



Happy Trails

Notizen von Unterwegs

24. December 2017 Vol 30

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2018**



With our 30th newsletter we send you
our best regards and wishes for Christmas.

We wish you relaxing and happy holidays and a happy new year
in good health. Be happy in what you have, do and are!

For 29 months on the road, we are preparing for our third Christmas in the motorhome. We stand at the big Mississippi river in Vicksburg. The sun is laughing at 80 ° F, the high humidity is killing us ==> real Christmas is something else. But, Beate has beautifully decorated our 330 sqft "White Berta" for Christmas, the smells of German Stollen and cookies, on the outside a few fairy lights are attached and the first presents are already under our little tree. Only the mulled wine does not quite taste because of the temperatures and being in shorts and T-shirt! But it will be getting colder the next days! Here at the "Ol' Man River", we want to spend Christmas together with son Sebastian. We had explored this historically interesting area extensively two years ago (Newsletter No. 12) and now want to show our son, who teaches American history in Dallas as a teacher, a bit.



Mont Helena

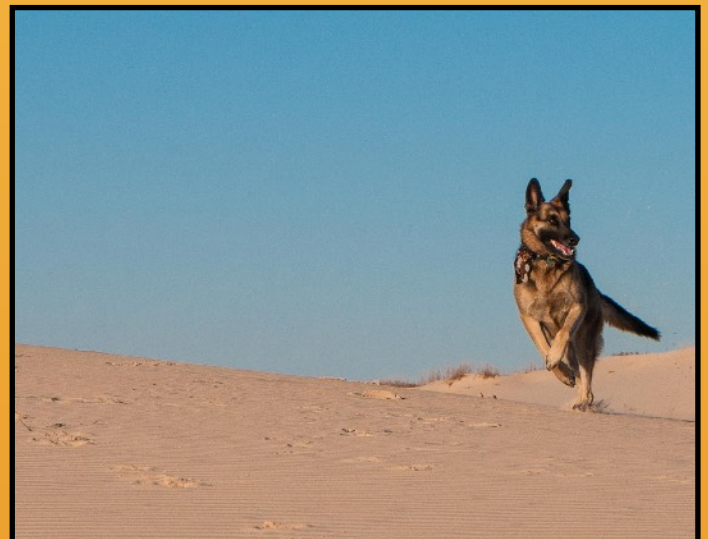


the birthplace of Blues



And again, an eventful year is behind us. We are grateful to be healthy and continue to have the opportunity to continue our wild life next year as we have done so far. The first plans for 2018: winter in Arizona, California and Mexico and then spend the summer back in South Dakota. But as always, our future is not set in stone. That is our great freedom, that we do not want to give up soon.

Our tour has been significantly slowed down. In 2016, when we drove approx. 15,000 miles in the motorhome, this year there are only about 5,000 miles. Instead of staying at 76 different campsites in 2016, we only stayed in 24 places in 2017. Also, we have entered little new territory this year, but enjoyed the familiar places much more intense. Everything is due to the fact that we still want to continue our nomadic life style in the desert or in the rain forest for a few more years, without any hussing, keeping an eye on our finances, maintaining friendships and focusing mainly on the four seasons: that's how we want approach the future.





We three just love this life, the magnificent nature, the people and especially
US.

Lillien



There were many highlights during the past year. But first and foremost, of course, is the birth of our granddaughter Lillien. Only grandparents will understand what unbelievable feelings you have, when Beate and I every morning eagerly look at the latest photos and videos of our little princess. It is the greatest gift since the birth of our own children. The little girl enchants us every day, even if thousands of miles lie between us. Thanks to daughter-in-law Anna and son Johannes, who provide "Granny & Grandpa America" so much with impressions of all kinds!



Almost three months have passed since the Balloon Fiesta in Albuquerque and thus our last newsletter. We still dream of the impressions of this colorful event that we remember so wonderfully. We will come back! For sure.





A trip to Las Vegas is always worthwhile. This time around, our visit was mainly to our friend Lee Ann, who lost her husband Larry this year. In addition to a lot of tears, we also had good conversations, I wanted to look after her motorhome, with which she want to be "on the road" again soon. There were some repairs that I could do with the help of her bother-in-law Larry. Trips to our beloved Lake Las Vegas or the Shelby Automuseum rounded off the 14 days of Vegas.



with Bonnie and Lee Ann at Lake Las Vegas



These two plates with Italian delicacies at restaurant OTTO in the Venetian and the French dessert of Jean Phillipe from the Bellagio are probably the most delicious dishes on earth! We do not know anything comparable and instead of playing slots or poker we treat ourselves to such luxury. You only live once.



