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November 2017

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*and tiny campers*

# CROSS COUNTRY

T@G



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# COOL Tears™ and tiny campers

Magazine

Vol. 5 No. 11

November 2017

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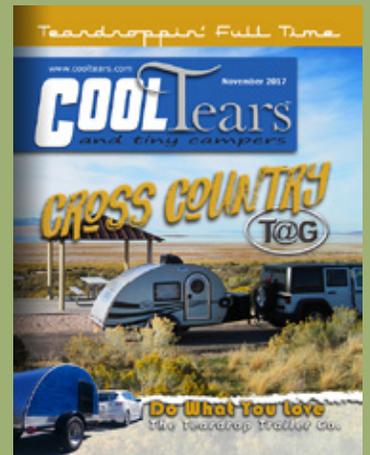
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Sarah Tucker

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## Uncle Sam vs Mom & Pop

October blew in with a blast of fun and ended with a bang! After a summer of hard work, I was so excited to be able to take the Cool Tears teardrop out to the Oktoberfest gathering in Kansas. We had an amazing time at Clinton State Park! This past weekend, I took the teardrop to Eureka Springs, AR to check out a Tin Can Tourist gathering of vintage trailers. The curvy roads and gorgeous fall colors in the Ozark Mountains was the perfect backdrop to a fun weekend with all kinds of vintage tiny campers and a few large vintage campers. In between those two trips, I took the teardrop to a small county campground in the Kansas City, MO metro area near our home.

These three trips were all unique in their own way but it led me to start thinking about the difference between government run campgrounds verses private owned RV parks. While I love the open space and more rustic feel of most county and state run parks, the lack of amenities (at some...not all) is a little disappointing. On the flip side, the great facilities and extra's like WIFI and swimming pools (at some...not all) of private parks is great but I've never been a fan of camping so close to my neighbor that I feel like we are right on top of each other. Again, I realize all parks are unique and but I would love to hear from you all! Send me your thoughts and comments from some of your best and worst camping experiences and I'll include them next month!

*Until next time...enjoy every sunrise!*

**SARAH TUCKER**

Editor  
Cool Tears Magazine™  
[sarah@cooltears.com](mailto:sarah@cooltears.com)

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# ON THE TEARDROP TRAIL WITH MARILYN

Marilyn McCray is a published author of a cookbook titled *Canning, Pickling and Freezing with Irma Harding*, the International Harvester's fictional spokesperson. Marilyn and her partner, Jim Kerkhoff, travel in a beautiful teardrop to promote the book and she has graciously agreed to share some recipes with us in a regular column. Be sure to check out her book at [teardroptrail.com/equipment-and-supplies/](http://teardroptrail.com/equipment-and-supplies/)

## GREEN CHILE STEW

*Comfort food for a cool evening on the Teardrop Trail.*

**1 ½ pound of lean stew cut in ¾ inch cubes.**

**Choose either pork or chicken**

**½ medium onion, chopped**

**3 cups chicken broth or water**

**3 – 4 cloves of garlic, finely minced**

**8 – 10 roasted, peeled and diced New Mexico green chilies**

**Option: 505 Southwestern All Natural Diced Green Chile or Medium Green Chile Sauce**

**2 – 3 potatoes peeled and diced**

**½ teaspoon Cumin or to taste**

**Salt to taste**

### Cooking Methods

Brown stew meat in skillet, adding onions. Add chicken broth or water with garlic and simmer until meat is tender. Add New Mexico green chilies or salsa, potatoes, cumin, salt and continue to simmer until potatoes are tender.

### Or Make It Solar Green Chile Stew

Transfer to 1 ½ quart oval crock pot, powered by a 300-watt Bestek Inverter plugged into a 12-volt, 200-watt solar system

Settings and Cook times: HIGH for 2 to 2 ½ hours, then LOW for 8 to 9 hours

Using the measured slow-cooker wattage on high and low settings, a little quick math showed a total power consumption of about 750 watt-hours — within the production capacity of our 200-watt solar system on a sunny day

***Serve with your favorite beer or a Margarita accompanied by warm tortillas or cornbread.***

**Serves 4**

# TEAR JERKERS

## CELEBRATING 20 YEARS!

*"Life moves a little slower on Teardrop Time"*



# TEARDROPPIN'



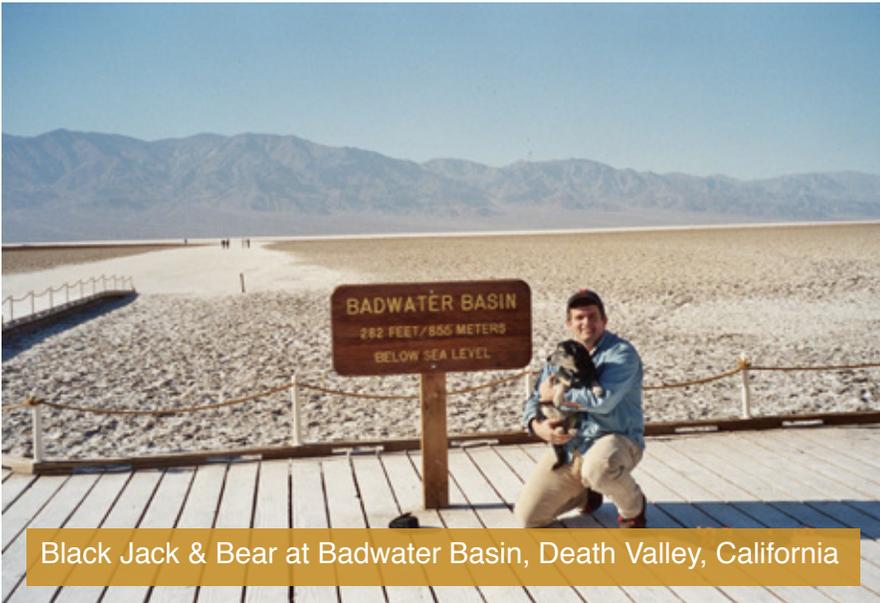
# PULL-TIME

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by **Rev. Bear Moore**  
CPO, USN(Ret)

