

OCTOBER, 2018 JOURNAL

10.31.2018-We VOTED today

This is such an important day. Every two or four years every citizen has the right to make themselves heard by exercising his/her right to vote.

10.31-Anniversary of my cancer operation

Twelve months ago I underwent a duodenal Whipple operation. It's been a long twelve months as I continue to get back to normal. After twelve months I don't feel I'll get back to "normal," but rather I should concentrate more on accepting the way things are, my new normal. Don't get me wrong, I am very happy that things have gone as well as they have. The alternative was not an option. It's just there are days in which I don't feel the doctors did not quite put me back together after seven hours on the table; but it is what it is.

10.30-Arrive at Rose Bay in Port Orange,FL

We spent last night at the Walmart in Kingsland, GA. It was much quieter than we were anticipating. Temps dropped to the low fifties and, inside the coach, the temperature was at 64 at 3am this morning. To the left is a schematic on this campground. We will be here for two weeks and it's a Thousand Trails "Trails" facility. Basically it's a freebie.

10.29 Monday-Travel day to Kingsland, GA

We got a scheduled late start today to go South to Georgia. Originally we were supposed to go to Jacksonville, FL, but the thought of dealing with Jacksonville at the end of this trip was something to think about. Kingsland is about thirty miles North of Jacksonville. We'll deal with this city with an un-tired attitude. We tried to settle in at Cracker Barrel but their lot was a little to tight, so it was off to Walmart.

10.27 Saturday-Travel to The Oaks in Yemassee, SC

We woke up a little earlier than usual this morning and for that reason we were able to get on the road by 8:30. The trip would be longer than usual around 260 miles. Surprisingly we got to The Oaks a little after 1pm and we're all settled in in 1:30. We are here for only 2 nights and will leave Monday morning for Florida. Excellent travel day temps around 55 with bright blue skies. This is a Thousand Trails property which means it's another freebie. Yesterday, Friday, was a nothing day just watched TV on the capture of the MAGA Bomber and that's about it.

10.25 Thursday- Rain!

Yesterday was R and R and today it's raining. The coach is ready to go. We will leave tomorrow morning and head out SE to Yemassee, SC about 175 miles in distance.

10.24-Wednesday-Four field trips scheduled.

Riley Moore Falls was our first choice. After traveling an hour and being lost most of the time we almost gave up. Finally we found the road to the falls but just looking at the road made our decision for us. Not friendly looking so we skipped it.

Brasstown Falls was very enjoyable. The walk to the falls was acceptable and the view were awesome. You'll also find a blog on this as well in the next couple of days.

As we travelled to Issaqueena we saw a roadhouse sign for "Moonshine ." I'm not naïve, even I know what moonshine is. But, how often do you see signs for it? See the blog on "Distillery."

Issaqueena Falls would be next. It was just a short distance from where we were and well worth the trip. I'll have a pictorial blog on this as well. See the blog on "Issaqueena." This was not on our list of places to see, but it's hard not to see something that sounds so intriguing. See the blog on "Stumphouse Tunell."

10.23- Tuesday-dinner with Ann Cunningham at Applebee's.

We had a delightful lunch with Ann Cunningham this afternoon. We met Ann a few months ago and promised to touch base with her on our travels back to Florida. She's not a full-timer yet, best reason for that would be the beautiful home she has here in South Carolina. As nice as it is though, I'm still set on the lifestyle we're enjoying. Please visit the blog I have on her beautiful lifestyle here.

10.22- Monday-Travel day to Carolina Landing in Fair Play, SC.

We slept this morning till 8AM, we were just slightly frozen. The coach did do quite well. Coach electric heat was set for 69 and it did well. We arrived a Carolina Landing in Fair Play, SC just a little after noon Monday morning. We woke this morning to very low temps. As an example of how cold it was just look at the picture above. Our car looked the same. All that was left to do was to detach from electric and disconnect the cable connection and I came in so cold. Other than that the day was awesome. Carla looked to her phone and it was 36 degrees in Maggie Valley while it was 64 here in So. Carolina.

10.21 Sunday-Carolina Landing in Fair Play, SC

We've done all we can , we're ready to go. We will leave tomorrow morning to drive to Fair Play, SC. Tonight we expect temps to drop to 32 degrees. We took in the fair and the temperature did not improve by even one degree. We bought a couple of gifts and quickly got back into the car, and drove home before we caught a cold.

10.20 Sat-t Margaret of Scotland and call from family.

We've been here before, several times. This time I would like to present a little history on this fine church. The history will take up to much space for the Journal, so I'll build a blog on the subject. Temps Fri. night came in at 37 degrees, more on schedule for Sat. night.

10.18- Very chilly night, last night, about 40 degrees.

Even chillier last night and today. Saturday and Sunday night coming up are scheduled to be in the mid-thirties. Doing very little today. We worked on our travel plans for 2019 and Carla through together her beef stew for this evenings dinner. Nothing like letting the crockpot do all the work, but it does take all the right fixings to bring the meal together. Our site with a much bigger coach to our right. Nice to have money, should have studied harder! We. Just spoke to Abby and we'll be meeting up with her and beau Michael, in January in Texas. More on that in another blog in the future.

10.17.18-Ice Cream in Maggie Valley.

Today has a very distinct chill in the air, but we should get used to it because it will only get colder, both during the day and evening. We had been quietly doing busy work, Carla reading and I with the blog, when we decided to venture out and seek out an ice cream cone. We had some ice cream in the coach, but no sugar cones. After that we would try to locate a log cabin we once almost bought, but that's a story in itself. Earlier in the day Carla had put together her famous French onion soup. That was such a pleasure to eat when we got back from our escapade. We just had a Prevost Marathon pull in next to us. We're 39 foot and it comes in at 45 feet. At 2.8 Million he paid more in taxes than we paid for our coach including taxes. They up'd and left by nine am next morning. Must be nice to pay \$50 to stay overnight at a campground. Forgive me; just a little envious of the one-percenters.

10.12-Friday-Hurricane Michael is gone.

Yesterday, as the storm was in our area, we took a ride to Mocksville, NC.

Over the course of the trip we counted over a dozen huge trees that were taken down through the might of this storm, even though the storm here was just a lot of water and some, not that strong, winds.

10.9 Hurricane Michael cometh! Childress Vineyards.

We are listening carefully to MSNBC on all the hurricane warnings. We will be rearranging our travels to Umatilla, GA from Yemassee. Yemassee, from experience, has a very high water table and the ground in their lower basin muddies up easily. Right now we are preparing to go to the Childress Vineyards.

10.8 Monday- Carla and I take a walk.

We have just finished taking a walk through this beautiful campground. This walk would take us through an infested area of mosquitos but ultimately we did locate the historic site. I don't think we've ever had a campground with such a site, We did not see it, but we're told this campground also has a shelter just in case something unforeseen comes in this direction. We have three days of rain in the forecast so no much more should be forthcoming.

10.7- Sunday-Improving the blog & journal appearances.

Just did a little shopping and now that we're home I have to get back to updating the Web Site. I have just been enlightened on some new formatting options this Web Site is now offering and I've made a few changes I hope the readers will find helpful. I've just discovered the drop-down menus on Journal, Opinions and Travel are not as sensitive to touch as I was hoping for.

10.6- Abby's birthday

Really hard to believe she's 21 today; Awesome! As we made our way south I needed a break and we pulled into the Caswell County Rest Area. This place is so pretty it's almost a destination. Below are two chairs; we call "Coke" chairs. We had a cocktail table with tow tall chairs at our log cabin, a \$600 expense, but guaranteed to last a lifetime. They have been constructed from recycled Coke bottles.

10.5 Friday- Our last day at Lynchburg RVP

I must break myself of the old way of doing the Journal entries. In the past the newest entries always went to the bottom, for the convenience of any readers out there the newest entries will bubble up to the top of the Journal. Feeling quite a bit better today, to the point that I spent about two hours prepping the coach, windows, hose and hose trays, for our departure tomorrow. I still had energy to spare so I took out a new brush we bought a while back and began soaping up the coach and hosing it down afterwards. Felt so good I continued and did the entire coach, except the roof, still get dizzy climbing. The coach had not been thoroughly washed down, except for the occasional down pour courtesy of Mother Nature, in over two years, Motorhome looks good. Finished up any loose end on any of my blogs as well. Yup, that's us hiding in the bushes. For all the trees and bushes all around our site we had excellent satellite reception all week. Today I'm tired, time to go to bed. Next time we speak we'll be in Advance, NC staying at Forest Lake RVP a TT property.

10.2-Tuesday- Appomattox National Historic Park

Today looks to be another beautiful day with temps reach no higher than 77 degrees. Our destination is Appomattox Court House (2-words) and Museum. To explain the 2-word item. "Courthouse" refers to just that a court house while a "court House" makes refers to the county seat; FYI! This is the actual looks of the McLean House. It was in this house and location that the signing of the surrender of General Lee took place with General Grant. Picture of the signing of the surrender papers. There's so much to this venue this is just an intro to our visit there.

OCTOBER 2018 BLOGS

10.2-Tuesday- Appomattox National Historic Park

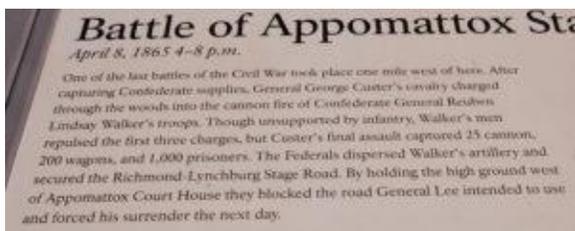
Today looks to be another beautiful day with temps reach no higher than 77 degrees. Our destination is Appomattox Court House (2-words) and Museum. To explain the 2-word item. "Courthouse" refers to just that a court house while a "Court House" makes reference to the county seat; FYI!



This is the actual looks of the McLean House. It was in this house and location that the signing of the surrender of General Lee took place with General Grant.



There's so much to this venue this is just an intro to our visit there. I should have a blog or possibly a pictorial on this venue in the next day or so. I'm fairly certain that the plaques below will reintroduce you to this part of our history.



In April in 1865 as many as 65,000 troops were encamped on these grounds.

Below just a little history on this part of our history. It would have been to much of an ordeal for me to try to summarize what the National Park Service has already articulated in the text to follow. The NPS text is in *bold / italicized* print. If the print you see is not *BOLD and not italicized* then those words are mine commenting on the

pictures either above or below my text.

General Robert E. Lee realized that the retreat of his beleaguered army had finally been halted, U. S. Grant was riding toward Appomattox Court House where Union Cavalry, followed by infantry from the V, XXIV, and XXV Corps had blocked the Confederate path.

This field is just about a half mile from the McLean House when up to 65,000 troops were encamped both on this side of the road and the other.



Lee had sent a letter to Grant requesting a meeting to discuss his army's surrender and this letter overtook Grant and his party just before noon about four miles west of Walker's Church (present-day Hixburg). Over to the right in this field is a path that we're directed to experience.



Grant, who had been suffering from a severe headache, later remembered that upon reading Lee's letter the pain in his head had disappeared. He stopped to prepare his reply to Lee, writing that he would push to the front to meet him.



A monument dedicated to the Confederate soldiers, mostly North Carolina, in the battle in this area. The location of the meeting was left to Lee's discretion. After reading Grant's letter, Lee, his Aide-de-Camp Lt. Colonel Charles Marshall, and Private Joshua O. Johns rode toward Appomattox Court House Marshall and Johns rode ahead of Lee in order to find a place for the generals to confer.

In those times, around 1865, those who died in battle were generally buried where they had died.



In the 1960's the government decided to have a special cemetery plot for those that died. As you can tell they could only find the remains of a little more than a dozen men. All but one were Confederate soldiers. You'll notice the first monument which bears the Union Flag was a Union soldier.

As Marshall passed through the village he saw Wilmer McLean in the vicinity of the courthouse. He asked McLean if he knew of a suitable location. Then McLean offered his own home.



Above. The picture on the left is the McLean house in 1865, the one on the right is the current version of that house with 150 years of improvements.

After seeing the comfortable country abode, Marshall readily accepted and sent Private Johns back to inform General Lee that a meeting site had been found.



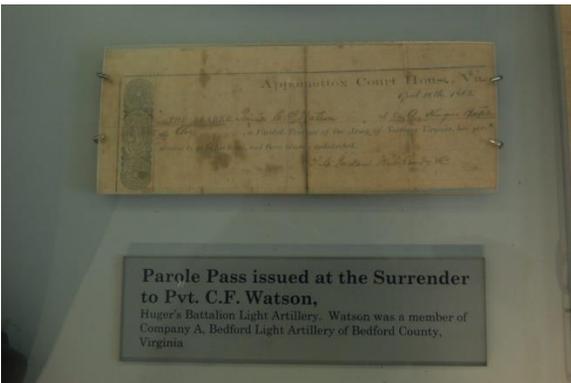
At first I thought this was an early picture of the Surrender Event, then I realized that "colored pictures" would be way into the future. But, none the less, as you enter the McLean home to the left is this room. It contains many of the original furniture but the signing desks are reproductions. The real stuff is in a national museum.

Lee arrived at the McLean house about one o'clock and took a seat in the parlor. A half hour later, the sound of horses on the stage road signaled the approach of General Grant. Entering the house, Grant greeted Lee in the center of the room.



The day after the Surrender signing it was decided that the Confederate soldiers should have parole papers for his men to carry with them so as not to be assumed to be deserters. So the immediately got three presses, 2 are shown, and began drawing up over 35,000 forms for the confederate men.

The generals presented a contrasting appearance; Lee in a new uniform and Grant in his mud-spattered field uniform. Grant, who remembered meeting Lee once during the Mexican War, asked the Confederate general if he recalled their meeting.



A Parole Pass for C F Watson. This picture is the best I could do, remember this pass is over 150 years old. *Lee replied that he did, and the two conversed in a very cordial manner, for approximately 25 minutes. The subject had not yet gotten around to surrender until finally, Lee, feeling the anguish of defeat, brought Grant's attention to it. Grant, who later confessed to being embarrassed at having to ask for the surrender from Lee, said simply that the terms would be just as he had outlined them in a previous letter.*



The surrender meeting happened in April but prior to that Grant and President Lincoln had a meeting. In that meeting had asked General Grant to be considerate to General Lee. They both knew that the Lee surrender was going to happen the question was how much longer. The Confederates were basically starved into surrendering. It was Lincoln's attitude that the surrender terms would go along way in re-unifying the country. Lee had only two personal choices; win or disperse his army.





The terms would parole officers and enlisted men but required that all Confederate military equipment be relinquished. The discussion between the generals then drifted into the prospects for peace, but Lee, once again taking the lead, asked Grant to put his terms in writing.



Some of the other room in this historic home. Most of all the furniture is authentic to the house.

This is a personal likeable picture. The unit is so small that unless you were looking for it you might not see it. It's a scaled down wood cutting table with saw for the nearby fireplace" FYI!



Below is the formal eating area with the best of the family dishware. Above is reality. This is where the family, most likely, ate most of their meals. This is a "Neo-Classical" home, meaning that as you climbed all those stairs in the front of the house you actually walked in onto the second floor of the home.

The dining table above would be found on the bottom level.



Once again above is the informal eating area. Below is the kitchen. In that time-period it would be normal to find the kitchen area located to the side of the home. The reason for this would be in case of fire.

When Grant finished, he handed the terms to his former adversary, and Lee -- first donning spectacles used for reading-- quietly looked them over.



This picture, to the left, only merits a small entry since the NPS person was just there to be helpful so Carla needed some help on the local bugs. As his dissertation went on he got into kitchens. Having been exposed to this information years ago with our Gettysburg trip on how and why kitchens were not usually part of the living portions of a typical home, he began talking about fires. He mentioned the majority of fire related burnings began in the kitchen. He then went further on to say; the majority of deaths for women were related to fire. The heavy clothing with multiple layers made it very difficult for a woman on fire to disrobe and shed her clothing in order to save herself, sad!

When he finished reading, the bespectacled Lee looked up at Grant and remarked "This will have a very happy effect on my army." Lee asked if the terms allowed his men to keep their horses, for in the Confederate army men owned their mounts. Lee explained that his men would need these animals to farm once they returned to civilian life.



Once again, I asked the NPS gentleman, about the little teepee structure to the left of the main home. (For what it's worth, I already knew the answer.) I knew he would tell us that this structure was used to preserve foods keeping them cool by letting a stream of water flow through the structure. He was nice very forthcoming with his answer. It was an "ice house." That's not what I had expected and I told him. He confirmed my understanding but enlightened me by explaining that Virginia has very few underground streams do to all the rock, slate and marble in the ground, therefore no stream cooling. Inside the ice house a hole would be dug, possibly as deep as 20 to 24 feet deep.

During the winter season chunks of ice would be cut up and carried to the ice house. Once filled with enough ice to last the hot summer months the ice would be covered with hay to shield the ice from the summer heat. *Grant responded that he would not change the terms as written (which had no provisions allowing private soldiers to keep their mounts) but would order his officers to allow any Confederate claiming a horse or a mule to keep it. General Lee agreed that this concession would go a long way toward promoting healing. Grant's generosity extended further.*

The partially grassy area in the center of the picture is the original Lynchburg to Richmond Road. Why is this worth mentioning? In order to get to either destination you had to go through Appomattox. For years this brought a great deal of commerce and settlers to Appomattox, until! The railroad. Prior to the railroad taverns, eateries and rooms to board were all doing a very nice business.

(Just think of it, in 1865 sixty-five thousand Union troops walked down this road to Appomattox.)



The towns folks fought bitterly to have the train station located in this general area, but the powers to be had their own opinion. The RR Station would be three miles from this location. Three miles may not seem that much since we can drive there in about five minutes but back then people had to walk. Not everyone on the train would, from that time on, stay on the train until their destination, and the town had to remake itself. The picture below is the current Lynchburg to Richmond Road. Needless to say both Lynchburg and Richmond grew exponentially thanks to the railroad.

When Lee mentioned that his men had been without rations for several days, the Union commander arranged

for 25, 000 rations to be sent to the hungry Confederates.

In addition to feeding the Confederate Soldiers, this day since they were hungry, this parole pass would permit them to eat at no charge at any and all government installations these soldiers came across as they made their way back home.

After formal copies of the surrender terms, and Lee's acceptance, had been drafted and exchanged, the meeting ended.

Before he met with General Grant, one of Lee's officers (General E. Porter Alexander) had suggested fighting a guerilla war, but Lee had rejected the idea. It would only cause more pain and suffering for a cause that was lost. The character of both Lee and Grant was of such a high order that the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia has been called "The Gentlemen's Agreement." Courtesy of the National Park service

The Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Lincoln a couple of years ago and the South was not accepting it. This surrender hopefully would unify the North and South and hopefully allow the Emancipation Proclamation to be further enacted. Lincoln would not live to see this happen. Only two days after the signing President Lincoln would be assassinated.



This was the local jail.



The McLean home.



Another picture of the County Courthouse with its Knee and hip killing steps.



This would be the General Store, and then some.

It's a regular Ace Hardware place.



Yes, this is also the post office as well as a Pharmacy. The little yellow shed to the right is an attorney's office.



All kinds of stuff from dishes to fireplace needs, even some farming supplies.



Once again, the Lynchburg Richmond road right through the center of Appomattox. The gentleman above is a retired doctor with a great deal of time on his hands. We sat and tolerated him for twenty minutes and he was still asking folks who they were and where they came from. If I wasn't certain that the Kentucky Fried Chicken Colonel had died, I'd be certain this was he.

This volunteer was really good. Got right to the facts. He saw that most of us were seniors and we did not have time to spare. He went into just enough detail, but not overly so, to paint an awesome picture about the logistics of the Union forces and of course the confederates as well as the impact the railroad had on the town. He was a pleasure to listen to.

10.06.2018- Tripping to Advance, NC



Above is just a very small sampling of the incredible beautiful farmlands we view every time we get up and drive off to another location. Not sure how early in the morning these folks get up to prepare for these yard sales. No lack for patrons, every yard sale has a good amount of shoppers.



When we drove by this sign, I told Carla, would anyone rent a Porta Potty thanks to this sign? Within five minutes this truck drove by us, go figure!



Caswell County Rest Area. As we made our way south I needed a break and we pulled into the Caswell County Rest Area. This place is so pretty it's almost a destination. Below are two chairs; we call "Coke" chairs. We had a cocktail table with tow tall chairs at our log cabin, a \$600 expense, but guaranteed to last a lifetime. They have been constructed from recycled Coke bottles.



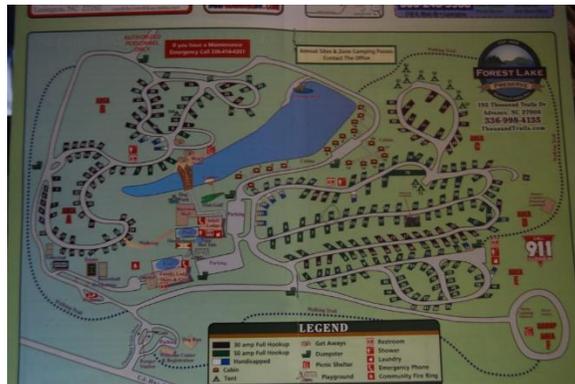
We spent about twenty enjoying this venue. Chairs, tables and benches are generously located all over this property. The inside of this building was as nice as any beautiful home could be. Below- This is a very big, clean and sold out park. Many of the campground roads are paved, Awesome!

10.07.2018- Sunday -Relaxing at Forrest Lake with a cook-out.

The trip to Forest Lake Preserve took about three-hours but three very pleasant hours. We got here safely and not that tired.



Could not imagine the steaks would come out so good. We took our time and let them sear for quite a while. After about thirty-minutes time was up and it was time to serve up the potatoes and carrots.



As you can tell this is a very big campground and for the next five days it is 100% sold out. It's amazing we got such a great site. more to come.





Camp lake and mini golf park.



This is the adult lounge.



This is Hairston Hall. It's a small venue for church services and meetings.



This hall is the Forest Lake Store and Grill. Also serves as a youngsters lounge with gaming machine, pool (also pool table in the adult lounge) and even an air hockey table.

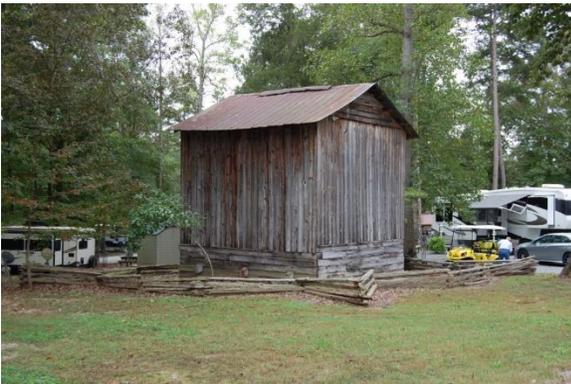


Friends of ours, [Adventure detour ahead](#), are full-timers and just moved up to a Solitude fifth-wheel.





At this point our quest is for a historical site. This would be a quarter-mile walk in an mosquito infested forest area. This is the first time in five years that we've had to deal with mosquitos.



It took a while to find this historic site. It's actually an original structure. A tobacco barn. After walking almost forty-five minutes we noticed the tobacco barn was just a minute walk from our coach, going in another direction.



Finally, we're home again. Now it's time to download the pictures and finish off the RVP blog.

10.09.2018 - Childress Vineyards

As I have done in the past the text presented in bold/italics is courtesy of TripAdvisor. All texts in "plain type" would be my own comments. By opening the doors to Childress Vineyards in 2004,



NASCAR team owner Richard Childress fulfilled a longtime dream that grew from the days when he first began racing in California and visited wineries with friends.



This is the Winery Store Room. They also have a couple of clubs you can join for, what thought, was quite reasonable; around \$200 to \$250. These clubs come with many benefits, especially if you're into wines. *What began as camaraderie and good times soon became an engaging passion for world-class wines and then the visi on to build a world-class winery.*

The Banquet Room used for weddings mostly. *After looking at options in California and New York, Richard chose farmland in Lexington, NC located less than five miles from his RCR Racing operations.*





This is the Bristol Room. I was pleasantly surprised at the menu prices. I imagined them to be much more expensive than they were.

The location situated Childress Vineyards as the gateway to the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA), North Carolina's first federally designated region for grape growing.



Walkway at the beginning of our Winery Tour. The gazebo below may be used or rented for special occasions.

Childress Vineyards are one of the most prominent wineries in the state's re-emerging wine industry that has grown from 21 to more than 100 wineries since the year 2000.



This is another Bristol venue for big events. As our tour guide said, everyplace in the winery may be rented except for Richard Childress' office. Below is the first step in the processing of wines; the removal of stems and exterior skin coating.



The building we were in originally was over 35,000 square feet in size. We are now in the basement of that building. Wine is stored in these aluminum vats for as long as six weeks. Temperatures down here are really chilly. This enhances the fermentation process. Below the holding tanks are being cleaned out and eventually sterilized prior to new wines enter them.



The aluminum containers store most of the wines they produce. The better and more expensive wines are stored in the wooden kegs. Each of these wooden kegs cost about one-thousand dollars each and may be used only once.



Above is Mark. He runs and controls almost every process in the wine making business at Childress.



This room is for their top of the line wines. Each of these kegs is being exposed to the ground which, once again, enhances the wine fermentation process. Below is the Childress Library of specialty wines. This room is always locked and very few enter as well.





One acre of vineyards can produce four-thousand bottles of wine.

For more information on Childress Vineyards click on the following link: [Childress Vineyards](#)

10.12.2018-Friday-Hurricane Michael is gone.

Yesterday, as the storm was in our area, we took a ride to Mocksville, NC.



Over the course of the trip we counted over a dozen huge trees that were taken down through the might of this storm, even though the storm here was just a lot of water and some, not that strong, winds. Half the trees had fallen in the roadway blocking one full lane or more, everyone proceeded cautiously, warning on-coming traffic of the impediment. On our way home, about 1000 feet from the entrance to the campground another tree came down. We sat patiently, in the car for about an hour, waiting for the obstruction to be remedied.

Today we're planning a trip into Advance, NC to go to a Wells Fargo Bank. Around here we don't talk about cities, more like towns or villages. Sat. we attend Mass at Saint Francis of Assisi CC. Our time here is quickly coming to a close. We have nothing worth mentioning planned the next couple of days. It's jacks-up on Monday morning, and heading to Pride RV Campground in Maggie Valley.



It's a beautiful place to visit even in a blog. By using your "page-back" key after visiting this blog of the past, this page-back key should bring you back to this Journal.

10.12.2018- Saint Francis of Assisi in Mocksville, NC



Today we're planning a trip into Advance, NC to go to a Wells Fargo Bank, then it's Mass, pizza and bear get the weekend going. The Church is St. Francis of Assisi.



Total capacity might be barely 200. Around here we don't talk about cities, more like towns or villages. Regardless the Pastor gave an excellent homily and the parishioners are very friendly.

10.14.2018- Sunday.

At Mass yesterday, I was fortunate to speak to Fr. Eric Kowalski. I mentioned to him how, last week, he spoke of how fortunate this parish is for having, not one relic, but two. I knew every church had the one relic, but why two. St. Francis, as some might know, was cremated. The Roman Catholic Church has his ashes. The Bishop, I believe, offered to give this parish a second relic, that is, ashes of St. Francis. In the picture, to the left, is a statue of St. Francis. To his right and above is a small wall stand. It is on this stand that his ashes are displayed. The first relic is embedded into the altar. The parish history in a nutshell. Way back in 1958 the parish was established. It had a total of three families enrolled as parishioners. Long story short by the year 2000, under very frugal leadership, the parish was able to free itself of all its mortgages on the buildings and the associated lands. In 2010 the parish had over 300 families. In 2017 Fr. Eric joined the parish as the parish's new pastor. He came from a very big parish and relishes his new life shepherding the parishioners in his new home. In the picture above is Fr. Eric



Kowalski.

10.15.18- Pride RVP



Pride is a privately owned park, not a Thousand Trails Property. For that reason we must pay to stay. Visiting Maggie Valley was very restful but in the future I'm going to recommend staying no more than 3 days, just to expensive.





10.15- Trip to Maggie Valley:



What the pictures above and below do not show are the overcast skies we left at Forest Lake in Advance, NC. Carla loves flowers, especially wild flowers. Virginia devotes a great deal of highway to natural coverage.



We've been in North Carolina for a short time but the road and landscape had not changed much. Seeing the sign for the Blue Ridge Parkway was very reassuring.

In this picture look at the car in the distance. This dude got pulled by five state trooper cars. Being caught by one state trooper is bad, five is indescribable.



The mountains in the far distance begin appearing on every corner we take. Below is the sign we've really been looking for. We find ourselves reminiscing on a couple of trips we took we Abby back in days gone by, when we had the log home.

10.20.2018 Fr. Michael Murphy,



builder of St Margaret of Scotland Church
 This will be a very short blog on the history of Fr. Michael Murphy. Michael Murphy, prior to becoming a priest, was a businessman. He came to North Carolina in 1950. He was also a wealthy man. In the years that followed he financed and built several churches in the towns surrounding Maggie Valley; he was known as the "Apostle of the Smokies." Long story short in time he bought 33 acres of land in Maggie Valley. On these 33 acres he built a 25-unit motel. Shortly thereafter the Bishop gave him permission to build another church. In 1969 the new St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church was dedicated. The name was chosen in honor of his mother Margaret Murphy. The name, which was a second choice, was chosen because "She always fed the poor and he always fed the poor." The facility was built to accommodate 200 parishioners at one service. The parish, at that time, was hardly big enough to fill the church, even if it wanted to. In reply to the size of the church he commented, "I did not build the church because of the demand, I built it for the future- strong so it will last for ages. Someday, it will be full every Sunday." The Bishop there at that time often urged Michael Murphy to become a priest.



After some thought Murphy enrolled and studied at St. Meinrad Seminary in Indiana and was ordained on May 11, 1972. Now, Fr. Murphy, was age 80 when he was ordained. News of his ordination sped around the world. Fr. Murphy, believe it or not, continued to operate his Falling Waters Motel. In 1981, with help from the Bishop, it was converted to the Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center. Even to this day it continues to be a popular retreat spot. Within a year after his ordination he was assigned to be Pastor of the St. Margaret of Scotland Church, which he had constructed. Fr. Murphy presided over this parish until his death. He was 99 years old. The parish hall he had built on the land he donated to the Church, was named Murphy-Garland Parish Hall. St. Margaret's has a strong push to try to have Fr. Murphy Canonized. In the "book for the sick and departed" a message reads that "should your request be fulfilled, please call the parish office. The Internet has much more on this awesome person, I have only provided some of the highlights on his life. Upon entering a new church I always look for the "book for the sick and departed." A parishioner pointed it out to me. She also quietly mentioned that it is a miracle book. Not having the time to inquire why, I just took her word on it. There it was smack dab at the foot of the Alter area, in the front of the church. The church is now half full and praying the Rosary. I hate standing out in a crowd, but did it anyway. So many are ill and so many are no longer with us. After five-years of doing this I have it down to almost a science; basically immediately members of the Ozdarski/ Grenier families and then family members needing special mention; even get a chance to add a couple of non-family individuals as well at times. The purpose for this in so many churches is both altruistic and self-serving. So many are forgotten with a few weeks of their passing. Purgatory is probably over crowded with "forgotten souls." Should either Carla or I go, I know we'll have each others backs after the fact. My self-serving interest is that should I survive Carla, I dread the thought of being one of those forgotten souls. I have no doubt I'd be forgotten shortly by any remaining family members. For this reason it's a matter of self preservation after death. Even though many of the us listed in these dozens of churches have not departed yet, I feel we could all use a prayer or two from time to time.

I have provided a link to this fine person, it's a quick read and much more organized than what I have written. [goto: history of Fr. Murphy](#)

10.23.2018

This is a schematic on the Carolina Landing RVP.



10.24 Wednesday-NEW PAGE



This area is peppered with large estates, homes and so many log homes. The road to the falls is just a tad bit wider than our HHR car.



The roadway finally does come to a parking lot, or at least a parking area. We were told to take the easier path to the left, however, I see only one path. About two-hundred feet along the path we were given a right and left choice, we went left, of course



We begin our trek down this narrow path. In the distance we can hear the falls, or at least we think that's them.



A beautiful stream is to our left and if you look carefully you'll see Carla in the picture above, in the distance. I'm trying to keep up.



The path here is cleared of debris, but it is loaded with tree roots. Finally the falls come into view.



The falls are in full view, but to get better views we do have a slightly treacherous path.





We hang out for a short time and take a few pictures then decide to go back to the car. On our walk here was mostly downhill but the way back we must go up.





Along the way are cleared area for campers. Not the type of camping we're into. The path is still going up but we're sure we're getting closer to the parking area. Below our trek comes to a close



10.24.2018-The road to this location was very relaxing and would be awesome if we were more timely with the foliage. The couple in this RV were from Lake Placid, FL. Lake Placid is known as the Mural City.

They were not full-timers but did spend a good part of the year traveling. I did a blog on Lake Placid about three years ago.

The Legend] of Issaqueena

Many versions of the story of Issaqueena exist. One such tale tells us Issaqueena was a Cherokee girl who fell in love with an Oconee Brave, while another regales the story of a young girl named Issaqueena who was captured by the Cherokee and given the name Catechee.



“Catechee” then met and fell in love with a white trader named Allan Francis. Yet another variant has Issaqueena falling in love with a white silversmith named David Francis.



This is a covered bridge that spans the stream leading to the falls. This is a very small narrow stream. How it manages to transform itself to such a beautiful waterfall baffles me. Early on we begin seeing the beginnings of the falls not to mention the beautiful sounds of water falling freely. As you walk through the covered bridge to the other side you come to an observation area looking down to the stream and looking out over the hills.

Regardless of who Issaqueena fell in love with, the numerous adaptations all end roughly the same way. Issaqueena overhears her tribesmen planning a surprise attack and sets out ahead of the braves to warn her lover — naming the local landmarks of Mile Creek, Six Mile, Twelve Mile, Eighteen Mile, Three and Twenty, Six and Twenty, and finally Ninety Six along the way.

The towns of Six Mile, Ninety Six and the creeks still exist.



She then marries Allan/David/Oconee brave and starts a family. The family then builds (depending on the story) either a “stumphouse” home or a home on Stumphouse Mountain, just north of what is now Walhalla. Her tribesmen, still seeking revenge for their spoiled attack plan, finally track down Issaqueena and chase her through the woods. She eludes her pursuers by leaping off a nearby waterfall. The tribesmen, believing her to be dead, call off their chase and Issaqueena, who had actually landed on a ledge and hid out of sight behind the great wall of water, was able to return safely to her family and live happily ever after.



The rendition with the Oconee brave has them both throwing themselves over the falls rather than die at the hands of the Cherokee while the narrative with David Francis has the happy couple ending up in Alabama. The Legend of Issaqueena is a prime example of local lore shaping an area but historians frequently disagree about how much (if any) truth is surrounding the story.



The trail to the falls is steep at times but not dangerous to most visitors. I, on the other hand have recently become a klutz at walking, and am slightly more cautious than most. The downhill path Harkins the thoughts of having to walk this same path, next time, going all the way uphill.



For one, according to local author and Cherokee language historian John Currahee, the name “Issaqueena” is actually the transplanted Choctaw word “isi-okhina” meaning “deer creek.”



“(The legend) may have some vague factual basis but the Indian maiden’s name was not given until 1895 when she was called ‘Cateechee’ in an essay,” stated Currahee. “It was not until 1898 that Cateechee became Issaqueena in a poem, the duality explained by saying that Issaqueena was a Choctaw captured by the Cherokee and given the name Cateechee among the Cherokee.



What it looks like from the top of the falls



“Both the poet and the essayist owned up to inventing the two names out of thin air, although the poet seemed to know that Issaqueena did come from the Choctaw language,” Currahee said.

The poem Currahee was referring to is the epic “Cateechee of Keowee” penned by J.W. Daniels in 1898.

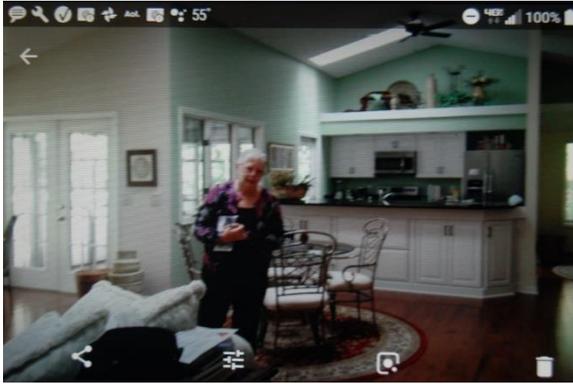
No matter which — if any — version of the legend a person chooses to believe, the 100-foot waterfall itself is truly a fantastic sight for all and should not be missed.

Story credit - Easley Progress online

10.24.2018



Applebee's in Seneca, SC. We had a delightful lunch with Ann Cunningham this afternoon. We met Ann a few months ago and promised to touch base with her on our travels back to Florida. She's not a full-timer yet, best reason for that would be the beautiful home she has here in South Carolina. As nice as it is though, I'm still set on the lifestyle we're enjoying. This is Ann's home. It's no wonder she is not a full-timer RVer.



The mariner which only charges \$700, not a month, but yearly for dockage; awesome!



10.24 Wednesday-

This trip will ultimately bring us to three separate venues.

We were just casually driving on our way to the next waterfall when this sign jumped out at us. I mean, could you just drive by without checking out some "Moonshine?" *general store*. It sold everything from grass seed Liquors

We were there only a few minutes when the storekeeper told us of their other location was bigger and had a better selection; so off we went.



Just up the road from the country store was this very symbolic western town. It wasn't just a façade, all the storefronts were occupied. Some of the units had, sheriff, barber shop, ammunition and a restaurant/B&B. Below, I'm not sure. A little to small for a "tiny home!" I'll let you contemplate other options.



The views from this part of the world are awesome! We're up high enough so we can see for miles. Below is the second venue.

This property is years of creative building and plantings. Above is a silo with an herb garden in the forefront. Rows and rows of grape vines, not to mention other plantings. This is the area in the back of this building. Mostly used for large group meetings and weddings.



The storekeeper back in the original location was right. Much more stuff to look over and purchase. Jams and liquors are very noticeable.

Yes, we did not leave empty handed.



Below is another gathering area, smaller than the outside area. The fireplace was awesome.



The views are as awesome as the plantings around the property.



Our third and last venue in this area was just up the road, where else, was a distillery. Ben was the barkeep. The storekeeper gave us his name. I have a feeling this is one very big family operation, I might be wrong, but I feels like it. More vineyards.



Last time we saw Llamas was n a farm in Maggie Valley. What is it about Llamas?



Our last look of mama Llama. It's time to leave. Off to our final destination which would be "just down the road." For more information on this venue:

[goto: Chattooga Belle Farm](#)

10.27 Saturday-Travel to The Oaks in Yemassee, SC



We woke up a little earlier than usual this morning and for that reason we were able to get on the road by 8:30. The trip would be longer than usual around 260 miles. Surprisingly we got to The Oaks a little after 1pm and we're all settled in in 1:30. We are here for only 2 nights and will leave Monday morning for Florida. Excellent travel day temps around 55 with bright blue skies. This is a Thousand Trails property which means it's another freebie.

I don't think in two days I'll get around to take another bunch of pictures on this campground but I'll give you a link to visit the blog I did on this place on Oct. 2015,

almost exactly three years ago to the week.

[goto: The Oaks TT RV Park](#)



10.27-Saturday

Saturday means, of purse, Church, Pizza and Beer. St. Anthony's is in Ridgeland, SC about a 20 minute ride from here. I really hate traveling on Saturdays, since it's Mass night and we're not always that organized coming into a new location, finding a church and getting there, but we've been there before.



This is a picture of the inside of the church. Evidently I never took a picture of the outside, hope to fix that tonight. Off to church we go...

10.30-Arrive at Rose Bay in Port Orange, FL

We spent last night at the Walmart in Kingsland, GA. It was much quieter than we were anticipating. Temps dropped to the low fifties and, inside the coach, the temperature was at 64 at 3am this morning. I wasn't too concerned since I was sleeping soundly, except for Scoots climbing on me on the bed looking for shelter under the bed cover from the cold. I decided to just turn on the electric heat, oops! Forgot we were boondocking; therefore, no electricity. Normally I would just turn on the generator, but we're sharing this parking lot with eight other RVs all in close proximity. Generators are noisy. My neighbor in back of us made his feelings felt when he came to the coach last night to ask us when we were planning to turn it off.

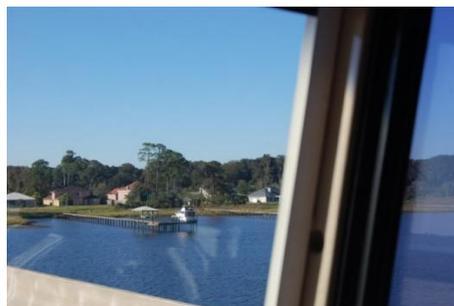
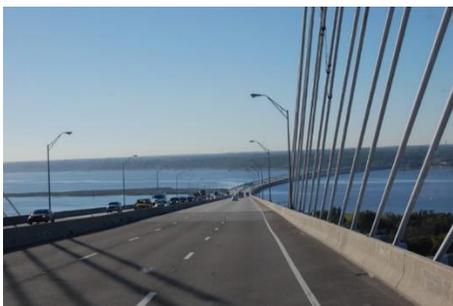


This was one of the two signs that we've been looking for. We'll spend a little time in Georgia but the sign we are really looking for is Florida.



I was a little taken back by the question, since a Walmart parking lot has no rules, you get what you pay for, and your not paying anything, you have to accept the conditions as they present themselves. We went without the generator; just snuggled up a bit more. We arrived in Port Orange after travelling 136 miles right around 1pm. We got a nice site with good Wi-Fi and Satellite. We are having a small problem with the electricity but that should resolve itself. We've called Carla's sister a couple of times and we're waiting for her to call back. Tomorrow morning it's blood work, Walmart (fix light) and it's time for us to get haircuts. To the left is a schematic on this campground. We will be here for two

weeks and it's a Thousand Trails "Trails" facility. Basically it's a freebie. Awesome highway/bridge infrastructure in Jacksonville, FL. The "Bow Tie Bridge." We cross this bridge and we're welcomed by the St. John's River Bay.



10.31.2018 Today we voted. *Operation anniversary*



This is such an important day. Every two or four years every citizen has the right to make themselves heard by exercising his/her right to vote. This year is especially important. Many are adamant that some tweaking is needed at all levels of government. If the changes don't take place the way I've voted I can at least say I made the effort to alter the course of local politicians, the House as well as the Senate.

This voting by mail is so simple and intelligent. Our ballots are mailed to us in a timely manner, we have more than ample time to complete the form and, most importantly, we have the option to Google, for a clearer interpretation of the amendments. Even, should the day come that we decide to stay planted, we will continue to vote by mail.

10.31-Anniversary of my cancer operation-Twelve months ago I underwent a duodenal Whipple operation. It's been a long twelve months as I continue to get back to normal. After twelve months I don't feel I'll get back to "normal," but rather I should concentrate more on accepting the way things are, my new normal. Don't get me wrong, I am very happy that things have gone as well as they have. The alternative was not an option. It's just that there are days in which I don't feel the doctors did not quite put me back together after seven hours on the table; but it is what it is.

NOVEMBER 2018 JOURNAL

11.01.2018-Thursday- All Saints Day and Ozzies' Trike.

Today was a Holy Day of Obligation therefore we go to church. We attended Epiphany Catholic Church at their 12:15 Mass. Carla says we'd been here before but I could not recall that event. After Mass we went out for lunch at a Mexican restaurant. I was a little leery about the menu but my meal was excellent. When we got back to Mary Ann's she told us of her new toy; an electric trike. We both fell in love with it.

11.02.18 Three days left...This is the most important midterm election in generations. So important that nothing get in your way to go out and vote. Even those politicians vying for local and state wide elections are all important. Carla and I are planning on a shrimp and junk food Tuesday as we plan to watch the winner on all the races. Such a shame in this day and age to see what Georgia is trying to suppress the votes. Likewise for Kansas. Imagine moving the voting location to a location outside the city limits! Please go vote! On another subject in a few minutes we plan to leave and spend some time with Mary Ann, Carla's sister. We are planning to take her with us to church this evening. Usually we have pizza and beer on a Saturday evening but tonight we're go out to Culver's for dinner.

11.03.18 Saturday - Saturday would mean Mass, pizza and beer; but not today. Yesterday was a quiet day, many things to do. Had a Eye Doctor's appointment, and he took my glasses so new lenses can be inserted in them. I do have an old pair but hardly fill the bill. Today we would spend some time with Mary Ann. We'll be picking her up at 3pm for Mass at 4pm, she has many before Mass prayers. After mass she treated us to Dinner at Culver's Restaurant in Port Orange, FL. They specialize in Wisconsin Beef only and it was truly great tasting. It's not exactly one step above a McDonald's but a little lower than a Cracker Barrel. The onion rings were especially good.

11.04 Sunday- Pork dinner with Mary Ann at the coach.

We did all the usual Sunday things, today we had our pancakes with strawberries in place of syrup, I know, we're really living life on the wild side. Around 1pm we picked up Ozzie at her home and brought her to the coach for a pork dinner. Carla, as usual, put on an awesome dinner. For dessert we all enjoyed ice cream with strawberries and strawberry sauce, delicious! Tomorrow she and Ozzie are going shopping. I've mentioned how the Wi-Fi is just not doing it with Netflix in the past. So today, after breakfast, we tried to change the Dish Settings so we can get Netflix through Dish instead of using our Wi-Fi. We were successful. We've watched three movies, two more than we usually watch in twenty-four hours, with no down time or buffering; heavenly.

11.05 Monday-It's your obligation to vote tomorrow.

Hard to believe voting day is in less than 24-hours. Today Carla and Mary Ann got together and did a little shopping, I chose to spend quality time with Scoots. We skipped our pizza night last Saturday Night so we'll be doing pizza and beer tonight.

11.06.2018 VOTING DAY-BY MAIL

11.07 Day after voting day.

In all it was a good day for the Democrats. Not so much for the fact that there are more Democrats in Congress, but to the fact that we no have a check on the Executive Branch of the government. I had some reflections on a couple of the outcomes. Go to the "blog."

[goto: Reflections on the Midterms.](#)

11.08.2018 Thursday-Another nothing day.

Mary Ann took us out for lunch after she let us use her washer/dryer. Once again we opted for Culver's. Yesterday was a nothing day also. Basically, were here to kill time until we align ourselves with our reservation schedule. Nice thing is that we're in a Thousand Trails campground so it's a free stay.

11.09 Friday-Breakfast and Christmas with Mary Ann.

Below is a picture of C's restaurant the place we went to for Christmas breakfast; we had excellent meals. The view from Mary Ann's lanai. It's a beautiful, well-maintained neighborhood of very affordable housing. Besides, it's hard to beat an HOA or Association dues of \$20.00, that's twenty dollars a year. Below we get a night light and canvas bag as gifts. There's a more in debt coverage of this beautiful day in my blog; "Mary Ann's Christmas" or do it the easy way by clicking from the right column "Resent Posts."

11.10.2018- Travel Schedule updated for 2019

This is still a work in progress but so far we've planned to go as far as Verde, AZ just south of Flagstaff, AZ. It's beautiful country and we hope to meet up with our former Director, Cindy, relax and enjoy her company and family for a few days. For the full schedule in more detail click on the link provided. [goto: 2019 Travel Plans](#) Of course this is Saturday. We chose to Go to Epiphany. Mass was followed, of course, with pizza, beer and a movie.

