

Williams Travelogue to Escanaba

Don & Gail Williams SNU, WBCCI 14207

East to the Atlantic

Day 1: immediately stop to air up several low tires; 1-1/2 hour construction delay on I-10 near Chiriaco Summit; temps approaching 100F so the Cove RV Park with hookups wins over dispersed camping near Quartzsite; 178-miles.



Day 2: 100 degrees again; abandon the freeway for US-60 & US-70; great burgers and milk shakes at Safford, AZ's Taylor Freeze; final destination is the Lordsburg, NM KOA; 384-miles.

Day 3: NM-9, skirting the Mexican Border for 100 miles; a gem along this route is Pancho Villa State Park; east to the Guadalupe Mountains National Park's KOA like RV/trailer campground; it's higher elevation provides relief from the days heat; 284-miles.

Day 4: change leaky rear street side tire (bad tire pressure sensor); mid morning stop for Carlsbad Cavern's 2-1/2 hour walking tour; stopped late afternoon at La Verde RV Park in Lemesa, TX; 207-miles.



Day 5: tire replaced in Weatherford, Texas - hidden nail and loose metal stem, not bad sensor; overnight at the Shreveport, LA KOA; relaxing day; 504-miles!

Day 6: blast across MS, AL to Georgia; park destination in disarray so camp at the I-20 Rest Area amongst the Semis; 684-miles.

Day 7: final slog to NC; near Myrtle Beach; arrive in Southport at 4:20 pm; 362-miles; East to Atlantic route is 2603 miles in 6-1/2 days.

Work and relax in Southport; find many local seafood restaurants; best crab cakes at the Dead End Saloon and Fish Factory Grille along the Intracoastal Waterway.



Northward to Escanaba

Day 25: NC-87 and US-421 through rural towns, timber, tobacco and other row crop agriculture is evident along the route; our nightly stop is Fancy Gap KOA adjacent to the Blue Ridge Parkway; 284-miles.

Day 26: US-460 west to the more relaxing Kentucky (Brent T Combs) Mountain Parkway; twists, turns, hills and downgrades but no commercial traffic; we park that night at the Kentucky Horse Park; 312-miles.



We visit with our son Brian and his family, busy with meals out, campsite barbecues, the Minions movie, the Mohammed Ali Center (Ali's boxing career, commitment to his religion and passionate philanthropy throughout the US and World were showcased in the center). We celebrate the Fourth of July on our last day in KY.

Day 34: a relaxing two lane trip through Kentucky and southern Ohio is thwarted by my miscue, becomes the long road to Cincinnati; arrive in

Tallmadge and eat supper with my Mom at the Danbury independent/assisted living center; 328-miles.

Tallmadge didn't offer any respite for the weary; puzzles, senior games, visits with resident's and staff at Danbury; church with Mom and trips to la Mexicana Cantina for great food and margaritas (check out the video of my Mom dancing with Santa Claus).

Day 44: head northwesterly on the Ohio Turnpike and a free dump station; continue north through the Michigan Lower Peninsula on I-75 and US-127 to a stop at crowded Wilson State Park and its small campsites; 348-miles.



Day 45: cross the straits of Mackinac to the Upper Peninsula on the historic bridge - 26,372 foot long (just 28 feet short of five miles); a short driving day to Indian Lake State Park; spacious campsites and great views of the lake; 226 miles!



Day 46: shorter day; reach Escanaba in one hour and in 30 minutes we're out of the Bull Pen and parked at the International; 50-miles; Northward to Escanaba route is 1965-miles.

A lot to do and see in Escanaba and at the International Rally: Dober's Pasties, Cherry Lane Ice Cream Shoppe, Delta County Amateur Radio Society, WBCCI Amateur Radio Club, pet show, Unit Flag Ceremony, area tours, cat-calls at Jack Hampel's suit, Airstream Betty, Doug McCraw comedy hypnotist, WBCCI Band, membership seminars, caravan leadership (hopefully more to come on this one), vendor area, tech session, Unit & Region luncheons, pancake breakfast, fish fry, WBCCI Delegate's Meeting, Ansty McClain and the Trailer Park Troubadours, flea market (Ms Gail is next years Chair), inductions of WBCCI President Jim Cocke, officers and next years IBT members, Herford & Hops! South Not West to Home!



