



# In Search of El dorado

A daily journal of my travels and adventures in my.....Search for Eldorado

Hello to Family & Friends

Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2021 Day 61

Today actually starts last night. Just as I was finishing the newsletter, the couple arrived back at the car parked next to us. Morgan had noticed the lights were on earlier, but of course there is nothing we could have done. Now another rental van with two couples notices the issue and offers to help with a jump. I sent the newsletter email and joined them with another light. They were having trouble getting anything to correctly connect, I took a look and told them to attached the positive clamp to the little metal bar, as that's what it's for. "No, no, we tried that" and so on. The jumper cables owner felt the connection inside the clamp was not working so they stripped the wires and tried attaching them that way. After several attempts a Ranger showed up. The first thing he says is "Is that your RV? You know you can't park here overnight." "You bet (Mr Ranger), we were just parked here when this happened outside" " Well ok, just so you know you can't park here overnight" Then he took a look under their hoods, told them to connect the positive clamp to the little metal bar as that's what it's for. I guess I didn't say it with enough authority. The engine started right up. So we moved down the road to a small pullover and went to bed.



The alarm went off at 6:30 a.m. and we drove into the Pine Springs Campground to hopefully find a spot. There were about two or three open, so we grabbed the one you see above. I felt it was a little noisy overnight, even though we were just off the highway it was pretty loud. Fortunately, only one vehicle goes by about every half hour; I also had an issue with warm and cold, it seemed I would get warm and throw the covers off, then get cold and pull them back, and this was happening constantly. I know, you're all joking about 'hot flashes' right now. Wrong! It just so happens I left a window open through the 35 degree night. End of problem.



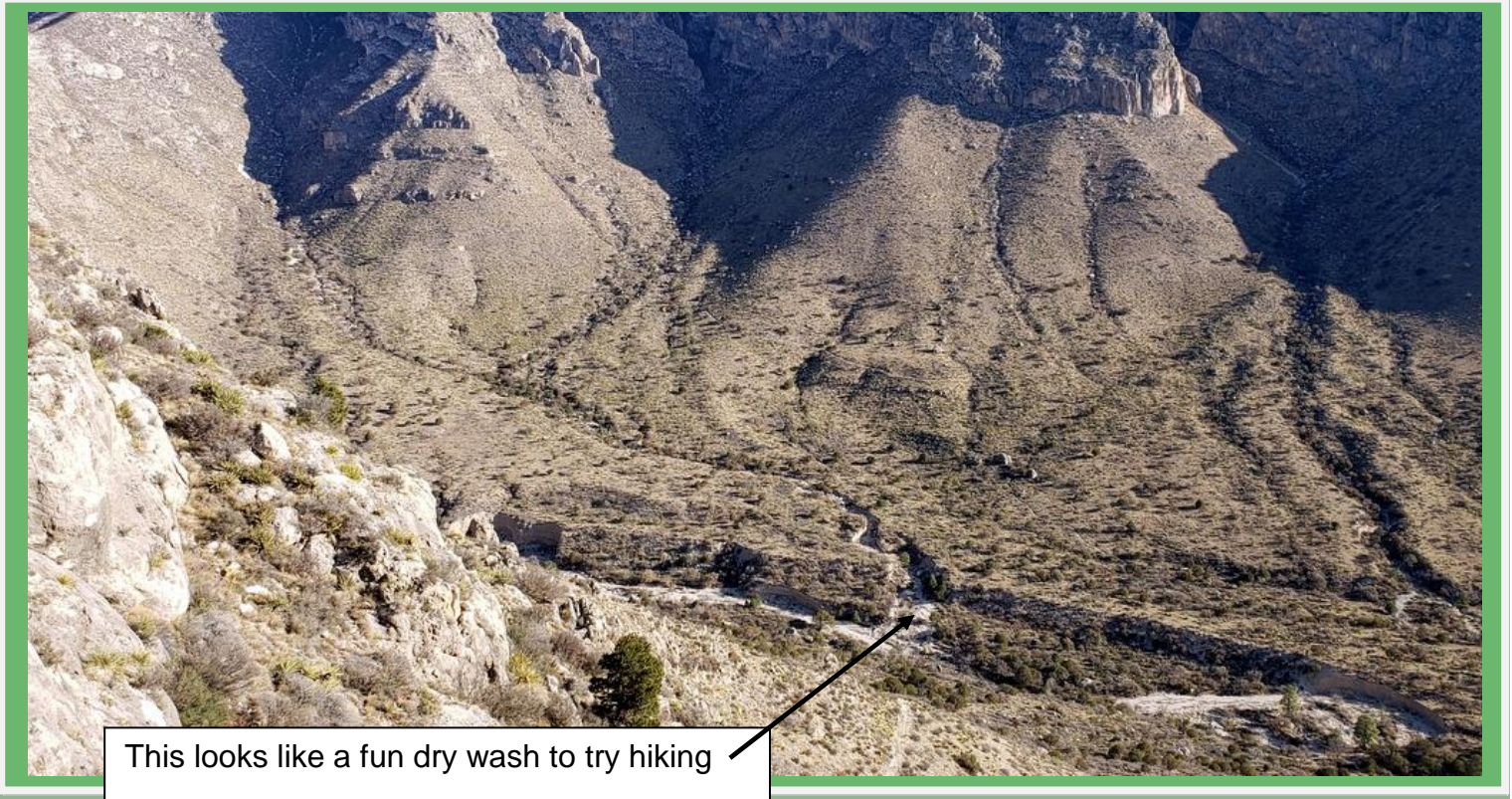
We ate breakfast, cleaned up, I walked over and brought back a pay envelope and filled it out. Morgan went out to get the license number of the RV to add. Saw a couple deer while filling it out, than I saw this one as we were getting ready to head off.



