

John's and Barbara's Grand Adventure

Home is Where We Park it

Leg 4: photographic highlights of our travels from June - September 2009

After a seven-month rest in St. George we spent six weeks in the southern Colorado Rockies. August was devoted to relatives: First came a week in the Kansas City area to visit Barbara's sister and brother, followed by a week in Saginaw, Michigan, to visit John's relatives. We then spent 10 days on the shore of Lake Superior in Michigan and Minnesota and a week in Minneapolis with Barbara's other sister and her husband. Then we were back in the southern Colorado Rockies until mid-September. Now we're back home in the desert. We spent a week at Natural Bridges National Monument in southern Utah, and another in Zion National Park to hike the Narrows. Finally we went on a 10-day houseboat trip on Lake Powell.

The most recent photos are at top.



A trip up the Virgin River through the Zion Narrows is one of the most fabulous hikes in the country, and we spent a day ogling the canyon walls that towered above us while slogging up the streambed. Actually, we spent most of the time watching our footing on the smooth wet rocks. A bunch of spectacular photos and three short movies are at <http://idisk.mac.com/johnmosley-Public>.



At Natural Bridges National Monument we hiked down to the stream flowing under the first bridge and then through canyons under the other two bridges. Here Barbara contemplates the descent. [This is a detailed stitched panorama -- try downloading and magnifying it.] Natural Bridges NM has the darkest sky in the continental US and John thoroughly enjoyed stargazing. Additional photos of a hike in nearby Grand Gulch Primitive Area are at <http://idisk.mac.com/johnmosley-Public>.



The Ute Indians have custody of acres of Anasazi ruins adjacent to Mesa Verde. The ruins were looted by early "archaeologists" a century ago, but unlike at Mesa Verde, these were not restored. This is a collapsed kiva. Corncobs and pottery shards are all around. You can visit only with a Ute guide, and we spent a full day. Additional photos are at <http://idisk.mac.com/johnmosley-Public>.



The Royal Gorge Bridge -- a bridge to nowhere (actually it goes to the other side). Cañon City built this in 1929 as a tourist attraction and it's been a great success. How many municipalities have the faith to invest a fortune in the hope that "if we build it they will come." We came, and we enjoyed walking across it.



We don't often photograph the sunset, but Lake Superior is known for spectacular sunsets and this one was. Click [here](#) for a very short movie taken at the same time.



Our main stop in Michigan's Upper Peninsula was Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore -- the scenic southern shore of Lake Superior. This is our lunch spot one sunny day. The water color varies from green through all shade of blue to purple.

We've posted a slew of Upper Peninsula photos and short movies at <http://idisk.mac.com/johnmosley-Public>.



We rendezvoused in Saginaw, Michigan, with John's Dad and other Michigan relatives John hasn't seen in decades (and Barbara never).



Barbara and John pose with Barbara's sister Susan and her husband Butch in front of the monument at the World War I Museum in Kansas City. John is not clear on how we defended our liberty by participating in WWI, but the monument says we did.



We spent the first week of August visiting Barbara's relatives in the Kansas City area. One trip took us to the only World War I museum in the country, where an unusual item is a 1917 Renault tank.



Our last remote camp in Colorado was at 8300 feet on BLM land just west of Salida. We had the whole meadow to ourselves (except for friends Rick & Vicki camped at the far end). John hiked each morning through the forest of low trees.



We spent nine great days at Valley View Hot Springs -- a remote 2200 acre land trust in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains that includes several hot springs in a natural setting, an abandoned mine that now is home to a huge bat colony, and hiking trails. We watched the bats sortie from the mine shaft at left one evening. Click [here](#) for a 6-second movie of them soaring overhead and into the sunset.



Inevitable afternoon storms prevented us from getting out as much as we had wanted in southern Colorado, but we did enjoy this hike across an alpine meadow at 12,000 feet in the San Juan Mountains.



We camped at Orvis Hot Springs just north of Ouray for the 4th of July holiday week, and this is the view (slightly telephoto) out our RV windshield. It threatened to storm most of the time so this was a good refuge. Next: to the old mining town of Creede.



Next major stop -- Mesa Verde, where we took a Ranger-led tour of Balcony House and hiked out to some petroglyphs.



Our first stop was our favorite meadow in the Kaibab Forest just north of the Grand Canyon's North Rim. It's not an official campground -- we just pulled off the road and set up camp in this ultra-peaceful spot. Who says you can't take a motorhome off-road? Deer come out and browse each evening, and the night sky is as dark as you can imagine.

Our first year, July 2006 - June 2007: Idaho, Yellowstone, the Black Hills, and a winter in Florida. Then Alabama, Mississippi, Cajun Country, Texas' Big Bend National Park, and New Mexico. **You can see photographic highlights of that first year on the road at [LEG 1](#).**

Year Two: July - December 2007: The Pacific Northwest, Northern California, Death Valley, Palm Springs, Anza Borrego Desert State Park, and Arizona. **You can see photographic highlights of the first half of our second year on the road at [LEG 2](#).**

2008: Arizona, the Colorado Rockies, and Moab. The Grand Adventure went on abrupt hold when John was diagnosed with a non-malignant brain tumor in November, underwent surgery, and spent five weeks in a hospital in Salt Lake City. We returned to St. George on Christmas Eve, moved into our Kayenta home on January 4, 2009, and remained there until mid-June 2009. **You can see photographic highlights of 2008 at [LEG 3](#).**