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**I**t has been said that “happiness is just one teardrop away” and truer words were never spoken. This play on words should be a reminder that life can be taken to another level if we are willing to go there. So we shouldn’t make haste of the time we have on planet Earth. Instead, we should be making the most of it and a teardrop camper can help.



Black Jack & Bear at Badwater Basin, Death Valley, California



Moose track comparison photo at Outskirts of Wrangell-St Elias National Preserve, Alaska

I, for one, am truly grateful for the masterminds behind Camp-Inn: Cary Winch and Craig Edevold. If not for them and their families the Odyssey over the past eleven years would have been lackluster in comparison. If not for them, I wouldn't be "living the dream" as I had imagined it to be.

for the opening credits to reveal that episode's adventure. With bated breath and crossed fingers, I would always hope for another story of the North American frontier and week after week disappointment would set in.

As a prodigy of the '60s, I can recall sitting in the family room of a patriarch's home glued to the television set to watch the adventures of Mutual of Omaha Wild Kingdom with host Marlin Perkins. Week after week I would be affixed to the television set like the knobs themselves, sitting patiently waiting



Tiny Camper Company specializes in modern teardrop trailers that have a retro look reminiscent of the 1930s - 1960s.



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**“If you don’t go within, then you go without.”**  
*Neale Donald Walsch*

in a teardrop (sportsman) camper and those that simply occupy the hard-shelled tents over a weekend here and there, and during a couple of weeks over the summer—both, however, have their place in this world. Full-timers have to own up to the fact that they’re going to push these rigs beyond their intended purpose, and when mechanical failures flare up there is no one to point fingers at than the person doing the pushing. The sportsman campers (much like synthetic tents of today’s world) were never intended to house

I longed to learn more about the mountains, forests, prairies and deserts of the Northern Hemisphere in particular Canada and the United States. It was the terrain outside city limits that sparked interest. So it was decided as a child when opportunity presented itself, it would be that day I would set out to experience this land first hand, and when that day came some thirty plus years later I did just that. What follows is The Odyssey born of that dream. A story at times I even find difficultly in believing, but live it I did and what a ride it has been. And I did it with a Camp-Inn 550 Classic in tow; I’ve been full-timing for twelve years come June 23, 2017.

It is without question there is a world of difference between full-time camping



**SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAIN RANGE;  
View from inside the Stagecoach**



**Little Bighorn Monument**



Visiting Camp-Inn for the first time.



someone for the long haul. Teardrop campers were designed with simplicity, maneuverability and short-term compatibility in mind. It is an unreasonable expectation to think everything to be hunky-dory simply because one bought the best equipment the market has to offer and not expect there to be challenges somewhere along

the line. Much like the world of tents, if you want the camper to withstand the rigors of longevity and excel beyond its intended design, a little love and tenderness has to go into its care by the owner. No owner's manual is going to spell that out for you.



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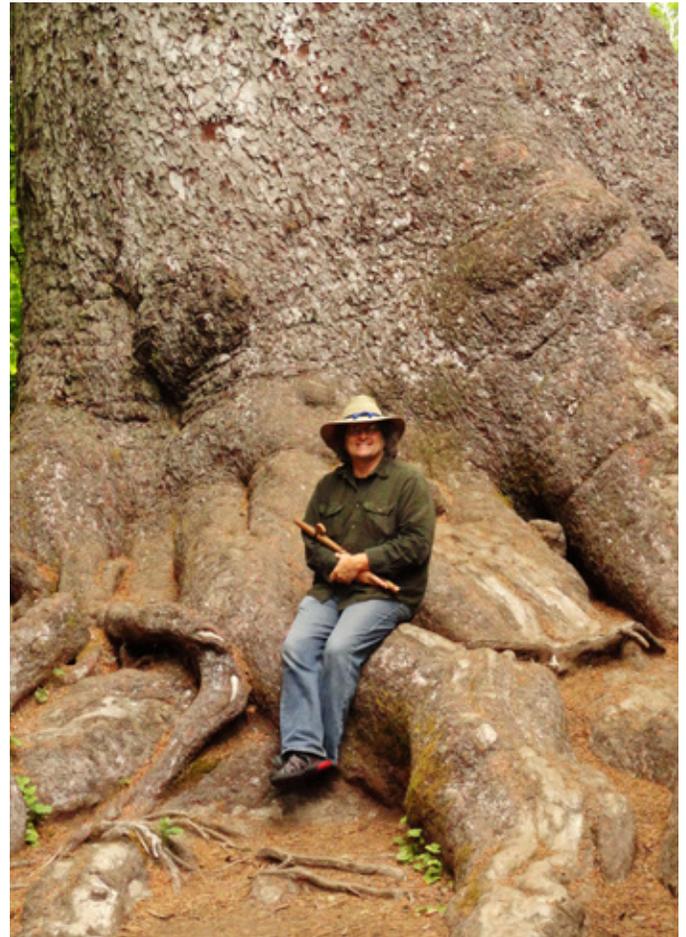


years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do (note it doesn't say "have") than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the harbor, and catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." ~Mark Twain

And there you have it; you've been exposed to the mind of a full-timer. You may not agree with some of what was shared and that is okay. Because I'm not living my life for you, but have enjoyed sharing it with you. After all, isn't that what love does?

