 2 pm to come so we could enjoy a "canal trip" before departing this town. Best of all, cost of this very generous cone was only \$2.00...Awesome!



Selfie, hard to do with a camera, my arm is too short. It's 2 pm and time to catch our ride on the Ben Franklin III canal boat. Below you see Indiana State workers removing the Belgium Draft Horses from their stables. At first, I thought they were Clydesdale horses, like in the Budweiser commercials, but no. You can see that the canal boat is being pulled by the horses, since the boat had no motor of its own. We met this gentleman earlier at the grist mill and he gave us quite a bit of his spiel back then.



Turns out he would be our guide and host on our trip explaining the canal system, the eventual demise of it and the purpose for the new Constitution for the State of Indiana. Below is a better look at the Horses pulling the canal boat. Not a bad job for the workers as well. It would take five State workers in total to provide us with this experience.



The horses, when not working, are kept in this covered stall. Several times during our wait we saw workers go to the stalls and keep the horses' company.

For a time, I wasn't quite sure why the need for horses. Turns out the workers simply detach the rope leads on the boat and let the canal boat float gently at four miles per hour till they reattach the leads when the boat reappears on the other side of the bridge. The horses, four or five of them, spend their off hours in this barn, also maintained by the Indiana workers. Above you can see the rope markings from as far back as 1838, *Priceless!* I saw this covered bridge coming up and did wonder about the horses. Our short trip has come to an end and now the horses are detached from the bow of the canal boat and reattached at the stern of the boat. In their heyday the canals were twenty-four feet wide in order to allow two canal boats to pass one another side by side. I believe over fifty canal boats were in use during that time period. This young lady, no name available, is in training. Currently she sells tickets but aspires to narrate and host a canal boat trip in the future. No, I'm not resting again. I just needed an odd picture to finish off the segment on the canal boat trip.



I've just about run out of material, so I'll be ending this visit by presenting just a couple of more original building and any placards if they have them. To help you see the writing: "this building was built in 1837 by Patrick and Elizabeth O'Reilly in Dearborn, IN. Reconstructed here by Russell and Reba Winkler in 1974."



This placard has nothing to do with anything, I just liked it. *The power of authoring your own posts.* Carla picked up a very nice purse here while we spoke to the store-keep.

Leather shop.



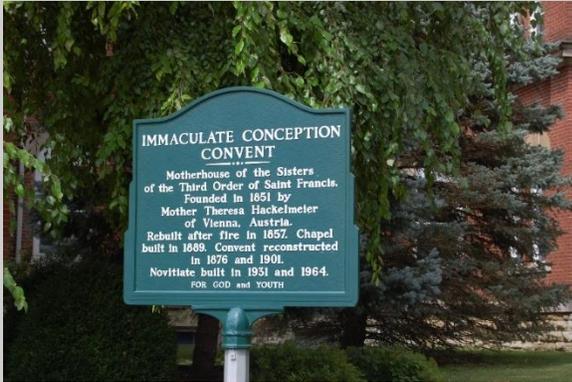
Even in the early 1800's the upper five percent, in their own way, had to show their ability to build better and bigger. So many more pictures to show you, but I don't want to wear on your patience. If you ever find yourselves in the area, take time to travel back in time about 150 years and enjoy a touch of the past. Kids will enjoy the experience to, not to mention the ice cream. We're now on our way to Oldenburg, IN. I hope you have a chance and the time to experience digitally Holy Family Church and the Sisters of St Francis retirement home.

8.26.15-Oldenburg, IN

This little town is just a short six miles north of Batesville. We've just finished visiting Metamora, IN a town still set in the mid 1800's. The day is still young, and we just noticed that Oldenburg is on our way bay to Batesville. We had noticed road signs for the Sisters of St. Francis along the highway but did not give it much more attention. It's a town almost dominated by the Sisters and Priest devoted to St. Francis.



Next this church will not make the top ten of the churches we've visited in the last couple of years but you have to give credit to the many priests, with so few resources, who had the ambition and vision to establish such simple but beautiful facility. This is the home that the Sisters of St. Francis go to at retirement time. It's a beautiful facility. Grounds are impeccable. We tried to enter the church in the picture above to the left of the home, but it was locked. Their home is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.



We gave it a little thought and decided it, most likely, was the Chapel for just the sisters. We were a little disappointed, since we drove here in particular to visit another Church if possible. It was then that we noticed another church just across the street. I could not understand the reasoning for having two churches within a stone's throw, but nonetheless, there it was. The Holy Family Church. It was established by a Father Franz Joseph Rudolf. Originally this church was just a wooden structure. He went on and later was known as the "Founder of the City of Spires."



In 1844 he was appointed pastor and in 1845 he built the stone church at in 1866 built the present church structure. In 1851, if he wasn't already busy enough, he founded the Convent for the Sisters of St. Francis. Sadly in 1866 he died and is buried below the church Sanctuary. We acquired some additional information on the City of Spires. Devotion area to St. Francis. But it's now time to say good-bye to this venue. The Churches and the town itself make this location a great place to visit for a day, should your travels take

you this far.