

2024

OFF TO NEW ADVENTURES

January 2024 A beautiful and peaceful Christmas is behind us. We spent another lovely Christmas Eve with Susan and Dale. Our friend Deb was also there for the first time. It is unusual for our American friends to celebrate Christmas Eve. Here, everything takes place in the morning hours of Christmas Day. So we are all the more pleased to be able to share the German tradition with our closest friends here in Yuma. Potato salad with sausages (this time the bockwurst sausages from the butcher in Eitorf that we brought from Germany), plenty of alcoholic drinks, chocolate in all its variations and, of course, Beate's cookies provided the culinary part of the evening. Singing about 20 traditional Christmas carols together out loud and taking turns to throw the dice for the abundant presents is also a must for us!



We then celebrated Christmas Day with a big holiday buffet in the company of the many ALFA motorhome owners here in Yuma. The menu included boiled ham, sweet potatoes, baked green beans, mashed potatoes and draft beer. Of course, spicy salads and sweet desserts were also on the menu. As always, a real treat!





When you have an Austrian chef as a guest: Hans conjured up original Tyrolean Kirsch Schmarren as the crowning glory for everyone!



Our "parlor" at Christmas time



JANUARY

Now it's time to "dismantle". We need two full days to pack away all the Christmas decorations and lights and get the Fat Berta back in shape.



Our washing machine was in need of repair after 11 years of loyal service. Good thing when an ALFA friend and neighbor is a certified washing machine technician! Thanks Skip for the quick replacement of the pump. Beate can wash at home again!



Citrus fruits can be found in every garden here. January is harvest time. As many people can't cope with the abundance of fruit, there are crates of oranges, grapefruits, lemons and mandarins available to take away for free on some streets. For days, we have been squeezing fresh juices, freezing lemon juice in portions or cooking delicious dishes with the precious fruit.

But beautifying the property, in this case the outdoor kitchen, is also on the agenda. Susan had already bought a huge gas barbecue last year at a reasonable price. Together with a 5-burner hob and a fridge, this now forms the heart of our new kitchen. The first tests were of course the order of the day over the last few days. After all, we want everything to work!





Our first trip of the year took us to California. Our friends and comrades-in-arms from Custer, Hope and Paul Burrows, had bought a caravan site at a resort in the mountains of Southern California last year. And we wanted to check it out.

A 3 ½ hour drive from Yuma. Just around the corner by American standards. They both drove to meet us and we met up in Borrego Springs, California.



The small community is famous for its collection of wondrous creatures: prehistoric elephants, sabre-toothed cats, locusts, goats, scorpions, a Tyrannosaurus Rex and giant dragons. They are all not made of flesh and blood, but amazing works of art made of metal - sometimes a little bizarre, sometimes really creepy. They were created by sculptor Ricardo Breceda. More than 100 of these sculptures can be found in and around the small desert town.



We then found even more sculptures in the artist's studio, not far from Hope and Paul's new home near Temecula, where they both invited us on a tour.



The winter home of our two friends is beautifully green, very spacious and offers a great view of the surrounding countryside. In addition to a parking space for their 5th wheeler, the resort, a Escapee Membership Cooperative Community, offers a swimming pool, sports fields and workshops for wood, metal and vehicles, common rooms and a dog park.



January is also always rally time for us in Quartzsite. Even though no RTL team accompanied us this year (you can watch the old program here: [RTL Sendung](#)), we really enjoyed the 14 days in the desert once again. Apart from a little rain shower in between, the weather was super pleasant this year.



Our traditional parking space a few kilometers outside the city.
Over 30 Alfa teams gathered here again this January.





No electricity, no water and no sewage connection.