Backpack, camel pack, frozen bottles of water and Gatorade, protein bar (Morgan), Kind Bars (me), lunches, M&M's for desert, hiking poles, hat, layers of clothing, cameras, tripod (which we went back for and didn't use), Morgan took a group picture for the gang in front of us, and off we go. I am going to leave the photos large so you can enjoy them, probably only two per page. A comment here and there where appropriate. The arrow points the way to our destination.











We are right on the border of Mountain Time and Central Time. This morning, as we sat six feet from each other, each of us had a different time. I bring this up because the photos are somewhat out of sequence due to the aforementioned time issue. Right now I am too tired to try and really sort them out. The obvious ones will be easy. The photo below should be farther along the hike. I wanted to show you the significant line of demarcation from one climate zone to the next, that being the tree line. This northwestern slope is away from the harsh desert and the pine trees start to dominate.





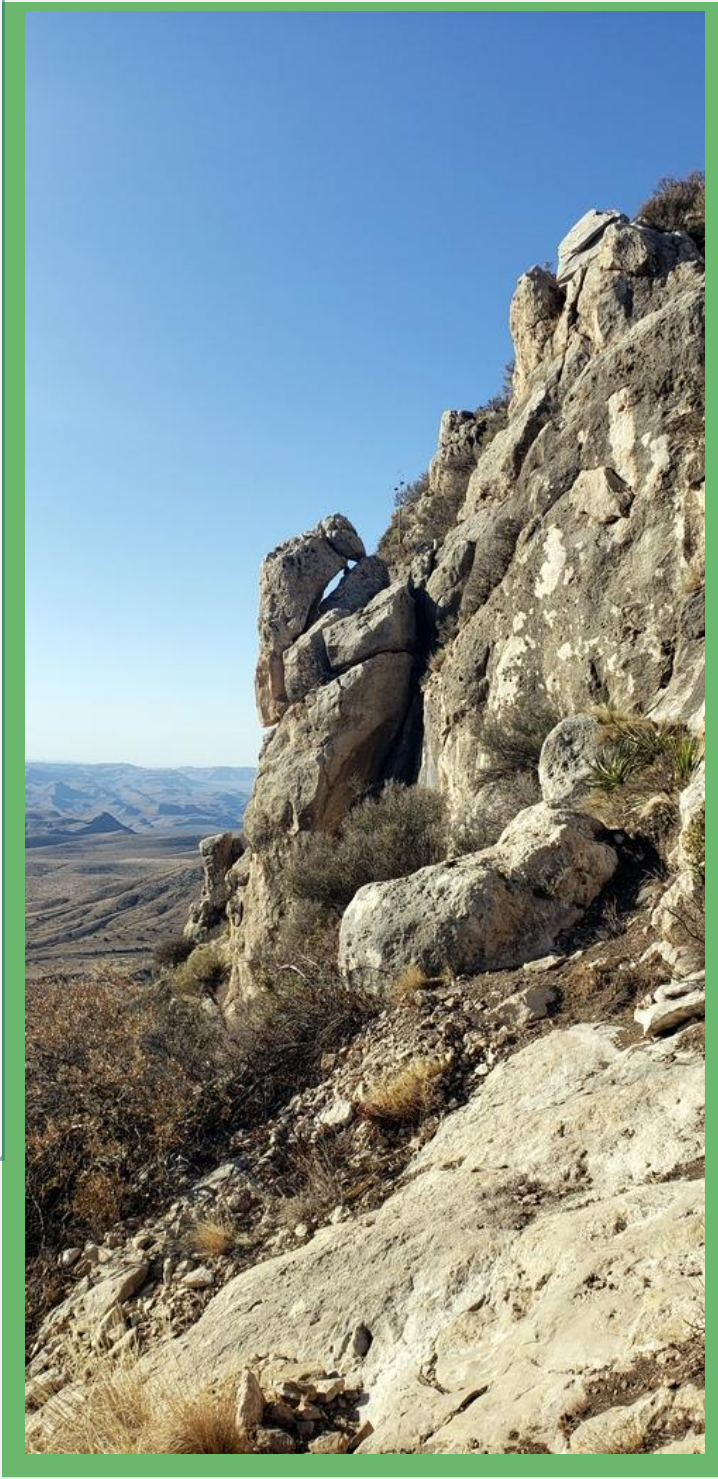


This was a great hike across three temperate zones, sun, shade, shadows, Fun!





A beautiful trail.







It's hard to see, but there is a wooden bridge we had to cross.







Above - I'm not sure which trail this is, but you can really follow it up the mountainside.

Below - We all read yesterday about how the sea once covered this area, here is living proof, Morgan found a shell fossil on top of Guadalupe Peak.



Now is a good time for some idea of how I planned the day. We are ascending just over 3000 feet in 4.5+ miles. I figured if I could average one mph on the upslope, 4.5 miles = 4.5 hours, add a half hour for several breaks, gets me to the peak in five hours. Give or take 30 minutes at the peak (lunch), add another 2.5 hours for the descent and we have ourselves an eight hour day. Morgan could probably make it to the top and back down in about four hours if.....



...if she didn't have to drag me along.



Made it – The highest point in Texas.



