

5/3/09

Dear Roy,

Well, I am going to send you something that I believe I might have sent before. It is a rundown on the Emerging Church conference. That took care of the first few days in Albuquerque last March. It just reports sound bites from the conference sessions. I have started on the Internship but am moving at a snail's pace.

Sr. Joan wants to talk about the Emerging Church Conference next Saturday in our prayer group. So I will provide my pages as background if anyone is interested. In these situations, we just usually say a few things and the group takes off. Sr. Joan also has Father Rohr speaking on the topic in a one-hour video. So we'll probably use a half hour of that too. Sr. Joan was in Albuquerque for the Conference. Those Franciscans (Joan and Rohr) hang together.

OK. I just figured it out. I sent you only one installment on the trip. If I send you the notes on the conference, you are caught up to about March 24. I see three items left in my travelogue.

1. March 24 to March 27 when Bev and I were running around south and west New Mexico.
2. March 28 to April 4 the Internship
3. Insert about the March 31 to April 2<sup>th</sup> trip to El Paso.

Nothing much going on here. Today was a beautiful day. Clear and sunny. No biking this weekend. Yesterday we raked leaves and did a few little things. Today was busy to about 3 PM and I didn't forgo my afternoon nap. So here I am on Sunday night without much written. It was in the 70s today and should also be tomorrow.

Oh yes, I did receive your 4/28 letter yesterday 5/2. We are happy to hear that you know you are improving – even if it is slowly. Trust us, we can tell it from your letters.

I think I will try to do item 1 on the list above right here.

Where I left off, we had just come over the Emory Pass. It was still relatively early and we decided not to rush to Silver City. I believe we had a sandwich in San Lorenzo. We went off Rte 35 to the NW and came back down Rte 15. As I said, I took very few photos. None on this trek. All I can say was that it was beautiful. Hope I can do it again sometime. Lots of switchbacks and ups and downs. Beautiful views. Photos never do them justice.

So we came into Silver City after 5 PM, I believe. We found a motel, eat, and bedded down. We did pick up a few items on life in Silver City. However, things were looking kind of depressed.

That was March 24. Bev thought I would be good for her just to rest on March 25 so that is what we did. We just went out to eat a couple times, but nothing else. Bev slept.

On the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup>, we had decided on our route back other. It is that wide sweep out around the west of New Mexico. I don't think we got moving until around 10:30 since I had that delay doing the tail lights in the rental car.

Again, the ride was beautiful. There was a lot of flat open land. But the vegetation changed and, as I said at another point, little ranges of mountains were usually in view in the distance. Going into Reserve, NM was quite nice. I wished I had taken a picture or two. There was a rugged cut through the rock coming down into the town. We took a stop to use the washrooms. In so many of these towns, you have a single enterprise that sells gas, food, groceries, hunting equipment, etc. Reserve might have had a little more, but I believe not much more.

Inside the store, a group of town folk were sitting in chairs – no table – chatting. About three men and one woman. One of the men got up behind the old counter when we came in. