

## **2009 WESTERN TRIP – July 7 – July 19, 2009**

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Howdy: 2009 Western Trip of Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Utah. Total miles 3809. Average 2009 Chevy Malibu 31.3 mp gal.

REFERENCES: First, go to <http://modaytrips.blogspot.com/> - there are some photos at the blog, but I can print my photos for your trip plans, too. Just ask.

Tourism: Click onto any of these sites for free state travel guides and area maps.

- [www.visitmo.com](http://www.visitmo.com),
- [www.travelks.com](http://www.travelks.com),
- [www.newmexico.org](http://www.newmexico.org),
- [www.travelok.com](http://www.travelok.com),
- [www.utah.travel](http://www.utah.travel),
- [www.arizonatravel.com](http://www.arizonatravel.com),
- [www.colorado.com](http://www.colorado.com)

USE THESE LINKS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR TRIP DESTINATIONS.

### **Kansas:**

- The Prairie Museum of Art & History, Colby, [www.prairiemuseum.org](http://www.prairiemuseum.org).
- Ellis County Historical Society Museum, Hays, [www.elliscountyhistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.elliscountyhistoricalmuseum.org).
- Ft. Hays St. University's Sternberg Museum, [www.fhsu.edu/sternberg](http://www.fhsu.edu/sternberg).
- Ft. Hays St. Historic Site [www.kshs.org](http://www.kshs.org).
- Fick Fossil & History Museum, Oakley, [www.discoveroakley.com](http://www.discoveroakley.com).
- Myron Liggett, Kanza Art, Mullinville, 1.620.548.2597.

### **Colorado:**

- Anasazi Heritage Center, Dolores, [www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ahc.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ahc.html)
- Fred Harman Art Museum, Pagosa Springs, [www.fredharmanartmuseum.com](http://www.fredharmanartmuseum.com).
- Burlington Carousel, Kit Carson County Fairgrounds, [www.kitcarsoncountycarousel.com](http://www.kitcarsoncountycarousel.com),
- Rocky Mountain National Park, [www.nps.gov/romo](http://www.nps.gov/romo).

### **Utah:**

- Kodachrome Basin, <http://www.utah.com/stateparks/kodachrome.htm>.
- The College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum, Price City, <http://museum.ceu.edu>.
- Dinosaur National Monument, [www.nps.gov/dino](http://www.nps.gov/dino).
- Arches National Park, [www.nps.gov/arch](http://www.nps.gov/arch).
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Lee's Ferry, [www.nps.gov/gka](http://www.nps.gov/gka).
- Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum, Blanding, <http://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/edge-of-the-cedars/>.
- Bryce Canyon National Park, [www.nps.gov/brca](http://www.nps.gov/brca).
- Museum of the San Rafael, Castle Dale, [www.sanrafaelcastlecountry.com](http://www.sanrafaelcastlecountry.com).
- Capitol Reef National Park, [www.nps.gov/care](http://www.nps.gov/care).
- Canyonlands, National Park [www.canyonlands-utah.com](http://www.canyonlands-utah.com).
- Anasazi State Park, Utah, <http://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/anasazi>.

### **Arizona**

- Antelope Canyon, Page, [www.antelopecanyon.com](http://www.antelopecanyon.com),

- Monument Valley, [www.navajonationparks.org](http://www.navajonationparks.org).
- Grand Canyon National Park, [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca).

#### JOURNAL NOTES:

(Stayed at Holiday Inn Expresses (7 free nights), two Comfort Inns, and three independent motels – which were fine. TOTAL cost of trip about \$2,000 for everything and saved \$180 by not taking the SUV).

#### ENJOY MY TRAVEL JOURNAL AND TRAVEL ROUTES ATTACHED.

Are you ready! Left at 6:53AM, **July 7**, returned, July 20, 5:15PM. Went our usual western way, thru Holden, Hiway 2, and onto Harrisonville – seeing the same roadside sign as before: “Justice for Cara Roberts.” Don’t know what that means. First oil well spotted KS-68 two miles into Kansas. Passed Louisburg, but stopped at our favorite convenience store, Ottawa. We stop there, because of seeing 4 middle-age ladies five years ago going to the US bowling tournament in Wichita from Iowa, jump out the car and yell at each other to buy cigarettes and beer. My, my, what wives do on a “gal” trip. Passed thru Osage City, Ks. Looks like an “Opie” town, a small town with thriving downtown – seems like a good place to live. Getting over 30mpg in new Malibu. Blue sky, 73 degrees, streaks of clouds – a Kansas morning as we go thru the Flint Hills. On US-56 saw first Kansas stone barn.

