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MARGUERITE'S AND ROD'S TRIP TO JOSHUA TREE AND NORTH RIM OF THE GRAND CANYON

(AND PLACES IN-BETWEEN)

October 8, 2018: We are at Kern River Brewing Company in Kernville, CA. It is October 8th, 2018. We drove down from Chico today and it took about 8 hours. We want to know one thing: Why does route 99 have no rest stops? We are staying at the KOA Campground. Tomorrow we will get up early and drive to Joshua Tree. We are currently camping at Lake Isabella. It is 6:22 p.m.

Marguerite is having the Blond Ale and Rod has the Just Outstanding IPA. We both like them. The service is great. It is a nice homie place and what you would expect at a nice little Brewpub situated on the edge of the Sierra Nevada's. Sort of in the middle of nowhere but that's what we are looking for. That is, cool places in the middle of nowhere.

We are thinking that we could make the pita wrap bread that Margarite's having, and it is very good. The ingredients include, but are not limited to, Pita, chicken, Kalamata olives, cucumbers, some kind of white cheese and other stuff and peppers. Fettuccine cheese.

Review of the Kern River brew pub, if we were to do it, would be five stars. Very good and nice service. Great food and great beer. If you're coming to Kernville, you got to come here. Yeah, we are sure it's on everybody's to-do list now ©.

Later that evening: We are sitting at the campground now. It is not quite 8:00 but it is pitch dark. The stars are gorgeous. We are going to sip wine and eat chocolate for a little while. Good night.



JOSHUA TREE JUMBO ROCKS: SKULL ROCK, DISCOVERY, FACE ROCK & SPLIT TRAILS

October 9, 2018: We drove from Lake Isabella KOA Campground to Jumbo Rocks. We are at campsite 116 and we like it a lot because it has a shade when it gets really hot and has a tree over us. We took the Skull Rock Trail that leaves from this campground and does a loop, but we also did Discovery Trail and part of Split Rock Trail and Face Rock. I didn't put toe tape on and my feet are killing me. We went 3.1 miles, Marguerite says. It was a real nice hike and we met a couple that was going to get married somewhere on one of the trails, but out of the way of the beating crowd. They were cute.

Tomorrow we are going to hike more. It was not the most exciting day in the world, but we

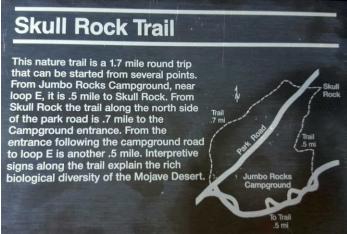


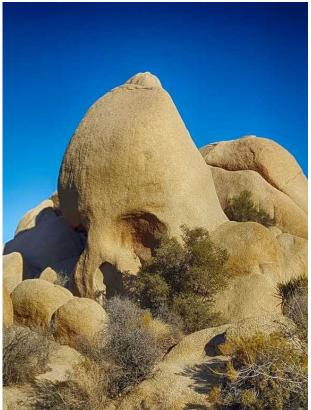
Camp at Jumbo Rocks

got our feet wet and now have an idea of what we're going to do. We will be here for four nights. I am not sure I will be able to stand Marguerite that long. Ha-ha.

And finally, we sat on a rock above our camp and watched the Stars come out. It's a little windy and a little chilly but it's a beautiful night. Goodnight.

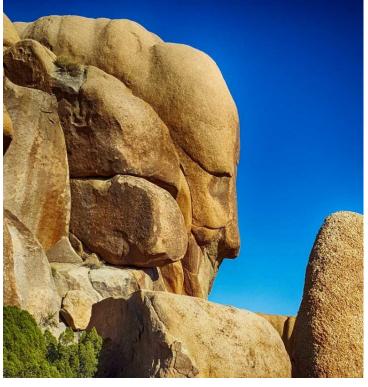














Dinner and Sunset

For dinner we are having wine and goldfish. Okay, that is just our snack. For dinner, which is cooking on the stove now, we are having broccoli cheddar pasta with fried rice in it. Oh yum. Marguerite says it smells pretty good.



