



Footprints



Placer Pacers' Newsletter, PO Box 142, Auburn, California 95604

September 2010

CELEBRATING NATIONAL CHILDHOOD ENJURY PREVENTION MONTH NO HITTING, NO HITTING!

Don's Discourse

Plan Ahead For Fun Fitness Friendship Food

Here it is September already and it seems like the summer has just flown by. This month the Placer Pacers will be hosting a three day event celebrating our 20th Anniversary as a club. The walks will be in Auburn starting at the Auburn Dam overlook. I would like to encourage everyone to come out and join us for the fun, fitness, food and friendship.



Also this month is the trip to Whidbey Island in Washington for a fun filled weekend of walking and social events. A group of us are caravanning up there, leaving on Monday, September 6 and walking several YREs on the way up. It's not too late to join in the fun.

Coming up in early October is a fun filled weekend as we do a scheduled walk in Reno on Saturday, October 2, the Reno YRE on Sunday and Carson City on Monday, October 4. It will be another great chance to do some walks in some great locations.

If you haven't figured it out yet, we have fun, here at home with the events in Auburn and other local walks and we have great trips planned with lots of fun, fitness, friendship, and food. Come and join in the fun. Don

Club Events

Placer Pacers Hosts Exceptional Events

The Placer Pacers are noted Nationally for their events, having earned the American Volkssport Association's Trailblazer Award in 2009. The selection of quality and interesting trails, well marked and/or with faultless directions and friendly, competent, motivated and helpful staffed Start, Finish, Specialties tables, and Checkpoints, sets the standard for conducting events.

Auburn

The Placer Pacers' twentieth anniversary walk is scheduled in Auburn, the location of the Club's first walk, on September 24 through 26; three days for three walks. The start point will be the American River Overlook (formerly the Auburn Dam Overlook). The walks are the Canyon, Town and American River Confluence. The Canyon walk is new and will take us out to an overlook of the Sacramento Valley and into the American River Canyon for a 10K walk with a 6K option. The Town walk will take us into part of the American River Canyon and then into old town, past the new Auburn Streetscape and clock tower and back to the start finish. This walk also has a 6K option. The third walk requires that we drive to the confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River and walk up to Lake Clementine. There will be a 5K option here. There will be a barbecue of hot dogs and hamburgers on Saturday and Sunday, with an anniversary cake at 1:00 on Saturday.

Now is the time to sign up to help out with these great events. A signup sheet is on the web at: <http://www.placerpacers.org/Auburn-schedule.htm>. To sign up, just choose your time and day and send Don an email with that information.

Placer Pacer Wonderings

On The Road Again With The Haskells

[Bette & Ron Haskell convoyed with several other Placer Pacers and Friends to Custer, SD for the annual Crazy Horse Volkswalk in June, and then went west to Oregon for the Columbia Gorge Volkswalk extravaganza. Following that weekend rally of volkssporters, they headed north to meet up with Bette's sister and her husband for an Alaskan campaign. We pick up the report of their travels as they head farther north...]

[July 8] Moving right along, and continuing to have a great trip. The scenery is so beautiful and seeing lots of wildlife right on the side of the road; bear, caribou, stone sheep, and bison. Last night we stayed in Liard River, and got to soak in some Hot Springs, and it felt so good. Tonight we're in Teslin, Yukon Territory. The weather is really cooperating now. Will probably be AK in two days. Can't believe it's 10:45 pm right now and it's still daylight.

[July 15] TA DA!!! We made to Alaska today. We are still rolling along. Last night we stayed on the side of the road in Destruction Bay, Yukon Territory, on a turn out, beside a beautiful lake. When we got up we found out the outside tire of the left side of the dual tires had gone flat. It's being repaired as I write in a town, called Tok, AK. Staying in a nice campground tonight. As we said before the scenery is absolutely beautiful. We saw several mountain ranges that are covered with glaciers. However, today's drive was pretty rough as the road for about 100 miles was under a lot of repair and was gravel. Also, the roads are known to have, what they call "frost heaves" which make them very, bumpy, full of ruts, and caused you to average 25 to 30 miles per hour attempting to avoid the large potholes and ditches and, of course, very dusty. We had a heads up to expect this. Heading to Fairbanks tomorrow and will keep you posted whenever we are able to get WiFi.

[July 20] Hi again, We took the shuttle excursion through Denali National Park. We weren't as lucky as some but luckier than others as it wasn't raining but it was somewhat cloudy and we only got to see part of Mt McKinley. They say only about 30% of the people get to see the whole, massive, mountain. There are usually clouds surrounding it or hovering over the top. However, it was like a mountain safari, as we were able to see, grizzly bears, moose, caribou, Dall Sheep, fox, wolves, coyote, pikas, and snowshoe rabbits, We also did an AVA walk in the park the day before the tour. On the 7/17 we went to Wasilla AK, and met up with our bro-in-law's (who we are traveling with) cousin, who lives in Wasilla, and went to a wonderful restaurant for a salmon dinner. Stayed the night in a campground. Got to see and take a picture of Sarah Palin's house, on Wasilla Lake. It is a touristy town, lots of ATVs (quads) running around on frontage trails along the main roads. We think everyone in town must own one. Then we found some geocaches. Headed to Anchorage on 7/18. Did the Anchorage historic AVA walk, had a wonderful lunch in the Captain Cook Hotel dining room, and then did some more sightseeing. Left Anchorage on 7/20 and we are in Homer, AK tonight. It was raining; hope it clears for tomorrow.

We did have one flat tire on the trip, picked up a nail somewhere, had it repaired, and we now have another tire that has lost air and Ron has put the spare on again and we'll get that one repaired as soon as we find time. That's all for tonight.

[July 24] Hi, again, While we were in Homer, AK, we took a ferry trip to Seldovia on the 21st, a small community where everything has to be brought in by ferry, boat, or small airplane. We took a nice hike on a trail which was like being in a rain forest, down to a beach, where Blair, my

sister and I, collected some pretty rocks, very small rocks, as we had to carry them back. We then went on to Girdwood, AK, which is the home of The Alyeska Ski Resort. Blair and I decided we needed to treat ourselves and had the most wonderful dinner. I had the best salmon I've ever had, Ron had halibut. What a beautiful area with a hotel that is spectacular. We're in here sitting a table in one of the many private corners at a table, sipping coffee and using their WiFi.

Yesterday, Ron and I did do an AVA walk in the morning and we found 3 geocaches. In the afternoon we took a train to Spencer Glacier, and went on a hike with a naturalist. Today we are heading down to Seward, AK for a look see. Not sure what we'll do but will decide when we arrive. Of course, this will depend on the weather. As we said before, we've been having a lot of rain and cloudy weather and temps never much over the high 60s. After Seward, going to travel to Valdez. Will update later.

With regard to the second low tire, we found it was just a leaky valve stem extension that Ron had installed on the inside dual tire, so all is well there.

That's all for today.

[July 30] Hi again, Well, since the last email, we headed for Seward but stopped along the way in the town of Girdwood, on 7/22, which is the Alyeska Recreation Area, where there is a large, popular ski area and a beautiful hotel that we enjoyed snooping around. We partook of a delicious salmon dinner at a local restaurant that evening. On the 23rd we did an AVA walk in town where we saw a beaver dam and lodge, but no beaver; however, he had been seen them the night before; also found 3 geocaches. That afternoon we took a train ride, out of Portage, which was near Girdwood. At our stop we got off the train for a hike with a ranger naturalist, to Spencer Glacier. At this one we got pretty close and personal. Before leaving Girdwood we took a tram ride to the top of the mountain for a spectacular view of the valley below and the bare ski slopes. In the p.m. we headed for Seward.

On the 25th, arrived in Seward and made reservations for a 7 1/2 hour boat cruise through the fjords of Kenai National Park. On this trip they served the most fantastic, all you can eat lunch of prime rib and baked salmon. We never had prime rib this good before, talk about melt in your mouth. Since I can get a little queasy, a Dramamine was popped and sure glad, as some of the ride was a little rough. It was worth it, as we saw orcas and humpback whales breaching quite close to the boat and playful porpoises ran alongside for quite awhile, boy, can they move. Couldn't get very good pictures as it happens so fast and my camera lens just isn't quick enough, but it is imprinted in our memories. On the 26th drove back to Anchorage, where Blair & Joe had to get their windshield repaired after a large rock hit it and put a star right in the driver's view. They also got an oil-change. It was raining

pretty hard this day so we did some shopping where we could stay indoors; we also stayed in a parking lot with many other rigs. Wal-Mart said we couldn't stay in theirs. Got through the previous rainy day, and woke up to sunshine, with plans to go to Valdez, but after reading ahead we discovered there was a National Park we had never heard of, Wrangell-St Elias Natl. Park, so we took a little side trip. This park is 4 times larger than Yellowstone, but of course you can't drive through much of it with your vehicle as it is so primitive. Please check it out on Google, as I don't have time to explain this park to you now. Took a ranger walk, and we are considering taking a shuttle tour of the park after we visit Valdez. Now we're back on the road to Valdez, where we made a few quick stops along the way, one at turnout that gives you an up close look at the APL, Alaska Pipe Line, and information. Moved along and stopped to take a hike, and did a little rock hopping up to Worthington Glacier, where this was really up close and personal as we were able to put hands on. We then continued down the road and when you think you've seen it all, we drove through the most beautiful, steep, canyon we've ever seen with such beautiful waterfalls right at the side of the road. Finally made it to Valdez, where we took another 7 1/2 hr cruise to another glacier, Columbia Glacier. Again, we saw breaching humpback whales and orcas and endangered Stellar Sea Lions and a lot of otters. That evening we were told if we went to the Salmon Hatchery, we might be privy to watch feeding bears. We were not disappointed, we enjoyed seeing one black bear wending his way to the fish ladder and grabbing salmon out of the water and munching away while gulls were screeching and grabbing at any parts of his catch he dropped. This was another long day and I mean long as the sun doesn't set very early. That's all for tonight. Take care.

[August 4] Hi again,

Here's our latest update.

The last email I sent on July 30th was actually written on the evening of the 29th and sent on the 30th.

So, to continue, we browsed around Valdez in the a.m. and found 7 geocaches, then we headed out for our new destination, Stewart, BC and Hyder, AK off the Cassiar Highway. To get there we must go through Tok, AK and Whitehorse again. So, we pretty much deadheaded on our way, stopping to do laundry on Aug. 1. After that boring job was finished we headed for Junction 37 off the Alaska Highway to the Cassiar Highway. Well, when we arrived at the junction we learned that there was a forest fire on the Cassiar Highway, which started a week ago, and the road had been closed on and off and was closed now, but they would escort vehicles through when safe. At this time the fire was not a danger and interestingly enough, they did not fight this fire but just let it burn, but the smoke was much too thick at times to drive safely.

There were cars and RVs parked at the road block waiting to be escorted through whenever fire crews felt the smoke was safe to drive through. Sadly, we went into town to do a little grocery shopping and planned to come back and get in line. However, we never should have done that, for when we returned, we found out that the group that was there had been escorted through and they would not open it again, hopefully, until after 8 a.m. on the 3rd, if it was safe to do so. Now we were 1st and 2nd in line, and slowly many more rigs lined up behind us. We had our dinner and took a walk up the road about a mile and a half, and were being attacked by mosquitoes, so that ended our much needed exercise. The next morning they said it was not safe to pass yet, so we waited and waited all day visiting with many of the people in the lineup, hearing and sharing all our travel stories. Very interesting to hear all the tales.

As the day dragged on we took a walk to the end of the line of vehicles and RVs and counted 99 cars and RVs, 3 motorcycles and 2 bicyclists. The bikes and motorcycles were up in the front now. Finally at 3 p.m. the escort, pilot vehicle brought in the northbound folks and then escorted us southbound. They did load the bicyclists and their bikes into the pilot vehicle. Yes, it was smoky, and since it had jumped the road a few days ago things were still smoldering at this time. Now it was pretty late to get to our destination, so we stayed overnight in a turnout (rest area) with a couple of other rigs that had been in the convoy. Now, tonight we are in an RV park in Stewart, BC after a beautiful drive today through canyons, over rivers, by mountains with spectacular waterfalls and glaciers on them and through bear country, where we saw black bears and a grizzly crossing the road right in front of us. What else is new, around every bend in the road is another awesome sight just as beautiful as the ones we've already seen, just taking our breath away.

Since we've had such cool, cloudy and sometimes rainy weather we've not been bothered by mosquitoes; however, it is getting much warmer and sunnier so the fight is on with those pesky things, also flies.

That's all for tonight.

