

John's and Barbara's Grand Adventure

Home is Where We Park it

Leg 5: photographic highlights of our travels from December 2009 - October 2010

We retired in January 2006 and moved to St. George, Utah. We enjoyed our new home in the desert for five months (a few shots of our Utah home and springtime '06 activities are on a separate [Utah Page](#)), and left in July '06 in our new 34-foot [motorhome](#). We've been on the road since except for a medical break from November 2008 - June 2009. We don't know how long we'll be on the road -- or where we'll go -- and it is indeed a Grand Adventure.

Where we are: We left St. George on December 11, 2009, heading south toward warmth. We camped in state parks on the Colorado River in Arizona for a week, dry-camped in Quartzsite along with 200,000 other RVers for the Christmas - New Year holidays, and then visited RV friends outside Phoenix. We were in the Tucson area for six weeks early in the new year. Then to Borrego Springs, California, in the desert west of the Salton Sea for a month. In March we stopped by St. George for inconclusive medical tests for John. We returned to Southern California's Anza Borrego Desert State Park for the month of April followed by a stay near Escondido, which was lush after months in the desert. We were in St. George for the month of May for yet more inconclusive medical tests. We spent a great week in Capitol Reef NP before heading to Idaho at the beginning of summer. We spent a month vacationing at a resort near Coeur D'Alene. Then we enjoyed a month hiking in Glacier and Yellowstone National Park before returning to the resort near Coeur D'Alene. Then south to central California as the weather turned chilly with a few days at Big Sur followed by two weeks near Los Angeles.

We ended up in St. George for 6 weeks to take care of business and visit friends.

The most recent photos are at top.



Our home in Kayenta just outside St. George. If you have to live somewhere (and you don't, but just supposing) this would be a hard place to beat. [Oct. 30]



Near the Hearst Castle at San Simeon we watched adolescent elephant seals practice fighting over who gets to mate with the ladies. Next year their fighting will be for real. [Oct 15]



The Pfeiffer beach at Big Sur was foggy and cool but the sound of the surf on the rocks was great. [Oct 13]



We're lucky enough to visit one of the most scenic places on the planet -- the coast at Big Sur, California. It's hard to take a shot that's not great. [Oct 12]



We returned to Coeur d'Alene after Yellowstone to finish out the summer, and then headed south to California when the weather turned chilly. Here Barbara admires the scenery at Mt. Lassen Volcano National Park near Redding in northern California.



Mammoth Hot Spring at the northwest corner of Yellowstone still overflows and creates new terraces here and there. This spring recently killed the trees growing below it. [We've posted 28 full-res Yellowstone pics and movies at <http://public.me.com/johnmosley>.]



Yellowstone Lake fills a small part of the caldera that resulted when the supervolcano underneath blew up 640,000 years ago.



Bison and thermal features -- it must be Yellowstone. This small herd was browsing along the Yellowstone River just south of Hayden Valley. [Aug. 19]



John was first here 54 years ago and today the Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River look just like he remembers them.



At Piegan Pass in Glacier NP marmots were running around everywhere. At one time three were checking us out from within 20 feet.



Two days after our Grinnell trip we hiked up to Piegan Pass, and this was the view down the other side. Note the unreal rich turquoise color of the glacial lake below. [We've posted over a hundred full-res photos of Glacier at <http://public.me.com/johnmosley>; you'll have to download them to view them.]



Success! We made it up 1600 feet in almost 5 miles to an overlook of Grinnell Glacier, melting and shrinking in the distance, and the icy lake of meltwater at its toe. In 1996 I walked on the glacier; now you would have to swim to reach it. By 2020 all the glaciers in Glacier National Park will be gone, so we see them while we can. [August 7]



Further up the trail to Grinnell Glacier. The trail was wide and safe, but in places the first bounce would be 500 feet down.



The trail up to Grinnell Glacier was carved into the mountainside with spectacular views all around. Our compliments to the trail builders.



We saw from the Goldilocks distance (not too close, not too far) a mama grizzly and two cubs frolicking in a meadow. Quite a treat!



One of Glacier's favorite hikes is the Garden Wall, and we walked it on an overcast day. There is often a spectacular drop-off.



We uploaded a 1-minute video of highlights of the flight to YouTube. Go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Z-gSILA4ps>.



On August 2 we took a helicopter flight over a corner of Glacier National Park -- a wonderful experience. It gave us a whole different perspective as we flew close to several glaciers and peaks and looked down instead of up.



We saw mountain goats at the pass (below) and snapped this shot during a pause in the rain. Several raindrops are on the lens.



On the last day of July we hiked to a popular low pass at 7,000 feet and had to cross several long ice patches. The dark clouds in the distance were moving toward us and we ended up hiking for an hour in a light freezing rain. We had our raincoats and were OK, but rain ruined the view.



Our first hike deep into Glacier NP took us to Avalanche Lake. Apparently avalanches are common here in spring, but by summer you see water cascades that drop 1,000 feet. Their sound is wonderful. [July 27]



Barbara at Flathead Lake

We spent a quiet afternoon at Flathead Lake, trying to puzzle out the reason for the lake's strange name.



