



YUMIA => 106°F IN THE SHADE

NOTES FROM SELF-ISOLATION

April 2020 (Newsletter 38 was supposed to appear)

My last newsletter from January ended with “we won't get bored”. It was not in my dream that I thought of the experiences of the following 4 months. But first of all: we are still doing wonderfully. We have everything our heart desires. Toilet paper, good food, delicious drinks, the best friends you could ask for on site and excellent weather. At least we had this until a few days ago, when the temperatures climbed well above 100 F for the first time this year. Now it is getting quite uncomfortable here in the southwest of Arizona, especially as a camper. But more about this challenge later.

First of all, I want to jump back to January, when our annual spring rally took place in the desert near Quartzsite / Arizona. The special thing about this year: together with a couple of friends, we were this year's “Wagon Masters” and therefore responsible for planning, entertaining and catering more than 50 motorhome crews. A great challenge that we could only manage with a lot of help from others. I already talked about the Quartzsite Happening for the first time in our Newsletter 31. Beate and I are still completely impressed by these 14 days of “desert totale”. Even without water or electricity connection (our mobile



home is completely self-sufficient for 14 days) we feel really good. The reunion with old friends, but also getting to know new ones, the exchange of technical information, the simply wonderful buffets, the romantic campfires or the breathtaking sunsets have a magical attraction for Beate and me. With a smile we still think of the times when we drove through Quartzsite in a car over 30 years ago and shook our heads and asked ourselves who is so crazy and to put themselves in the camper in the middle of the desert, when there are enough inexpensive motels nearby. And now we're smiling again. This time about those, who spend the night in an overpriced strange motel bed, don't talk to any neighbors, hear air conditioning instead of coyotes howling and spend 10 dollars on a coffee with two eggs and bacon!





Our space, which has been used for many years, is on public land. A few miles off dirt road - in the middle of the desert. You can stay here for 14 days for a minimal fee. There is water and dumpsters for that. But both are several miles away.

As settlers did 200 years ago, we set ourselves up around a large fireplace. Not an easy task with over 50 motorhomes, because everyone wants to be as central as possible, wants to leave at any time, prefers morning sun in the living room, wants to stand next to Ms. X & Mr. Y and the list goes on.



The fireplace is always the focal point of all activities. Insights into the maintenance and fault diagnosis of diesel engines or the tinkering of decorations for the beautification of our motorhomes are on the program.



My friend Hans, who comes from Austria, is a trained chef, not only helped me destroy beer, but always lends a hand when it comes to feeding hungry mouths.



Most Breakfast are provided by us, while dinner is almost always a potluck. It's unbelievable what 50 teams are serving!



Oh yes, and then of course we mustn't forget the evening, always great talks at the happy hour around the campfire.





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We are looking forward to the next year!



Quartzsite 2020



Almost 80 of the 118 participants this year.



Big car - small caravan

There are always quite a few shrill and unique campers in Quartzsite. From motorhomes, for which you have to pay out a million dollars, old timers that have seen better days, to self-made plywood junk ==> everything included. If you think you have already seen it all....



The Wagon Masters of 2020
Together with Linda & Jeff we were able to finish this rally successfully.



*Give every day the chance to
become the most beautiful of
your life.*



The VW Bulli almost fits in my bedroom slide-out



The fascination of the Yuma Car Show
What seniors from the area
have in their garage!

Back in Yuma. Yuma is located in the southwest corner of Arizona directly on the Colorado River. Yuma County is the third largest vegetable producer in the USA! With nutritious soil, access to water and more than 350 days of sunshine a year, Yuma's vegetable growers supply households across the country. After the infamous summer heat, temperatures drop just enough to create the longest growing season in the United States. Yuma County is the winter salad capital of the world and delivers a whopping 90% of the leafy vegetables to all corners of the USA between November and March! That's a lot of lettuce. Wherever the eye looks, fields of lettuce and cabbage. Around the clock people plow, sow, water, harvest and plow again here. Everything according to a sophisticated planting algorithm, which, among other things, also oriented to the respective needs of the customer. With the help of thousands of Mexican harvest workers and a lot of high-tech, it sometimes only takes 3 days from harvest here in Yuma to delivery, for example in New York. The necessary water is taken from the Colorado River just before Mexico, the water of which has been carefully channeled into miles long canals to supply the surrounding area for over 100 years.



