

Happy Trails

Notes From Down The Road

July 15th 2018 Vol 32

1080+ NIGHTS AND NO END IN SIGHT

The bookkeeping says that we have already spent more than 1080 nights in our white Berta travel ing the North American continent. And the best: we still enjoy and love this unconventional life. No sign of boredom. Although missing the children, our sweet granddaughter, the other family members and good friends in Germany: the Internet brings us then again and again quite close together. Sometimes we feel the bond with our loved ones is so much more intimate, than if we lived "around the corner". Or we use the plane. So Beate has just returned from Germany. There were two important events to celebrate there: Mom Leni turned 90 and our little Lillien celebrated her first birthday on May 11th. Of course, grandma from America was not missing. Grandpa stayed with Noah and our white Berta in beautiful Colorado. But more on that later.



As planned, we have enjoyed Arizona and the south of California as winter domiciles for the last few months. We are still experiencing a lot of new things, the fantastic weather (without heating or air conditioning), the meetings with our many friends and acquaintances and not unimportant: the costs for food, drinks and living are significantly lower than in the North of the USA. All in all a right decision. We have already decided to spend the next winter in Arizona. We just loved it.

From February to April we slowly but surely headed north, not forgetting our favorite destinations: Parker, Casa Grande and Surprise again this year. Tradition is tradition.



Connie, Silvia, Bill & Steven
from Casa Grande



I  ARIZONA



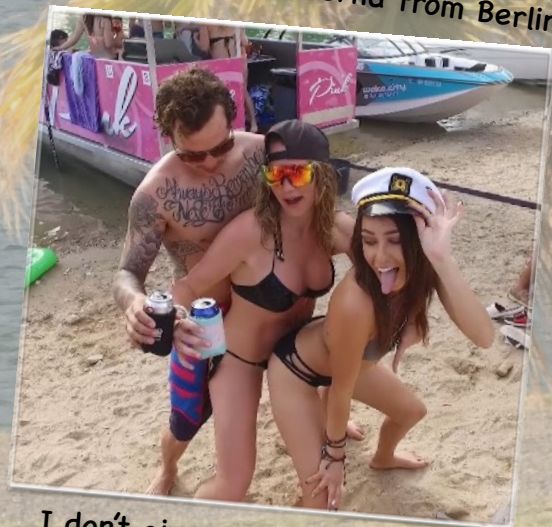
Gabi & Bernd from Berlin



Jeannie & Detlef
Surprise, AZ



Carol & Phil
from Kanada



I don't give out their names !!

My former colleague Giseller had always reported about it and tried to persuade me to visit the Steampunk Convention in Tucson.



Well, it took more than 6 years to finally make it.

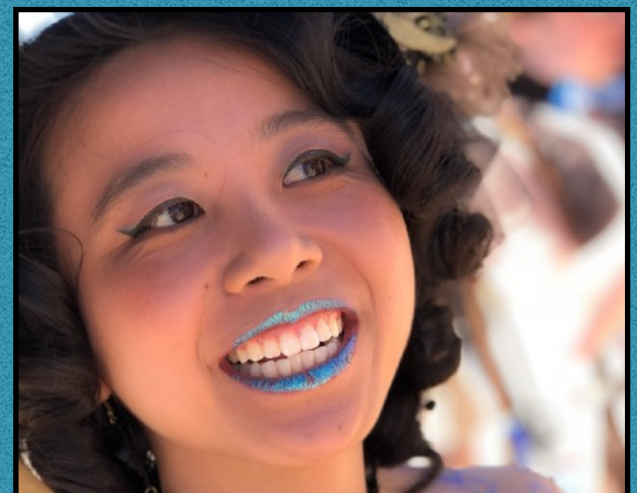


While having dream weather, we experienced the Wild West completely different: Victorian fashion, steam engines and time travelers; everything. Colorful, bizarre, adventurous and sometimes very shrill. We are thrilled and will come back whenever possible. An absolute MUST, when you are in the area....



my friend Giselher as
Pterodactylus







Our friend Lee-Ann had brought us together with a friend who told me about boonedocking sites in the Arizona and California desert. These were former airfields and barracks, which General Patton built in 1942 to prepare American troops for the Africa campaign of WW II. There are more than 15 of them, lots to see and discover. But very remote - far away from any civilization. Just right for us: We visited the former Rice Army Airfield together with our Canadian friends Carol & Phil for a few days. Although there are no more buildings, but on square miles you can discover a lot: old beer bottles, tin cans, razor blades, metal hangers, nails and other legacies from the 40s. Environmental protection was already a foreign word at that time.



