

# The Original Ranch



# PALAVAR

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## Special points of interest:

- Pershing Larson leaves us
- The Ranch Improves
- The Sick Report In
- Ranch Hand's Travels
- Ranch Hands in Mexico
- Mary's Recipes



Articles for the July/August, 2001 Palavar are due September 1. Send to Lynell Arnott, joyfulmd@aol.com or 216 Rainbow Drive #11697, Livingston, TX 77399-2016, (303) 929-8272

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## In Memory

On Monday, June 25, 2001, at 6:50 am, Pershing Larsen passed away in the Carlsbad Hospital. After having had surgery to repair a broken hip, he was doing well. Then he died suddenly. We are deeply grieved at the loss of such a fine friend and we will certainly miss him. A memorial service will be held on November 7, at the Ranch, on the afternoon of the Fall Business Meeting.

Pershing was a leaseholder at the Ranch from the beginning and could always be found helping with various projects, lending his own special expertise. Over the past year he was the designer and builder of the air compressor station. In fact, he worked so long and diligently on that project that there is a plaque on the structure honoring him. He was a perfectionist, especially when it came to his own

craft as a machinist, and he fussed and worried over  $1/64^{\text{th}}$  and  $1/128^{\text{th}}$  of an inch. In fact, Pershing probably wouldn't have even been at the Ranch in June if it weren't for the fact that he didn't want to leave before the new tractor barn was complete. Even on the hot days of June, he sat in his lawn chair lending his ideas and "supervision" to the building crew.

He had a good last year with us, for which we may be grateful. Besides building the compressor cover, he hauled and heaved rocks with the beautification committee, watched over the installation of the new water treatment system, and answered the call for virtually all other work crews. He was "ding-a-ling" at our social hours when he was asked. He helped

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## From The President's Corner

I hope this finds everyone enjoying their summer travels. According to Roger it has been hot at the ranch, but things are happening. The new tractor shed is almost completed. Thanks to Roger and all the volunteers for their hard work. Bob and Marilyn Railey headed up the painting and the Ranch House and outbuildings are sporting a new coat of paint, Thanks to all for the hard work on these projects. Pat and I have been enjoying a typical Colorado summer: 5 inches of snow last week and 85 degrees today. Pat and I will be returning to the Ranch, in mid September and are looking forward to finishing our projects and preparing for Roundup.

Hugs to all, Dave Armstrong



## “RAINBOW” RANCH?

Those of us who have stayed longer this summer have had a special treat. There are just a few rigs sitting here and there, and we have had a different view of the park. Usually we can look out from our rig and see just a shed or two. Now we can look around and see most of the sheds, and the various colors they have been painted. Pink and white, blue and white, green and white, gray and blue, tan and brown, red and white, purples, greens, and mauve: it truly is beautiful. The latest is a snazzy tricolor paint job by Judy and John McCain. Great colors! Marilyn Railey

## AREN'T WE LOOKING PRETTY!

By Marilyn Railey

For the first time that I'm aware of, all the buildings at the Ranch have been painted at the same time, and the same color. The paint on the buildings matches the color of the bricks on the clubhouse. The trim is a dark brown, carrying out the paint scheme of previous paintings. The painters rose early and worked during the cool of the morning. When the returning leaseholders see the results of hours of work, they can thank Dick & Lucy Billings, Jim Bryant, Monty Hopkins, Paul King, Mike and Margie Klick, Matt and Barb Lucas, Chuck and Elena Morris, Bob & Marilyn Railey, Sherman Toler, and Bill Watson.

## Chili Chapter Web Site Changed

I have had to switch the URL for the Chili Chapter Website to the following: <http://www.zianet.com/cactuspoint/chili>. PVT will not allow me to suspend service during the summer and still access the Website. Zianet will allow this. John McCain

## On the Injured List

By Lynell Amott

It would sure be nice if we didn't need this section of the Palaver! Unfortunately, we do. Phil Sharp is actually back in the game, but just to report, he did have surgery and is recovering well, soon to leave for Colorado and good times. Have fun, Phil and Gene, you've earned it.

The Barnes have traveled to South Carolina to see family. John continues to have health problems. It's good to hear he's on the road again, though. Likewise, Elena Morris is on the road and doing very well. She and Chuck left Florida for the Ranch the day after her last chemo treatment. Can't keep a good gal down!

Jim McGirr broke his ankle, but has been seen back at the Ranch hobbling around. Hope you heal up soon! Bob O. has had pneumonia, but is out of the hospital now. He and Cass will stay in Illinois until August when he celebrates his 80<sup>th</sup> (have a great celebration!) and then will head slowly back to the Ranch. Reports have it that Cass's back is doing well.

Our hearts go out to Bob and Shirley Charlton, Assistant Managers. Their young grandson passed away unexpectedly. Bob and Shirley have gone to Oregon to be with their daughter. We're so very sorry that they have had to face such a tragedy.