Iceberg Salat





We were just as surprised as you are now when we passed this old bridge on one of our hikes on the Colorado River, which was covered with swastikas. But a bridge from 1907 with over 40 swastikas? On arrival at home there was a logical explanation: the dam built here was built by US engineers who took the symbol of the Indian god Indra (had 4 hands and controlled the water) as a model for their decorations. Art in architecture in 1907. Who thought that?

<http://smoter.com/flooddam/swastika.htm>

<https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swastika>

I love history!





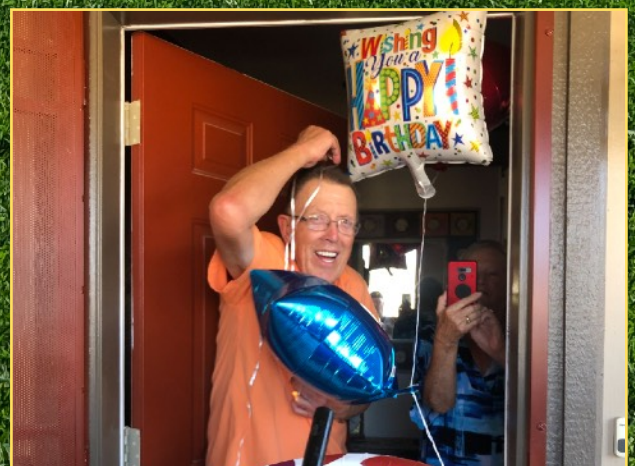
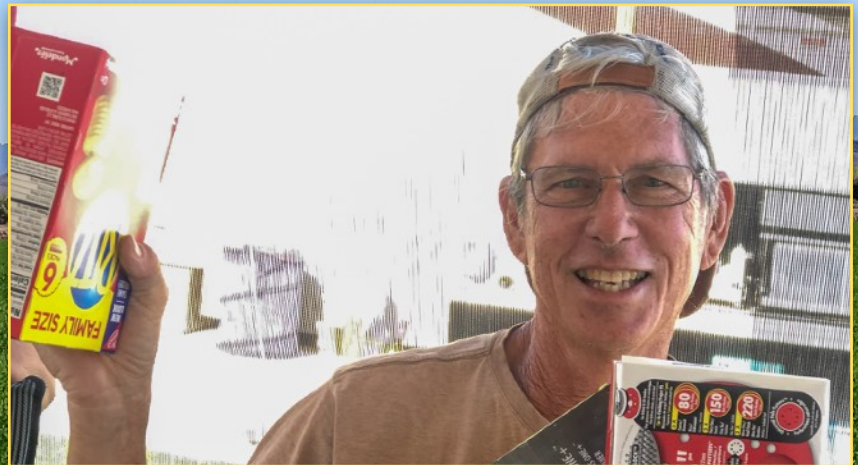
For us, Yuma is closely related to our friends Susan and Dale and their dogs Tilly and Dakota. Especially after the outbreak of the corona epidemic, they not only gave us a parking space, but also the feeling of home, family and security. From December to mid-May we enjoyed getting through the crazy time together. You can't think of better friends. We had fun and joy every day. Projects were tackled together to pass the time and we celebrate happy evenings and culinary festivals with a core circle of friends of around 10 people in the neighborhood. No trace of isolation.