Full Moon gave us bright night light

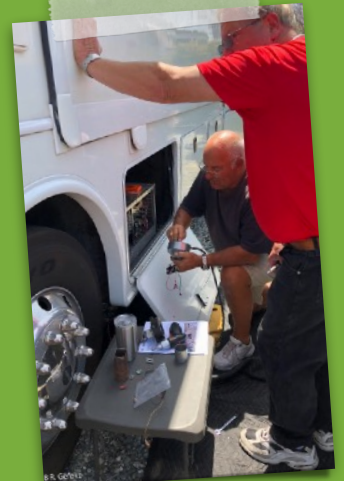
abandoned factory
for semiconductor electronics
outside
Casa Grande, AZ





In April, we met with nearly 100 Alfa RV owners for a rally in California for two weeks. In addition to old acquaintances from Quartzsite, we once again met many new Alfa owners from all over the United States. The main focus of this event was the mutual exchange of experience and the mutual help in case of problems and defects. So every day we repaired, discussed and talked on or about our beloved ALFAS. This friendship and know-how is priceless for Beate and me. So we have been able to repair a lot, learned even more and saved many \$! In addition, about 10 companies arrived to offer their services on site. From shocks and tire changes to the replacement of windows, refrigerators & Co., almost everything could be done while the owners explored the pool or the beautiful surroundings. For such repairs, you often sit around for days (or month CeAnne / Ray !!) on the backyards of workshops. In addition, there were rally discounts of up to 25%!

And yes, 2 weeks of having fun with all the group members took a toll on my liver and my scale.



ALFA ROADRUNNERS - SPRING RALLY 2018



The present members of our club. A total of 6 clubs from all over the US traveled to Hemet, California for 14 days with more than 100 ALFA campers.



Find on the wayside



Visit of the California Fire Attack Base



Yes, and then Noah and Beth became my heroes, when they took first place in the obedience category at a dog show on the last day.

WHAT A GREAT TEAM!



Salvation Mountain, Californien

Tons of clay, straw and paint make up this crazy-looking art installation in the middle of the desert.

God loves you





Years ago this was unthinkable for us - now quite normal: we camp for a few days in the wilderness. No electricity, no water, no internet ==> still great!



nocturnal visit: Desert Kangaroo Rat

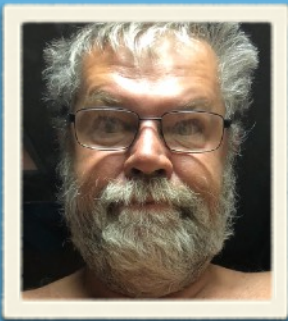


Happy Birthday

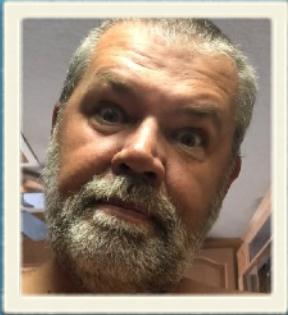


Lillien





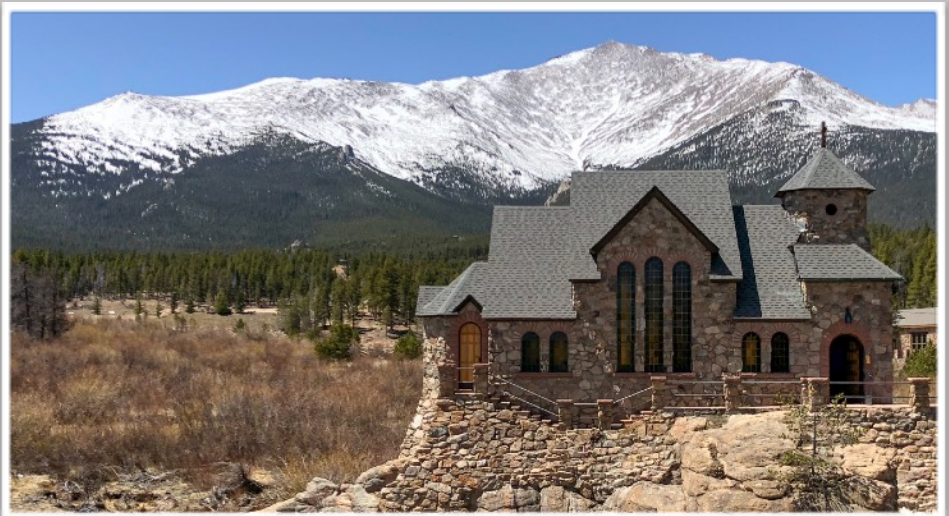
Not a hairdresser, (we do it ourselves for years), but a promise let us stop in the beautiful Albuquerque area on the Rio Grande. Last year we had promised the two German Schnitzel. Finally the time has come. In addition, a smoldering fire in the electrical system made a technical stop necessary.