For more on my story, log-on to the Unofficial Camp-Inn Forum website:

[Bear's Odyssey: The First Decade](#)  
[Bear's Odyssey: 2017](#)





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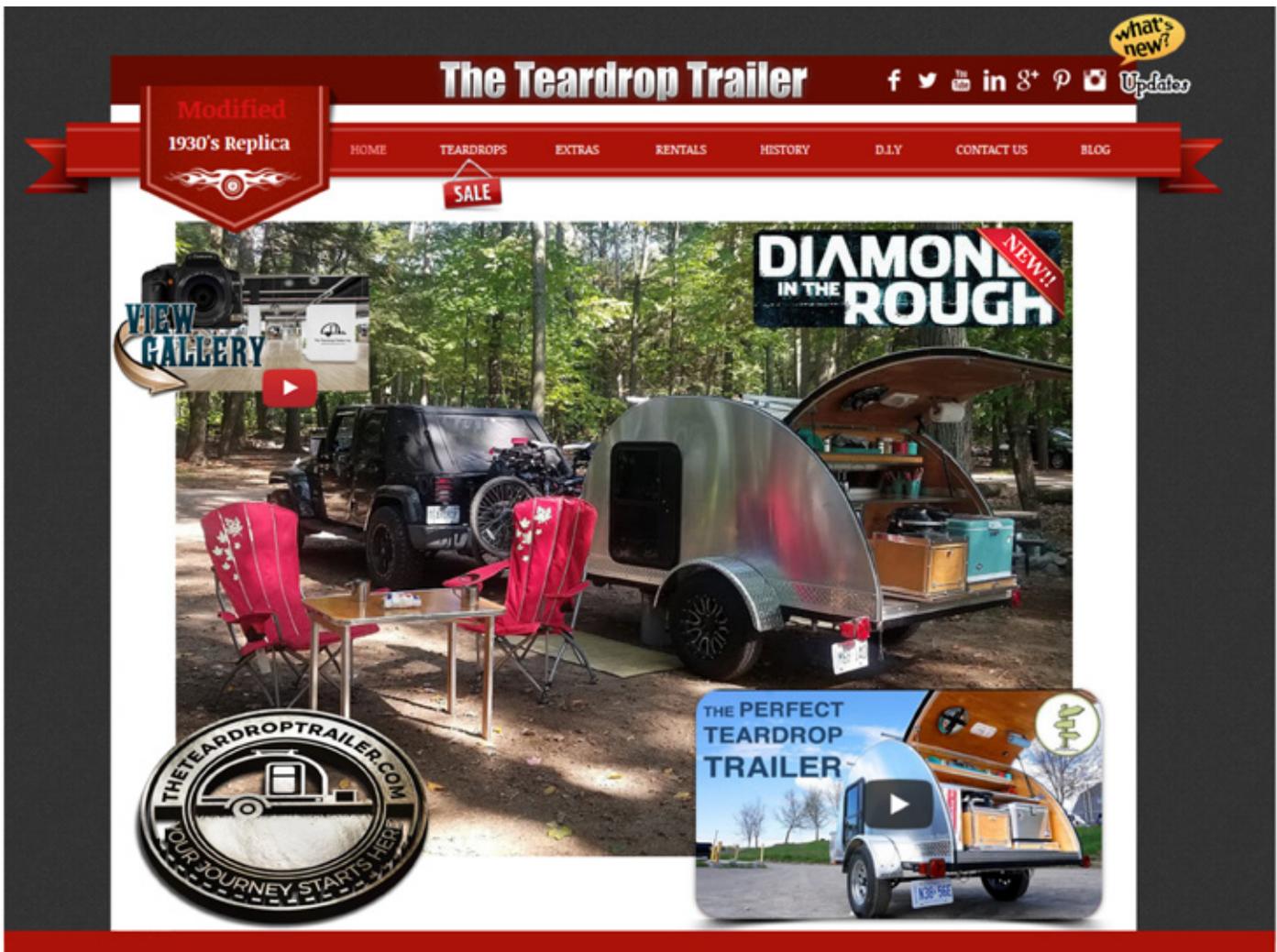


DO WHAT YOU  
Love

THE STORY OF  
THE TEARDROP TRAILER  
COMPANY

by Steve Hoddinott

In 2013 I was tired of working my day job, commuting 2 hrs a day back and forth and wanted a total change. Mandy (my wife) and I considered moving to a town 45 minutes north of us.



## MANUFACTURE FEATURE

I wanted to get a hot dog cart and become a beach bum, selling hotdogs. So, I went online and started browsing through an online classifieds website. I typed in: carts, hot dog cart, carts, trailers, hot dog trailers. And BAM! There it was. A 5' x 8' beauty. I found a used teardrop trailer for sale. It was the first teardrop trailer I had ever seen. I was in love instantly.

