

## “Happy Thanksgiving!”

Back on the road, this time heading south through the Pan Handle section of Texas. We are still by ourselves as Henry & Ann have really had a run of bad luck getting their coach back on the road. Well, sometimes “Shit happens”, and you just have to roll with the punches. I also believe that sometimes things happen for a reason, even if we don't see it right away. We have reassured them, over and over, not to worry about us. If these newsletters don't convince them, I don't know what will. As a result of plan changes, we have gone places and done things we wouldn't have otherwise.

Once again, our experience of staying longer in and around certain areas has drastically changed our over all impressions. It was true of the Phoenix area, of Albuquerque, and now of the Texas Pan Handle. Our first stop was Amarillo. To be honest, I couldn't recall much from our previous trip there in 2003, except that it snowed. As you well know from our web page, it did it again to us on the day we were to leave! About 4 inches worth! It was not even predicted. We delayed our departure a couple of hours and found that the snow disappeared about 20 miles south of town. We went back and revisited the *vintage Cadillacs* buried in the ground. We were camped just down the road. Their are always at least a couple of car loads of people visiting this spot any time of day. I think the only thing holding these things up at this point is the thousands of coats of spray paint! Amarillo was and still is a major cattle feeding and shipping town, with cattle auctions every Tuesday. Speaking of “beef”, no where else will you find “The BIG TEXAN Steak Ranch”, where you can eat a FREE 72oz Steak (provided you finish it, and everything that goes with it, within 1 hour). No, we did not attempt this, but at least 2 or 3 people did try while we were there. Our waitress said that many people are actually successful! They even give you a special table, so all can watch and cheer you on. Their steak was very good!

Have you ever heard of the ‘Grand Canyon of Texas’? Well, there is such a place and it is quite a surprise. It is about 25 miles out of town and quite scenic. It is part of Palo Duro Canyon State Park. Also within the park is the Pioneer Amphitheater, which puts on open air stage plays in Summer. There is even an RV park on the canyon floor.

In both Amarillo and Abilene, we toured some great museums, which contributed to our education on “The Great Plains” and the many peoples who inhabit them, past and present. In Amarillo, it was the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum; and in Abilene the ‘Frontier Texas’ museum. Both were excellent. Then there was the WWII 12th Armored Division Memorial Museum, which is privately run. It was the home of the “Hellcats”, who trained at Camp Barkeley, near Abilene, before going overseas to fight in Europe and the Pacific. We spent a good part of the day here, soaking up the museum's

here, as there were ‘tons’ of pictures on the walls taken by the soldiers in the division. As we walked through the museum, everyone was so friendly and helpful. Volunteers just started talking to us about the various artifacts and pictures, giving information that only they could give. Bob was not even aware of the WWII army training facility located here and he is retired army. We highly recommend this museum to anyone interested in WWII history.



the personal attention given to us by the museum's volunteers. This was spontaneous on their part.

Driving south through west Texas, from the Panhandle, was very pleasant. The roads were great, and I don't think I have ever seen so many cotton fields. They went on forever. In the north section, it was cotton fields with oil rigs scattered about. In the southern section, it was cotton fields with wind mills scattered about. Did you know that Abilene was named after Abilene, Kansas? They were both cattle towns and Abilene, TX still is. We visited Fort Phantom Hill, an 18th century fort built to help the new settlers in the 1850's. For the most part, the chimneys are the only things remaining along with some foundations. Very spooky, allowing the imagination to run its course.

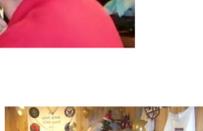
Then on 11/15/10 we arrived in Fredericksburg, TX, which we have visited in the past on day trips. This community has small shops and wonderful German restaurants, with a main street built with beautiful stone structures. It is a popular destination for tourists. We also used this stop to take a day to go see the Capital of Texas, Austin. As many times as we have come through here, we had yet to visit the capital. Finally, no visit is complete to this part of Texas, without a visit to Luckenbach! I was disappointed though as there were no chickens sitting in the trees this time! Who stole their Luckenbach sign????

Well, it is 11/18/10 and we arrived in San Antonio, TX, just in time for Thanksgiving! This time we parked at Brauning Lake RV Resort, in the South East corner of the greater San Antonio area. Kevin bought a lovely home nearby where he is in the process of settling in. He & Brenda are no longer together, and have moved on with their lives. Tom was there too, visiting from southern Florida, which was fantastic! Then we also hooked up with Bill & Peg Jones from our 400 family, who we invited to join us as well. Peg & I planned the Thanksgiving meal, cooking some of it ahead in our coach and some in the house. I think we did a great job of coordinating and serving dinner, if I say so myself!! We make a good team!!! Right Peg?

It was after Thanksgiving, that we all got together in downtown San Antonio, on the River Walk, for some dinner and were able to meet Kevin's girlfriend, Maria, who turned out to be a very sweet person. We also met up with our dear friends Ed & Kaye Lee, who don't live too far from Kevin either. It just so happens that Ed & Kaye were about to be surprised with a 50th Wedding Anniversary party, planned by their daughter and family. We had to be very careful not to spill the beans when we saw them beforehand! Bob & I and Bill & Peg were invited to that event, which went off without a hitch! They were soooo surprised!



## San Antonio for Thanksgiving!



Left side are pictures from Thanksgiving in San Antonio, including Kevin and Tom, Bill & Peg Jones, Ed & Kaye Lee, Maria and Bob I I.

Right side continues with some of us having dinner and a stroll on the River Walk. Then the remainder of the pictures are of Ed & Kaye's 50th Wedding Anniversary.



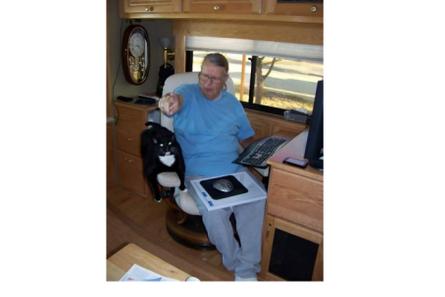
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