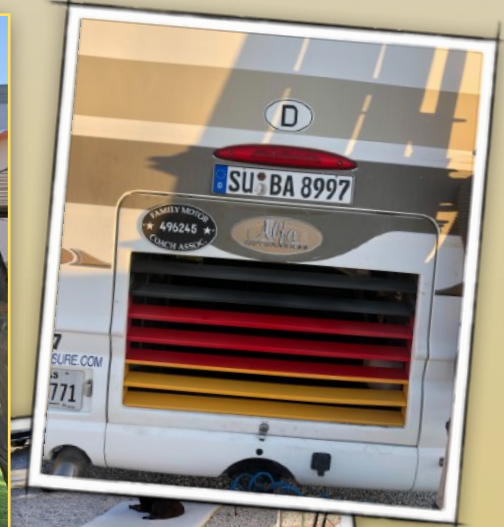


Cabbage roulade (Kohl Rouladen) dinner with friends in the motorhome or a large buffet outside. We always cooked and ate superbly!



This photo comes from the "pre-corona period". So many people in one place!





Terraces were paved, gazebos move or masks made, toilets renovated or colored accents for the motorhome created.

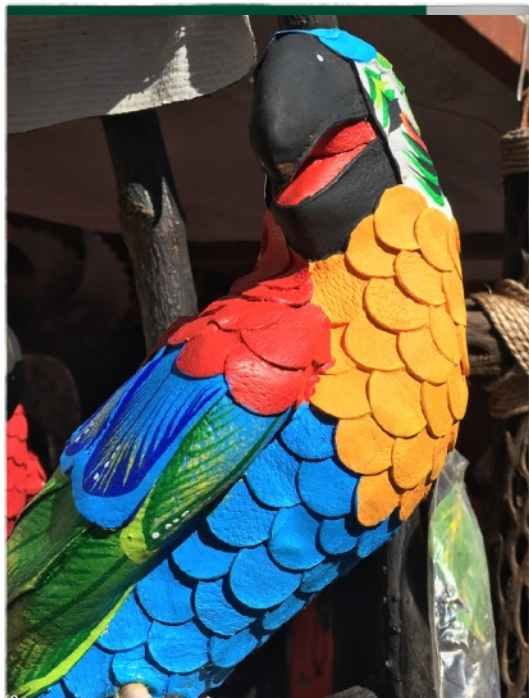




O f course, various excursions in the surrounding area, such as here to the Salton Sea in California (Bombay Beach), were on the program.



Multiple visits to Los Algodones, Mexico served to visit dentists, refill the first-aid kit and of course to enjoy the culinary delicacies of this country.



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Thank you for your wonderful friendship!

Like many others, we had imagined our spring to be completely different: Surprise / Arizona, El Paso / Texas, Roswell / New Mexico, Lawton / Oklahoma, Dallas / Texas and Branson / Missouri should be visited by the end of May. But now we were stuck in Yuma because almost all campsites were closed. In Yuma we had everything: electricity, water, food and good friends. However, temperatures from April also make life in a motorhome not exactly pleasant. Our Alfa is well equipped with three air conditioners, I can darken all windows, we have ceiling fans and the white Berta is also well insulated. But did we want to lock ourselves up, and especially Noah, all day? 100+ degrees in the shade were already reached in April. Beate could only hike her daily 8 miles with Noah at 4 a.m. or from 8 p.m. Now our isolation really began, when we hardly saw anyone in daylight. We held out until mid-May. Then we were just fed up with the heat and went with Susan and Dale into the woods of Flagstaff-Arizona.

Dale and Susan showed us some just wonderful boon-docking sites on federal land.

What a treat: fresh, fragrant and aromatic air up here at almost 7.500 feet! And Flagstaff, on old Route 66, is always worth a trip. Beate and I were once again impressed by the multitude of beautiful murals in the downtown area. Don't just drive through. STOP and be amazed. My friend Dale always says: Smell the Roses!