HIDDEN VALLEY LOOP, BARKER DAM AND WALL STREET MILL HIKES

October 10, 2018: Good morning, it is the 10th of October. Last night sort of sucked although it was beautiful. Our neighbors are assholes and stayed up until about 12:30 or 1. But, we figured we're not here for the sleeping and so forth although it would be nice to be able to sleep. Thank God for that white noise machine on the iPad. If we want solitude we will go backpacking. We know that national parks are filled with people and campers – very popular.



Moving on, the sunrise this morning was gorgeous. Rod got up and took pictures. Today we are going to go to Barker damn and do a couple hikes there and then go to Twentynine Palms and find the hike that is down that way.

We did three hikes today. The first one was Hidden Valley loop which was really cool, and we got 1.66 miles out of that. It was a place where rustlers took their rustled cattle to hide them because you couldn't easily get into the area. It was a box cannon.



Moring at Jumbo Rocks

The next hike was to Barker damn. That was also 1.66 miles and on that hike we saw Bighorn Sheep. That was really cool because I have never seen one in the wild. On the 3rd hike we went 2.4 miles. That was the Wall Street Mill. It was also a site where a guy named Keys shot another guy because of a water and land dispute. We took some pictures of some old cars and we also saw a monarch butterfly. That is the first monarch that we have seen all year. We are going to put in milkweed so that we can maybe attract monarchs to our Garden in Portland and maybe Chico too. We then decided that we would eat at our lunch at the visitor center. It was 80 degrees down there. We bought some ice and beer and are now enjoying popcorn and beer. Marguerite organize the ice and did a very good job of it. Of course, I have to say that or she would bust my balls.

It is breezy up here at Jumbo Rocks Campground and much cooler than it was down near 29 palms. We are watching a quail cross right in our campground right now. Got a video and some pictures. Hopefully something turned out and I will paste them in here when we get home. (None turned out very well, so I am not pasting them in.)

Tonight, for dinner we had garlic mashed potatoes, tuna, left over macaroni and cheese with fried rice. We went up and had wine on the rocks behind us and talked to a guy that had a mountain bike and rode it places on the rocks and took pictures. He was a very nice and very talkative guy. We had a quiet time and lay down in the tent but I don't think he either one of us fell asleep but read our books.



Good morning from Jumbo Rocks

It is now 6:30 and we will probably wind up going to bed in an hour or so. We have to do the dishes, drink our wine and beer, probably have a piece of chocolate, which melted today, brush our teeth, pee, read and fall asleep. It was actually a very nice and full day.

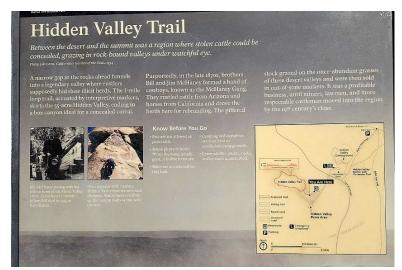
Pictures from October 10







The sunrises and sunsets at Jumbo Rocks were truly gorgeous – some of the most beautiful I have ever seen. We were able to get up before sunrise a couple of times and watch the dawn break. Wow! I wish I knew how to take pictures well. A photographer would have a field day here. Still, we were able to capture memories and that is something a photograph can't capture, so I'll take it .



I named the rock to the right, "Hershey Kiss Rock." I am surprised that no one has officially named it that. Hidden Valley box canyon below. There were many little side-canyons. We took one and came across the area at the very bottom of this page.











Barker Dam was a very easy hike, but we came across water and wildlife. In particular, this is the first time Rod has ever seen a Bighorn Sheep in the wild. It was pretty cool. As with Hidden Valley, it was easy to find beautiful seclusion. Just walk toward some big rocks and there you go, all by yourself. We also came across petroglyphs. They have been tampered with, but many are still in their original state.









On the walk to Wall Street Mill, we saw a Monarch, a windmill that Marguerite liked a lot, the mill itself, some old me (cars). I love taking pictures of the old cars. They have character.













Monarch in Joshua Tree. "The Monarch Butterfly was one of the many simple, but integral pieces of the painting of my childhood that, if removed, would render the painting incomplete - without depth."

