

THE EGGLESTON GREAT CROSS-COUNTY ADVENTURE

Day 16 — **MAY 17, 2011 (Tuesday)**
DURANGO, CO → MONUMENT VALLEY →
TUBA CITY, AZ → FLAGSTAFF, AZ

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Photos on Picasa: <http://bit.ly/jVjJvb>

Photos on Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/krojBR>

04:30 — **PEACE IN MY WORLD**

The world is at peace mainly because I haven't been watching the news. We did learn that the Space Shuttle took off for its final voyage. We watched 'Dancing with the Stars' last night.

11:15 — **DENNY'S** 6058, 666 Camilo Del Rio, Durango, CO. Chris was our waiter. The breakfast on Day 14 (15 May) was so good that we decided to repeat it. 'Grand Slam': two eggs, 2 pancakes, oatmeal, assorted fruit for both. Cost: 13.98.

12:00 — **ON THE ROAD AGAIN.**

As we headed toward Monument Valley, CO, the once clear skies turned a fluffy, soft mixture of clouds from horizon to horizon. I would liken the appearance to freshly picked Alabama cotton. The colors ranged from off-white to grey to the greyish-blue of the official uniform of the Confederacy.

You remember the Confederacy? It existed during what Yankees call 'Civil War'. Virginians call 'The War Between the States'. And Alabama calls it 'The War of Northern Aggression'. Whatever you call it, it was a horrific time

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for America when the greatest nation in the known worlds came close to splintering into two or three parts.

Any way, my point is that the sky was cloudy and overcast.

We drove Highway 160 to Cortez, and 491/160 to Four Corners and to Kayenta and to Monument Valley and on to Tuba City, AZ

13:04 — Gas at **CITY MARKET 208**, Grand Junction, Colorado.

\$54.31 (\$3.859/gal) Mileage: 25,686

14:10 — **FOUR CORNERS**, Navaho Park < <http://bit.ly/evmX43> >. We paid \$6 (\$3/each) to enter. We took more than the requisite photos. It uses outhouses for restrooms. Not too bad for the guys; but, I'm glad I'm not a woman. The tourists were everywhere. Conveniently, Navaho merchants had tables, enclosed on 3 sides (plus a roof) by walls. However, the wind was blowing so harshly that even the Indians were thinking about surrendering the site and moving on.

17:08 — **MONUMENT VALLEY NAVAJO TRIBAL PARK.**

< <http://bit.ly/7hOJZD> >

☆ Navajo Name: *Tse'Bii'Ndzisgail* ☆ Elevation: 5,564' above sea level

☆ Size: 91,696 acres (extends into Arizona & Utah)

We paid \$20 (\$10/each) to enter. It had a nice Information Center/restaurant/gift shop combination.

Unfortunately, the custodial staff did not coordinate and ALL the bathrooms were closed for cleaning at the same time. Add to the fact that a female was cleaning the men's room and waited until we had a line of 9 guys before asking, "Have you tried the other restroom. It's through those doors," she proclaimed wildly waving in the direction of the closed-for-cleaning restroom we had just come from.

"Yes, ma'ma," I replied, "but since the doors to it are locked and your compatriots told us it would be closed for the remainder of the day, this is our only real inside facility option."

She replied, "Then come on in." (I'm not sure she was serious, but by the time she could point that out, it was too late.)

Only after the 11th guy had entered did she realize that there was no longer any room for her. She left.

The 17-mile trail is just that: A well-worn, and partially destroyed dirt path. We called 'Kidney Killer Road'. It has more 'tank traps', pot holes and 1.5-foot drop offs than the border between Iran & Iraq.

By eight miles, you realize that you would be more comfortable riding in a Conestoga wagon. But, at that point, you've got too many miles invested in the trip and you just press on.

If you're not in a truck, you can plan on replacing your muffler IF your shocks are still working after the trip. Having 4-wheel drive doesn't hurt either.