Finally got WiFi again, so here is our update:

Trip update August 10, 2010

On Aug. 5, 2010, arrived in Stewart, BC and we took a self guided road sightseeing trip up to the top of Salmon Glacier, the worlds largest glacier accessible by car, in Hyder, AK, just over the border from Stewart, BC, where we are staying in a campground. There is much history up this canyon, which has remains of silver and copper mines. When we got to the summit where we had planned to take a hike to an area to view heather and wild flowers and have a wonderful picnic lunch. When we got out of the car we were practically eaten alive by mosquitoes and flies. So much for our best laid plans. We quickly took pictures of the glacier and hightailed back down the 22mi.

gravel road. When we got to the bottom we stopped for another photo op, just before crossing back over the border into BC, and got a flat tire on Blair & Joe's car. It was about 2:30 p.m. by now, so we ate lunch in the car and then changed the tire. The border guards offered to help but we didn't need it. Then, when we crossed they asked us all the usual questions. Where do you live, where have you been, do you have any firearms, where are you going, etc. That was really dumb, we were only across the border for a couple hours and there is nothing there. Oh well.

Next a.m., Aug 6, drove to Hazelton and after visiting the Visitor Center was told that a drive to the historic town of Old Hazelton would be worthwhile. NOT! It was a very depressed town, although there were some old buildings and some things of interest, but not something that was worth wasting our good travel time. We returned to the main highway and headed to Houston, arriving later than we liked and had some trouble finding a place to stay for the night, hoping to boondock in one of the rest areas, but we found out was a No-No, so we found a campground.

On Aug.7, we had decided ahead of time, that Blair & Joe would head for home as they needed to be home in Redmond, OR by the 10th. Ron & I had decided we wanted to go to Jasper National Park, in Alberta, Canada. We parted company and went our separate ways. On the way we were able to look up a geocache in Vanderhoof, BC. Stopped in the Visitor Center and asked if they had WiFi just to find a cache. The young lady, docent, knew what we were talking about but wouldn't tell us where it was, but did point in the direction of the cache and our geosense kicked in and we knew exactly where it would be and we found it with no trouble. Also stopped at a local Sat. Farmer's Market and picked up a Rhubarb pie and a Saskatoon (a local berry) turnover pastry. Both were yummy!!! Continued on our way and came across a very small sign for an Ancient Forest. We decided to check it out and took a most fascinating 3 kilometer hike through a Cedar Rain Forest, with Cedars that dated at about 1 to 2 thousand years. These trees were almost as big as some of the Redwoods in Calaveras Big Trees Park in Calif. Unbelievable. We took another side trip along a trail and saw some logging being done, which was quite interesting.

Aug. 8, arrived in Mt. Robson Provincial Park, BC, just outside of Jasper Natl. Park, Alberta, Canada. Stayed in a wonderful campground the next two nights and visited with some very interesting fellow campers in the next site. Aug. 9, drove up to Jasper, walked around the town and had lunch in a local restaurant and after that we took a hike up the Maligne Trail along the Maligne River and canyon. This canyon and river can not be explained and any photos taken will not capture the beauty and grandeur of the raging river that has carved out the canyon over the millions of years.

Aug. 10, did a 10 kilometer walk to Kinney Lake in Mt Robson Provincial Park. Another indescribable river and canyon of beauty. This is pretty much the end of our trip as we are now going to deadhead home. Will cross the border into the U.S. tomorrow, drive through WA, pick up our car in Castle Rock, and drop into OR & CA, and home.

This has been one heck of a trip. We've seen so much and experienced so much, never realizing how big and beautiful our neighbors to the north, Canada and Alaska, which is really The Last Frontier, as it is called, is. We marvel and wonder how and what the people do to make a living, as there is so much nothing between the cities, towns and small communities of only a couple hundred people within a hundred miles or so of one another. Of course, mining and logging are real mainstays for the majority of them.

That's it. We'll be home in a few days.

Bette & Ron

Next Meeting

The next Placer Pacers business meeting will be at 7 PM, September 14, 2010, at the Round Table Pizza Restaurant in Auburn Town Center, 370 Elm Avenue, a block north of Interstate 80. Come early for your favorite table, to eat and make gossip.

Rescue Wisdom: You can accomplish much if you don't care who gets the credit.

“Lord, you pick ‘em up and I’ll put ‘em down.”

I found the Fallen Leaf Lake photos!