## Win Some, Lose Some

We offer a great big SKP hug to our new leaseholders. Let's make sure we all meet:

Robert Liebman & Diane Costa new leaseholders, lot 84

At the same time, there are others we have to say Happy Trails to:

Paul & Lana King (lot 36)

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## David's Leak is FIXED

Hello to all our friends .... We have had quite a busy time since we left in April. We spent more time in Scottsdale than originally planned as the American Coach factory in Riverside took longer than expected, they still did not get the leak fixed. After we left the factory we stopped and visited relatives all the way up to Washington. We finally got the leak fixed in Auburn, WA (hopefully).

We have attended luncheons, a rally and are at a rendezvous with the Avion Travelcade Club. We also have had time to visit with our family in the area.

We celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary on June 26th, went out to dinner with some friends and that was all there was to that.

The weather has been relatively cool and rainy but we are in eastern Oregon at this time and it is heating up.

Miss you all and we look forward seeing you in November.

Hugs.....Donna and Russ David

## Ginny and Cowboy Send Word

We are doing just great. We are on the Cache La Poudre River Canyon Mountain Park, Colorado. It's so beautiful. We're Camp Host & love it. We're meeting so many nice people. Cowboy is in Maintenance. The weather

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is really great. But we sure do miss our friends at the Ranch & will be glad to get back Oct. 1st. No place like the Ranch. We take care of 32 Sites. I take care of all Reservations. Its fun but I'm homesick. We will be glad to get the Palaver & read about our friends. Take Care & God Bless, Ginny & Cowboy

### **Wow, There are Some Ranch Hands at the Ranch!**

Lucy Billings reports: All the out buildings have been painted and does the Ranch look sharp now. Bill Watson redid the bulletin board in front of the Ranch House and it sure looks sharp. Matter of fact the Ranch looks pretty good this summer.

The King's gave up their lot, number 36, and we have taken it so we have moved onto Coyote Run. Sure do like this a/c office in the shed!

Love, Lucy Billings @ mamule

### **McCains Have a Life Beyond the Web Page**

If you haven't had an opportunity to check our website designed by John McCain, don't miss it! You can find it by going to <http://blake.prohosting.com/skpranch/>. There is always something new to see. For instance, under the list of wildlife seen at the park, there is a photo of a skunk and instructions of what to do if you get too close to one: leave the Ranch immediately! We thought John worked on this wonderful website full time, but low and behold, they do other things as well! Here's the latest word:

We are still at The Ranch. We get our new shed this week or next (small 8x10' storage shed) and then we hope to be off to Texas and maybe north!

Aloha,  
John & Judy

### **Hi Ranch Hands,**

Hope this finds you well and cool. Do to an unfortunate change in our summer schedule, we are back in Texas instead of Michigan. We were going to pick up Dave's Mom in Colorado and take her to visit the UP of Michigan with us. Unfortunately, she fell and broke a bone in her leg the day before we arrived in Colorado. So we decided to rework our schedule in the hope she would be able to travel later in the summer. First, we went to Branson and on down to Eureka Springs, AR to visit old friends, who are working there. Attended a number of shows including the Passion Play with them and really had a good time.

Then, since Dave has been having lots of discomfort from his hip problems, we decided to head home and get him checked out. To that end, we are in south coastal Texas and yes, it is HOT & HUMID. But there is lots to do here in the summer and the 4th of July is a really big deal. We are looking forward to the fireworks shows over the Gulf and the following day, meeting with Dave's "bone doc," to see what he recommends. Hopefully, after that, we'll be heading for Michigan but we won't know for sure what our schedule will be until his appointment.

Hope you are keeping cool and having a most enjoyable summer. Take care, travel safe and big Ranch Hugs,  
Beth & Dave Norton

### **IN MY OPINION!**

There's an old joke about the guy who shows up at a meeting wearing one black sock and one white sock. When a remark is made about his pair of socks, he replies, "Yeah, and I've got another pair just like them at home!" Okay, I know it hasn't been funny since the third grade, but the real comedy would be if he *didn't* have another pair just like them.

Socks mystify me. I have somewhere around a thousand single socks. I don't have any idea where their mates are, or for that matter if they ever had any. I keep them in a large pull-cord canvas gym bag which Jeanette keeps trying to throw away. I don't think they make bags like that anymore, but I carried my leather helmet, pads, high-top football shoes, jock (oops), and athletic socks back when I played high-school football. I think one of the socks is still in there.

I was looking in it this morning for a match to a new single I found in my sock drawer when it occurred to me to try to match these strangers up. First, I went with solid and patterns. I have a lot of argyles, but none looked like any of the others. I threw away three that had holes, but retrieved two of these because the patterns are really nice. Then I found a real pair (and one extra) of formal wear knee-length socks with little silver diamonds on them. Someday I might rent a tux again, and I can save by not renting the socks!