11.15.2018 Sunshine Travel RV Park, Vero Beach, FL

What a beautiful and well organized campground. As we checked in, in TT tradition, we were given a campground packet and told which site was assigned to us. Just a thirty second walk from the clubhouse, pool and everything else. It's also known as Vero Beach Encore, but is located in Fellsmere, FL. The picture below is a site-plan on this campground. We're occupying site 190. Please check out my blog on Sunshine Travel RV Park, one of Equity Lifestyle Properties nicest campgrounds.

11.15- Lunch with Abby and Michael at Dixie Crossroads

This walking bridge, we think, is part of the Florida Bike Trails and it spans I-95. Above is at the entrance to Dixie Crossroads. This gator is harmless, they say. We all had excellent meals at Dixie. Just before we all departed we took a walk around the Dixie building. Could not pass up the park bench for a photo-opt. Behind the building was a huge outdoor mural. A "young couple" we met as we arrived at the eatery was nice enough to take a picture of the four of us. For additional information, menu and/or directions on Dixie Crossroads click on the link:

[goto: Dixie Website](#)

11.16-Friday-Hot Dog Day at the campground

This community meeting room, just across from our site, is the hot dog night venue. Below is our current site. This room was literally filled with campers from the RV Park. The menu was simple, inexpensive and very good.

11.17 Saturday- Quiet day; just church, pizza and beer.

Very chilly, very nice at night. I have hopes to clean up the coach today in preparation of our leaving on this coming Tuesday for Pompano Beach, FL. This weekend we would attend St. Sebastian Church. The Pastor Fr. John Morrissey. We first met Fr. John about three years ago. See the blog on St. Sebastian Church

11.18 Sunday-For us it was up bright and early this Sunday morning as we were planning to visit my brother Dennis in Boca Raton, FL. It has been six months since we left the Boca area, and even though we telephone regularly, there's nothing like a visit.

11.19.2018 Monday- Just another day, watching grass grow.

11.20.18 Tuesday-Travel to Pompano, FL

We got up early this day, don't know why? By 10am we were on the road. We were told could not enter the park until 2pm so we had to kill some time. So we were off to Sam's for air, shopping and pizza. Arrived on Highland Woods in Pompano, FL around 2pm.

11.21.2018- Wednesday-Today will be another watch grass grow day.

A little shopping at Walmart and we're waiting for 1st Choice to re-install a part in our bed to assist in raising the bed up when needed. They lost this part three years ago when they installed our satellite system. Today they will finally finish the job.

11.22 Happy Thanksgiving Day

We hope everyone has the luxury of spending time with friends and love ones. As for Carla and we plan to spend a good portion of the day, including dinner, with my brother Dennis, this time with him should begin around 10 or 11 am. As you know we are residing at Highland Woods Resort. This, believe it or not, is an Encore property. The big plus for this location is that we're only about a fifteen-minute ride from Boca, where Dennis lives.

11.23 Friday- Deck the halls at Dennis' . ,

Morning jobs. A little after noon will find ourselves at Dennis' where we were hoping to find his Christmas decorations from last year. We spent a little time today trying to expand our 2019 travel schedule. Same as the first schedule it begins in Florida but this time it takes us to San Francisco. See the blog of 11.23 "*Deck the halls at Dennis'.*"

11.25 Sunday Travel to Alliance RV

We were up early and were on the road by 8 am. Refueled twice and had a bite to eat at a local Checkers fast food. Arrived at Alliance around 2:30, got a nice spot and relaxed for the rest of the day. The ride was much longer than I had expected, thankfully it was uneventful.

11.27-Waiting in the waiting room at Alliance.

It's about as boring as it could be, just sitting in a big room as the techs work on your coach. Today they'll be pulling out the slide on the passenger side to reinforce the slide plate which allows the heavy slide to glide in and out with very little friction. This will be a two-day job which means we'll be staying at a motel tonight and tomorrow night. We should be all back together again by Thursday.

11.30 Friday- Finally settled in a campground

We've been in the area, Wildwood, FL, for a few days, but hanging out at Alliance RV as they remedy the passenger side slide and an oil change.

It's taken three days and we must go back on Monday for them to fix a hole they accidentally drilled into the side of the injured slide. We are now staying at Three-Flags RV Resort in Wildwood; FL. Alliance is just five miles from here.

11.30.18 George H. W. Bush dies

NOVEMBER 2018 BLOGS

11.01.18-Thursday- All Saints Day

Epiphany is located in Port Orange, FL. Guess we've been here in the past when we had the trailer on Seabird Island.



Today was a Holy Day of Obligation therefore we go to church. We attended Epiphany Catholic Church at their 12:15 Mass. Carla says we'd been here before but I could not recall that event.

This is such a beautiful church, I find it hard to think I could not recall being here before.



Look carefully and you'll notice that the pews are circular. We'd never seen that before.

11.01.2018 Mary Ann's new toy



After Mass we went out for lunch at a Mexican restaurant. I was a little leery about the menu but my meal was excellent. When we got back to Mary Ann's she told us of her new toy; an electric trike. We both fell in love with it.



She loves it and so did we. Both Carla and I had the opportunity to test it out. Reluctantly after a good ride I did bring it back to her. This is not a toy, it can reach speeds of up to fifteen miles per hour. On top of that, in Port Orange, she can use it both on the roads and on the sidewalk. I would not take it on I-95 however.

11.03.2018 Saturday- Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church



Our Lady of Hope is located in Port Orange, FL. We used to attend this church back in the days when we had the cabin on Seabird Island, Florida.

Just a couple of pictures from one of our stays on the Island.



I could not resist the urge to dig back into my stand-alone hard drive and search out a few pictures from days and nights gone by. Seabird Island is located about six miles south of Daytona Beach, FL



Yes, we enjoyed a fairly large dock just off from the cabin. It really wasn't a cabin, but just a fifty-year-old trailer, but oh the memories we have from our many stays there.



Above Dennis and a chunkier version of myself enjoying a lazy afternoon. Below is Mary Ann (Ozzie). She had the trailer next to ours. Can't make out what she just caught.



Yes, that's brother Dennis as he shows off one of his finest catches; a shark!



11.07 Day after voting day.

In all it was a good day for the Democrats. Not so much for the fact that there are more Democrats in Congress, but to the fact that we now have a check on the Executive Branch of the government.

Now I would have to go to Texas. Robert Francis "Beto" O'Rourke was so dynamic, I thought for sure he would take Texas, but for a Democrat in a red state he did awesomely. *I hope to see Beto in a couple of years for the 2020 Presidential Elections.* Next Georgia.

A statement from CNN summed it up nicely.

Democratic candidate Stacey Abrams is not conceding the Georgia governor's race to Republican candidate Brian Kemp, arguing that the high stakes contest is too close to call. CNN has not projected a winner in the Georgia governor's race, but Kemp is ahead in votes with 99% of precincts reporting. "I'm here tonight to tell you votes remain to be counted. There's voices that are waiting to be heard,"

Abrams told supporters early Wednesday morning gathered in Atlanta. In a statement provided to CNN, her campaign cited several specific reasons why she is not conceding, including that three of the state's largest counties "have reported only a portion of the votes that were submitted by early mail" and four other large counties "have reported exactly 0 votes by mail," according to the campaign. Together, it said, the seven counties "are expected to return a minimum of 77,000 ballots."

...He (Kemp) dismissed critics alleging that he weaponized state law to suppress the minority vote as "outside agitators." A lawsuit filed Tuesday in a Georgia federal court by five state voters asked a judge to strip Kemp of his powers over the midterm election -- including any potential runoffs.

My hopes and prayers are for Abrams, only time will determine this outcome. It's hard to believe voter suppression would still be in our vocabulary in these modern and enlightened years. Good luck Stacey!

11.09.2018 Friday- Christmas at Mary Ann's, Carla's sister.



The picture above has nothing to do with Ozzie's Christmas. Rather, it's a picture for my brother should he ever start thinking of relocating to a less expensive neighborhood, Mary Ann's neighborhood. Below is a picture of C's restaurant the place we went to for Christmas breakfast; we had excellent meals.



The view from Mary Ann's lanai. It's a beautiful, well-maintained neighborhood of very affordable housing. Besides, it's hard to beat an HOA or Association dues of \$20.00, that's twenty dollars a year. Below we get a night light and canvas bag as gifts.

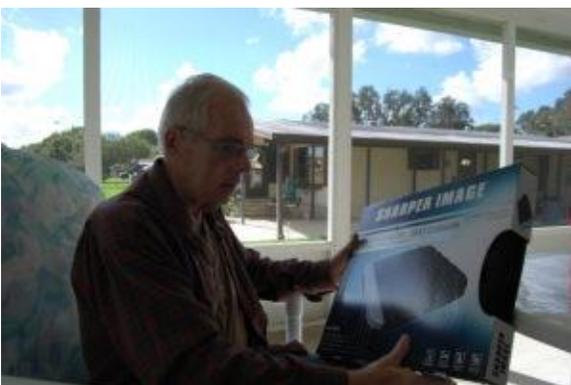




We gave Mary Ann a head-rest pillow, Scoots, on the other hand, got a folding playpen and cat-grass. This was an awesome gift. Each book of the fifty books, tells of everything you need to know about each state.



Thank you, Carla. This is a Triple A (AAA) product.



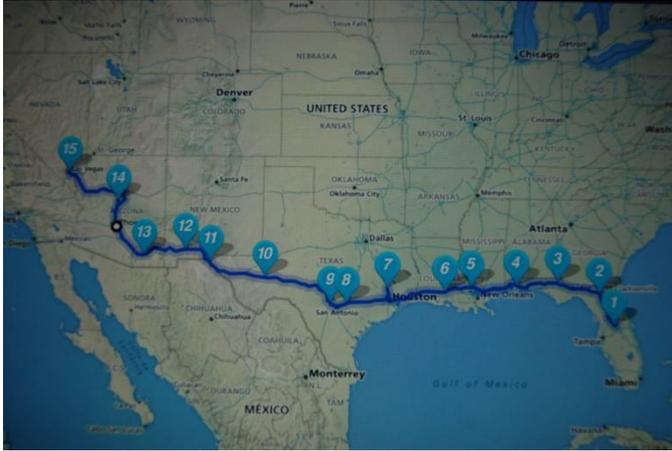
She gave me a seat riding cushion and Carla got a classic RV pillow. Ozzie below got a Walmart Card.



A classic RV gift name-card. A carpet the coach deeply needed to help keep the coach cleaner. Below a gift to us of two classic Curling Stones, from the past.



A couple of pictures of Mary Ann's neighbors.



This is still a work in progress but so far we've planned to go as far as Verde, AZ just south of Flagstaff, AZ. It's beautiful country and we hope to meet up with our former Director, Cindy, relax and enjoy her company and family for a few days. We might even cruise up and revisit the Grand Canyon again. It won't be quite the same this time since Abby will not be with us. Number 9 in the travel plan above is Lakehills, TX. We're still looking for that perfect spot for up to fall back on some time in the future and this might be pretty close. Voting, fishing and beautiful sunsets. Temps vary, depending on the season from the lower 40's to high 80's. Not sure about humidity. Imagine it's a dry heat. At least we'll experience Texas in February.