This old advertising tower on the left bears witness to the good old days on Route 66. A room for \$ 5 !!



the almost 13.000 feet high Humphrey Peak towers over Flagstaff



our free parking space in the Coconino National Forest

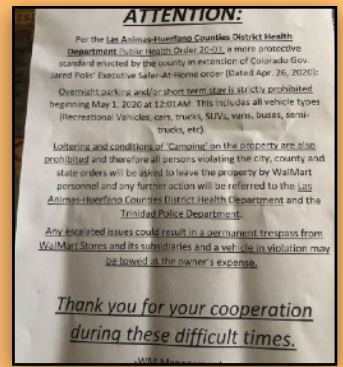


Picnic in the middle of the forest with friends who had come specially to meet us

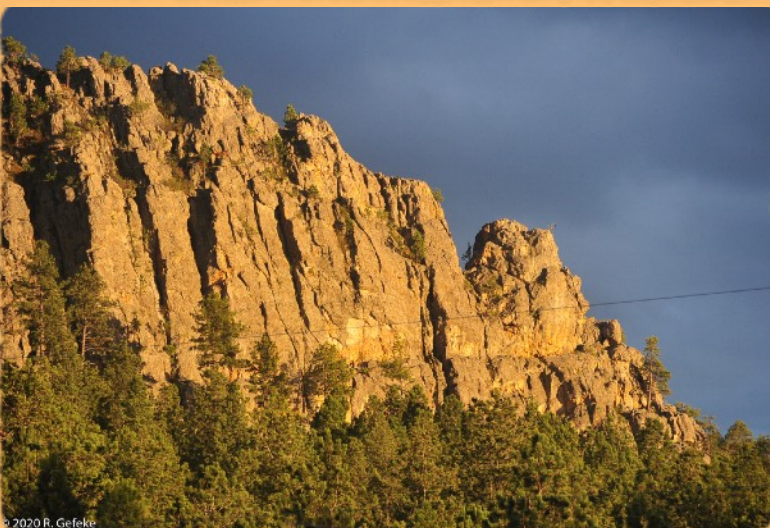


Yes, and granddaughter
Lillian enchants us every
day





After a week the hitch itched and our summer home Custer in South Dakota was calling. The weather forecast was promising (no snow like last year) and so we started our journey north. The choice of campsites was very limited due to Corona. The normally given option to spend the night at rest areas or the Walmart parking lot had also died this year thanks to the pandemic. So no side program, no sightseeing and detours in the area around our route - just going "up" to South Dakota as fast as possible.



lucky side 13



We have been enjoying our beloved Black Hills since mid-May. Blue sky, granite rocks and green forests and meadows. And a fauna that is second to none. Bison, antelopes, deer, prairie dogs, coyotes and squirrels are our constant companions on our hikes and walks.



Also this year we are helping out on the pitch. Despite this "work" we still have a lot of time to spend and love the enjoyment with old and new friends and acquaintances.





We plan to stay up here in Custer until the end of September. A few old friends have announced themselves. It remains exciting. What comes next? We would like to visit Montana and Yellowstone National Park again. But as always: everything in Jello. Everything depends on the corona situation here in the states. So far we feel very safe here, we are giving priority to common sense and are not bothered by the unspeakable political turmoil here in the country. So we and our closest friends have done well so far. What is certain, however, is that we will be back in Yuma at the beginning of November. Susan and Dale want to build a She Shed - and we want to help. And then there is this desire for our Yuma family!!





Dear friends, I think you will notice, despite all the turmoil, we are doing very well in 2020. Beate and I love and live the day that is given to us. We have a great family that lives far, far away from us, but communicates with us every day. Then we have a simply unique circle of friends who are always there for us!

But the most important thing: we have each other. Every day. Still with great love and passion! We are happy!

Be happy too and keep yourself healthy and keep your common sense.



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So that's it for today. We are now 1837 days on the road!

That's 5 years and 10 days !!!!!!!

Beate, Rudy and Noah