The big problem was, it was too much money, and I couldn't afford it. I suddenly forgot about hot dogs, and started the search for teardrop trailers. I soon found out, they were very expensive, and that there were no manufacturers in Canada. Once I got caught in the teardrop trailer world, I knew I was hooked. I had a construction background, and

quickly discovered the world of Do - it - Yourselfers across Canada and the United states.

I went out and bought a used 4' x 8' utility trailer. It was a fold up trailer, a bolted frame with 8 inch rims. I quickly replaced them with 12 inch rims. It took me 3 months to build it. I started in the backyard in early spring with snow still on the ground and not even a garage to cover me. I bought a 10' x 10' tent so I could continue building the teardrop, regardless the weather.

Mandy gave me a deadline of May 24 long weekend. And that was my first build deadline I had, and the first weekend we got to experience camping in a teardrop trailer. It was a 4' x 8'





woody with a deep cycle marine battery, 45 watt solar panel, 12 volt sink, stove and pull out cooler. Mandy finally started getting involved and decorated it, with curtains, bedding, and matching dish wear. We were so proud of it. Every time we went out with the teardrop, people would come

up to us and ask where we got it. I would always say, with a big smile on my face, "I built it."

Now the wheels started turning in my head, and I thought, "Hey, let's rent it." We rented it out for the whole summer. The only problem was, we



never got to take it out ourselves, because we were renting it. Well, the season was over. I put it away for the winter, and forgot about it until spring. This year I was not going to rent it. I thought I'll build another one.

Before it was built, I had a buyer. Then I got laid off my day job - yeah, the one I was tired of working at. I needed the money but was not sure I really want to sell my baby. I loved that teardrop. I even had a poem written in magic marker under the mattress. It read like this: " I dedicate this trailer to the love of my life, Best friends forever, I call her my wife." Well, I had to sell it. A nice guy from Nova Scotia read my classified ad and came to the house and bought it. Now what? Well, I decided to build another one.

The rest is history. We cannot build fast enough. We have sold across North America, from California to Florida, New Hampshire, North west territories, Newfoundland, British Columbia and everywhere in



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between. We now have a 3,000 square foot shop and run 12 months a year. With Mandy, myself, my mother and our qualified staff, we average building between 2 to 3 teardrops a week.

The "Diamond in the Rough" is one of our best sellers. All of our different stained woody's are big hits. All of our teardrops are off the grid capable and the 100 watt semi-flexible solar panels are quite popular.

We avoid selling through dealers and sell directly to the consumer, offering custom units for every unique, happy camping, customer. Everyone camps differently, and each person has different needs, requests and requirements. We try to make each trailer as unique and different as our customers. From customers 6' 6", to a business that wants to use the teardrop as a multi-purpose unit for trade shows, we build for every one. We use high quality wood and aluminum materials, and because our Canadian dollar is so low, we find a lot of our customers are coming in from the U.S.A. making our teardrops highly competitive in price and value. All of our trailer frames are welded with 2,200 lb axles. We offer 12, 13 or 14 inch rims with white, chrome or black aluminum alloy. We are firm believers in high volume sales, yet still maintaining competitive,



affordable prices. Our trailers all come with a vin number and are federally compliant, making for easy registration.

We offer a delivery service anywhere across North America, and are still able to offer a high quality product for all budgets. We never miss a deadline build date, and stand behind our product. With all of our unique customer requests, we have found that we have been able to really diversify our portfolio in options and features. We always love trying something new and different. We listen to our customers, and are

constantly improving and evolving as a manufacturer. There is a saying: "Do what you love, and you'll never work another day in your life." We love what we do, and we love "The Teardrop Trailer." But more importantly, our customers love them too.

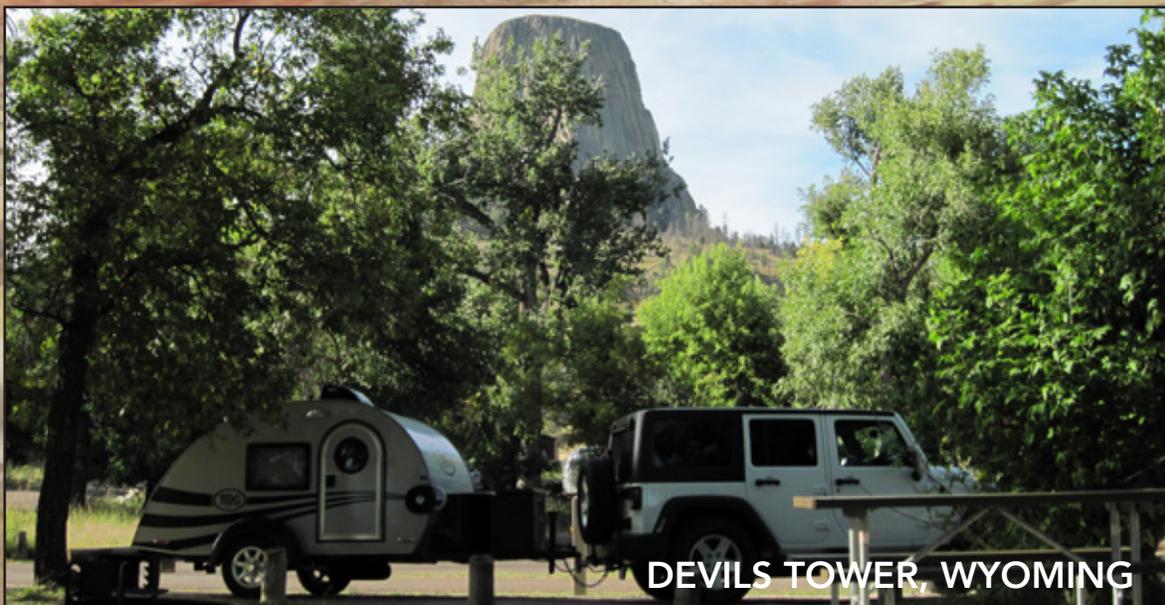
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# CROSS COUNTRY

by Phil & Judy Ann Bronner

**M**y wife will absolutely NOT sleep in a tent, although she enjoys the outdoors. After retirement, I purchased a 4 door Jeep Wrangler for my tow vehicle (in 2013), then looked around for a suitable camper. I spent over a year looking at various pop-ups, teardrops, canned hams, etc. and finally settled on a T@G, manufactured by Little Guy. I began “accessorizing” both the Jeep and camper.



DEVILS TOWER, WYOMING

# WINTER T@G

We took several weekend trips to the Oregon Coast to see if it met our expectations. It did, and next thing you know, we're planning a cross country trip to visit my family (My wife is an Oregon native and I'm from Massachusetts.) I spent a lot of time on the internet checking different state attractions we might be interested in and got familiar with my Garmin GPS.

My wife saved her vacation time and took six weeks off in September-October 2015. We left Springfield, Oregon headed east on September 2. We only had a rough itinerary and decided we'd stop and see places that struck our fancy along with the attractions on my "list."

Our first stop, the Painted Hills near Mitchell, Oregon, proved the capabilities of our T@G. We

camped about nine miles up a dirt road, by a BLM boat ramp, our first night, FREE!

We traveled through Washington and Idaho into Montana before our next site: Pompey's

Pillar, the only remaining physical evidence of the Lewis & Clark expedition. We managed to make it across Montana to Miles City where we spent Labor Day weekend. The "Range Rider's Museum" and local Art Museum were "interesting." We doubled back to the Custer Battlefield, then south into Wyoming to Ft. Phil Kearney & the site of the Fetterman Massacre. On to Devils Tower, where, after dark we saw the lights of climbers, as they bedded down halfway to the top! From there, into South Dakota, Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial and Museum and a brief

SIoux FALLS, SD, BATTLESHIP SOUTH DAKOTA, OUTLINE IN CONCRETE WALL, MUSEUM WHERE SUPERSTRUCTURE WOULD BE ON THE SHIP..LIFE SIZE



SIoux FALLS ITSELF, FROM THE VIEWING TOWER.





ME WITH DR. SEUSS & THE CAT IN THE HAT



GETTYSBURG, PA. THE DEVIL'S DEN (ON THE RIGHT) AND THE SLAUGHTER PEN (TO THE LEFT) FROM LITTLE ROUND TOP.

brief stop in Mitchell to see the Corn Palace. Sioux Falls is home to a beautiful Veterans Park, the USS Battleship South Dakota Museum, and Sioux Falls Park itself. From there, a jaunt into Minnesota to Pipestone to see the thousands-year-old quarry that gave the town its name. Indians have been mining this red stone to make

the bowls of their "peace pipes" for that long!

We next headed south to Kansas through Iowa and Missouri. I wanted to visit some buddies I worked with in Leavenworth, Kansas, where I had begun my law enforcement career. After a short visit, we headed east through Missouri, southern

Illinois to Indianapolis, Indiana. Both my wife and I had been stationed at Fort Ben Harrison for training, although several years apart. The Fort is gone, except for the Finance Center (that manages the pay for all military personnel), but there is a beautiful state park, and many of the original military buildings have been "repurposed" in the town of Lawrence within which Fort Harrison is located.

It was a short trip

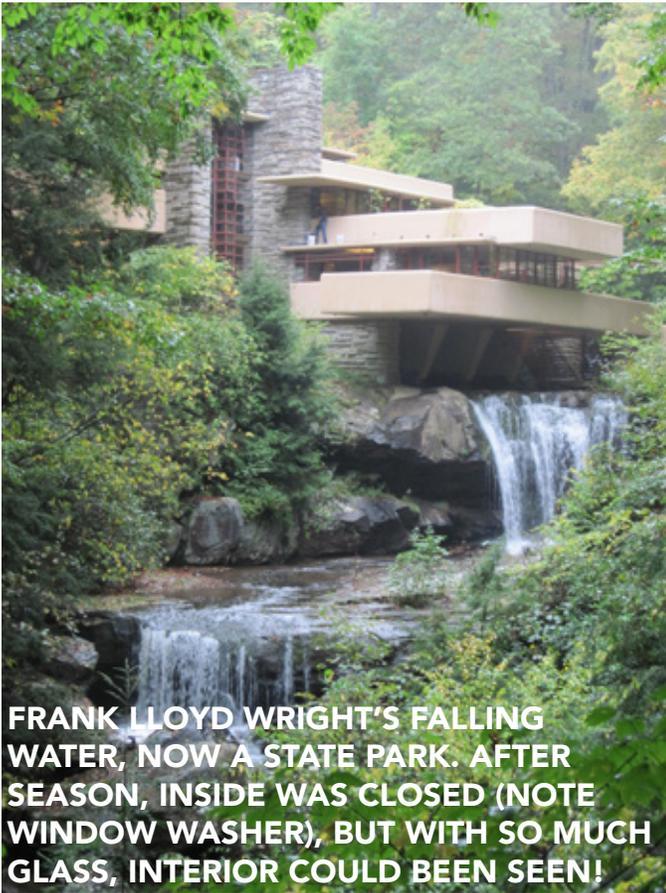
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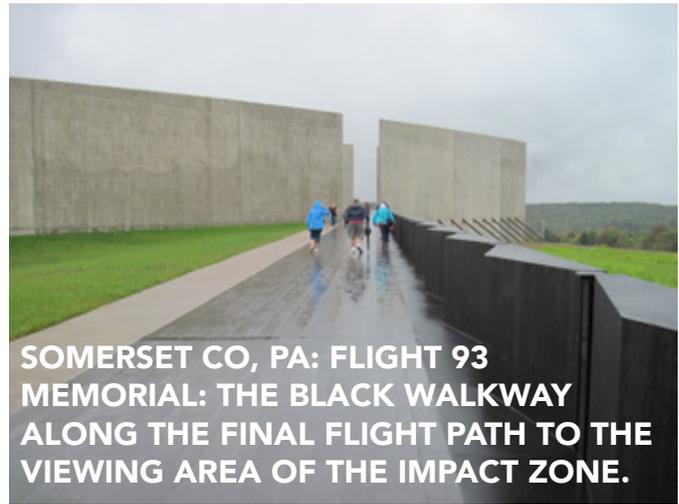
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**FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S FALLING WATER, NOW A STATE PARK. AFTER SEASON, INSIDE WAS CLOSED (NOTE WINDOW WASHER), BUT WITH SO MUCH GLASS, INTERIOR COULD BEEN SEEN!**

north to Buchanan, Michigan for a quick, two day visit and recharge with my youngest sister, who would meet us later in Massachusetts. While in Michigan, we visited "Hell", and in Frankenmuth a unique Military & Space Museum with displays of Michigan veterans and astronauts, including a large number of Medal of Honor awardees. We also visited "Bronner's" Christmas Store (alas, I couldn't prove a direct family connection, so no job offer!)

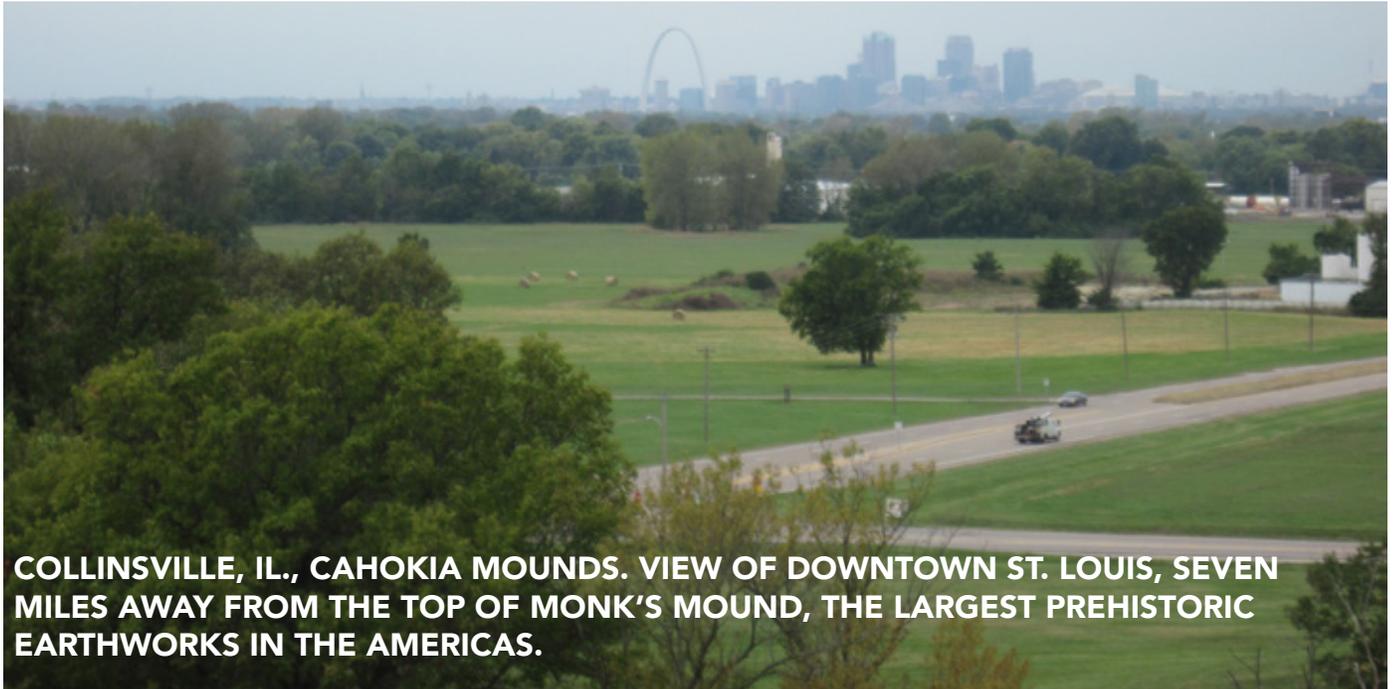
We then headed south, to Ohio, across upper Pennsylvania into New York. The proverbial visit to Niagara Falls, then south to Seneca Falls to visit the Women's Rights National Park. We then took a slight detour to Sampson State Park, further south on Lake Seneca. During WWII, it was Sampson Naval Training Station, where my dad, after induction, went through boot camp.