Day 59: instead of west we're headed south back to Southport; we pass through Green Bay, Oshkosh and Madison, WI to avoid traffic and congestion near Chicago; our night's stop is Hickory Hill Campground near Secor, IL; our only diversion all day was a stop at the Seguins of Wisconsin for Extra Sharp Cheddar, Bacon Cheddar and Ghost Pepper Cheddar (careful with this one); 436-miles.

Day 60: freeway route to Georgetown, KY for an evening dinner with our son and his wife; camp again at the KY Horse Park; 521-miles.

Day 61: south on I-75 and exit to follow US-25E through the scenic hills near the Kentucky-Tennessee border; sign in Corbin, KY beckons us to stop at Harland Sanders Café and Museum (think Kentucky Fried Chicken); continue southeasterly towards the Mt. Pisgah Campground near the southern tip of the Blue Ridge Parkway; a local highway shortcut climbs 2250 feet in the last 3.5 miles (~10% grade); wildflowers brightened our pull through campsite in the Blue Ridge; 283-miles.



Day 62: an easy drive through Charlotte ended when the GPS noted a more than an hour backup; we opt for a two lane route near the SC/NC border; arriving in Southport at 4:30 pm; early enough for dinner at the local Italian restaurant; 400-miles; total South Not West route is 1500 miles in 4 days.

Finally, West to Home

Day 72: we decide to visit my sisters and their families on the way home; a GA KOA is our destination when efforts to stop at two different state parks are again thwarted; SNU parking skills needed for the steeply sloped site at the KOA; 362-miles.

Day 73: freeways dominate our day; we camp at Kentucky Dam Lake State Park in the very western edge of the state; we share the spacious campground with 10 other soles, but the following weekend all 220 sites are sold out for the coming eclipse; 442-miles.



Day 74: avoid the St Louis freeway traffic, head to our MO destination on US-70 and US-65; 560-miles.

I spend a relaxing day watching the prize beef calf judging at the Missouri State Fair (a calf is a full grown steer ~1300#, imagine 10-12 year olds leading their calves in the judging); my bother-in-law's friend and sister's calf take FFA Champion Crossbred, Champion FFA and the Overall Champion Steer at the Market Steer Show; rumor is their steer brought upwards of \$28K in the auction several days later. We head home to hamburgers on the grill (*apropo*) to complete the day; no miles driven by me!



photo used with permission of Missouri State Fair

Day 76: west across Kansas through rolling farm; divert north at Lebanon, KS for a photo opt at the Geographical Center of the 48 States; still on the road we dine on Chicken Fried Steak (\$10) at a local Norton, KS diner; eat well and continue 30 minutes to Prairie Dog State Park; 416-miles.

Day 77: US-36 west into Colorado to my sister's home in Denver; her ailing husband, a MD with a broken collar bone, drives us to a local *Avant-garde* Mexican restaurant; 276-miles.

Denver provides two days to visit with family, assemble a barbecue (remember the broken collarbone), make minor repairs on the trailer and relax.

Day 80; north on I-25 with a nagging idea to camp in Wyoming and witness the Total Eclipse; idea fades in 6 miles of stop and go traffic; we escape west to Rocky Mountain National Park and a great Timber Creek campsite; evening's entertainment is two female moose and young that wandered into the campground to graze and the campfire program featuring Colorado's other national parks and monuments; 107-miles.



Day 81: spend 2 hours at RMNP's easterly Kawuneeche Visitor's Center watching the eclipse with their solar telescope and eclipse glasses; while there a female moose came out to graze in the eclipse twilight, leaving shortly when sunlight resumed. we continue west to Dinosaur National Monument and camp at Green River Campground; 262-miles.

Day 82: the tour of the Dinosaur Quarry and then south to Torrey, UT near Capital Reef National Park for our final night on the road; 254-miles.

Day 83: long slog home, cool through Cedar City; warming to over 100 at St George; dine at the Peggy Sue 50s Diner near Barstow and arrive home after rush hour; 570-miles; Finally West to Home travel is 2950-miles; almost 12 week Escanaba round trip is 9957.

It's great to be home!