Just at the Morris-Lyons Cty. lines on way to Council Grove, saw metal cut-outs (large) of three Indians on horses over-looking the hiway. Nearer to Council Grove there is an Indian hunting buffalo metal statue on hill, too. Also, further is a pioneer covered wagon of folks going west, but no Indians.

By 11AM, having lunch at Country Café, Gypsum, Ks. Many vacant buildings in Gypsum, but many oil wells. Salina, Ks. arrival 2:42 PM – big western, wide-street, road town. Windmills, not old-fashioned though, were turning making energy on hilltops. Lots of those churning windmills for wind power! Hot, sunny, windy day.

By now, the scenery has changed to hills, slopes, trees are gone, ranch land. At Hays, Ks., went to the museum listed above with dinosaurs and played in the kiddie dinosaur room making Bill a dinosaur card! At Fort Hays where General Custer was before he massacred Indians at Washita. At the Historical Society there I learned about the migrations of Russians, Germans, and other Europeans to the area, plus I saw Comanche leader Quanah Parker pictured with two of his 6 wives.

**July 8<sup>th</sup>** saw a sign an unusual sign in cattle country Kansas – “American lamb, try it, you’ll like it.” On way to Burlington, but along hiway saw rain but no rain and learned what virga is –rain that doesn’t reach the ground. Missed seeing the largest prairie dog, a five legged cow, and the art of the largest Van Gogh in Goodland. Our next stop was the Fick Museum, Oakley. Never seen thousands and thousands of prehistoric shark teeth made into paintings, nor paintings done by heated honey wax and crayons. Yes, Mrs. Fick spent most of her time picking up shark’s teeth on the prairie and melting crayons! Mrs. Fick did beautiful paintings. The museum is a must stop! Lots of Kansas prairie history, fossils, prehistoric history. I did start counting shark teeth in my sleep!

At the exit to Oakley is a sign for Mittens. That is the Mittens Trucking Company. In this town, Buffalo Bill has some connection, but there is a huge, huge statue of him on a horse shooting a

buffalo at end of town. Must see stop there. Bill stood next to the huge buffalo statue to see exactly where Buffalo Bill was aiming – it looked like a belly shot to him.

In Colby is the prairie museum where Rex, the mechanical wonder for all horsey kids. Rex is a dime store horse everyone knows sat in front of grocery and dime stores of long ago. Well, guess who got the horse going and took a picture of me riding it! I rode for 4 minutes and then got bucked off or when the time was up! This museum houses the Kuska collection which includes collections of everything they could think of. Can't really list every collection, but here goes: Dishes, clothes, farming items, toys, Indian things, and much more of Kuska family interests.

*Magic Moment:* Riding a 60-year-old mechanical horse that was just as young as I was for a while or until time up. Rides are free. 1 cent Weight/fortune machine.

The Keith Avery western artist show is at the museum. He was an illustrator of Western Horse magazine and other publications. A must stop to see this collection of paintings. You will probably recognize his illustrations of cowboys.

Oops. Forgot to mention those metal Indians on horses chasing metal buffaloes along the hillside along the hiway. But, sadly there will be no more metal statues to see as we enter Colorado. Got to the Burlington, Kit Carson County carousel, about 1:23PM and made it just in time for my first ride on a gray horse. This carousel is 1900s carousel restored at about \$4 million dollars. See reference to the link about the carousel. Then after riding the gray, Bill rode the gray, which he named Traveler because the player organ was playing "Dixie." I rode the Indian pony for my second ride and named that horse Comanche in honor of the real military horse, Comanche, that survived the Battle of the Little Horn and is stuffed at the University of Kansas.

*Magic Moment:* Riding perfectly restored carousel horses around and around.

As we traveled from Burlington on US-385, saw fields of wheat, tree breaks, and high plains we are seeing for the first time. At Yuma, Colo., visited with two rural co-op electric workmen and told them about our rural co-op. In area, saw Mary's Beacon Café, Bug-Off Car wash, and never saw roads named XX before. Oh yes, at Otis, Colo., the hole is cut out of the center of the "O" in Otis. So, there you can have your picture taken in the open space of the "O" in Otis. There is one last metal statue on a hillside: A cowboy is dismounted praying while he horse stands next to him. Glenn Miller's boyhood home is Ft. Morgan, Colo., Saw baby ducks swimming in an irrigation ditch. And, the Sober Auto Service is in at Kersey, Colo.