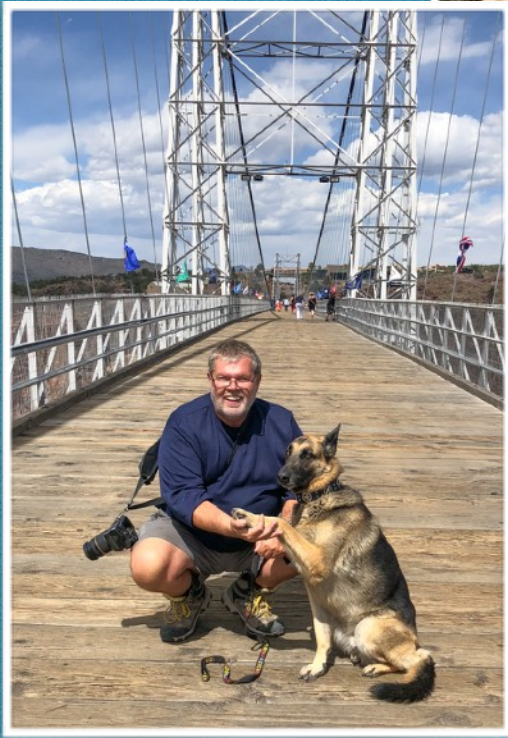
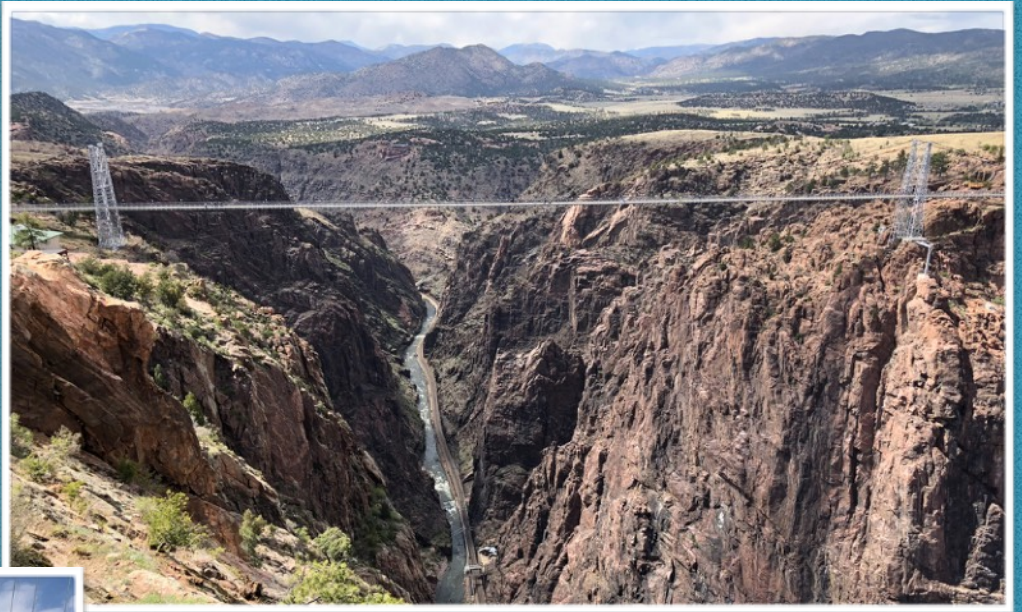
While Beth was visiting Germany, a campsite near Denver was home for Noah and me. We both took advantage of the proximity to the Rocky Mountains National Park and Colorado Springs for numerous walks and excursions. Especially in spring: a dream landscape.



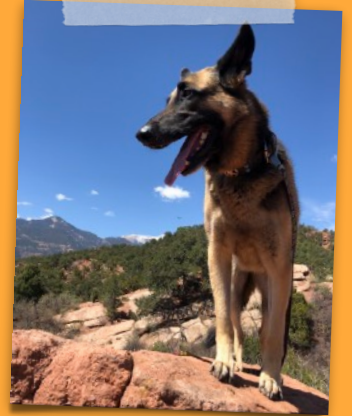
The mountain passes at just under 4,000 meters were closed to traffic in May so we both could use them for our hikes. No traffic - no tourist. And when we ran out of steam in this alpine 10.000 foot area==> we relaxed on the warm asphalt.



Until a few years ago, the **Royal Gorge Bridge** was the highest bridge in the world at 289 meters. Built in 1929 as a tourist attraction, your knees will still be soft as you cross the gorge. Noah graduated with me also a dizzying gondola ride over the gorge.



Especially beautiful: the small university town of Boulder at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.



GARDEN OF THE GODS





This art installation amplifies the sound of the forest and the creek in front of you.



Estes Park, Colorado

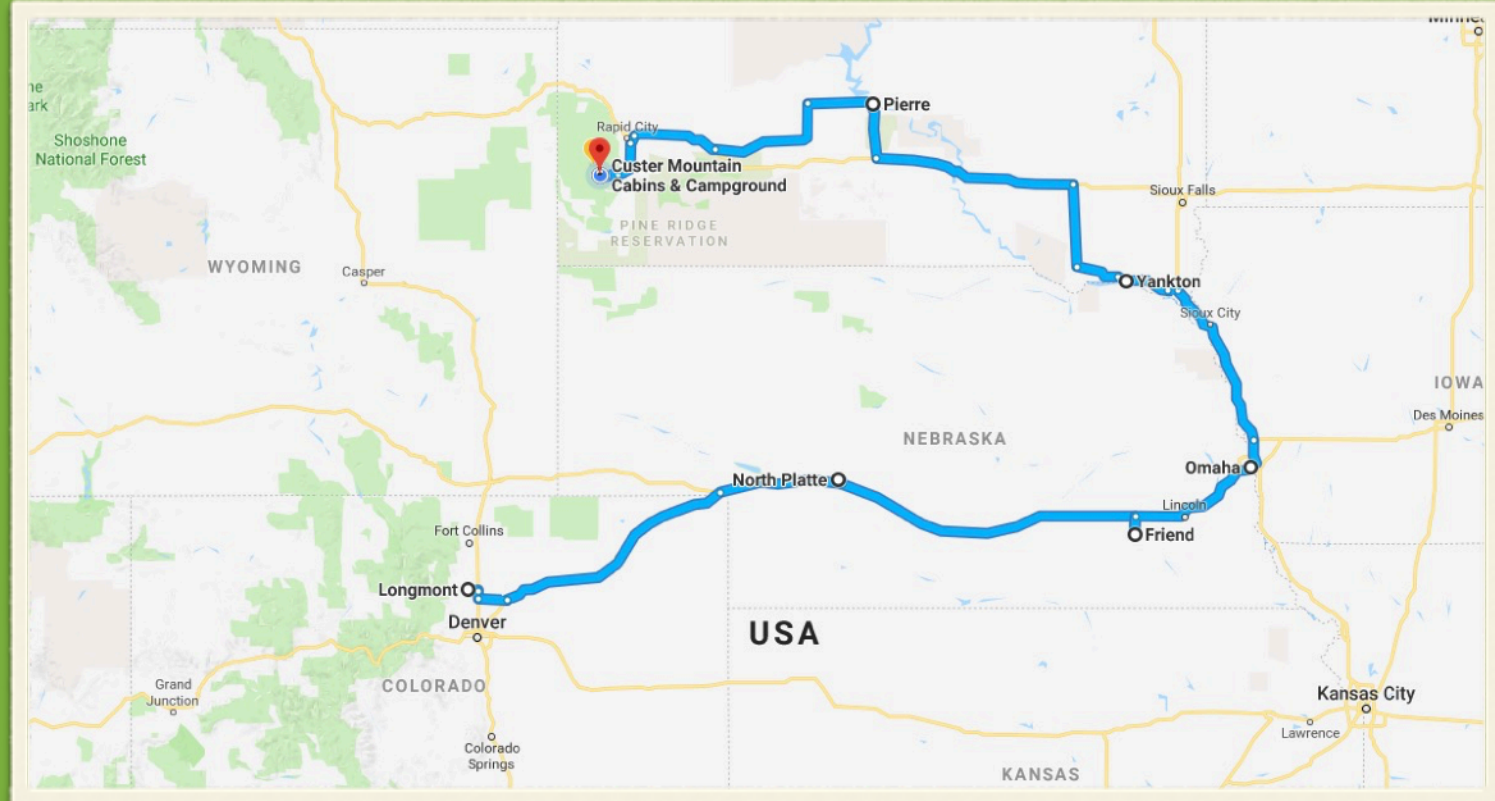


So far only found in Colorado: At the beginning of high-altitude trails, there are dispenser with sunscreen cream!