John enjoyed hiking the wooded trails of Idaho's foothills near Coeur d'Alene -- quite a contrast to St. George.



Western Idaho has no mountains, but we enjoyed the green scenery. [June 13]



Look closely and you'll see Barbara hiking the Grand Wash in Capitol Reef National Park. This relatively-unvisited huge park in south-central Utah has more spectacular scenery than you can shake a trekking pole at. [June 2] [We've posted 20 full-res photos of Capitol Reef at <http://public.me.com/johnmosley>; you must download them to view them]



We often hike in the tortoise reserve but seldom see one. This old fellow, who is about our age, was wary but not too disturbed by our passage.



Our St. George "stick-and-mortar" home is rented for the year, so while in town we park our motorhome in well-named Temple View RV Park. Snow lingers on Pine Valley Mountain in the distance in mid-May.



One hike at the southern edge of the Anza Borrego Desert State Park 70 miles east of San Diego took us to an overlook of the old railroad that runs through the Carrizo Gorge. Today the route is mostly used by drug smugglers and immigrants hurrying north from south of the border, just a few miles away.



There's a lot of granite in San Diego County south of Palomar Mountain. These palms found a seep in the granite and voila -- an oasis!



You have to admire the sheer tenacity of these delicate little flowers that are able to pop up in the desert pavement near Quartzsite. Are they tougher than they look?



Barbara tests the footing in a slot canyon in Anza Borrego Desert State Park, California.



Downtown Borrego Springs at rush hour during the tourist season. Most of the time you could safely walk across main street with your eyes closed.



John took a break from RVing to visit family in Florida. Here are the three John Mosleys. A pile of family photographs is at http://idisk.mac.com/johnmosley-Public/2010_Florida.



Southern California has had a lot of rain this winter, so the desert is actually green -- with grass! John continues to hike several times a week in Anza Borrego Desert State Park; Barbara finds it more enjoyable by the pool.



The Tucson Gem and Mineral (and Fossil and Meteorite) Show is one of the world's largest with 4,000 vendors! It's unbelievable and overwhelming with so many marvelous things to see from dinosaur nests full of eggs to gigantic crystals to acres of gems and museum-quality mineral specimens. We enriched our private meteorite collection in three days of serious shopping.



While staying in Tucson, John thoroughly enjoyed hiking the lonely trails of Saguaro National Park.



We've both enjoyed Prairie Home Companion for years, and were delighted to see Garrison in Tucson on January 30. It was a great show with a tremendous amount of energy and humor.



One of the more unusual museums we visited is the Titan Missile Museum (<http://www.titanmissilemuseum.org>) south of Tucson -- the only remaining Cold War missile-in-a-silo. This one missile carried more firepower than was unleashed in WWII, and we're all fortunate it was never launched.



Tombstone -- "the town too tough to die" -- sure looked dead on this wintery day in January. We saw about six other tourists and didn't linger.



Indians did a remarkable job of farming the desert centuries ago. At Casa Grande, south of Phoenix, they built this four-storey observatory out of sticks and mud.



Christmas / New Year's: If our camping spot on BLM land outside Quartzsite looks barren, it is -- extremely so. But if we'd shot the picture in the other direction you'd see several dozen campers scattered over a few hundred acres of desert in our local group. We have friends here who return each year, and that's why we're here for the holidays. The \$40 fee for two weeks doesn't hurt either. Note that our three solar panels are up; the nearest electrical outlet is miles away.



This well-maintained trail looks like it goes nowhere -- and that's essentially correct. This is Arizona. But it's a sunny day in December.



One of John's favorite hobbies is metal detecting, and here he's searching for treasure on a beach on the Colorado River south of Lake Havasu City, Arizona (treasure = small change).



Back to searching out petroglyphs, these near Laughlin Nevada. It's 20-30 degrees warmer here than in St. George.



We left Utah on December 11 and we're glad to be out of the cold and snow (two of us were -- Bailey was sorry to leave her hammock in front of the fireplace). This is the route south to Mesquite; it was about 15 degrees outside.



Domestic life in our home without wheels, mid-October to mid-December 2009.

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 at [LEG 2](#).**

Year 3: 2008: Arizona, the Colorado Rockies, and Moab. The Grand Adventure went on abrupt hold when John underwent surgery in November and spent five weeks in a hospital in Salt Lake City. We then stayed in our Kayenta home until June 2009. **You can see photographic highlights of 2008 at [LEG 3](#).**

Year 4: June - September 2009: The southern Colorado Rockies; Kansas City, Saginaw Michigan, and Minneapolis to see relatives; the southern shore of Lake Superior; the Colorado Rockies again; Natural Bridges National Monument in southern Utah and Zion National Park to hike the Narrows; a houseboat trip on Lake Powell. **You can see photographic highlights of 2009 at [Leg 4](#).**