PANORAMA LOOP HIKE

October 11, 2018: Good morning it is the 11th of October 2018. It is Ben's 27th birthday. We made a video for him sitting on the rocks above camp at Joshua Tree. We are staying at Jumbo Rocks in camp number 116. It is another beautiful day and we slept much better last night because we didn't have any Butthead neighbors. We are sitting waiting for the Sun to expose our heads so that we can take a picture of our shadows sitting and drinking coffee/tea.

Later in the day: Today's hike was the Panorama Loop at Black Rock campground. It was officially 6.71 miles. It was an awesome hike. We got some great pics, we climbed 1,100 feet in elevation to 5,050 feet and the panorama was indeed gorgeous. We saw very few people and had a great time. We had lunch just below the top of that mountain in a nice shady area under some pine trees. Saw the biggest Joshua trees of the whole trip so far. They were huge and it looks like a forest of Joshua Trees.

The people in the visitor center were great. We agree that all the volunteers and people working in the visitor centers that we visited are really nice. We see a bunny rabbit right now in our camp. We were hoping that we would be able to see snakes on our hike. We didn't see any but we learned that there are seven varieties of rattlesnakes down here to include the invasive species of the Mojave Green Rattlesnake. It is one of the most deadly or poisonous rattlesnakes. We also saw a picture of a six or seven ft Diamondback rattler that one of the workers at the visitor center husband killed. I asked them if they ate it and she just laughed.



Our tent at night. Cozy.





We are now at the camp, it is 3:30 and we are drinking beer and eating popcorn and goldfish. We might take a little walk later depending on how much beer we have.

I have decided that I am going to see if we can get a better cooler. For dinner we're going to have turkey and cheese and roast beef sandwich said that we don't have to cook tonight. And that means we don't have to wash dishes – ha ha. I love not washing dishes.

And one more thing and then I'm going to lie down and read. Black Rock campground seem to be a very nice place to stay. There is not a bunch of shade, but you might be able to find some. The great thing is that it has water.

We took about an hour nap. Is now 6:15 so maybe we took a longer nap? Right now, I am sitting watching the Sun go down and it is stunningly beautiful and I think I got some very nice pictures.

It's funny, I have been with your grandmother for 4 or 5 straight days now without hardly being apart. And even after being with her all that time I miss her when I'm sitting up here by myself.





