

Western Road Trip Newsletter



A snowy trip home

Day 23
Sunday
November 17th

Avon, CO
To
Merton, WI

Stats

1315 miles today
4593 total miles this trip

Weather

High Temp: 50
Low Temp: 20's
Conditions: Sunny & Snowy

"I gave Homer a
piece of my
mind!"

Hello To My Family & Friends

Well...today I start the last leg of my Western Road Trip Vacation. I left Avon about 8:15, and taking Jeremy's advice, stopped at the Northside Kitchen for some donuts. Jeremy told me they had the best breakfast in town and great donuts. I'm glad to say he was right.



The road conditions as I left Jeremy's condo.



I had considered a side trip to Central City, a place visited on vacation in the mid 1960's



I think the camper needs a shower more than I did.

I received an invite from Ben, to stop off in Denver and watch the Packer game. I was planning to accept until I found out the game did not start until 2:25 MST. If it would have been 11:00, no problem, but the late start would cost me three hours on the road.

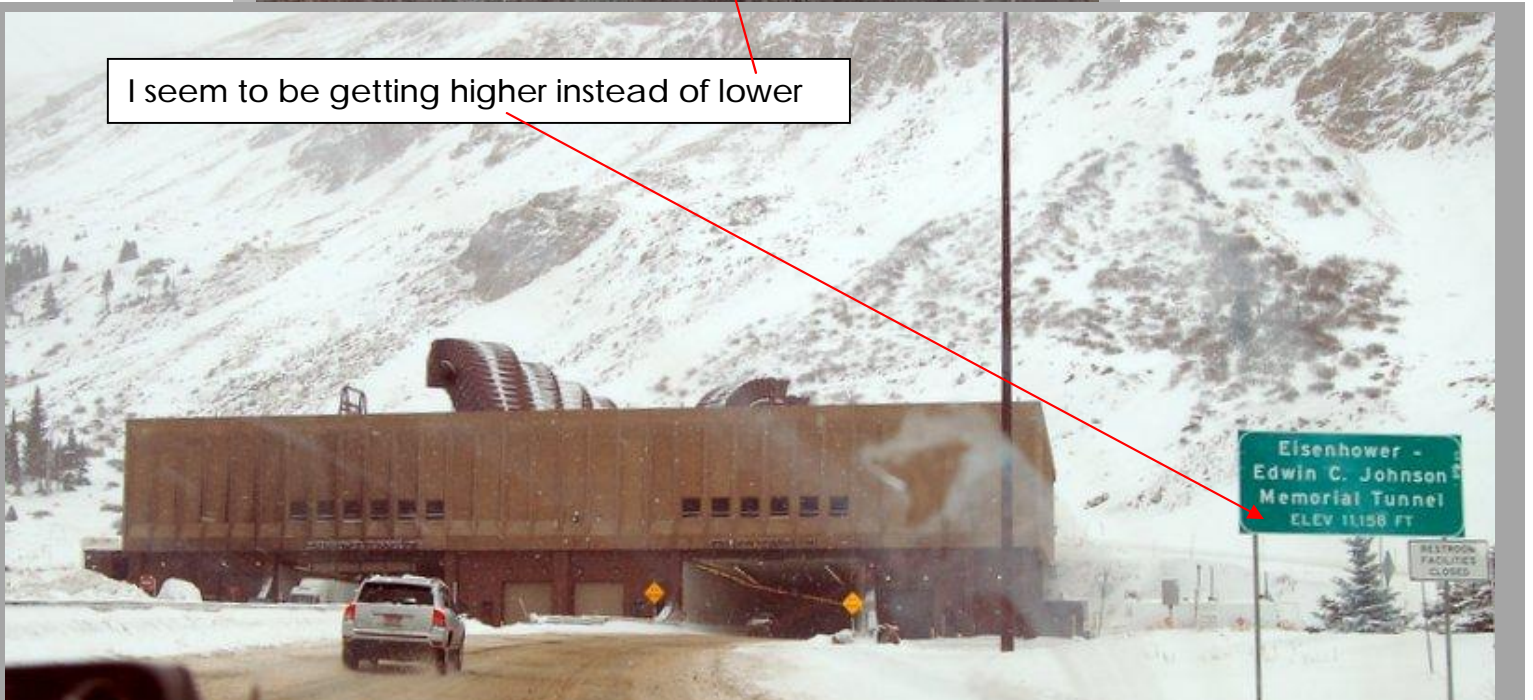


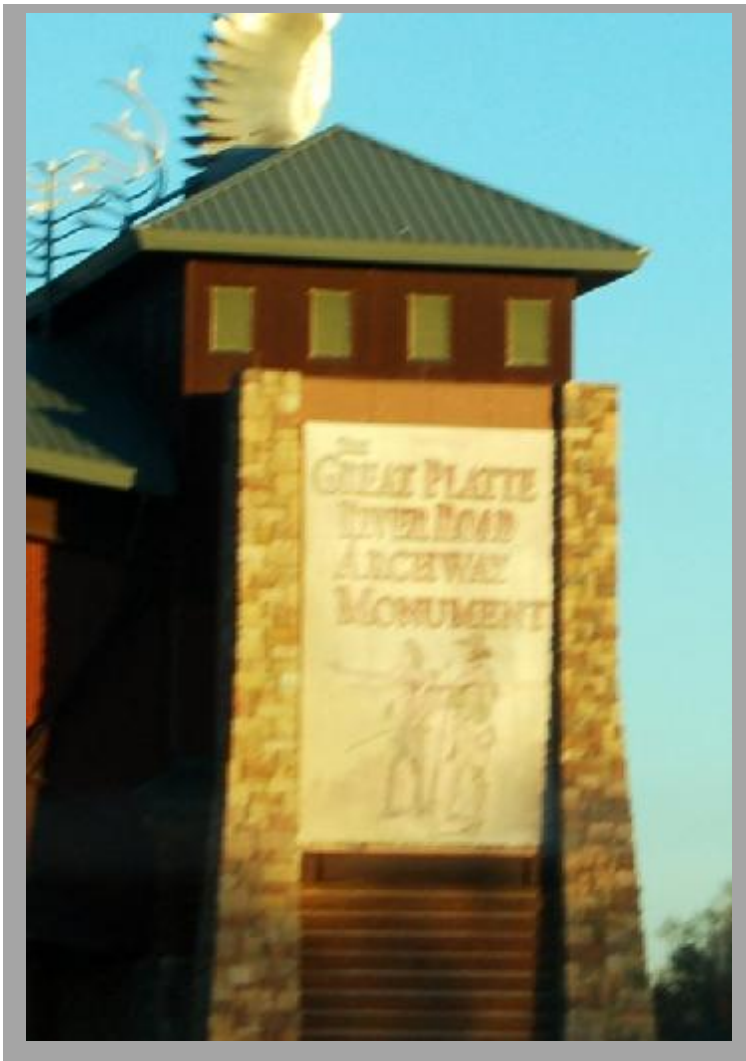
Above: As I headed up to Vail Pass I passed all these semi's putting tire chains on....Not a good sign of things to come.

Below: Just another reason to spend winter in Florida.



I seem to be getting higher instead of lower





I climbed Idaho Springs Pass after which the sun came out and the temp began to rise. Denver was pretty quiet on that Sunday morning as I made my way through and switched to I80 East.

It's a little hard to read, but it says "Great Platte River Road Archway Monument"

Kevin told me to try and stop here because it was pretty cool and Bob 3 seconded that thought. But I was kind of baffled because I was told it was near Ogallala, Nebraska. I passed Ogallala, keeping my eyes open. After another two hours I thought I'd have to tell those guys I somehow missed it. But then, as I neared Kearney, Nebraska (150+ miles east of Ogallala), there it was.

It looked pretty interesting, and I needed a break, so I pulled in. It didn't look very busy, and as I walked up to the door I noticed the sign telling me they close at 5 p.m. It was 4:58. There was a gentleman locking the doors, but he let me in and told me about the tour and what was there and seemed genuinely disappointed that I would miss it.





He did let me take this picture and I promised him I would make sure it was open the next time I passed through.

There did seem to be a lot of things to see and do here. Just so you know, this spot of the Platte River was a starting point for wagon trains going west on the Platte, Oregon and Mormon Trails.



That is the last of the photos folks.

I stopped for dinner in Lincoln, Nebraska. Then, without realizing it, I took a 180 mile 3 hour detour and added South Dakota and Minnesota to my trip log.

I was supposed to take I80 east to Des Moines, then north a little to catch 151 back through Dubuque, Madison and home, about 542 miles from Omaha. For some reason, or should I say somehow, the volume got turned down on my GPS (Homer where are you?). As I drove through Omaha I realized I missed the exit to I80. I mistakenly thought I was on a bypass that would connect back to I80 in a few miles. I followed the GPS (still not realizing the sound was off) and in the dark could not tell I was heading north instead of east. I know, "Why didn't you just look at the compass?" I was listening to a book on CD and assumed (there it is) that I was going east. After a few hours I saw a billboard advertising something in South Dakota. I even said to myself at this point, "They sure are advertising pretty far away from South Dakota".

Suddenly I see the signs for Sioux Falls, South Dakota and I90 east. I pulled to the side of the road and did some checking. Couldn't believe it. I gave Homer a piece of my mind, let me tell you. At this point it was just as far to go on as it was to try and go back or find a different route. For miles and miles I was....angry. Oh well, so it goes. Adding an extra 180 miles? No big deal.

After 23 hours on the road and 1315 miles, I arrived home at 7:15 a.m. Safe & sound.

I know what you're saying. If I arrived home early Monday morning, why is it Thursday before I send this out? 23 hours on the road does not leave much time for the laptop or sleep. I needed both Monday morning. I also did not want to send out Friday, Saturday and Sunday all at the same time. I wanted you to enjoy my trip as much as I did.

Another point. I mentioned the loss of the cell phone data cord in Monument Valley. Seems no one around here, even Samsung, does not have any in stock. I had to order from Amazon and it will take a week or so to get here. When it does, I will send out the Panoramic shots I took. They are impressive.

Last minute update: The dog just chewed up my phone. Maybe I will get those panoramic shots out sooner than I thought.

I would like to thank everyone for their support and kind comments for my feeble attempt as a journalist. Writing this newsletter was like having everyone right there with me to talk about the events of that day, right after they happened.

I enjoyed this trip very much. The scenery in person was even better than the photos. As I told Erin during a phone call from Goulding's Lodge, I think you can see in the photos that I am smiling a lot on this trip, especially during the Monument Valley Horseback Riding portion. I would gladly do another horseback riding adventure.

Thanks again. Happy Thanksgiving! Merry Christmas! See you on the golf course!

Mark