The solids were something else. Not only do you have to find the same colors, but the lengths have to match - or at least come within three inches or so. Some look pretty close, and nobody will see them if I wear real long jeans, so I was able to put together four more pairs that I can wear. But Jeanette was saying something that sounded like OUT, so I had to devise some reasoning to maintain my collection.

A tennis ball in a sock is a great dog toy! If I still played golf, I could cover *all* my clubs, not just the woods. In a crisis they could be used as mittens, although I also have a large collection of single gloves. Anyway, it came to me that someone should make disposable socks, sorta like Pampers. Oh well, it's just my opinion. C.T. Hancox

### **Hot, Hot, Haase's**

It's hot in South Dakota. Greetings and SKP hugs to all of our Ranch friends. We are settled into our jobs and all is going well. We have a nice yard for our house on wheels. Chuck even has two tomato plants growing in five gallon buckets.

We are in the middle of a hot spell, 105 degrees yesterday and not a breeze to be had. Today is supposed to be much cooler, only 95 degrees. But it is summer after all. We have had some violent weather, hail, tornadoes, and high winds. It has been a little scary a few times but we haven't had damage. Norm and Shirley Partch stopped to see us and then went on to Sioux Falls where they experienced some truly violent weather, but they too are fine and no damage.

My thanks to Lynell for doing such a great job of putting the Palaver together. I really enjoy it during the summer. It is so nice to keep con-

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nected to all of our friends. When it comes, it is like a letter from home. Thanks Lynell.

We hope that everyone is having a great summer and smooth traveling. Stop and see us if you come this way. Hugs Chuck and Nettie Haase

## Hi everyone,

We will be leaving the Ranch on June 28th, going to Alpine to see the Serklands and the Irons. We will have a Railey family reunion at Prude Ranch, Ft. Davis, TX over the 4th of July. After a short "vacation" with the granddaughters, we will be going to MO and IL to visit family before heading somewhere East. We will see you in early Nov. Hope all your travels are safe. Hugs, Bob & Marilyn

## Lyle and Ginger Are Coming This Fall!

We are still at our place at Lewis Clark Resort, Kamiah, Id. Lyle has taken a summer job here at the campground. We do plan to be at the Ranch this fall, don't know if we will make it for the Round-up because he wants to do some hunting before we leave here.

My daughter is still not well... but it does look like she (*is okay*) at least for the present. So unless we are needed here we will be at The Ranch probably around Nov. 1st. It is really too soon for definite plans. Hugs, Ginger and Lyle

## News from the Cooks

Hi to all,

Fred and I, along with Pat and Dave, are keeping very busy camp hosting here in Colorado. Aspen is a very popular tourist stop, along with those who come here for hiking, rock climbing, mountain biking, fishing, etc. We can't get over seeing the bikers riding up to Independence Pass which is over 12,000 feet elevation. With the Music Festival, balloon fiestas, jazzfests, and all kind of races, we get lots of visitors in the campground, including many foreign visitors.

We had the pleasure of seeing Bill and Bev Heeter, Rusty and Mary Irons and Chuck and Elena Morris. Jim and Carolyn McKinzie

were visiting with Tony and Debra Simmonds -Amari (also hosting some miles from us) and they drove over for a visit. We are expecting the Marquardt and Lambersons in two weeks.

Hope everyone has a great summer and we look forward to seeing you this Fall.  
Fred and Joyce Cook

## Singles report in

Just thought I'd let you know that we are alive and well. We haven't any big exciting news. We are still in LA, we hope to leave for the Ranch on 7-11. We did send out several emails to try and get some ark plans. It rained 5 days in a row and I mean rained. Then the water started coming up. Lucky we are 3 ft off the ground, so no real problems. The grandsons loved it. We were really glad that our rig was at the Ranch. Hugs, Sandy & Art

## Trockel's Travels

We spent a delightful month 5-21 thru 6-21 in northern NM at Heron Lake SP & El Vado Lake SP. We arrived to the bounty of early spring blooms in the wild and the yards - GEORGOUS! The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR offered a GREAT ride, this time we went from Chama to Antonito. We also stopped by the Chama yard 2x for photos as well as doing some train chasing. The State Parks offered wonderful opportunities to hike, bike, kayak, fly model airplanes and loaf. Currently we are in Utah on our way to MT & ID. Bob and Ede

## Dulcich's Travels

Well we finally made it out of the states. We are now in BC near Chilliwack. We will be here until after the 1st of July then start our trek north to Alaska. We will travel the Casiar Hwy. north and pickup the Alcan west of Watson Lake. From there it's on to Whitehorse, YT, then Dawson City YT. We plan on about a week in the Dawson area exploring many of the relics of the 1897 Gold Rush. Our next major stop is planned at Denali National Park where we will try to spend several days at Taklaneeka Campground about 30 miles inside the park. This should be a great place to enjoy wildlife and relax. From there its down to the Keni area around Homer and

Seward. By the time we finish there it will be time to start south again.