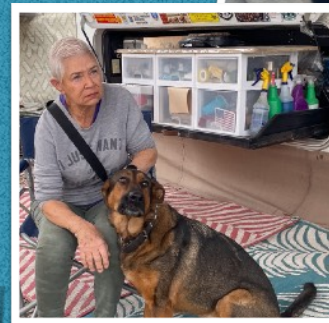
In recent years, Beate and I have learned to stay "dry" in the wilderness for a good 14 days. Electricity is generated by my solar or the diesel generator. A 400 liter water tank and a 400 liter waste water tank ensure that we can take a quick shower every two days, flush the toilet and keep our hands and dishes sparkling clean. However, we take drinking water for coffee etc. with us in 4 liter canisters and fill them up every few days at various vending machines in and around Quartzsite for a few pennies. Only when the waste water tanks are full is it time for us to set off and dump the ballast at the nearest dump station and stock up on fresh water again. However, 14 days of desert life are more than enough for us. The luxury of electricity from the socket and a dust-free environment should not be underestimated. However, a few of our friends will be staying in the desert for another 2 months!





© Dale Prichard

Our large family came from all over the USA and Canada again this year.



Henna's first mistress
Connie also came to visit.



Our friends
Birgit and Jim
also came
arrived.





We visited the "Skooliepalooza" for the first time: an event similar to ours, but mainly attended by people who have converted old school buses into camper vans. The average age here is much younger - we meet some young families with small children!!! A rather rare sight for us grandpa and grandma campers in the desert!



We were all impressed by the absolute friendliness of the campers here. During our tour, we were approached everywhere, invited for coffee and tea and could certainly have smoked a joint or two if we had wanted to.





Lillien



Of course, we are still being spoiled with photos and videos of our little princess!



Uncle Sebastian from Dallas visits Germany.



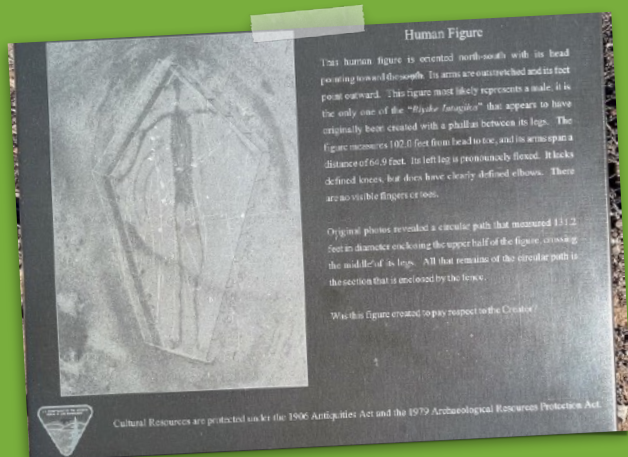
Blythe Intaglios



On a sunny, but unfortunately also very windy day, we explored the Blythe Intaglios together with Susan and Dale. The ancient figures engraved in the desert floor are up to 60 meters tall. Huge ground drawings created by scraping away surfaces to expose lighter-colored underlying rock. They are only found in desert areas near the Colorado River. During our hike, we also discovered hidden treasures in the form of unique stones and pebbles. The variety here was incredible: snow-white quartz, black iron ore, agates in all colors and so on. Every stone, a little world waiting to be discovered and taken away. If only there was room in the motorhome!



Human figures, some of them detailed with fingers and toes, and four-legged animals can be recognized. Although no exact age could be determined, it is assumed that the figures are at least 400 years old. They were only discovered in 1932 when a pilot flew over the area for the first time, as the figures are barely recognizable from the ground. It is only when you stand right in front of them that you get an impression and can recognize the drawings. Unfortunately, vandalism in recent years has made it necessary to fence off the intaglios.



our own Intaglio creations



Happy Birthday Susan - Mari usque ad Mare

Our ever so active friend received her Canadian citizenship just days before her birthday.
Double reason to celebrate with her!





Our spring planning





Now we are back in Yuma. Another 6 weeks and the three of us will be on the road again. New adventures and visits to friends await us. We are currently planning a stay in El Paso over Easter, and then we will try to experience another total solar eclipse in Texas. And then? Well, again, the weather will decide when we will be in Custer for the summer: We have set mid-May as our target. But until then, there is still a lot of water running down the Colorado River. Let's take a look. We will report back.

Best wishes to the world

Stay healthy and happy everyone!

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That's it for today. Already on the road for 3108 days.

Rüdiger, Beate und Henna