JANUARY 2019

1. Dec. 31st Arrive at Clermont, FL at Orlando TT RVP for 2 weeks
2. Jan. 14th Lake City, FL - Overnight
3. Jan. 15th Marianna, GA Overnight
4. Jan. 14th Arrive in Robertsdale, AL - Wilderness RVP (RPI) x 4 days ?
5. Jan. 18th Hammond, LA Overnight, AZ
6. Jan. 19th Lafayette, LA Overnight
7. Jan. 20th Willis, TX staying at Lake Conroe (TT) RVP for 12 days.
8. Feb. 1st Lake City -Overnight
9. Feb. 2nd Lakehills, TX at the Medina Lake RV Resort (TT) foe 14 nights
10. Feb. 15th Fort Stockton, TX overnight
11. Feb. 16th El Paso, TX - overnight
12. Feb. 17th Deming, NM overnight
13. Feb. 18th Benson, AZ at Valley Vista RV Resort (T3) for 14 nights
14. March 3rd Phoenix, AZ overnight
15. March 4th Cottonwood, AZ at Verde Valley RVP (TT) x 14 nights

11.13.18-Sunshine Resort

What a beautiful and well organized campground. As we checked in, in TT tradition, we were given a campground packet and told which site was assigned to us. Just a thirty second walk from the clubhouse, pool and everything else. It's also known as Vero Beach Encore, but is located in Fellsmere, FL. The picture below is a site-plan on this campground. We're occupying site 190.



As you can see in the picture this campground is an Encore. Encore parks are also members of the Equity Lifestyle Properties group. In a nut shell Encore parks are similar to the Marriott Hotels, four-star properties. Thousand Trails RVParks would be grouped as similar to a Motel-6 or Holiday Inn type properties. There are five star hotels as well as five-star campgrounds. Some, I've been told charge from \$100 to \$1000 night. I'll have to take everyone's word on these since we'll never have reason to experience these properties.



Our site #190 for our stay. Great location, 50 amp and satellite access... awesome!



These camp style homes dot the campground everywhere. This is one of TT most beautiful parks and annual residences are popping up everywhere



Another campground gathering place. Also used for dances, bingo library for books and DVD's and most importantly the mailroom.



Both above and below is the office where we register when we arrive.



11.16-Friday-Hot Dog Day at the3 campground



11.15-Thursday- Lunch with Abby and Michael at Dixie Crossroads



This community meeting room, just across from our site, is the hot dog night venue. We arrived at 5:15 and by 6pm the room was full. And why not? For two dollars we were fed a 1/4, similar to what Sam's would serve, chips, a coke or other soft drink and an ice-cream desert. Just when I thought it could not get much better the volunteers announced that they had about two-dozen dogs leftover and seconds were being offered at no extra charge. This walking bridge, we think, is part of the Florida Bike Trails and it spans I-95. Above is at the entrance to Dixie Crossroads. This gator is harmless, they say. We all had excellent meals at Dixie.



Just before we all departed, we took a walk around the Dixie building. Could not pass up the park bench for a photo-opt. Behind the building was a huge outdoor mural. A "young couple" we met as we arrived at the eatery was nice enough to take a picture of the four of us.



11.17 Saturday- Quiet day; just church, pizza and beer.

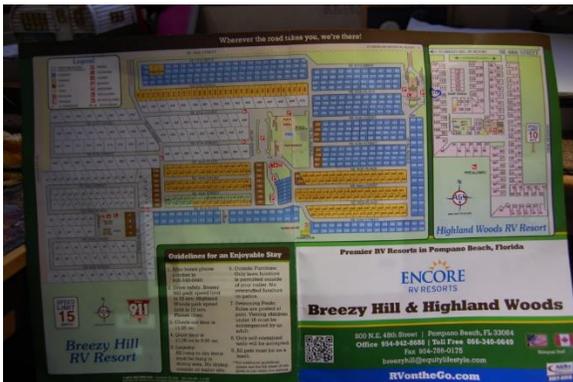
Very chilly, very nice at night. I have hopes to clean up the coach today in preparation of our leaving on this coming Tuesday for Pompano Beach, FL.



This weekend we would attend St. Sebastian Church. The Pastor Fr. John Morrissey. We first met Fr. John about three years ago. He had just finished his homily and noticed us. After ending his homily, he noticed us and spoke to the gal next to Carla. At the end of the Mass the gal asked if we had time to join Fr. John in the rectory with other parishioners. We did and met many of the parishioners. If it were not for us being RVers and if we were in the market for a new church to attend, St. Sebastian would fill the bill. It was memorable seeing him again.

11.20.18 Tuesday-Travel to Pompano, FL

We got up early this day, don't know why? By 10am we were on the road. We were told could not enter the park until 2pm so we had to kill some time. Carla noticed the right rear tire looked low so we called Sam's in Fort Pierce to see if they could check the tire for us. The Sam's auto technician was good and fast, yes; the tire needed some air. After getting the tire straightened out we could not pass up having lunch and possibly do little shopping, awesome!



Highland Woods is a Thousand Trails Property located in Pompano, FL. We will be staying here for five-nights leaving on the 25th. As a result, this will be a free stay for us. This is very big campground. It's made up of three parks all either next to each other or across the street. It looks like they could have about 1500 sites altogether. What we were not told is that all reservations go through the Breezy Hill Resort; we found that out the hard way. Nothing fancy here, but who cares, we're just here for Thanksgiving and visiting with Dennis. Dennis is aggressively looking a new home in Broward County.



Above is a section of a Solar Farm that is being fitted with solar panels. Below is another section that is further along with panels. This parcel of property must be over one-hundred acres, really big. Next time you're traveling north just past Ft. Pierce, FL look to the west, Driver's side, and you'll see it with no difficulty.

11.22 Happy Thanksgiving Day

We hope everyone had the luxury of spending time with family, friends and love ones.



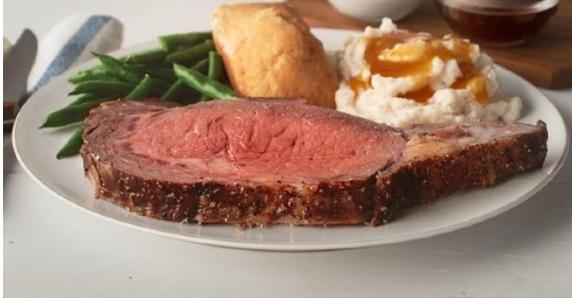
As for Carla and we plan to spend a good portion of the day, including dinner, with my brother Dennis, this time with him should begin around 10 or 11 am. As you know we are residing at Highland Woods Resort. This, believe it or not, is an Encore property. The big plus for this location is that we're only about a fifteen-minute ride from Boca, where Dennis lives.



Kiesha, Dennis' caregiver joined us at this Thanksgiving Dinner as well. It was a happy occasion but we could not help but remember those family members and friends who are no longer with us.

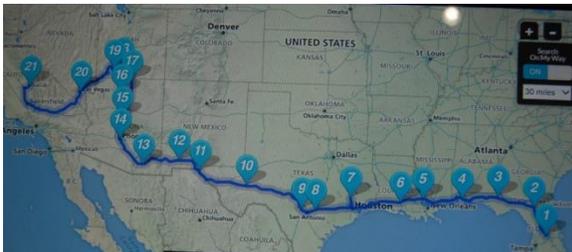
As you can see in the bottom picture we did not have turkey. For Carla and I it was a real feast. Dennis opted for Prime Rib this year for the Thanksgiving meal. This meal was a freebie for me, Keisha would do any washing or at least place the dishes in the dish washer. As the official dishwasher of the family, I was off the hook for this meal and Boston Market provided the meal, so no one had to cook either. The meal was so good, you could cut the meat with a fork.

Picture is courtesy of Boston Market:



Above is what Boston Market says you will receive, below is what you actually get. Much thinner than is seen in the above picture. It's not to say it lacked excellent taste, because it did, it's just that you will get a much thinner piece of meat. We got the same thickness, or lack of thickness, in all four meals. Four \$15.99 size is everything.

11.23 Friday- Deck the halls at Dennis'.



Morning jobs. A little after noon will find ourselves at Dennis' where we were hoping to find his Christmas decorations from last year. It only took a couple of hours since all the decorations were in his condo. We were on our way back to the coach around 4pm. We will be visiting Dennis again tomorrow to do Christmas since we'll be leaving on Sunday and our Florida sites from Sunday on will be about four-hours from Boca. *Same schedule just different map formats; a map and satellite format below.*

We spent a little time today trying to expand our 2019 travel schedule. Same as the first schedule it begins in Florida but this time it takes us to San Francisco. Ultimately this schedule will go on beyond San Francisco



and, right now, it goes to Cedar Rapids, IA. Our tracking program we're using, Rand McNally, allows us to only plot 25 waypoints. The waypoints we've outlined are projections only, but we'll nail them down in the next few weeks with dates and campgrounds.

11.24-Visit w Dennis, Christmas and Mass



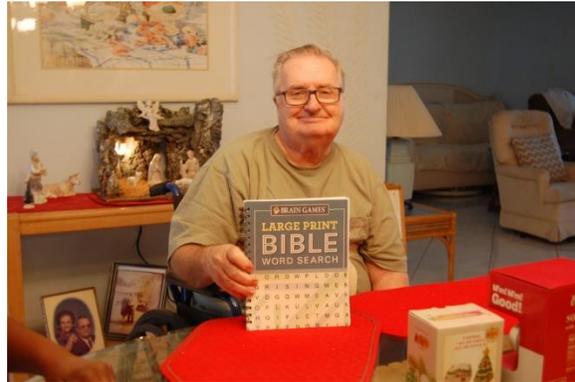
We woke a little early this morning in anticipation of a visit from Dennis and his caregiver Camille. They would be visiting us here at the coach. By 11am they were here. It was so nice that we spent the entire visit outdoors. It was an afternoon enjoyed by all. Temps, for a change were around 78 with a constant breeze blowing between our coach and the one next to us.



At 1pm we drove to his condo to share an early Christmas with them. We topped off the afternoon by attending Mass at Dennis' church followed by, of course, Pizza and beer. For a change we attended Dennis' Church, John the Evangelist CC in Boca. It's a beautiful church, but attendance is about the same as most churches these days. St. Vincent de Paul has them all beat without a doubt.



Some additional pictures on Dennis' Christmas.



I must have taken us at least 5 minutes trying to pry this gift from its skin tight container



Super-size package of 24-inch Twizzlers, just what he doesn't need, but it's Christmas. Below is an audio book of that infamous book "Fear." Dennis has difficulty reading small print; we have no doubt he'll enjoy listening to the audio version of this book.



Above a cap from our travels and Scoots' gift to him a cat laden head rest pillow.

11.30 Friday- Finally settled in a campground



We've been in the area, Wildwood, FL, for a few days, but hanging out at Alliance RV as they remedy the passenger side slide and an oil change. It's taken three days and we must go back on Monday for them to fix a hole they accidentally drilled into the side of the injured slide.

We are now staying at Three-Flags RV Resort in Wildwood, FL. Alliance is just five miles from here. Needless to say, this park feels like home. For six months they let us stay here for a very modest price while I finished chemo and radiation. Wednesday and Thursday nights were spent at a motel called "Sleep Inn." A little pricier than what we usually opt for but was worth every penny. Just down the street from the Inn was Hungry Howe's. We'd never eaten there before or any of its franchises but I'm ready to go back. We both decided on the buffet. I was delighted with every item I chose. Salad, spaghetti, 2 slices of pizza, 2 pieces of Bowie bread and corn; awesome! I even went back for seconds on the pizza. That was just about it for something to Wright about. Forgot, I did take some camera pictures.



This contraption would eventually pick up the slide, which weighed in at over 1/2 ton, so the techs could repair the slide skids which were on the bottom of the slide, which is why the slide had to come out. To lighten the weight of the slide furniture components inside had to be dismantled, cloths removed for the closet and draws relocated to other parts of the coach.



This is about what it looked like. Needless to say both Scoots and I were getting a little depressed. Fearing she might go catatonic we both spent a little time talking her through this ordeal. One saving factor was her new portable condo, a gift from Carla's sister Ozzie. In the end we all survived the trial, especially the coach. The oil change was on schedule for today, Friday and Monday they plan to finish repairing the hole the placed in the slide.

DECEMBER 2018 JOURNAL

The Journal is a quick peak into almost everyday activities of our lives. The blogs are a more in depth destination on a particular activity or venue. Each Blog is introduced in the Journal but not all Journal items will be found in a blog. Journal entries begin on the last day of the month and move to the first day.

12.1.18-SATURDAY-GEORGE H.R. BUSH PASSED LAST NIGHT.