and always great views





We were particularly surprised by Nebraska. We had an appointment with friends in the east of the state. Therefore, we had to cross a state that was so inconspicuous for us. Then we spent 14 wonderful days in this very north of Germany reminiscent state. Especially the stay with Sharon and Dwight on the farm of their children remains in special memory. Thank you – we loved it!



love



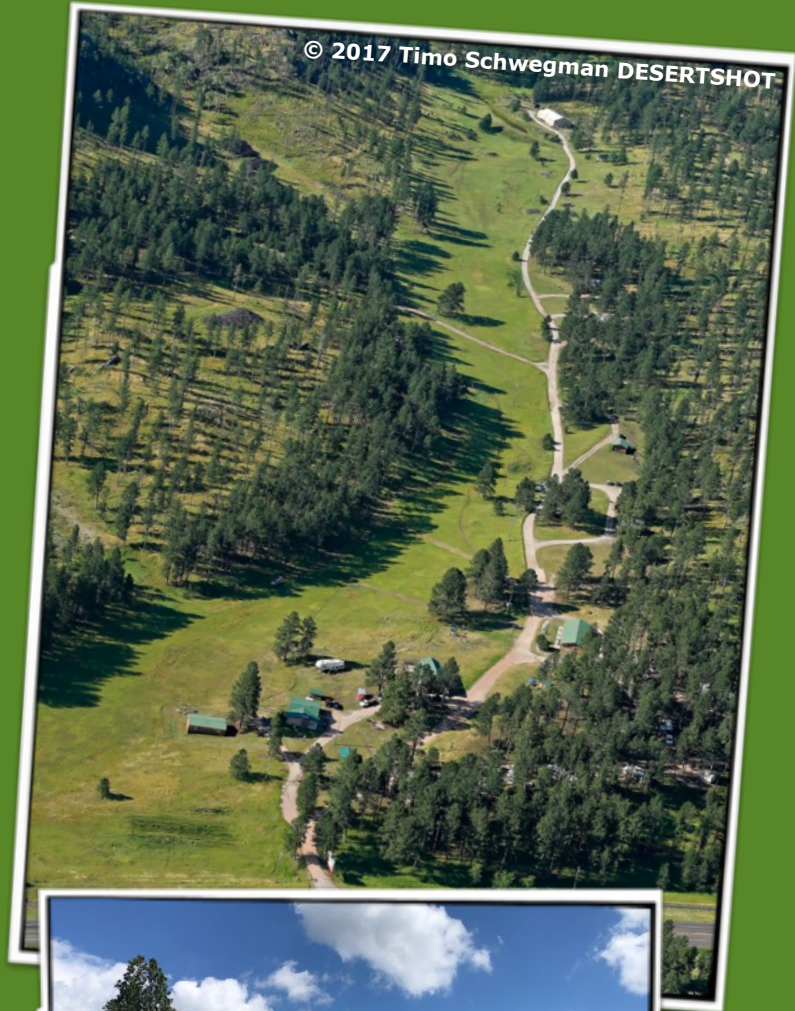
Also, the one week stay in Omaha was unexpectedly beautiful, instructive and will certainly be deepened again someday. The city on the Missouri River is home to one of the most beautiful zoos in the world, exhibits for the Lewis & Clark Expedition and gave us the opportunity to travel to Iowa to glue our next state sticker onto our motorhome.



the Big boy, one of the biggest steam locomotives of the world



Now we have been back for a few weeks in our summer home in the Black Hills of South Dakota. Beth, Noah and I just feel right at home here. We have our old space with all amenities: garden furniture, hammock, fire ring & Co. The old friends are already there or will come in the next few days. Our Custer family is looking forward to the next weeks and months. We love being here. For the first time this summer, Beth and I will do our bit to help with the landscape maintenance and cleaning of the log cabins. Thus, we are now in fact part of this campground! Noah works in the field of security as every year. Summer can come. We expect a lot of visitors this year: two nephews from Germany, friends from El Paso, California and Arizona have already announced themselves. We want to stay here until the end of August.



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WE LOVE THIS CAMPGROUND!



CUSTER



Yes, and then we plan to tour the US East Coast this fall. So watch out friends, should you still live there, it may be that we will knock at your door!



That's it for today.

Until next time

SeeYa

Rudy, Beth and Noah

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