In Greeley, Colo. saw sculptured sunflowers to promote the town. And, don't forget rubber mulch is for sale on 71<sup>st</sup> St. And, on way to Loveland, Colo. saw my first prairie dog town! When we got to the HIE in Loveland quickly discovered a slide in the swimming pool. I went first, Bill did 3 times and then we behaved ourselves and watched others go down the slide! Also, there was a Buckus Meatery and a Grandma's Gluten Free Bakery near Loveland. Furthermore, there is a sign that says, "Good Place to Get Married, Silverdale Ranch!"

**July 9<sup>th</sup>.** Of course there is sign where flooding might occur in the Big Thompson Canyon that says, "In case of flooding, climb to safety." En route there is a sign that says, "Good Place to Get Married, Silverdale Ranch!" We arrived at Estes Park after Loveland, where I tried to figure out why so many want to vacation in Estes Park:

Here's my figuring – Estes Park at entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park. However, after one drives all over the park and drives up to 12,000 feet to look at snow in July, plus horseback riding, I guess shopping is next in the abundant touristy shops in Estes Park. We drove all over the park, up the mountains to 12,000 feet, looked at snow, and then left the park to have hot dogs at the Dairy Delight. There was a Drowsy Water Ranch nearby. I was impressed with Kremmling, Colo. Even though it was more tourism than others, the town leaders also had life-size buffalo and some elk statues in the downtown shopping area.

You should have seen foreigners and tourists that should have known better, walking around at 11,000 feet wearing flip flops, shorts, tee shirts in winds about 40mph and temp. hovering at 40degrees. We were bundled up as we planned ahead, but still too brisk to get to the snow and make a snowball to whack Bill with it!

Time for artsy visions: Dark blue lakes, mountains are green on top with pine trees, and then dark colors because of lava rocks and flows from ancient volcanoes. Lots of colors relating to sun reflections, distance, and flat not fat clouds. This could drive an artist nuts not knowing how to capture the images of western colors.

Then, I got a glimpse of a man walking along the hiway carrying a large cross. But, that wasn't all – saw in the Rabbit Ears Pass a horse head in shape of Uncle Sam and painted to look like a flag. The horse's body was a large hay bale. And, yes, at Steamboat Springs, Colo. Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln were sitting on a park bench with their arms over the bench's backs – all in bronze. If Bill would have stopped the car in the middle of heavy traffic, I would have joined Ben Franklin on the bench. Continuing, I saw my first Safeway store (there are many out west) and a Holsum bread truck. And, I didn't know that Craig was second to Alamoso as the coldest spots in U.S. At Alamoso, temp. can fall to minus 30. As I surmise, nothing like wearing long johns in the desert no matter the season!

**July 10<sup>th</sup>.** As we drove along I saw a statue of Liberty on top of a tin barn with a flag below. We were near Maybell, Colo. And after the roadside sign that warns, "No gas next 57 miles," and I saw the moon low in the sky in broad daylight right in the middle of the hiway dividing line. Moon didn't move until we turned left.

Need to tell you about traffic and who is driving what: Foreign visitors, mostly French, are always around, some have rented middle size RV campers, over middle-age Harley-Davidson motorcycle drivers, many bicyclists, tourist bus coaches, over-packed cars with kids about age 10 to 18, senior citizens traveling in big cars, and then folks like us. And, of course, there are those wearing sandals, shorts, teeshirts, and many so over-weight we thought they wouldn't last long in the hot sun. And, after leaving Estes Park, saw a motorcycle driver with helmet and a mohawk pink top décor on top of his helmet. There's no law against decorating a helmet!

During our trip we listened to XM Satellite radio, Willie's station mostly plus some Fox news. The Willie Nelson station gave us hours of old-time country western in the west. The Colo. Info. Center at Dinosaur we went to really had a welcome – they had a book exchange, take one, leave one, so I took one and insisted on paying. Great ladies there who told us everything about Colo. That's a welcome tourism attitude!

The colors of the Mesas we see in the distance range from a yellowish tone to purple hue, almost black, red rocks – the sunlight seems to change colors, so that's why I go nuts trying to set my F-stops and speed on my print camera to catch the lighting.

When we arrived at Dinosaur National Monument, a park ranger gave me an official Junior Ranger Dinosaur badge (as you know I was a Junior Ranger at Mesa Verde last year for surviving one the longest hikes there). At Dinosaur, the park rangers put hikers in a van going up a steep hill and turned us loose to walk downhill and around the rock formations looking for dinosaur bones still in the rocks. The trails were up and down, narrow, hot day, so became a real effort to take pictures. But, with white arrows marking where the bones were, I did take a photo of a leg bone of some dinosaur. *Magic moment:* Petting the bone of a dinosaur still in the rock where it died! Then, scary moment when saw Bill almost fall on one trails!