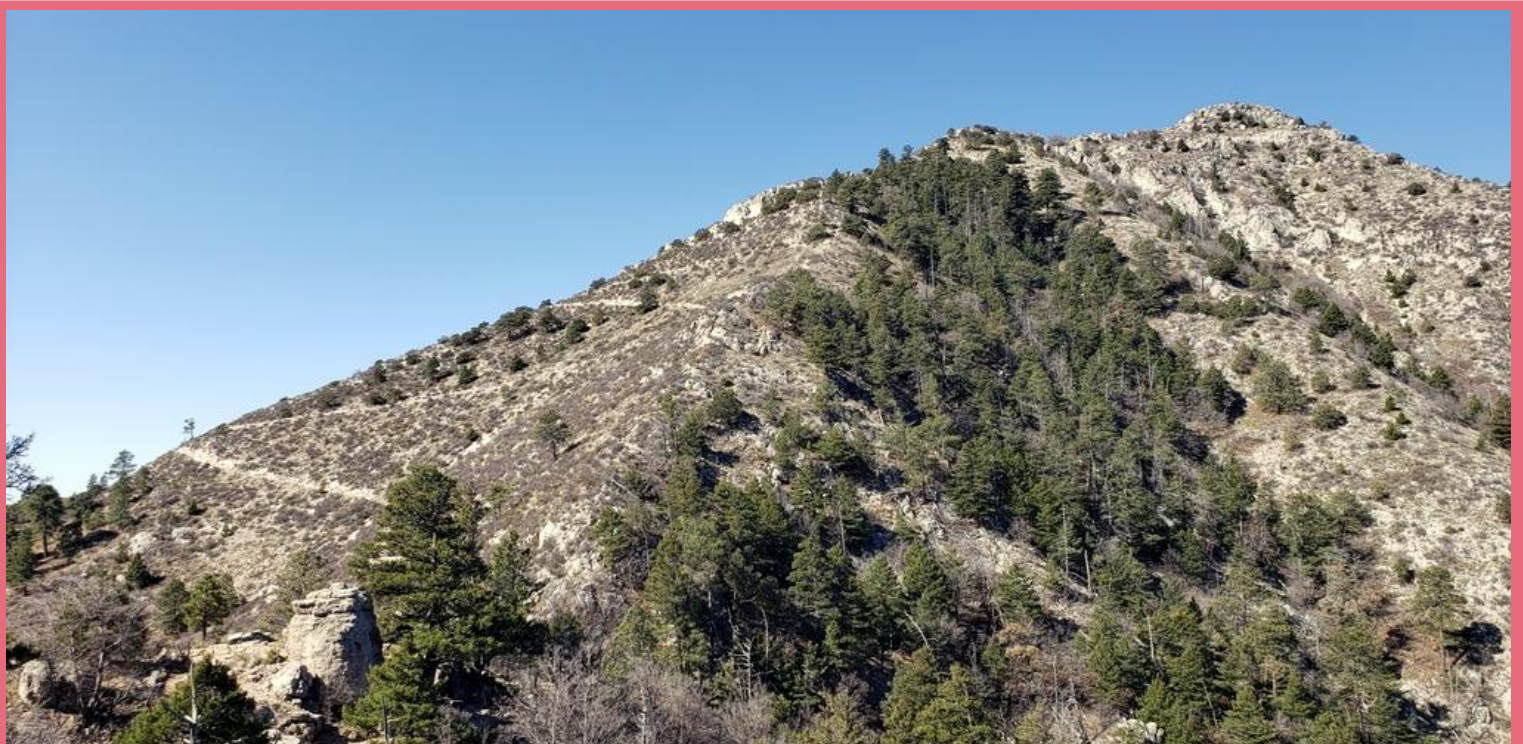
Here are the real figures – We left the parking lot at 8:52 a.m. After ascending 3025 feet we arrived at the peak at noon on the dot. We ate lunch and spent about 49 minutes at the peak, taking a lot of pictures for other groups. Morgan burned 1997 calories, according to her Apple Watch. Average heart rate was 119 beats per minute. My average heart beat was too high to be measured. We averaged almost two miles per hour the entire climb, nearly double my guesstimate. Our round trip time was 5.5 hours. Morgan just informed me that the Badgers beat UNC 85-62. GO BUCKY!!!!





This was on the way up during a break, with our destination in the background.

Below is also on the way up, you can see our switchback path.