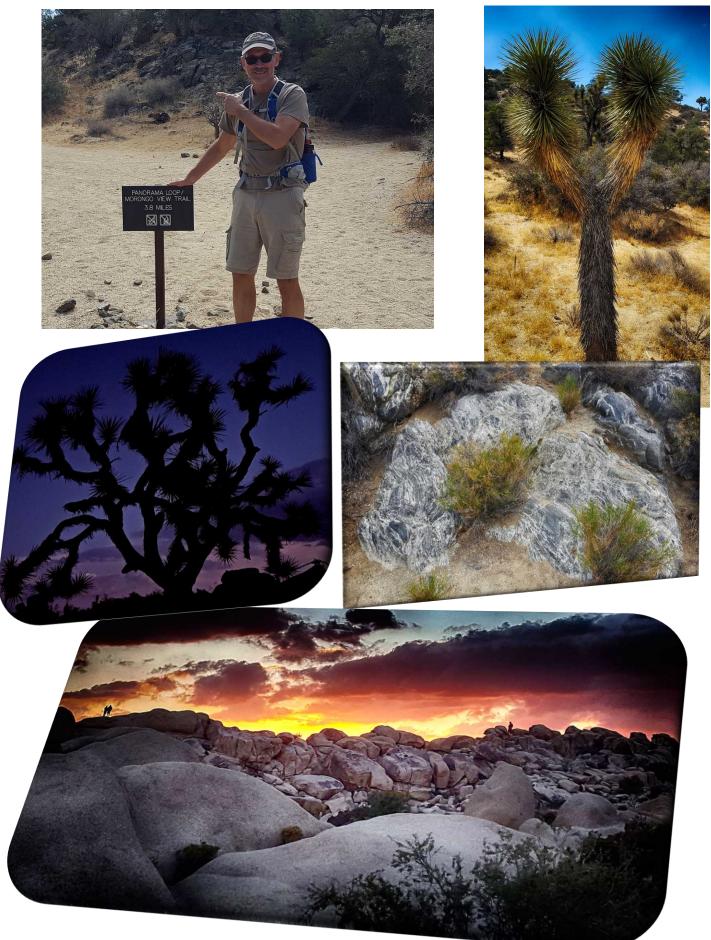












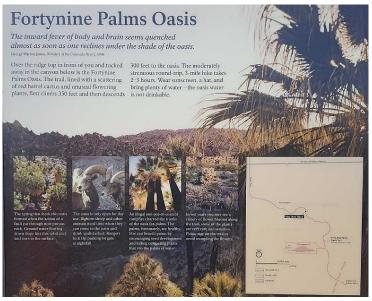
HIKE FORTYNINE PALMS OASIS & GEOLOGY ROAD

October 12, 2018: Good morning. It is the 12th of October 2018. We had great neighbors again last night and we slept really well. It is 7:48 in the morning and we have been awake for maybe half hour. Well, that is we have been up for that long. We have been awake for over an hour or so. We agree that four days is probably too much in one spot. But still, we have things to do today that we have never done before so it will be a good day. I guess that one just gets tired of looking at the same old scenery from your camping spot. We are up on the rocks behind us drinking tea and coffee. I have verified that the only way to get solitude is to put on a backpack and hike into the wilderness. So, when you go car camping you just have to expect people. And the people that we have been around have been just fine for the most part.

Later, after our hike: Our hike to Forty-nine Palms Oasis was a really nice hike. I think we did a total of about 3.3 mi. There was about 400 ft elevation game. The Forty-nine Palms Oasis seems to be a very well-kept secret. It is one of the best hikes there is because at the end is in the actual Oasis in the middle of the desert. There are Palm trees and there's water and Wildlife that we didn't see. It was stunningly beautiful and highly recommended. We took a lot of pictures and we will stuff some in here. We also saw some very large cactuses that might be Barrel cactuses (they were). We had seen smaller versions of them, but these were maybe

four feet high. They are quite beautiful, and we haven't seen any in Joshua Tree that large except for on that hike. We are going to go to the Geology Trail and drive down it. That should be fun, and we might get out of the car and take a walk or two. It is 2:15 and the park is full but very few people are here yet. We are hoping it won't be too noisy tonight as we do not know who are neighbors are going to be. Keep a good thought

It is now 4:54 p.m. we drove about three or four miles down Geology Road. It was very interesting, but we were not able to get brochures at the road head to tell us what was at each marker. That was a little bit of a screw up on the Park's side I think. We took pictures but didn't really walk anywhere. After that we drove to Keys View which is actually an incredible view, but it is in haze almost all the time and while it was hazy today there were signed it said if you can see a particular mountain in Palm Springs then it is a clear day and we were able to see that mountain in Palm Springs. We were also supposed to see the San Andreas Fault and the Salton Sea and we did see the Salton Sea but not sure about exactly where the San Andreas Fault was. Marguerite had an idea and I think she was right.







We are now sitting in our campsite and sucking beers. Our neighbors have not shown up yet but there are several people in the camp that have not yet shown up so not quite sure what's going on there. I suspect we'll get our neighbors at 10 or 11 tonight haha. But as I said earlier, if car camping you just have to expect people. Between our two major adventures today we took a walk in the campground for a mile or so and discovered several campsites that if we come back we will try to get those. But it might be a long time before we come back because we have seen most of the rock formations and you see one Joshua Tree you sort of seen them all. It would be really awesome to load up all the grandchildren someday and bring them down here. They would love running around on the rocks and stuff. I can see kids just going nuts here.



Charlie can be the boss of them. Marguerite suggests, and I agree, that someday soon, we will pack up all the grandkids and adopted grandkids, and visit Death Valley, Joshua Tree, Grand Canyon, maybe Arches, Yellowstone and some other parks and attractions along the way. I suspect there will be a murder suicide of some kind . Will make sure to bring the twins also.







Keys View







TRAVEL DAY AFTER MASSIVE RAIN STORM

October 13, 2018: When we went to bed about 8:30 we found a couple of raindrops. We didn't think too much of it until about 12:30 a.m. at which time lightning and thunder started and then torrential rain set in until about 5. We only got a little damp and had a pocket of water in one corner of the tent. For the most part we stayed good and dry and I think probably dryer than most people in other tents. The roads washed out with sand and gravel and in some places when we drove to say George's the roads were under nearly a foot of water. I measured the amount of rain that we got accidentally in my coffee cup that I left out overnight and there were at least two and a half inch of rain in that cup. It was crazy! We are now at St George's after a 5-hour drive or so in mostly back roads except for a couple hundred miles of it Interstate 15 ©. The Fairfield Marriott is very nice. Marguerite did a load of laundry and I set out the tents and chairs and other stuff to get dry. I have sort of crashed and Marjorie is taking over driving the ship now ②. Ohio State won again today in Georgia got beat by LSU so Ohio state will probably be ranked number 2. Oregon beat Washington today dang it. We are having dinner at George's Corner Restaurant and it is a very nice place. We are having Zion Brewing Company beer Zion Canyon Brewing beers. Marjorie is having the Zion logger and I am having the Zion IPA. They



Well, that rainbow turned out to be a bit more ominous than it looked. We got hammered by a very big storm.

are both good that her longer is very good. Tomorrow, we will leave here no later than noon and will take about 3 hours to get to the north rim of the Grand Canyon. There we will start a new document for that Adventure. If the weather gets very bad we might go up and stay at White House Campground in Vermillion Cliffs which is very nice. Well, that's what the reviews say anyway.



The storm moves in over Jumbo Rocks Campground. Turns out that it deluged a huge swath of Southern California and Arizona.

WHITE HOUSE CAMPGROUND, PARIA RIMROCKS HOODOOS & PARIA TOWNSHIP

TODAY IS OCTOBER 14th, 2018. We were going to stay at North Rim Campground but discovered that there is supposed to be snow in the temperatures in the midtwenties. So, we decided to see if we could find other options. Rod looked around and found White House Campground in the Vermilion Cliffs area. Also called the Escalante BLM land. This is a tremendous campsite. I think that we are very glad that we chose this. However, it is supposed to rain on Tuesday night so we are going to see if we can find another place to Camp Tuesday night. The road getting in and out can be rough if it rains.

Today we left St George about 10 AM and drove for 2 hours or so to get here. It was a pretty easy Drive. It looks like there are seven sites here rather than the five mentioned in the website.

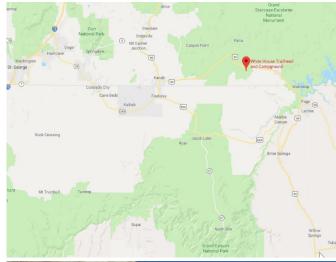
Our first Adventure after setting up camp – by the way our site number is number 6 – was to go to the Hoodoo (or Toadstool) area just a few miles about a mile and a half up the road. Gary and Rod have already done that hike but it was cool for Marguerite to do it as well. We took pictures and we'll leave them here.



Rock formations at our campsite.



The big Hoodoo





Camp at White House





We then drove up to Paria Township site. That was an incredible five-mile drive to some of the most beautiful scenery I have seen. Then we walked another mile to where the Paria Township or town was supposed to have been. However, it was destroyed by floods and there was nothing obvious to see town-wise. We did see the old Cemetery where people were born in 1815 and were buried there. We walked all the way to the river and took some selfies. We took a ton of pictures because the scenery was so incredibly beautiful. Maybe some of them even turned out.

We then drove back, had a glass of wine while making dinner, which was Noodles Fettuccine in Parmesan and Romano sauce. It was not bad at all but certainly was not as good as it sounds. We also had sugar snap peas as something green.



At the end of the Paria Townsite Trail. Paria River.

It is going to be cold tonight and into the twenties. But we are ready for it, we hope. We have washed the dishes and are now having some more wine and chocolate. Tomorrow we plan on driving the Loop to Page and then work our way to Lees Ferry, then down to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, then come back around towards Kanab and back to here. That will probably take all day. We hope to get a good early start and leave no later than 8 in the morning. Keep a good thought that we stay warm tonight. Good night.