When we got back from the 45 minute trail hike over slick rocks, big rocks, and careful stepping, the ranger told us about Josie. The pioneering Bassett family had three daughters, a big homesteading ranch, and one of the daughters was named Josie. Josie and her sisters had a hide-out cabin for some interesting guests including outlaws, anyone who wanted to hide-out for awhile, and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Josie lived in the same cabin (which I walked thru – the dry climate doesn't damage wood, and one can imagine what it was like to be in that cabin with Butch and Sundance) until she was in her 90's. She died in 1994. Read the book, "The Bassett Family," by Louise McClure.

*Magic Moment:* Finding colorful history only in the west.

In the area of Vernal, Utah, one is greeted by pink dinosaurs at stop signs, and a museum with growling dinosaurs, smiling dinosaurs, and other dinosaur statues that were designed years ago to give kids that feeling of pet friendly.

*Magic Moment:* Touching a T-Rex "really" growling at me.

**July 11<sup>th</sup>:** We are in area of the Northern Ute Nation and in this area was a unique statue along the hiway: A black horse with a cowboy on it holding an American flag while sitting on the horse. I thought the cowboy was real and getting ready for a parade! What was very unique about many Utah communities was huge, over-done, sidewalk pots for flowers – I mean a lot of flowers in each of this pots. The flowers looked like petunias, but I don't think that's what they were. The towns, big and little towns had abundant pots of these flowers. Amazing. For example, Roosevelt, Utah, had these flower pots on corners, along the street, and the downtown did look a lot better with the flowers. I liked the name of one of the ranches in this area – Floating Feather Ranch. And, here's a most unique sign: "Rebel Bail Bonds for Rebel You."

Tried to write about more colors one sees for you all who may never go to this Utah area: Green gigantic alfalfa fields, yellow fields with some sort of plant, white and red rocks all in formations of Mesas and mountain and hill sides dotted with sage brush and pine trees. Lots of sage, pinon pines, dead pinon pines, but very little cactus.

As we did other stops, we spent several hours at historic and science museums, and the Museum of Eastern Utah was no exception. Learned about "Al." He is a new dinosaur discovery and very impressive. Al is an Allosaur. Behind Al was a reproduction of the Pliocene swamp complete with a cold teenage age alligator warming himself under a heat lamp, gold fish seem to be there for the alligator when he was warm enough for lunch, a soft shell turtle looking at us. Loved this museum for detail and descriptions of the Fremont Native American history and pottery, cloth, and other examples of their lives. I would say 300 BC thru 1200AD society. Then, drove over to a Greek festival at a church and decided we didn't feel like Greek for the day, so we found Big Mama's Restaurant in Castle Dale. Oh yes, we passed Granny's Grub restaurant in Huntington.

How do the folks in Utah prepare for a garage sale? Hang their sale items over barbwire fences! By now, we are headed for Capitol Reef, one of our favorite must visit over and over. I took a prize-winning photo at Capitol Reef and went back to the same spot where I stood for another photo. However, things aren't always the same – had to wait for right lighting, clouds to get in place, the storm to move on, and watching Bill, so he would not steal my picture opportunity! He has a digital camera, and all he has to do is take photos over and over, and me, I must think about what I'm doing with my 40-year-old film camera!

Saw the Fly store in Loa, Utah (Fly store is really for fly fishing), about 17miles from Capitol Reef, later went by the Tooth Ranch, Bicknell. Later, near Bryce, we saw an old gas station called "Too Pooped to Pump."

What was the weather like during our trip? From 70 degrees to 106 degrees in no time, but Moab, Utah had to be hottest, and the mountain altitudes kept us about 70 degrees. Very little rain, if any. We could see rain clouds in distance, but no rain.

Now, for my story about huntin' dogs. Dogs that look like hound dogs are put in trucks, horse trailers all around (hunters ride horses where the dogs go), and real cowboys go huntin' for mountain lions. Saw several mountain lion dogs, called lion dogs. They were very quiet dogs with collar finders. They all were a brown color and faces like beagles. We saw three hunting groups.

**July 12<sup>th</sup>:** In the area of Kodachrome Valley saw many sheep herds and real sheep herds men old-time wagons. One wagon had the sign "Home on the Range." Wagons are small and just like one sees in the movies. The sheep ranch hands move the sheep herds in the mountains on mules or horses with their sheep dogs.