So hard to believe that this is the beginning of another new month and approaching the closing of 2018. We began the day with shopping at Walmart; can you believe \$208.00. We had to replenish some staples but very rarely to we spend that much at Walmart. Looks like light rain is on schedule for the rest of the day. Later, as always, it will be church and pizza.

12.02.18 SUNDAY SHOPPING AND TEXAS ROADHOUSE DINING

Not much to do today. A little later on today we plan to do a little shopping. I've also finished the blog on the coach repairs needed a few minutes ago, which is about as interesting as a root canal sadly. Strangely our shopping would take us to Lady Lakes, FL the home of a Texas Roadhouse Restaurant. The meal left nothing to be desired. Go to the blog on the Texas Roadhouse and read about our experience. Only warning the reading and seeing will make you hungry.

12.03.18 PRESIDENT GEORGE H RBUSH AT THE CAPITAL ROTUNDA

We spent most of our day at Alliance again, except this time we were able to remain in the coach as they made their small fixes. The paint job on the coach came out great and they even fixed the defect I inflicted onto the coach by using the rough side of a sponge. To my surprise all they did was to buff it out. Those circular buffers are awesome. The rest of the day was spent watching #41 at the Rotunda in the Capitol. We treated ourselves to night out eating at Hungry Howe's again. Once again it's not somewhere you'd bring someone on a first date, it is better than a McDonald's but definitely not as good or as nice as an Applebee's.

12.05.18 PRESIDENT GEORGE H R BUSH AT THE CATHEDRAL

Just watched a lot of TV on George HR Bush. Sadly its times like this that commentators talk about a deceased person and you learn so much about his character and mannerisms.

12.06.18 #41 LAID TO REST AT HIS PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM.

We did a little shopping and then we watched the final day of #41 off the DVR. Blogs and pictures will be coming on #41 in the next couple of days.

12.07.18 FRIDAY, ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK.

Today was another Doctor visit day, same as last Wednesday. Everything looks good we're told. They would like to see us in three months but we'll be away, so the next visits will be at the end of 2019. At 4pm we'll be off to church, then the day is ours.

12.08.18-TRAVEL TO ORLANDO RVP

We did get up around 7am but could have slept a little longer, if that luxury was still an option for us. Orlando RV Park is one of Thousand Trails' biggest parks. A little later, as on all Saturdays it will be Mass, pizza and beer. We are planning to be here for two weeks. The church we go to in Clermont, FL is St. Faustian. It's in a plaza and they're renting about ten-thousand square feet for services over the weekend. Thing is that this church is struggling hard to build a new building but funds are short.

12.10.18 MONDAY-CHRSTMAS LETTER DAY

Today was my Christmas Shopping Day and later I was able to put together the 2018 Christmas Letter. We dug up the Christmas decorations also. There are very few occasions when I look back and have some regrets on this lifestyle; the Christmas Season would be one of them. Carla and I had an awesome display of Christmas décor to chose from and Carla did an awesome job of decorating our home. But that was then and this is now. Regardless, we made the right decision.

12.11.18 EXPANDING OR TRAVEL PLANS FOR 2019

We deleted quite a few stops do to necessity. Our focus for 2019 will be Utah. So much to see in such a beautiful state. We kept everything up to and including Grand Canyon Village. From there it would be Utah, but it wasn't that simple logistically. Utah is very big with only two good campgrounds to choose from in the southern portion of the state.

12.12 WED. DECKING THE HALL

We thought today would be just another quiet day, but we surprised ourselves. Walmart and shopping was our first duty. After that we were off to Target. Scoot's suit, new this year, looked blah, and the coach in general needed some additional Christmas décor, so today we made those updates. Go to the blog for the details.

12.14.18 FRIDAY- CALL FROM DWIGHT

We were just sitting around when the phone rang; it was from Dwight Smith. So nice to hear from him again. It was a call of mixed messages. Dennis, his cat, had to be put down this year. They were life-long mates. At 86 even he has a few problems, but like all of us, he's dealing with them. His big trip of the year was Quebec City. The high point was the St. Anne de Beaupre Cathedral Quebec. He found it very exciting. We're hoping our paths will cross in 2019. Dwight became a part of our life when we met him on our Alaska Tour. [St Anne De Beaupre Quebec](#)

12.17.18-NEW ENTRY IN THE "REFLECTIONS" SECTION.

It wasn't very insightful just another topic for me to reflect upon. In the Reflections section you'll find it under "Christmas, Traditions and Stuff."

Or you can click on: [Christmas, traditions and Stuff, reflections](#)

12.18.18- CHRISTMAS IS ONLY SEVEN DAYS FROM TODAY**12.20.18 ANOTHER CAT IN THE HAT DAY-HEAVY SHOWERS LAST 2 DAYS**

Just like everyone else on the east coast, we're stuck inside as it pours outside. Half hour ago we were in a "tornado watch window", that wasn't to reassuring.

12.21- FIRST DAY OF WINTER WITH VERY STRONG GUSTY WINDS

Since early morning we've been experiencing heavy gusty winds. All morning the coach has been nudging us from side to side as a result of the heavy winds. We did get a break around 10am with some windy weather with no rain, and I took advantage of the break and brought in the septic hoses and water lines in preparation for our departure Saturday morning, tomorrow. The trip tomorrow is about 180 miles and should take about 4 hours. This will be our first time staying in Arcadia.

12.22.18-SATURDAY-NOW AT RIVERSIDE RVR, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL

We left Orlando RVP in Clermont, FL this morning around 8:30. I'm happy to say was another uneventful ride. By 2:30 we were getting ready for church at St Antonio CC. The sermon was enjoyable, funny and to the point. I doubt if it lasted longer than ten minutes. Every family has certain traditions, even small families like Carla and I. Almost every year we make plans to watch The Polar Express and, of course, It's a Wonderful Life.

12.23.18 RESERVATION CHANGE--CHRISTMAS EVE EVE

We were scheduled to leave here, Riverside RVR, on the 29th. Now we'll be staying until the 31st. We cancelled our reservations in Wauchula, since it has a tendency to turn muddy with even a small amount of rain. Tonight, would be an It's a Wonderful Life night. For the most part I do enjoy this movie. My only concern on the movie is Uncle Billy. I could wright an entire blog on Uncle Bill, but I will forgo that for now; It's a personal reflection and not worth the time to type out.

12.24.18-CHRISTMAS EVE

Carla let me sleep in this morning, that is till 8:30, then we bided our time until the Christmas Vigil Mass at 3:30. It's not the same as it used to be either when I was a child or in those days with my kids. The magic was even there when Abby was a bigger part of our lives; miss those days.

12.25.18-CHRISTMAS

Great night for sleeping. Woke up this morning to find the temp in the coach at 61 degrees, decided to turn on the heat. We woke up this morning around 8am and, for a change, I made breakfast. Over all we were pretty well matched and the gift giving went well. Before opening we enjoyed breakfast, then made few family calls wishing all a Merry Christmas. After lunch we took a stroll to visit the Peach River- see blog.

12.29-MOVE TO A NEW SITE, SAME PARK

We've never done this before. according to the old schedule we were supposed to leave Riverside and travel to Wauchula. If you remember some of the old blogs on Wauchula, you'll remember that the park has a very high water table.

12.30.2018 NEW YEARS EVE, EVE

We still haven't gotten out to eat at Texas Roadhouse, but hopefully maybe in a couple of days. I was going to call Alliance to make the rug repair to the slide but Carla suggested calling the guy who installed the carpet itself three years ago. We did contact him and we hope to meet up with him on this coming Thursday.

DECEMBER 2018 BLOGS

12.1.18- Saturday...A Cat in the Hat Day.



George H. W. Bush passed last night. So hard to believe that this is the beginning of another new month and approaching the closing of 2018. We began the day with shopping at Walmart; can you believe \$208.00. We had to replenish some staples but very rarely to we spend that much at Walmart. Looks like light rain is on schedule for the rest of the day. Later, as always, it will be church and pizza. As for myself, today I'm a little bored. My next-door neighbor, on the other hand, is busily working with the tools. His pastime is creating wind-chimes from beer cans. I am so thankful that I have a purpose in life, especially in these older years; Writing a blog, I accept few will read, in hopes that I will reflect on these precious memories in the year 2032 as

I approach ninety. Hopefully I'll still have the mental acumen to access this Web Site in those later years; doesn't this beat building wind-chimes?

12.02.18 Sunday



Above is the patch for the 3.5-inch screw that was used in a 2.5-inch wall. Hopefully paint will be sprayed onto the area and hopefully it will blend in with the twelve year old paint job of the coach. Below is a tree sap stain. We're hoping the paint technician will be able to buff out the remaining remnants of this stain.

12.02.18 Sunday-lunch at Texas Roadhouse

This, most likely, will not be our Christmas Season Dinner, that should be a little closer to Christmas. We



found ourselves with a gift certificate, from my daughter I think, and it had a balance on it, and was getting dusty. We had some shopping to do and the best stores in the area are in Lady Lakes, FL a few miles from Wildwood, FL. If Lady Lakes sounds familiar it's because this is where I came for both chemo and radiation only a few months ago, but that's in the past. Today was a beautiful day and our shopping went better and faster than expected. When we arrived at Texas Roadhouse I ordered the same meal as Carla. This is the same meal she had when we found ourselves in Elmira, NY. Only difference between hers and mine was rice in place of the potato. Aside from the generous portion of potatoes were the beef tips. Sautéed exquisitely in a bed of onions and mushrooms. Not the least of the dinner were the bread rolls everyone loves. TR is a little like Kohl's for us today. You buy something and you leave with a gift certificate to put towards another meal or two in the future; awesome!

12.03.18 PRESIDENT GEORGE H RBUSH AT THE CAPITAL ROTUNDA

We spent most of our day at Alliance again, except this time we were able to remain in the coach as they made their small fixes. The paint job on the coach came out great and they even fixed the defect I inflicted onto the coach by using the rough side of a sponge. To my surprise all they did was to buff it out. Those circular buffers are awesome. The rest of the day was spent watching #41 at the Rotunda in the Capitol. We treated ourselves to night out eating at Hungry Howe's again. Once again it's not somewhere you'd bring someone on a first date, it is better than a McDonald's but definitely not as good or as nice as an Applebee's.





In the picture (above right corner) is Jim Baker, a life-long friend of George HR Bush. He took his passing very hard. He gave two eulogies one at the National Cathedral and the other at St. Martins Episcopal Church in Houston, TX.



Above- George W and Jeb with wives look on at #41 is laying in State at the nation's Capital. George HR will lay in State for the next two days.

12.05.2018- Service at the National Cathedral



SHHH! Just resting my eyes. All commentators agree that the President and Ivanka either did not know the prayers of the service or did not bother to read them in the memorial program in his hands.



Former President Jimmy Carter and wife. I apologize for the picture, MSNBC, that I know of, did not give me a close up on them. Below, once again, #41's life-long-friend Jim Baker. Jim Baker, at the service for #41 at the National Cathedral was extremely emotional of his passing. Turns out they'd been close friends most of their lives. So many stories told of his life at the White House and in Maine. The story goes that he once took Putin out for a ride in his speed boat. With three- three-hundred horsepower engines for power Putin had a white-knuckle experience. They were going so fast it took several minutes for the secret service to catch up to them.



12.05.2018



Union Pacific, on their own, took the initiative to repaint the locomotive in the same colors as Air Force #1 and registered the name of the locomotive to "4141", for the day, the 41st President of the US.

12.06.18 #41 LAID TO REST AT HIS PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM.

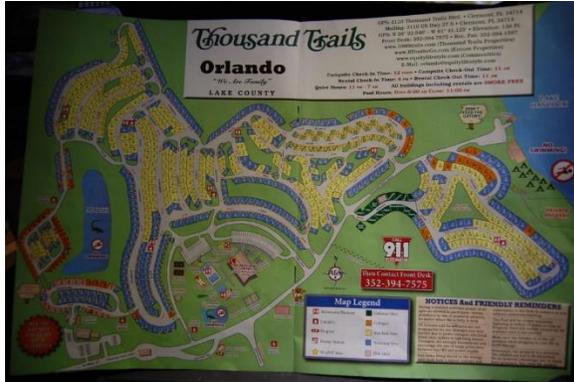
We did a little shopping and then we watched the final day of #41 off the DVR. Blogs and pictures will be coming on #41 in the next couple of days. #41 will be transported to College Station where he will be interred next to his wife Barbara and Robyn there child that died decades ago.