We plan on coming out through Alberta and Saskatchewan into North Dakota and hopefully stop and see Lenny and Bev at Avon, SD. Our plans are to be back at the Ranch in time for Roundup if possible.

Happy Trails,  
Cliff and Margaret

## Hi From the Freys

We don't really have anything exciting to report. Ron and I are currently in Bakersfield, CA waiting for escrow to close on the sale of our last piece of real estate here. Hopefully, we will be leaving here about the middle of July for Colorado and South Dakota. We will make our way East to West Virginia for the Escapade in September, then to Texas in October for vehicle registrations, etc. We plan to be back at The Ranch in late October/early November.

Hugs,  
Phyllis & Ron, Lot 40 **RON & PHYLLIS FREY**  
[mariah@escapees.com](mailto:mariah@escapees.com)

## Hello From the Breens

Not much real news to report from us, however, we have been having a great summer. I will give you a brief report of our travels so far. The two dogs, Nikki & Casey & I left the Ranch on April 6th for Albuquerque to pick Susan up on her return from Kauai where she was visiting our daughter and grandchildren. Sorry to report that Nikki took sick on the first day out and was unable to continue and is now in doggy heaven. Susan arrived at The Sunport on the 9th and we spent the next few days sightseeing around Santa Fe. We then headed for Washington State with stops at Congress, AZ, Lake Havasu City, Bullhead City, Pahrump, NV. We spent some time with friends in Grass Valley, CA before heading to Pebble Beach, CA for a horse show. We stopped at Sutherlin, OR on our way to Ocean City, WA. Susan left for New Hampshire on June 6th to attend our granddaughter's high school graduation and returned on June 11th and we were off to Hood River, OR for another horse show. We are now in Monroe, WA visiting with friends. We plan to go to our last

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horse show of this year in Bend, OR the last two weeks in July. We will take it easy in August before heading back south to The Ranch in October. Hope everything is going fine where ever you might be and everything fine at The Ranch also. Take care until we see you in the fall. Susan, Art and Casey, the faithful doggy companion.

### **The Marquardt's have been BUSY!!**

Between several campouts with our trailer club in Denver, a 40" snow storm May 4-5, and MUCH company, we've been having fun!!

Our two daughter's and spouses, one from Breckenridge, CO and one from Anchorage, AK, gave us a WONDERFUL LUAU in June, to help celebrate Milo's 75th birthday, and our 40th anniversary. We had 75 guests, which came from all over, including OK, & SD. We were lucky to have a nice representation from the Ranch, which included Lynell Amott & Greg Vederoff, Steve & Dream Lamberson, Bev & Lenny Ratzlaff, Joyce, & Fred Cook, and former lease holders, Jim & Belle Blair, and Shirley & Bob Foster.

As I write this, we are enjoying a visit with Rusty & Mary Irons. The Lamberson's are enjoying this CO Mountain area so much, they are staying a month, and considering staying an additional month. We'll admit this area can be addictive! Beautiful 14,000' Mountain peaks are our view, and the Arkansas River, with many rafters goes thru our park. It's all difficult to deal with, but someone has to do it!!!

We'll be heading to SD & MN in Aug, have to check up on the Ratz Nest, then going to kidnap Bev & Lenny, and take them to a Threshing Bee in Milo's home town in MN.

Hope you are all having as much fun as we are. If you can catch us, the Welcome Mat is always out.

Hugs, Milo & Bettie

### **A New Home for the Newlyweds!**

Hi all - yes we have a message for the Palaver. Bob and I moved into our lovely new home on Friday June 15. It is lovely and we walk around like in a museum after all these years of the motorhome. There is so much to do here,

but we haven't gotten started on the socials and activities much. Friday is our 1st wedding anniversary and we are celebrating with RV friends who live in Ocala and were married a year ago on the same date. We will have dinner at the Katie Belle (a music hall) here at The Villages, then dancing in the Plaza. Maybe I can get Bob to dance with me. We will be back at the Ranch mid October to mid November. Need to bring back "stuff" from storage and will need to rent a U-haul. So see you all then to celebrate Roundup. Love and Hugs Pat/Bob Stephenson

### **Thanks from Phil and Gene**

To all our wonderful SKP friends we wish to thank you for the getwell cards, E-mails, and telephone calls we received during Phil's surgery in El Paso. To Bob and Marilyn and Greg and Lynell, who came to El Paso and stayed with us throughout the surgery, we give you a big hug and our thanks. It is truly a blessing to be surrounded with caring people like all of you!! Again, thanks to each one of you!