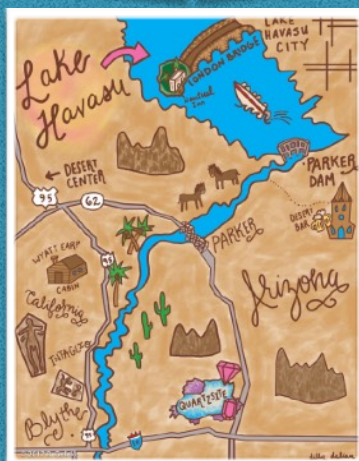
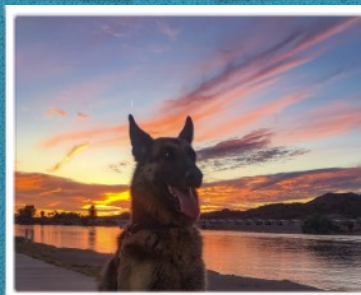


Lee Ann you are right: a must in Vegas is a visit to the SHELBY workshop and museum. What great cars. Some can even be purchased locally. Unfortunately, no tow-bar fits to put one of those beasts behind my Berta! What a pity.





A stop on the Colorado River: a must this fall. You know how much we love Arizona's West Coast. Nice too, when close friends and acquaintances from last year meet us here again. Once again we say: here we could stay for weeks or months, because the air & water temperatures are just fantastic.





A visit to Arizona without making a detour to Surprise? Does not work. The only weeks of the year we will live in a real house are at our dear friends Jeanie & Detlef house. We park in front of the house, enjoying the benefits of their grandiose hospitality and especially Detlef's cooking. He is a master of his trade. Beate returns the favor with her baking skills. We can stay a week and feel fantastic with those two. Lee Ann had met both on the Colorado and now, after her first solo tour, had come to Surprise for a detour. Nice to see that she is back on the road and will continue her life in the RV. We are so proud of her.



lunch at the Olive Mill

When two sausage lovers work together Our first results can easily compete with commercial sausages. Both the Thuringian and the Nuremberg bratwurst have become simply super tasty. Detlefs has the right equipment and a large, large kitchen. This was a lot of fun. And very yummy.



A week later I had the opportunity to use a smoker at Bill's place. The Krakauer succeeded right away - Sausage making ==> it's fun!





Two turkeys, countless side dishes and even more desserts, plus a 5 l Warsteiner barrel (gift from Detlef) ==> a wonderful holiday at 30 ° C.
Thank you dear Casa Grande friends inviting us again for this feast!



Thanksgiving 2017



El Paso December 2017



with Petra at La Malinche



yummy pea-soup with Brigitte and Garry



part of our family - love you guys



meeting long time friends and comrades



meeting new friends



with Timo in Downtown



Renate's birthday party



with Michaela

To pamper us and to remind us of German winter weather our friends even provided some snow and ice in the Sun City of El Paso! That was not necessary !!



our beloved Cris



Noah felt in love with Manu



Uwe and his two adorable twin's



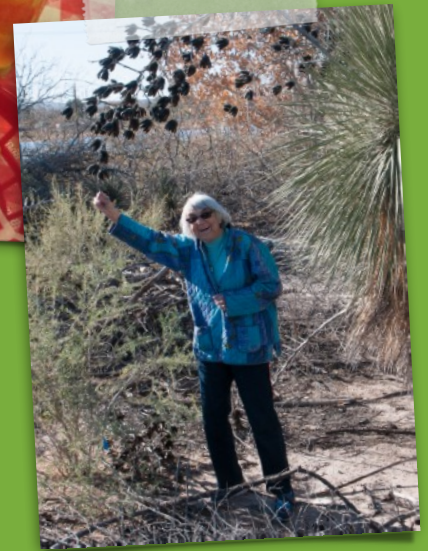
two very nice people, Heidi and Horst, who we could finally meet again in El Paso!



so great seen George healthy again



Especially remembered will be a wonderful day with our over 80 year old friend Susi, who showed the so experienced El Paso experts (Beate and Rüdiger), a few completely unknown sides of the metropolis on the Rio Grande and could not resist to invite us to Rosa's Cantina for lunch.



Million Barrel Oil Tank



Monahans Sand Hills

After El Paso we spent two days in Monahans, a region of Texas, that was unjustly overlooked by us, which offers so much



Thanks for the many mail and response to our reports in the past year.
For us it is always nice to hear from friends and acquaintances.



Now we look forward to Christmas holidays together
with our son Sebastian, the many presents and all the good treats.

For the coming year, we wish you health and the joy of life.
Hope seeing you soon!



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That's it for today. We are 882 days on the road.

Until next time

See Ya

Rüdiger, Beate und Noah