At the Bryce Canyon area had the best pizza at the Bryce Canyon Restaurant and Inn in Tropic. Here are more signs: The Cactus Cowboy Restaurant, Mugwumps Antiques, and in town of Hatch, Utah, the Hatch Hatchery is closed, and the Cowboy Blues restaurant is open. The Home Plate Diner is in Orderville, and the Ends of the Earth Gallery is on US 89. What is amazing is the rental RV campers from Nevada. We figured that many touring the west rented campers at Las Vegas.

Several B&Bs were noticed along the hiway into Kanab, Utah, some looked good and others wouldn't stay at. Noticed a stove totem pole as we entered Kanab. And, the Moqui Cave Hill B&B will open soon on Hiway 89. This stay at the Kanab HIE meant we were on our 6th consistent dinner at Mexican restaurants. Started to think mashed potatoes and roast beef after so much Mexican! Mailed 15 postcards from this HIE.

**July 13<sup>th</sup>:** Next day was to the north rim of the Grand Canyon. At 8,840 altitude everything looked so crisp and bright – no problem with altitude so far. Travelers were mostly foreign we came into contact with. The French were serious about hiking, and we could see that by their physical conditioning. On the other hand, the Americans often looked very over-weight, wore the usual, flip flops, teeshirt, shorts! Temp. about 70 degrees and soon I managed to get myself lost at the National park's cabin areas, two gift shops, and massive tours going on. Bill thought he would find me staring at stuff in one of the gift shops, but no...I was walking around enjoying watching everyone else (watching me probably) and forgot about Bill!

Before I forget, we played games in the car as Bill drove: Points for first mountain range sighted, first stone barn, first prairie dog, first elk, first antelope, and first one to spot a Mormon temple in the towns we went thru. That last one was easy since most towns only had Mormon temples. I tried to record who won the games, but trying to write in a journal book on bumpy roads got real interesting! And, we counted half points to one of us who saw those rented "See America" RV campers. Those were too numerous to count! Also, we played let's count ancient volcanoes, too!

When we entered the Grand Canyon National Park north rim, we did stop at Jacob's Lake general store for two cookies and then returned to the store for lunch. Met a tour bus driver who was taking a large group two weeks on the road. That bus group seemed to suddenly appear where ever we were going.

The north rim is less crowded than the more popular and easy access southern rim. However, the colors and spectacular views of the canyon are much better than the southern rim. We hiked several trails to look-out points or just drove to the look-out points. It was getting hot, so we preferred to drive of course. We followed a mountain hiway thru some excellent scenery and eventually came into the very hot area of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area at Lee's Ferry. Only 106 degrees in the shade. However, at the Ferry area I got to see a very big, semi - loaded supplied trucks and piles of containers for those rafting trips one sees on t.v. adventure shows. Everyone was real friendly sitting in the hot sun, so I joined them!

The heat seemed to disappear when I was staring at the supplies needed for 6 days or 3 days on the Colorado river to Lake Powell. Of course, I had to make some fun comments about lobster being served on a river sand bar with melted butter. Go to [www.westernriver.com](http://www.westernriver.com) for big time rafting from Lee's Ferry. Rafting at this level is \$2100 for 6 days, full meals, helicopter ride back to Lee's Ferry, and much more I couldn't even image. To see how large those rafts are on top of two semi-trucks just got my goat. I've even been near a canoe! While there on the swift, rapid, river shore I did see folks fishing for trout with rod and reel. The sun was so strong, so those fisher people were bundled up in white clothing, hats and scarves. Me, in contrast, was out in the sun playing in the sand, asking stupid questions, and marveling at the river rapids. There is no Lee's Ferry now, just a place name.

**July 14<sup>th</sup>:** Now, go to the Antelope Canyon link, before reading on. Yes, I was riding with 11 others (all foreign tourists) in back of pickup, driven by a Navajo, to the canyon, which is a slit canyon and you will see what that means at the link. My photos are very artsy and upon looking at them, you don't realize I'm taking pictures up to the sky thru the color changes in the canyon walls. The canyon looks like a cave, and it even had a baby rattlesnake which the Japanese tourists couldn't resist photographing. Tour lasted about two hours at cost of \$32 per person. I loved riding in back of truck!

We are in the Navajo area and can see Navajo hogans facing east, trailers, lots of horses, but few cattle and no sheep. This is desert area of arbors for shade next to the trailers and used by Navajo selling jewelry along the road.