### **Dear Ranchers and Ranchettes,**

We are summering at Stony Point Resort in Cass Lake, Minnesota. The Gangelhoffs (owners) are a real nice family and we are having a good experience. However, we do realize that we have become VERY LAZY in our retirement and working period is hard for us.

The weather has not been very good or typical for here to date, still wearing long pants and running the furnace in the morning hours.

Maybe we will see some summer before it is over.

Best wishes to all and we certainly hope that Pershing is improving.

Ken and Becky Tanner, Lot 1

### **Heeters Hot in the West**

Dear Friends:

Bev and I are presently in Bishop, CA and plan to leave tomorrow for Yosemite where we will be hosting again at Tuolumne Meadows until mid Aug. This will be our 4th summer at Yosemite. We have had a nice trip since leaving our son's place in Indiana May 1st. We visited with my two cousins in ILL, and Wis. and then headed on to the Winneba-

go factory in Forest City, IA to have some warranty work done on the MH. Everything was taken care of and the factory people were great. We stayed there 4 days and then continued on through IA.

Finally caught up with Minor and Pat Lyne in North Platte, NE and enjoyed our stay with them. Just before getting there we stopped at the Pioneer Village in Minden, NE. If you ever find yourself near there it is well worth a stop. They have displays from the 1800s and early 1900s. Cars, farm equipment, clothing, airplane engines, appliances, buildings, almost anything you can think of.

From North Platte we drove to Scottsbluff, NE where I graduated from High School in 1952. Wanted to find out if an old high school friend was still alive. He was and we were able to get together with him, I enjoyed that. He, another fellow and myself left Nebr. in 1953 and headed for Calif. I stayed but he came back to Nebr.

We then continued our trip stopping next in Golden, Colo. for 3 days. Enjoyed that, spending the day at the Art Museum in Denver and touring the Coors Brewery another day. Next we stopped in Aspen to spend a few days with Dave and Pat Armstrong and Fred and Joyce Cook at Difficult Campground. Had a nice time there. Colorado is really a beautiful state to drive through. Utah was next and we spent about a week and half in 3 different places, Green River, Delta, and St. George. Delta is a nice little town in the central part of Utah and we had a nice relaxed time there. Did not know it before but nearby was located a Japanese internment camp called Topaz during WW2. Went through the local museum in town and learned this. As we headed south to St. George the weather really turned hot, 105 degrees almost every day we spent there. Did not do too much there although we did drive to Zion NP one day.

Finally drove on with one more stop in Las Vegas to visit with some old friends who moved there after he retired. Saw Neil Sedaka perform one night at the Orleans Hotel and he was very entertaining. Anyway we have had an enjoyable trip and look forward to Yosemite. Will see everybody back at The Ranch in Oct. or Nov. Hope your travels are good. Hugs, Bill and Bev Heeter

### **What is it About the Novy's and Rain?**



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Guess who was in Houston visiting their kids when rains and flooding came. Our son's house got some water in it and we spent a lot of time getting it cleaned up. We're tired, hot and sweaty. Otherwise doing OK, but it's delayed our trip to the Northeast.

Presently we're in Dallas where it's rained every day since we arrived. Everybody here was happy since they had drought conditions. We are thinking about renting ourselves to communities that need rain. Of course flooding is a bit much.

Hugs,  
Lou and Barb

### **Helen Does Not Stay Put!**

Hi All! Hope everyone is well and having a great time, no matter in which part of the US you are. At present I'm still in ND. Right now at lake Sakakawea where fishing is great, or so they tell me. I don't fish! End of week back to Cheyenne, WY. Next week to GoodSam state Samboree for few days and the rest of the month is filled with Singles & FMCA camps. All is well, after a blowout, the 5 new tires should bring me back safely to the Ranch sometime in the fall. Hugs to all of you, Helen Farnsworth

### **HELLO EVERYBODY! BUENOS DIAS YA ALL!!**

Well, we have had some interesting and fun travels since we left the Ranch in Beautiful Downtown Lakewood, NM. We've been to many SKP parks and seen (and eaten with!) many friends. We always have a good time when we visit North Ranch! Nice people and always something going on there. There's a great restaurant up on the hill – The Arrow Café. MMMMMMMM Good!

Got word today from the Ranch that Pershing Larsen passed away. He was a real interesting person and a real nice man. He will be missed. We said prayers for him in Sutherlin, OR. We also hear that Bob O. was in the hospital. We wish you a Speedy Recovery!

We got to visit a bit with Frank and Karen Ogden in Sutherlin. We've been to Joshua Tree, to Chimacum, where we saw friends Jim and Carol Holmes, to Vancouver, Auburn, Washington, and a bunch of other places.