**SOMERSET CO, PA: FLIGHT 93 MEMORIAL: THE BLACK WALKWAY ALONG THE FINAL FLIGHT PATH TO THE VIEWING AREA OF THE IMPACT ZONE.**

Air Force personnel were later trained there and after closing it became a State Park. The only original building left is the "brig", which is now a museum. I found my dad's name in the Roster Rolls for 1943! We traveled back to the I-90, and followed it into Massachusetts and arrived at Springfield. We visited several sites (The Springfield Armory, the Museums "Quadrangle" now home to a display of bronze sculptures of Dr. Seuss & his characters (he also was a Springfield MA native, and he and I graduated from the same high school, although decades apart!) We were in time for the Eastern States Exposition, like a huge county fair, where each New England State has its own building.

After the family get together, we headed south through Connecticut, New York and into southern Pennsylvania. A stop in Amish Lancaster County and breakfast at Intercourse. Then three days touring the Gettysburg battlefield, museum and Cyclorama. Gettysburg, the most costly battle ever on the North American continent claimed over 58,000 casualties, was fought over 25 square miles, and each day of the battle ranks within the top 15 of casualties suffered. We camped at "Round Top" campground, the only campground on the battlefield, and open year round. From Gettysburg, we travelled west to the



newly opened, very moving, Flight 93 Memorial and crash site in Somerset County. We next visited "Falling Water", Frank Lloyd Wright's 1935 creation of a home built for the Kaufmann family, now a state landmark. Leaving Pennsylvania, we made two stops in Ohio, first to Chillicothe, to view a Hopewell Culture mound site. Next to Lebanon to see Fort Ancient National Historic Landmark, a hilltop overlooking the Little Miami River. A wall, stretching 3½ miles around the edge of the hilltop, varying in height from about four feet to twenty-three feet so the top is perfectly level. Accredited to the Adena Culture, Shawnee Indian oral history describes them as a "tribe of yellow haired white giants." Not a fortification in the usual sense, its purpose is still unknown, but probably ceremonial. It bears some resemblance to the Celtic hilltop "forts" of Europe.

Arriving in southern Indiana, we briefly stopped at New Harmony, a village established as a "utopian" center in the 1800s. Next was Collinsville, Illinois to see the Cahokia Mounds, named for the Indian tribe who occupied the area at the time of

European colonists arrival, but who had no idea who built them. They have been attributed to the "Mississippian Culture". The pyramid has a larger footprint than the Great Pyramid in Egypt, and from its top you can see, seven miles to the west, the Arch and downtown St. Louis. Driving across Missouri, we stopped at the National Trails museum in Independence. (The start of five trails of discovery and settlement of the west.)

We headed north to Nebraska stopping in Gothenburg to see: one of the last remaining Pony Express Stations, a "Swedish Cemetery" (the graves of three pioneer children still maintained to this day), a Veteran's War Memorial in a city park, and a Sod House. On our way west, we stopped at North Platte, home to Union Pacific's massive "Bailey Yard" for locomotive and car repairs and switching and assembling trains. After lunch in Colorado, our next stop was at Fort Bridger, Wyoming on the border with Utah. A unique grave, still maintained, is of a legendary dog, along with other buildings maintained, as is a reconstruction of the original trading post.



**ANTELOPE ISLAND, UTAH: OUR CAMPSITE, LOOKING NORTH EAST ACROSS GREAT SALT LAKE.**



**ANTELOPE ISLAND, UT: COYOTES THAT HAD JUST CROSSED THE ROAD IN FRONT OF US.**



**ANTELOPE ISLAND, UT: A BISON, ALONGSIDE THE ROAD. A 750 HEAD HERD IS KEPT ON THE ISLAND.**

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**GLENN'S FERRY, IDAHO: GETTING BREAKFAST READY AT THREE ISLAND CROSSING STATE PARK AT OUR CAMPSITE.**

Our next stop, probably the most unique camping experience we had was at Antelope Island at Great Salt Lake. Primitive conditions (no water, electric, etc.) although there is a vault toilet at the camp grounds. A 6-7 mile causeway connects the island with the "mainland" at Ogden. A gate closes the island off at night so none of the wildlife escapes. There are bison, pronghorn, deer, coyote, and any number of smaller mammals, as well as during migration times 150-200 species of birds. The animals are not confined and you can drive, hike or horseback several roads/trails, to see them in a natural setting.

We drove straight through southern Idaho to

Glenns Ferry, site of Three Island Crossing. This is where the Oregon Trail crosses the Snake River. The three islands at this location helped float the wagons across in the fast current. There is an excellent Oregon Trail Museum at the park, as well as a vineyard right next door! We visited Malad Gorge nearby, a rift with waterfalls of clean water from the huge aquifer underlying Idaho. We crossed the Snake River west of Boise and our final tour stop was at Baker City to visit the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center and see the wagon wheel ruts still visible. A breakfast at "Sumpter Junction" Restaurant, with a scale model train and diorama, was a neat attraction, especially for kids of all ages, as the train makes a complete circuit of the inside of the restaurant

about every six minutes.

We arrived home, having traveled 8,791 odometer miles, through 23 states in 40 days.

We plan further trips when we're not so pressed for time! See you on the road!