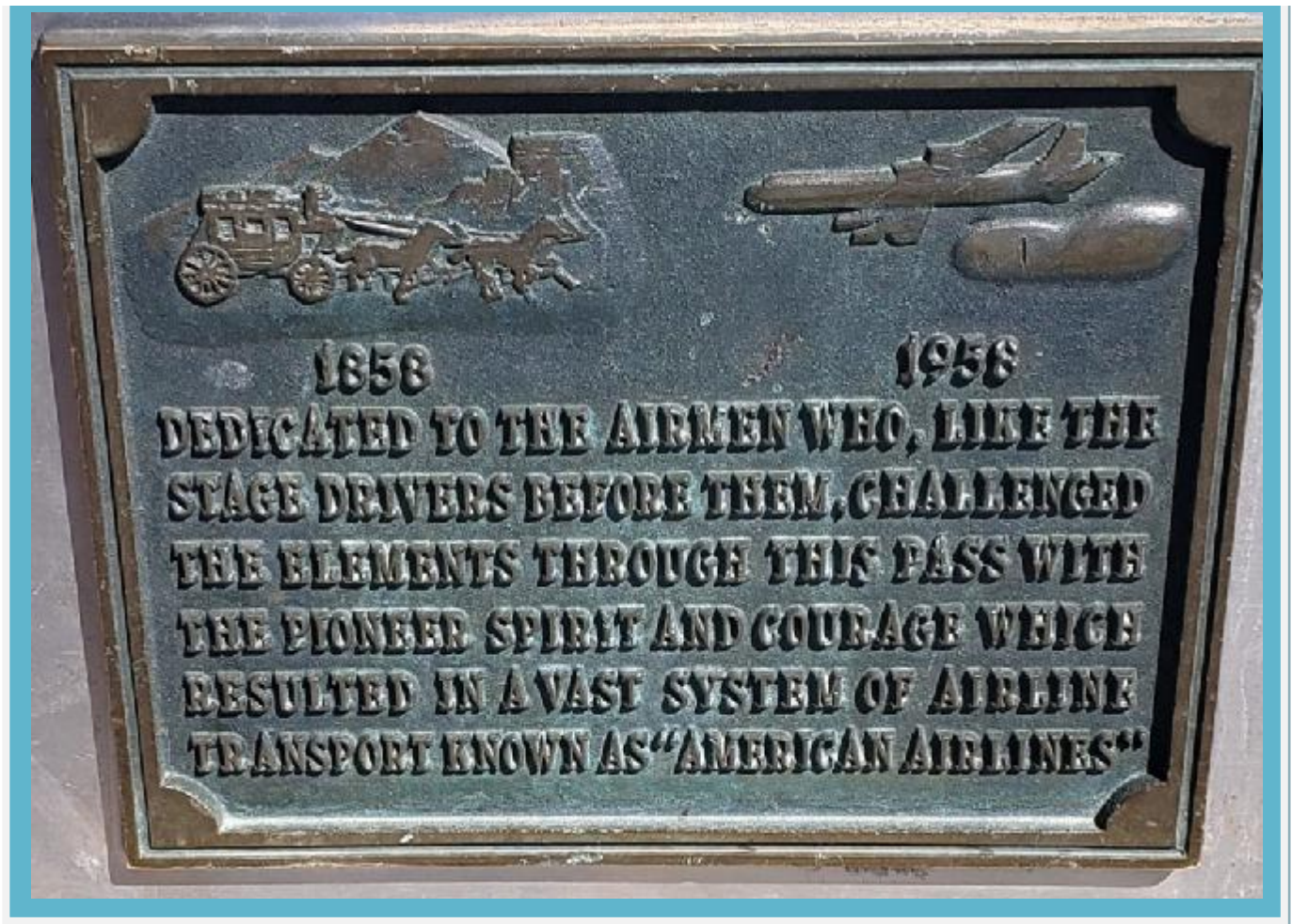




The following are from the peak.















Here is the wooden bridge path again



Click on this link for a treat

<https://insearchofdorado.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Rocky-Peak.mp4>





This is a great shot.  
We are now on the  
way back down.











The rest of the afternoon was very laid back. We are low on water. I knew this yesterday but the campground outside of Carlsbad Caverns wanted fifteen bucks. So Morgan and I drove the RV over to the water pump, no hose connection, and filled up a gallon of water ten times and emptied it into the RV tank so we could each take a well deserved shower. Then we really made camp, opened the awning, put out the carpet and chairs, and fired up the grill. Black Angus filet and a salad. Basted somewhat in a deli mustard that Morgan has been putting on here lunch sandwiches and says is really good. The meal was fabulous and well deserved







I think this one was worth another look.

I made it to the top twice as fast as I was hoping, my hips did not hurt, my feet do not hurt, my back was sore at one point on the downslope, but otherwise, besides being tired (we are both yawning away), I feel fine. I feel empowered. If I can complete this hike, I am capable of much more than I thought.

Nothing more to elaborate on for now. More hiking tomorrow.

Just an FYI – Tomorrow may be the last newsletter for this trip. I know, you're all so disheartened that you won't have my escapades to bring a little laughter into your day, a little cheer to your heart, gush, gush.

Sunday, Morgan and I will be driving back to Houston. Monday I may still have as my own to visit a place we have been hearing and reading about for 60 days, then I will be joining a couple buddies for golf, and basketball and baseball before heading home.

Until next time.....