We are now again at Sutherlin, as are Don and

Mary Hovis. We are having a "Great Visit". Mary and I got to have a girl's day out short trip to the Coast. Fun. All our news now. Hugs, Lillian and Chuck, SKP 32124

### **Pearl Shows Us Off!**

I have had a busy time as my two cousins came in from Europe, one from Germany and one from Norway. They arrived on May 21st on different flights but within minutes of each other. So I was busy showing them around Colorado and then we took a trip to NM to the Ranch as they wanted to see my lot down there. We spent 3 nights at the Ranch and we went to the Living Desert one day and then to the Caverns another day. They liked seeing my lot. Went to happy hour once and there was a good crowd there. Then we drove back to Colorado, to the Hart Ranch in Rapid City, SD, went to Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse, the Black Hills and Custer plus the Needles Drive. It was beautiful. Then we did more touring around Denver and went on a couple of long walks. It was a very good month with the two cousins.

Now this week I have my grandson and his friend with me as they are going to Vacation Bible School. I will take them home on Saturday. Then I will have some time to myself to catch up on yard work and all the work on cleaning the RV inside and out. That's it for now.

Hugs, Pearl #92

### **Lucy Billings Muses about Awnings**

By Lucy Billings

Have you ever noticed that there is a relationship between the strength of the wind and whether your awning is down or up? You can be sitting in the hot sun and there will not be a hint of breeze to cool you off. So you unroll your awning, tie it down, and put your lawn chairs under it to enjoy the shade. As you are sitting there having a cold drink, you notice that a slight breeze is coming up and it feels so good. You enjoy the rest of the evening. When the RV is cool enough, thanks to the slight breeze, you go to bed.

You are asleep having good dreams when this racket wakes up. It is the wind at a gale force blowing your awning up and down. You curse a little as you get dressed to go outside to put the awning up. You notice that the wind is dying down as you get dressed and when you are outside ready to put the awning up, there is

just a slight breeze.

Well, that must have been just a gust; it will be okay the rest of the night. So you go back to bed and as you snuggle under the covers you hear this roaring. It is the wind roaring and snarling as it blows your awning up and down. You lay there hoping it will die down again like it did before, but no such luck. The wind becomes stronger than before and now the poor awning is really pulling at the tie downs. Okay, out of bed, get dressed, go outside and put the awning up for the night. You do want to get some sleep this night!

You wake up with a start early in the morning and as you lie there wondering what woke you up, you realize: NO WIND. After breakfast, you put the awning down for the day because it will be hot again. As the progresses, the wind that was just a little breeze starts to blow a little harder. So it is mid-day, hottest time of the day, but you do not care because you have the breeze and the shade of the awning. But this was just the beginning. Before you know it, the wind is howling and trying to tear the awning to pieces. Okay, up goes the awning and you move around looking for shade.

Before you even find a place, you notice that the wind has died back down to a calm cooling breeze. You wonder, shall I take the awning down or should I leave it up? There is a breeze and there is a little shade on the other side of the RV, so okay, let's leave it up. But soon the temperature is rising there is no breeze. You need the shade of the awning, so down it comes. Ahh, nice and shady...but here come the wind, not a breeze, but a hurricane. Put the awning up quickly before it is blown away!

But what is this? NO WIND, NO HURRICANE, no air moving at all. Down comes the awning, up comes the wind, up goes the awning; no wind, down comes the awning; hurricane force wind again, so back up with the awning. By this time it is late and so you leave the awning up and go to bed.

Yes, there is a very definite relationship between wind and awnings. The connection should be studied very closely by the Federal Government. This could lead to a new discovery of wind power. For example – if all the RVs in a park would put their awnings down at the same time, the wind would blow hard enough to make enough power to light up Yuma Arizona!

## ***Mexico's Copper Canyon top to bottom RV caravan February 2001***

We left Presidio Texas on a sunny, windy Sunday morning after spending two days getting everyone a tourist visa and vehicle stickers. We are on a RV caravan of three fifth-wheel trailers and seven motorhomes. Our destination is Batopilas, Mexico at the bottom of the Copper Canyon in the State of Chihuahua. This is a trip of about 1200 miles round trip from Presidio returning to the United States thru El Paso Texas fourteen days later.

Our first stop was Chihuahua City at a KOA campground. This is a city of one million plus and growing rapidly. Most of this growth is due to the American companies building and manufacturing all types of products here as a result of Nafta. Motorola, John Deere, Ford and others have large, new plants on the north side of the city. We all got our Walmart/Sams Club fix here!! Most fast food places are in this same area, as well, and familiar restaurants, such as Applebee's.

We visited the Chihuahua state capitol building where there are huge murals under the circular portico. These are dramatic colorful scenes in the history of Mexico much in the style of Diego Rivera with a touch of Salvador Dali. Our guide was from a government approved tour company and he was required to pass a detailed exam on the history of his country. He was excellent and had no problem answering our many questions.