Some points to ponder:

- Pre-plan (notify credit card companies of your general routes, ensure adequate supplies of medications, or plan for shipping your meds to locations for pickup.)

- Do research on the internet, stop at (usually) the first rest stop upon entering a state and check with the Visitor's Center (how we found out about Antelope Island).

- Spend a few bucks and get the latest edition of "Next Exit" if you plan to travel on freeways, and KOA or other pubs from state, national or private printings for campground info. If you carry a firearm, order a current copy of "Traveler's Guide to the Firearm Laws of the Fifty States."

- Keep a journal! You'll refer to it often after you return home (especially to log your photos correctly).

- Take plenty of pictures and/or purchase meaningful booklets, etc. (example: there are over 1400 monuments on and around Gettysburg, There is a book available at the gift shop that details each monument, and maps to find them.)

- We took a CD car tour (available at the gift shop) at Gettysburg, but if you have time, you can hire guides to take you around the battlefield, on foot, or by vehicle.

- Plan to stop early enough (unless you like eating in the dark) to set up and eat.

- We took Mountain House freeze dried food with us for our main meals in camp. Easy to prepare and lightweight, they can be supplemented with fruit, vegetables, salads, etc. With a shelf life of 25 years, you can start stocking up well in advance of your trip. It's also easier than trying to find a restaurant

or to prepare a complete meal from scratch after a long day's drive and sightseeing. Many trips on side roads, at the right time of year, also allow purchasing local produce!

- Keep track of what you used and what you could have left, if you're like me, you packed WAY too much!

- And, yes, as the Archibald's discovered (July 2017 Cool Tears pgs. 10-15) EVERYONE wants to see the Tear Drop! My wife makes fun of my "25 cent tours", but I was constantly showing the camper off, sometimes up to four people at a time! (We even had a car pass us on I-70 in Missouri, then slow down, and slowly pass us again as the passenger actually took a video of us!)

- DO take time to "decompress" with friends or relatives on the trip, or just take a few days and relax at the camp grounds, even just sitting around reading a book is therapeutic.

- Information is available online for all sites we visited. Aerial photos (of Devils Tower, Battleship South Dakota, especially) are also online.

**MALAD GORGE, IDAHO: ABOUT A 10 MINUTE DRIVE FROM THE STATE PARK, A WATERFALL CAN BE SEEN ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE GORGE.**



# Oktoberfest

## Heartland Tearjerkers Fall 2017 Gathering

by Sarah Tucker

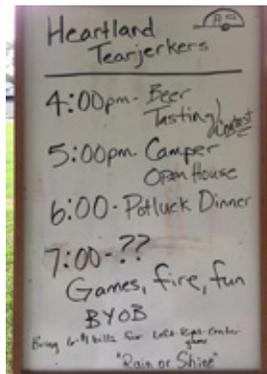
**I**t's been just a few weeks since the Heartland chapter of the Tearjerker's gathered for one more camping weekend before winter sets in. Clinton State Park just outside of Lawrence, KS played host to 17 teardrop trailers and an all around great group of folks. The Cool Tears Teardrop made it's debut (albiet a short debut) along side several other new campers to the group. After an afternoon of setting up camp, we gathered at a main shelter for a meet & greet around a campfire.



It was quite the experience to sit in a circle of friends, new and old, and listen as folks found common ground to forge friendships from all across the midwestern states.

Saturday morning dawn wet but thankfully cooler (midwest humidity is no laughing matter) and it was great to be able to walk the campground loop, meeting folks and hearing all about each unique trailer. One of the best parts of camping with other tiny trailers, is the fact you can walk up at just about any campsite, pull up a chair and instantly have new friends.

The afternoon turned a bit stormy and my little family had to bow out



early due to a flooded out tent the girls were staying in. The group weathered the storm, while enjoying a beer tasting competition (it was Oktoberfest after all) and a fantastic potluck dinner.

I can't say enough about the leadership of this Tearjerker chapter. Although the director was unable to attend due to a battle with cancer, the interm director stepped up and really pulled off a fantastic weekend that was well planned and allowed each camper the freedom to be as involved as they wanted to be. If you have never attended a teardrop gathering, it would certainly be the number one thing I urge you to try and accomplish soon.

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**Joe & Monica** - Home built



**Heather & Sarah** - Home built





**Terry** - Home built (and yes, the tow vehicle is a Smart Car!)



**Phyllis & Garry** - Silver Shadow



**Chris & Ken**- Home built



**Sherry & Al** - Home built





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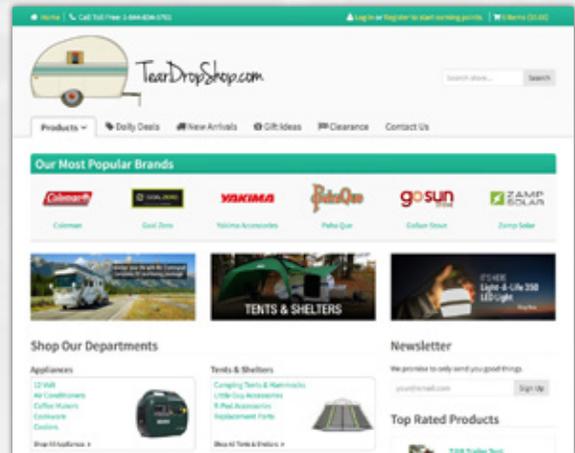
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