We had our best Navajo taco at Kayenta, Ariz., but we had already had two tacos by then. Kayenta is one of our favorite stops....now it has more fast food touristy businesses, but the government homes the Indians get are still the same, drab concrete. Our next stop will be Monument Valley, which will connect us again to the Blair family of Lukachukai, Ariz.....Lesson is "it's truly a small world."

*Definition:* A Navajo taco is homemade fried bread with beans, hamburger, onion, lettuce, cheese, and topped with jaleno peppers, sour cream, and salsa. Very large.

First of all, we drove the Malibu the 17 mile, 10 mile-an-hour, road thru the public areas of Monument Valley. It's hot, dusty, and tour jeeps are whizzing by us. Monument Valley is strictly owned by the Navajo. We took some trails, met a German couple by name of Hans & Lili. It was their 3<sup>rd</sup> trip to the Valley. Our photos were perfect of the Valley formations, but I was getting tired, so decided to check out the 'same' Navajo jewelry displays I have seen over and over. However, at the jewelry table was a Navajo fellow named Shawn Staley. So, we just talked about alfalfa farming, Scruffy, and our travels into the Navajo areas. Well, he knew the trading post at Lukachukai, the daughter who ran away and left 4 kids with her mother, the Blairs, the daughter who Bill and I just happened to meet at a casino restaurant (she was our waitress) near Phoenix in 2006, so after visiting the Blairs twice during our trip and knowing the daughter, I feel like Bill and I are somehow connected to the family and now Shawn, a cousin!

After Monument Valley, we headed for Mexican Hat, Utah, stayed at a motel on the San Juan River, and saw my first and last swinging steak restaurant. The steaks do swing back and forth over the coals of a gigantic grill, but I wasn't impressed, so we had another Navajo taco at a nearby Navajo restaurant. While there, I spotted 6 over 60 motorcycle riders on Harleys of course. A KU jayhawk was roped to one of the motorcycles. More on that jayhawk later.

The 17 mile route thru Monument Valley will cost \$65 per person if a guide is chosen. However, most cars can drive the terrain okay, just slow in the sand. The Mexican Hat motel was on the San Juan, so we went to the shore line while I got some rocks and wanted more rocks, but that didn't work. Bill said only two!



**July 15<sup>th</sup>:** Remember, one of Tony Hillerman's stories, "Thief of Time?" Mexican Hat is a scene where the boat is pulled in. Then, we saw the "goose neck" formation of the San Juan River – a natural attraction. Then, we traveled on up and down many switchbacks climbing the face of a steep bluff on the "dugway". Then we saw three natural bridges near each other at Natural Bridges National Monument where we came upon the motorcycle guys of over 60, and talked with them about their KU jayhawk. The jayhawk seems to be a symbol of their travels. The MU graduate had the jayhawk for the trip they were on, and the MU tiger went all the way to Maine on back of the motorcycle in a previous trip. Depends on who wins the big game, MU or KU.

Also, two Anasazi sites I will insert here: First, is the only museum owned and operated by the national Bureau of Land Management: Anasazi Heritage Center, Dolores, Colo. This facility is dedicated to the thousands and thousands of the Anasazi ancestral Pueblos of that area. Researchers sought artifacts in the area before the dam near Dolores flooded the history of the area. Thousands of items were saved and on display at this very unique museum. Also, the Anasazi State Park at Boulder, Utah offers information about who the Anasazi were. Explore the link of both at the top of this journal. Bought a teeshirt at state park.

Then saw a great rock art by local photography artist, Dave Manley, [www.grandeurimages.com](http://www.grandeurimages.com), of extensive Ancestral Puebloan pottery collection. Blanding's Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum, where we were, is of course a Mormon town. Use the term "Tsetane" for the definition of "a rock that says a story." We headed for Canyon lands where we took pictures of Newspaper Rock, a petroglyph-covered rock that is called a newspaper because it is so big with all sorts of pictorial news for those traveling by it – it's as old as 1000AD or even before. We drove thru Canyon lands for about two hours and came across a gal with two little dogs sitting in the shade for 4 hours waiting for her husband to return. Tried to cheer her some, but when hubby showed up she started really yelling at him, but their son said she would settle down in a couple hours. Enough of getting involved with a gal with two little dogs at a picnic table!

**July 16<sup>th</sup>:** At Moab, Utah, we were there to see the Arches and spend the morning doing some light hiking and riding around the park. However, the hotter it got the slower we moved. We left Moab and headed for Pagosa Springs.