Pictures from walk to Paria Townsite









ROAD TRIP: PAGE, LEE'S FERRY, COLORADO RIVER & NORTH RIM OF GRAND CANYON

IT IS THE 15th of October and we made it out by 8 this morning. We drove to Page and ate some breakfast there that included bars and some fruit. We made coffee and tea before we left but we didn't eat breakfast at our camp. From Page we went to Lees Ferry and Marguerite put her hand in the Colorado River for the first time. And I did too but it was not for the first time. We then drove on to the North Rim and walked around for 2 or 3 miles and took a ton of pictures. The north rim is spectacular but it was very cold.

We should go back to Page someday because there is a an incredible dam at the Colorado River there. There are several things to do and many hikes that you might be able to take. We have brochures.

We took a lot of pictures of the Vermilion Cliffs. Pictures do not do them justice. And I'm sure my pictures did not do them justice either. We drove what we are calling the Lollipop Loop doing 39 or 89 and 89A with the stick of the lollipop being the Grand Canyon route 67 we think.

Last night the folks in the camp beside us invited us over to enjoy their fire with them. We did not immediately take them up on it but we let them



The Colorado River at Lee's Ferry



use our marshmallows and marshmallow stick. They had a great time eating marshmallows and when Marguerite and I got back from a walk in the moonlight we walked over and talked for a good half hour or so with them. That was very enjoyable. The parents were both environmentalists with majors in biology and studying climate change. They are professors at Northern Arizona in Flagstaff. Really nice people. It got cold last night and Marguerite's butt got cold. Tonight, I am going to change sleeping bags with her to see if her butt does not get so cold. We are going to go to Zion tomorrow but not Camp there. We will just play there and then go on to Cedar City where we have hotel reservations. It was a good, long day. Oh yeah, the folks next door left us their firewood which was very nice so we are going to have a fire tonight.



Grand Staircase & Vermillion Cliffs



Pictures from the North Rim of the Grand Canyon





Tonight, we had a fire in roasted marshmallows, drank wine and sat by the fire and got warm. It's a beautiful night and the moon is about a quarter full but still very, very bright. Goodnight moon.

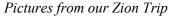
ZION NATIONAL PARK, ANGEL'S LANDING

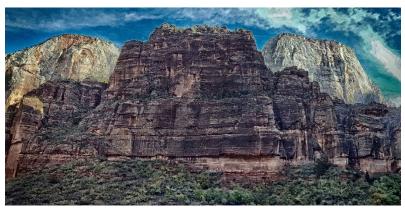
OCTOBER 16TH, 2018: Good morning. I just want to make a quick note that I am impressed and it ceases to amaze me just how cute Marguerite is even when she wakes up each morning. She has a smile on her face and crinkle-cute eyes and they are just for me. You know, that is pretty darn special.

We drove to Zion National Park today. After a little bit of a fiasco figuring out which park entrance was, we got a parking spot at the visitor center which was a difficult thing to do because there were no parking spots. We jumped on the bus that went into the canyon and hopped off at The Grotto. We then hiked up to Boy Scout Landing which is just below Angel's Landing. It was a long uphill. Gary and I did it a few years ago. Back then, Gary and I made it all the way to the top of

Angel's Landing but many people do not want to do that because it requires holding chains and ropes.

Marguerite had another heart or stress event but did not pass out and insisted on continuing the hike. On our way up the hill we ran into a very interesting insect. It was very large with yellow rings around its abdomen. The abdomen almost looks like a giant bee. It was about 1 inch to 1 and ½ inch long. I first thought it was a spider but it only had six legs so it was definitely an insect. We got pictures and I will post some here. – Later, we discovered that it is a Jerusalem Cricket.















The trail up to Angel's Landing

We are now in Cedar City at Wingers Roadhouse restaurant. We are eating popcorn and drinking beer which can be a challenge in Utah.

Notes from the field on Joshua Tree/North Rim Trip:

- 1. Of the things that I would like to get, one of them is a new coffee system.
- 2. Marguerite likes sleeping in my sleeping bag but does not like the zipper. But it did keep her nice and cozy warm.
- 3. I would like to get 100% cranberry juice to drink instead of wine.
- 4. Check into getting a new smartphone but this one seems to be doing okay except for picture taking.
- 5. Look into getting a real camera.
- 6. We need to get a ground cloth.