We also visited several other locations in the city including Pancho Villa's home. This was a lovely large home with two enclosed patios beautifully landscaped. It seems that upon finding her husband in the company of other women, Mrs. Villa took over the home and remained there until her death giving tours of the home and lectures on Pancho's adventures. She lived a long interesting life there in this gracious home. Pancho, on the other hand, died in his forties in a Bonnie and Clyde style shootout. The Mexicans believe the American government including Abraham Lincoln had placed a bounty for Pancho's head. When his body was exhumed it was indeed missing the head and some Mexicans believe Pancho's head is in a private club museum at Yale University. The guide pointed out that both the senior and junior George Bushes' are members of this club. Who knows??????

We left Chihuahua City Tuesday morning for Cuauhtemoc, a small city Southwest of Chihuahua. There is a large Mennonite community here and one family operates a campground in the area, where we stayed for two nights. Our tour in the area included a Mennonite church and school. The church was plain as expected and the men and women still sit on opposite sides for services. Our guide, who operated the RV park, and his family are of the new order and attend more liberal churches and schools. The old order school we visited was a little chilling for some of us as the children attend here until age twelve learning only math, low German and the Bible. The children are like little robots reciting in unison and behaving just too good.

While in Cuauhtemoc we discovered a great treat that we wish were available in the U.S. It is a cross between a Popsicle and an ice cream bar. They come in a dozen or so flavors and we found them in many locations. They proved to be our caravan's favorite treat! We left

Cuauhtemoc and headed for Creel, a lumber mill town in the mountains at about 8000 ft.

The drive up to Creel was interesting and challenging as the road was good only half way, the remainder being narrow and winding. The changing scenery from desert to mountain was interesting with tiny dusty villages along the way. The people we passed were smiling and waving at us even tho' most of them would not benefit directly from our presence.

We arrived about noon at another KOA in this smoky, dusty small town. Mexico is a country of amazing contrasts as I suppose most third world countries are. There is work in Creel in the lumber industry and of course, much money in the hands of a few. This town is a jumping off place for tourists visiting the canyon. It is also the home of the Tarahumara Indians who live in the caves and fields around Creel.

We visited the Tarahumaras the next day. The women still wear traditional skirts, blouses and shawls with the skirts being made of yards and yards of fabric, gathered on a waistband. There are many layers of these skirts and the top layer is pulled up as a cover at night. The men wear a very short sarong-type skirt and full gathered shirt. Most Indians wear sandals made from leather strips glued to soles made of old rubber tires. These people walk many miles on all types of terrain in these sandals.

As seems the case in many countries indigenous peoples are at the bottom of the economic ladder and unwelcome by many. This seems the case here as we saw few Mexicans in the company of these native Indians. The Tarahumara are very poor, begging on the streets and living in a very primitive manner. The women seem to do most of the work with the men appearing only to hang about. Lots of children around begging but most of them are sick and only about half of them survive to age five. The women sell beautiful baskets they weave as well as some other small weaving products. Many, many baskets were bought in Creel from these very shy women.

Next day visited Divisidero, a tiny town at the top of the canyon where there is a lovely hotel hanging on the cliffs overlooking a beautiful valley. It is home to many Tarahumara Indians with a small active marketplace. We also visited this same day several spots with breathtaking views. The next morning we leave for Batopilas at the bottom of the canyon.

At eight the next morning a 21-passenger school bus picks up twenty of us at the KOA in Creel. We had been told this trip would be a rough one with a daylong ride in a small cramped bus, little did we know!!! We are spending three nites at the bottom of the canyon in a local hotel so our suitcases are loaded on a pickup truck that will follow us down the canyon. On the bus we can take a backpack or small suitcase only as space is nonexistent. This nonexistent space held true even for our legs. You have never sat in an airplane with this small amount of leg-room, no wonder, this bus was used for grade school children! The first three hours of the trip is on a paved, narrow, winding road, which leads to the real canyon road.

Ah yes, the real canyon road. The next four hours plus was the ride

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from, you can guess it, hell. This road was as nonexistent as space on the bus! Suffice to say it was unlike anything called a road we had ever experienced. Having said all those negative things we wouldn't trade that experience for anything—well maybe the Texas \$77,000,000 lottery!

We stopped along the way down for a delicious lunch. Oscar, our tour operator to the bottom of the canyon, has a sister who prepares the tour lunches in her home. This lunch was also in the pickup that followed us along with our suitcases. Stops along the way were made for us to view the canyon as well as an equally important reason. Potty stops! One of the caravan women had brought along a huge black plastic bag which we held for each other's privacy in the bushes and rocks that served as restrooms.