2.05.2018-#41 arrives at the Union Train Station for a slow ride ultimately to College Station. Years ago #41 asked if he could take controls of the train, the engineer agreed to the request.

12.08.18-TRAVEL TO ORLANDO RVP

We did get up around 7am but could have slept a little longer, if that luxury was still an option for us. Orlando RV Park is one of Thousand Trails' biggest parks.



They have relatively new rules. Under no circumstances can you arrive even fifteen minutes early, as we did, and expect to stay even in the huge parking lot. We were told to get out and come back in fifteen minutes. I think it's the only park in the TT gallery of properties with such stringent rules. The ranger who directed us to our site mentioned that the campground has almost nine-hundred sites with over one-hundred-fifty more in the planning. Just a few random pictures of this beautiful campground.





12.08.18- Clermont, FL is St. Faustina

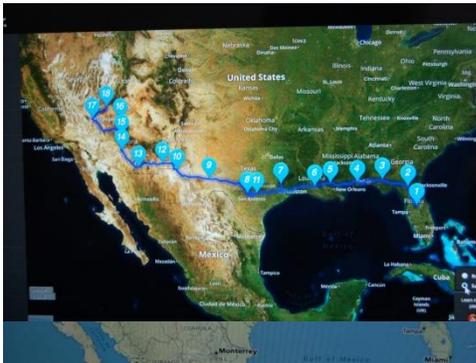


The church we go to in Clermont, FL is St. Faustina. It's in a plaza and they're renting about ten-thousand square feet for services over the weekend. Thing is that this church is struggling hard to build a new building but funds are short. It's time for the Diocese to come in and give these parishioners some assistance. What the Diocese does not realize is that the services this church is providing *is standing room only*. The big difference is that parishes like St. Vincent de Paul are fortunate to be pulling from the Villages. St. Faustina is a working man's church. With all the money St. Vincent and St. Mark's bringing you'd think they could share some of it with a struggling Parrish like St. Faustina This parish is not looking for a multi-million over built building meant to impress even the two percenters; They just want their own building so they don't have to keep throwing away six or eight thousand dollars a month to a landlord for the luxury of the use of his rental unit. You would think

the Diocese would feel the same way. Like everything else the rich always get preferential treatment and those that struggle are told to work harder and save more . It's not my Parrish, we're full-time motorhome people, but I do feel for these parishioners. We make St. Faustina our Parrish of choice for the four to six weeks each year as we camp in Clermont for Doctor appointments and to wait out some of the bad weather up north.

Only wish I had either the political clot or financial resources to give these folks a helping hand.

12.11.18 EXPANDING OUR TRAVEL SCHEDULE IN 2019



We deleted quite a few stops due to necessity. Our focus for 2019 will be Utah. So much to see in such a beautiful state. We kept all he stops up to and including Grand Canyon Village. From there it would be Utah, but it wasn't that simple logistically. Utah is very big with only two good campgrounds to choose from in the southern portion of the state. We found ourselves at the Grand Canyon in the middle of March, a chilly time of the year and we were about to climb to higher elevations with even cooler temps. Our quandary was to squander a couple of more weeks somewhere till the temps warm up a bit. The solution was to go to Las Vegas for two weeks.

Thousand Trails has a campground in Las Vegas that would be free to us for at least two-weeks. So, on March 22nd we'll leave Grand Canyon Village and travel to Vegas, a longer than normal trip of around 275 miles but we can do it with a couple of additional coffee breaks. On April 5th we'll depart Vegas and trip to St. George, Utah.

12.12 WED. DECKING OUR HALL



We thought today would be just another quiet day, but we surprised ourselves. Walmart and shopping were our first duty. After that we were off to Target. Scoot's suite, new this year, looked blah, and the coach in general needed some additional Christmas décor, so today we made those updates. Go to the blog for the details.



Carla noticed it first; Scoot's had no Christmas décor on her suite. Then after Scoots was so decorated the coach began to look blah. Target had strings of lights for sale so we ended up buying three sets of them.

You can actually have up to eleven sets attached to one plug in.



The coach began to look alive and in the Spirit.



Temps outside have been very cool so Carla warmed us up with her French Onion Soup for dinner this evening. Earlier this morning, after putting the clothes in the washer, Carla wanted to see if we could find the Russell's who were supposed to be here as well. All we had to go on was the model of their new Fifth Wheel and their grey truck. Luckily within fifteen minutes of meandering in and out of these small campground roadways Carla spotted it. It had been over two years since we'd last met up with them. Below is a picture of dad (Scott) and Kora. No picture of the three of them yet.



12.20.18 A CAT IN THE HAT DAY-HEAVY SHOWERS LAST 2 DAYS

Just like everyone else on the east coast, we're stuck inside as it pours outside. Half hour ago we were in a "tornado watch window", that wasn't to reassuring. The Window is scheduled to last for another two hours, so if I don't finish this entry; well, that will be that! Since we have to rely on satellite and satellite relies on clear skies, television is possible but not very enjoyable. Nice thing about MSNBC they'll repeat their "breaking news" every two hours so what you miss at 10am you'll catch at noon. Today we've opted to listen to Christmas Carols, a very nice change. We just finished listening to some Perry Como oldies. I know, you younger readers are asking Perry Who? (Google it!) Only five days till Christmas, can that even be possible? Once again it will be jacks up come this Saturday morning. We'll be traveling to Arcadia, FL staying at the Riverside RV Resort. Our stay in Clermont has been relaxing and beneficial, with so many retailers close by. A week ago I had all my shopping done, since then I've returned just about everything and opted for other choices. Our Christmas', thanks to our lifestyle are simple, to say the least. Many of our gift choice are mostly one level above stocking stuffers, but are very humorous. This all relates to that saying: "*Happiness is to have everything...*" you know how it goes.

12.22.18-SATURDAY-NOW AT RIVERSIDE RVR, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL

We left Orlando RVP in Clermont, FL this morning around 8:30. I'm happy to say this was another uneventful ride.



We gassed up at a tight Shell Station and about twenty-five miles from Port Charlotte we dropped in to a Cracker Barrel and had an early lunch. We arrived at Riverside RVResort in Port Charlotte, FL, shortly after noon. This is one of the nicest, if not the nicest campground, we've every stayed at. I'll try to get a blog on it in a couple of days. By 2:30 we were getting ready for church at St Antonio CC. The sermon was enjoyable, funny and to the point. I doubt if it lasted longer than ten minutes. The church was relatively new and beautifully designed. Once again, the church was full, unlike what is commonly found in churches these days.

12.22.18-SATURDAY-The Polar Express Movie

Every family has certain traditions, even small families like Carla and I. Almost every year we make plans to watch The Polar Express and, of course, It's a Wonderful Life. Tonight, was the Polar Express night. Yes, I've seen it possibly a dozen times, and will never tire of it. Your next question might possibly be; Do you believe? The answer, of course, is yes! Not in the mind as of a child, but more importantly in Him. All my life, in so many ways, I've found myself in situations I felt were not solvable, yet, to my disbelief, a solution would present. itself. Some, I would say might just call it luck, but no, picking the right lottery number requires luck. What Carla and I went through this last year required a great deal of believing.

The Polar Express had to do with gifts also. As it was mentioned in the movie *"friends are the most important gift you could have."* Friends I've not had that many, more since I've married Carla, but each is very important to me. More importantly all of us could always use closer ties with family, I know I could. I will always "believe" that that situation might someday improve. In the movie the conductor mentions *"Where the train is going is not that important, getting ON the train (of life) is what matters."* Carla and I embarked on this train of life almost thirty years ago, and it's been one heck of a ride. Even though many don't really understand the challenges and rewards of this lifestyle, it is awesome, and neither of us ever want it to end.





Believe, we will always "believe." We only hope all those who read these blogs will never stop believing either.

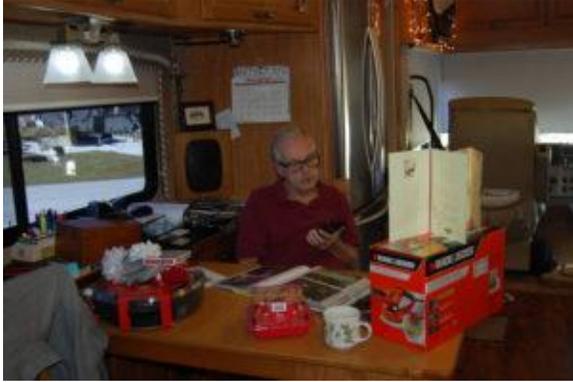
12.25.18-CHRISTMAS



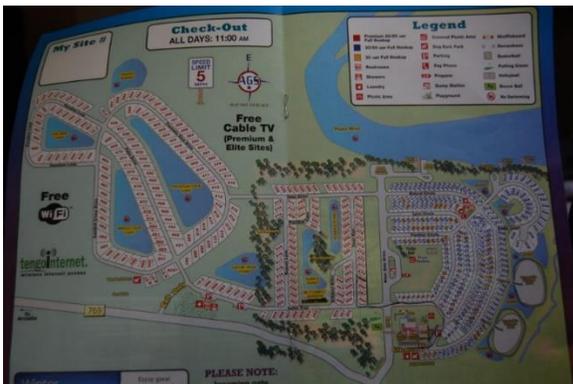
Great night for sleeping. Woke up at 4am this morning to find the temp in the coach at 61 degrees, decided to turn on the heat. We finally woke up this morning around 8am and, for a change, I made breakfast. Below is a blue thing-of-a-majig. Guess why it is used for. Answer later in the blog. In the big package is my main gift, a buffer. Not the inexpensive one I thought I would get, but much nicer.



Over all we were pretty well matched and the gift giving went well. Before opening we enjoyed breakfast, then made few family calls wishing all a Merry Christmas. Below would be Carla's main gift, a photo album with 150 pictures of our 2018 travels; a gift of love more than anything else.



Scattered on the table are most of the rest of our gifts. It was a very nice day, but as I mentioned in a previous blog, It's just a tad bit more exciting with young ones in the mix.



The thing-of-a-majig. It's a little stub you place in back of your phone to hold it upright, or in my case, most times, to take pictures of a picture on the phone, since I don't know how to transfer pictures in any other manner. After lunch we took a stroll to visit the Peace River- see blog.

12.25.18 The Riverside RVR- THE PEACE RIVER

This campground is located in Port Charlotte in the town of Arcadia, FL. To say the least this is one of the best we've ever stayed at. It's a Thousand Trails property in their Encore collection.



It doesn't get much more relaxing than this. Many of the residents here, many annuals, have towable boats of all sizes on the grounds.



**I doubt if I'll ever forget the thrill of driving a boat; if only I were younger!
Excellent dockage here for putting your boat in the water. The Resort has all the attributes we're both looking for, should we ever we get older, except that it's in Florida.**

12.29-MOVE TO A NEW SITE, SAME PARK

We've never done this before. according to the old schedule we were supposed to leave Riverside and travel to



Wauchula. If you remember some of the old blogs on Wauchula, you'll remember that the park has a very high-water table. The last time we were there we had to be towed out, an easy way to spend one-hundred dollars. The last couple of weeks have been very rainy and we did not want to chance another mishap. Christmas was very nice and yesterday we celebrated a bit by going to the movies. This is a luxury we do only 2-3 times a year. Can you believe we paid over nine dollars apiece for a matinee showing!



I'm beginning to sound like my father; unbelievable. To get back to our move today, since I have very little else to talk about our total distance was about five-hundred feet. On our way to the new site was the propane filling station. We have a twenty-gallon tank but usually only refill it once a year. Now we are fully ready to travel. We'll be contacting Alliance again since the slide on the driver's side is sticking a bit, always something.