Oh yes, before leaving Moab, saw a sign on side on building of bicycle riders with a huge black spider chasing them. Seven years ago, we were at the Arches when we got to see a thunderstorm wash over the huge red cliffs. So, I told the park ranger that he should name that area of the Arches, a rain forest. That naming was pretty funny for a desert formation. When we left the Arches, I was upset with Bill about him not taking a picture of me next to a lizard statue. Was in a bad mood about that plus traffic in Durango when I wanted to go to Walmart there for presents for Madge & Larry Harrah.

The drama of Bill is big time traffic at Durango to Pagosa Springs and me getting my way to buy a cake, beer, and watermelon for Madge & Larry, who are near 80 years old; Larry likes cold beer. Did all that, and that stressed out Bill. This "Durango" episode was called the "fuss" of the trip. However, the world changed as we got close to Pagosa Springs.

The Red Ryder Museum did it. Bill was back to normal, and I was so impressed about the Red Ryder Museum and creator of Red Ryder and Little Beaver, Fred Harman. Bill was in cowboy heaven with the Museum's collection of Red Ryder plus I sat on the same divan that John Wayne sat on when he visited the Harman ranch! *Magic Moment*: Bill was in comic book heaven. And, what made the day even more unusual was a Sioux Indian lying on the floor taking pictures of Harman's paintings while his wife and two sons sat in circle outside the museum. They were on vacation from the Pine Ridge reservation. Greatest Mexican restaurant we went to was in Pagosa. Yes, Bill did shoot his glasses with a Red Ryder BB gun just like in "A Christmas Story." What fun we had at that museum!

**July 17<sup>th</sup>**: We left Pagosa Springs and headed for Chama, N.Mex., where the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad (steam) is - <http://www.cumbrestoltec.com/>. We took the train last year, but couldn't resist walking around the rail yard again. From Chama we went through two 10,000 ft passes to get to where we could start the 20 plus forest road miles into the mountains to visit Madge and Larry, who have a cabin up in a mountain valley. Yes, it was very slow driving. Yes, we were there right on time for lunch and Larry got his beer! This trip to see them was like driving in Alaska, streams for trout fishing, huge Pines, lava flow rocks, and very slow. When we arrived, they were ready to show us everything, but lunch came first at a lodge in their town of Platoro, which means silver and gold mining. I wanted to pan for gold right then on the spot! They showed us a man-made mountain lake – the highest in the US. Then, they took us on a tour of the old mining town of Platoro which had everything of a small town including Eva's place which is named in honor of the only....let's say "gal who sells herself." Now, the Eva's place is a gift shop for tourists. Platoro is a community of summer houses...the kind one sees in the west...wood. Their cabin is two-story with an attachment bunk house for their family. Around them are smaller cabins used only in summer. Snow is above the houses and even the two-story cabin in the winter!

We went to the lodge of sorts where there is rafting, fishing, and horse back riding into the mountains. This is not Missouri's Lake of the Ozarks. I was in the real West and still thought Alaska must look like Platoro. Lunch was pretty good at the lodge, but I would call the lodge in need of a good cleaning. Petted the nose of a stuffed buffalo head which I named Ralphie in honor of our stop at the Red Ryder museum.

The day was hot, but so pretty with Madge and Larry showing us around. However, when we left they promised to have watermelon and beer for supper. Larry was a scientist at the AF base where the aliens were taken after the Roswell 1947 crash. Of course, I ask about those aliens all the time, and Madge is the author of the Blind Boone book and was a student of Rod Serling of "Twilight Zone" fame and winner of many children's author awards in many states. Madge & Larry were in Warrensburg for the auction at Teehaus downtown plus we accompanied them to a big alumni achievement award Madge received from MU. I picked up some volcanic rocks for Sandy & Mark and just kept taking photos for Madge & Larry of their home in the mountains that sure looked like Alaska (I imagined).

Oh yes, two good stories: I told Madge about Comanche the military horse from Custer's battle that is stuffed at KU. Well, she had a better story – seems like a horse named Snippy with his head snipped off should be on display at the Alamosa county museum. Snippy's head was removed by aliens from another planet. Betcha I was on my way to that museum. But, couldn't see Snippy because the museum was closed! Darn! Will go to that museum again, you betcha! Also, Larry explained why there are no spook lights outside of Miami, Okla. I cannot reveal the reason for the spook lights, but I do know the secret. When we left them, we had another 2-hour drive to get out of the mountains to Alamosa.

**July 18<sup>th</sup>:** We were on our way to Taos, then to Angel Fire and the national Boy Scout ranch – which means we were going lower in elevation and headed for home. Bill gave me 15 min. to sit on a Taos plaza park bench and watch others on the plaza park. However, this time I was too busy looking for art shows, galleries, buying teeshirts, and just walking around to be a people watcher. We did leave Taos pretty much on time schedule. Near Taos are subdivisions in the desert with unusual signs – “Earth Ship Visitors’ Center” plus “Sustainable” community. Both terms meant that the houses were contact houses with self-supporting utilities like windmills, solar heating systems, and couldn't figure out water supplies. This is high desert country.

We then headed for Cimarron, past Angel Fire Lake, which Lucien Maxwell established for his ranch. I like the history of Mr. Maxwell from his Kit Carson days to his family line which becomes the Maxwell Museum, Philmont Museum in Tulsa, and the oil empire called Phillips, his descendants achieved. The national Boys Scout Ranch of thousands of acres was the making of Lucien Maxwell back in the early 1800s, later acquired by Phillips, who gave the ranch to the Boys Scouts. A very fascinating story of how one person, from Illinois, came into Taos wanting to be a fur trader and told everyone he was Kit Carson's friend.... Go to: <http://www.clanmaxwellusa.com/lucienb.htm> for information about Maxwell's life. Another colorful western story.

We left our last day on the road from the Taos area and drove straight to Guymon, Okla. That was a long day, but our last day was from Guymon, 500 miles, to Warrensburg. That was a long, long day. At Guymon, must not forget an unusual barbeque restaurant called Hunny's. Very good barbeque, but restaurant is large, one orders at counter, employees say servings are big, too big, and beans are \$5 in a carry-out container. Food was good, that's not the problem. Gave beans to HIE front desk clerk. She loved Hunny's!

**July 19<sup>th</sup>:** But, our trip isn't over: We did go thru Greensburg and drive around looking at the city that was destroyed in a tornado survived, rebuilt, and is now considered an example of a “green” community. What is changing the town is the new developments in conservation, protection from tornados, and energy use. And, before Greensburg, I met my first and famous folk art artist. Mr. Leggett of Mullenville, Ks. He is the whirly gig artist of totem poles and whirly gigs along the hiway. Mr. Liggett is known for his Kanza Art of metal. His totem poles are metal depictions of interpretations of people, mythology, and whatever Mr. Leggett designs. The metal arts are references people he has met, politicians, animals, and his views of the world. Think humor and social comments: Examples, are the “blue dress with a stain, Ida Hoe, City Funded Gravel Pit Valley Ball, Ruby, Rhonda, local folks, and Sandra.” Yes, he made me a metal heart with the word Sandra. However, he might have a totem made of Sandra, a vacationer, when I return.

He sells his metal art for big dollars, and he was just featured in the Hutchinson, Ks. newspaper which meant to him a new totem to make about the reporter. The world's largest coffee cup collection is in his garage, out behind the garage, and in another garage – 26,000 cups in all.

Whirly gigs of sayings I rather not explain are in two rows the entire length of 40 acres along the fence for sight-seers along the hiway. Might be over 200 works of art, some moving as whirly gigs in the wind and others stationary with sayings. He has been featured in a K.C. PBS Roadside Visions program. Just go to Mullinville, Ks. and be ready for expand your definition of art.

To close the journal, here are some roadside tidbits: Hooker, Okla. has replaced its Hooker sign of chamber members dressed as old-time hookers with signs for churches. An Amarillo radio station advertises livestock feed to the tune of "Green Acres." A cemetery in Meade Ks., is named "Grace Land." A statue of a Mexican boy in Cunningham, Ks., shows the boy herding his cement pigs. There is the "Bite Me Barbeque" restaurant between Goddard and Wichita, Ks. Notice the sign on a bridge along the Kansas turnpike that reads "Bazaar cattle crossing." Near Homewood, Ks. is a sign: Pome on the Range apples. The cutest thing I saw along all the highways was just out of Durango: A mama cow was standing on a pond dam while her calf was lying underneath her so the calf was shaded by mama's four legs and belly.

Arrived home, Sunday, July 19, about 5PM. After a 500 mile day, we were tired and everything in the car needed washing, so before got to farm we went to Mexico Lindo for a light supper and I had a frozen margarita just to prepare for unloading the car. Thank you for reading this journal. Exact travel routes are attached. My journal entries are only for observations and adventures. Bill and I hope some of you will go to links offered at the top of this journal for more information.

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