I watched one guy drive ahead of us in a Ford Mustang, but he turned around at the first photo site and returned to the Info Center parking lot. It was kind of nice to have him ahead of us — screaming obscenities I had never heard before over the 100 decibel music on his CD player. (The National Institute on Deafness & Other Communication Disorders, a part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) < <http://1.usa.gov/manqAq> > recommends no more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure to 100 decibels.)

CAUTION: Be sure to visit the restroom before the drive because you are *really* going to need to visit it after the tour.

Some of the tourists took guided tours on open-sided, covered, truck beds. With the 27 mph winds that were colder than a witch's armpit, it must have been mind numbing. We could hear them whining from 500 meters away. None of the tourists on tour trucks that we saw had any cameras out. Their hands were shoved elbow-deep into their jacket pockets — or someone else's jacket pocket.

Older couples, in the trucks, were hugging like they were still in the drive-ins that disappeared from most of the American landscape in the 1960's. Two guys, who were obviously uncomfortable hugging each other, continued to hold onto each other as if by releasing, they'd fall out of the truck.

Yes, I know that the Family Drive-in is still thriving in Ruskin, Florida. "The Ruskin Family Drive-In Theatre, with over 50 years of continuous service to the Ruskin and South Hillsborough County, has been a community gathering place since its first movie, "Singing in the Rain" played in 1952." says it website,

<http://RuskinFamilyDrivein.com>

19:00 (20:00 on our watches❖) — **TUBA CITY, AZ**

❖ Because Arizona does not believe in Daylight Savings Time (DST), it's a hour behind Central Mountain Time.

This was to be our overnight stay location; but, we were unaware that the high school graduation was this weekend. Pooh Bear!

All three motels that we checked were full, so driving to Flagstaff, Arizona, was our only option.

It's a nice sized town with most of the businesses — including the motels (apparently) — are owned by the Navaho Nation.

19:10 — **DENNY'S RESTAURANT #8695**, Tuba City, AZ 86045 — 928.283.5468

The only sit-down restaurant that didn't offer local or Chinese cuisine we could find, it was and continued to be crowded. The hostess said it was the largest crowd they had since they opened on Mother's Day (8 May 2011).

Obviously, the high school graduation had caught them by surprise as well. The waitress announced they were out of chicken fried steak, chips and seasoned French fries. And the crowds kept coming.

We had our usual Grand Slam Breakfast because none of the other offered meals appealed to us.

Cost: **\$13.98**

22:15 (23:15 on our watches) — **LUXURY INN**, 3100 E. Rt 66, Flagstaff, AZ 86004 —

Our planned 3.5 hour day had turned into a 9.5 hour odyssey.

The dark road drive from Tuba City to Flagstaff had been relatively flat but curved frequently.

There were only two vehicle speeds. The tourists trudged along at 45-50 mph while the locals passed us at speeds somewhere between 75 and the speed of light. One minute I saw their headlights in my rear-view mirror and the next second, their tail lights disappeared into the darkness that was the horizon.

The Motel hostess was very cordial and worked with us to ensure that we had a basic requirements: Wi-Fi, room temperature controlled by us, and ground-level (because my knees don't like stairs anymore).

No, it has nothing to do with parachuting out of aircraft for 12 years. IF there was a problem with parachuting, my Army Recruiter would have told me.

Room 120 was very nice with a comfortable, queen-sized bed. The space heater the hostess loaned us ran all night & kept us warm.

I laid on the bed to watch some TV show, but passed out before I could get my glasses off.

Cost: **\$91.96** for two days.

23:15 — **LIFE IS WHAT HAPPENS**

“Life is what happens while you’re making other plans.”

This day did not go as we had planned, but we modified as we went along and found success in the end.

With Susan Boyle singing “Wild Horses” < <http://bit.ly/KbKjm> >, I realize that life is as it should be.

If you don’t like where you are, inspect your physiology < <http://bit.ly/m9Ch9Y> > and move your being to where you want it to be. Mind, body, spirit — these are the things that add up to who you are.

Define yourself.