

Happy Trails

Notizen von Unterwegs

11. Mai 2017 Vol 27

WELCOME LILLIEN

OUR FIRST GRANDCHILD IS A GIRL.





Lillien Gefeke

May 11th 2017

6.4 lbs - 18.9 inch



Shortly before 6AM in Utah, the news that our daughter-in-law Anna went into labor reached us. Our son, very cool, quite relaxed and very professional is parking his car outside the hospital. This is soothing - that could take hours - I went back to sleep. At 8AM the best wife of the world crashes loudly into the bedroom: "Come on Grandpa, your granddaughter is here!"



We are grandparents.

Anna and Johannes parents!

This event does not strike us unprepared, but now we are completely overwhelmed.

First talks with Johannes about size, length, width and weight; Then the first photos: we are blown away and infinitely proud of our team from Eitorf! More pictures of this enchanting little girl are coming, champagne and lucky tears flowing, Grandma & Grandpa are happy and - I will say it again - very, very proud of our kids, who have suddenly become

P A R E N T S.

Dixie National Forest

If you are driving through the south of Utah, you normally will visit the major national parks ZION, BRYCE and ARCHES. We did those several times on various tours in the South-West of the US. This time, we are on the road to explore the less known sights of this landscape. The National Forests and State Parks also offer an almost infinite variety of landscapes.

Welcome Side Effects:

1. We can take Noah everywhere with us, sometimes even without a leash. (National parks do not allow dogs on their hiking trails)
2. we are usually completely alone on our hikes. No crowded parking areas and lines at the bus stops and viewpoints.

A few years ago my friend Rudi Schön gave me a CD with great places away from tourist trails. It is still an important part of my travel plans: thanks Rudi.



Red Canyon





Castor Canyon



Red Canyon





Kodachrome Basin State Park

Grand Staircase - Escalante National Monument





Devils Garden

**Grand Staircase - Escalante National
Monument**





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Devils Garden

Grand Staircase - Escalante National
Monument



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We haven't been dry-camping for a long time. In the US, this "boondocking" is basically permitted in all state forests and state-managed areas, if one finds a suitable place at least 200ft away from traffic roads. Many internet sites are dedicated to such places, so we do not have to look for it long, but only to see, if our Berta fits in and out again. Many beautiful parking spaces are quickly turning into a mud zone after a rain-shower. We found a perfect spot: the next "neighbor" is far away, no street noise - only nature and a view ... hmmm ... as in the picture book. And everything for free. 200 liters of diesel, 380 liters of fresh water, 3 boxes of beer and wine, a filled fridge and ice compartment, firewood This is very luxurious wild camping.





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Who ever has sat under this firmament on a crackling camp fire
will understand why we enjoy the gypsy life so much!



Well, all alone we were not





Lower Calf Creek Waterfall
What a reward after a 3 hour hike!



The variety of rock formations is simply incredible. Sometimes we walk as on solidified yeast dough, then again on dunes which have become rocky or on the finest sand. We discover traces of dinosaurs, first settlers (Mormons) or green oases with great waterfalls and lush flora and fauna.

Once again we say: We must come again and then longer! (So we never will see the east coast.)



**Here we are standing on an approximately 70 million-year-old footprint of a dinosaur.
Just writing this number makes me dizzy 70 million**



We spend one day at the CAPITOL REEF National Park. Here, the Earth's crust appears to be burst open for more than 70 miles. A gaping, weathered, and colorful rock landscape, that looks different in every corner. This crack, a few hundred feet high or deep, was described by the first settlers, formerly often seafarers, as impassable and hence called a reef. And since some round peaks looked like the Capitol in Washington, the name of the area was quickly born. Once again, we are glad to have our off-road Jeep, because with it we are able to reach a few off-road and extremely inaccessible canyons and fissures. We just love this landscape.





There has been a wall here for millions of years. However, the immigrants who were expelled from the East of the USA because of their polygamy were also not disturbed.

But on the contrary. The obstacle has been overcome with great strength and skill,



they settled in the surrounding valleys and canyons, fertilize the soil, raised animals



and thus ultimately founded the state of Utah.





On the way to South Dakota we stoped in Salt Lake City, harvested our own Fleur de Sel from the Salt Lake and explored the area around the Capitol.





view from the Capitol



Great Salt Lake



Horst Güldenhaupt

1951 - 2017

Life is a rollercoaster. Time goes uphill and then unfortunately again downhill. Babies are born, but loving people leave us. You can not run away.

Thus the news of the passing of Beates brother Horst reached us two days after Lilliens birth. Happiness and grief in such a short time - especially my Beate suffers heavily. We think a lot about Horsts son Marc, who has lost both parents much too early within one and a half years, and to Beates mother, who at the age of 89 has to carry her first-born son to grave.

Long hikes, lots of talks, our good team spirit and the certainty that every dark cloud has a sunny side, let us overcome this difficult time. We feel even confirmed in everything we do:

Enjoy the next day as if it were your last, because life is short - live it!

Our visit to Germany in June is now particularly important.

But now we move to our summer destination,
The Black Hills of South Dakota.

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That's it for today

We are now 666 days on the road.

Your 3 Gefeke's