The scenery was spectacular! Mexico's Copper Canyon differs from our Grand Canyon, which it almost equals in size, in that it is longer but less deep. Our pictures do not do it justice. As the scope of this area just can't be captured by amateur photographers like us. Fortunately, the views of the canyon provided us with a distraction from four hours of continued bouncing, lurching and general discomfort. This was not fun but when we reached the bottom, just before dark, we knew it was all worth it.

Waiting for us at Batopilas after eight and one half hours was a wonderful rainbow trout dinner, perfectly prepared and served! This was a tiny private home where the 20 of us were again packed in but this time we loved it! The food, drink and company were wonderful. Next stop was our hotel and we were ready. The hotel in which Rob and I stayed, was a former politicians' home recently converted to an eight room inn. This hotel had a lovely center patio with large chairs, trees, plants and a fountain. We gathered here mornings to take side trips around Batopilas and again in the evening for drinks and games. The atmosphere was so relaxed and comfortable we felt right at home. A fiesta was held here for us on our last night in town.

Our other meals were at private homes as well where the women cooked on wood stoves and the men served the tables. Every meal was delightful, pleasantly served and happily eaten. Real Mexican food in real Mexico!

We took several walking trips around the town including the home of the Shephard family of Washington, DC who operated several very lucrative silver mines in the area in the early and mid 1800's. Their home was not much short of a castle but now abandoned by the remaining family members. It is in ruins and inhabited by squatters and their animals. But still is lovely and haunting. The Shephards had a number of children and all grew up in this home. Their son has written a book about the family's life here. We also visited one of the Shephard's deserted silver mines where a few men still try to find bits of silver but mostly make adobe bricks by hand near the site.

The village of Batopilas consists of 3 or 4 dusty streets, a central paved area where children play and adults can sit on benches to watch. Tiny, tiny stores dot the village with only goods brought in over the road we came down. Electricity has been available on a regular twenty-four hour basis since May of 2001. Previously power was limited to several hours a day.

An entrepreneur from Estados Unidos opened a hotel for environmental tours in the canyon but closed it after only a few years. We met two American women both of whom had come to Batopilas to work in this hotel. One woman, Helen, from Oak Ridge Tennessee had lived and worked there as a geologist, as well. She had come back for a visit with a Mexican family.

The other American woman, Lynn, was from Detroit and came to Batopilas to work in the now closed hotel. She raised her children and decided she wanted to be "free" so she came to this remote village to work. Since the hotel has been closed she has opened a tiny shop selling silver jewelry two hours a day a few days a week. It's all she needs to live here. And she loves the town and the people. So did we!

Oh dear, it's time to return to creel where we have left our Rv's. We have to go back up the way we came down and most of us we dread the trip. A word here about our driver to the bottom of this canyon. Roberto is in his twenties, and about to become a father for the first time. He dresses in a manner most Mexican men seem to favor. Tight jeans and tight, long sleeved shirts buttoned at the neck. Halfway down the canyon Roberto had a spontaneous nosebleed. The stress of driving this nightmarish road combined with the heat, tight clothing, no sunglasses and airless ball hat brought this macho young man down. He was lucky we had a nurse aboard who assisted him. We got back on the road twenty minutes later with Roberto having his shirt unbuttoned and no hat. Carol the nurse, made him promise to drive back in a white t-shirt and he did. He is a terrific young man and an excellent driver.

Rob and I would probably not make the trip again to the bottom but wouldn't take anything for having done it once. We were delighted to have experienced this village, its people, food and surroundings, which will be a lifetime memory for us. We headed toward the border to be crossed two days later. We remain in contact with several of our fellow travelers and hope to get together with them someday.

Adios

Lyn and Rob Lucas



## Trockel's Tips

By Ede Trockels

Plan ahead - be prepared in case of loss of your wallet. Make copies of both sides of all of the cards in your wallet and store in a safe place, one not being in your Rig, in case of fire.

Do you do a safety check before pulling out with your rig? Hook up without visiting with neighbors or friends. Conversation can interrupt your concentration. Once everything is ready have your co-pilot or other observer check that the turn signals are working on both MH & Toad or Truck/car and trailer. Pull ahead and check for tracking, hitch connections and safety chains.

When was the last time you updated your RV inventory with your insurance company? We are all shoppers and add electronic equipment and other "toys" to our "stuff". Be sure that everything is covered

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## **In The Kitchen with Mary**

by Mary Irons, Food Editor

### ***Cream de Menthe Cake***

1 box yellow cake mix  
1/3 cup Crisco oil (only Crisco!)  
4 eggs  
1 cup sour cream  
1 pkg 3 ¾ oz. Pistacio pudding mix  
¼ cup Cream de Menthe  
1 cup chocolate chips

Mix all together, adding chips last.

Bake in greased and floured tube pan at 350 F. for 45 or 50 minutes. Cool before removing from pan.  
Frost with 1 large container of cool whip. Refrigerate. (It is also good without cool whip.)

Very Good!!!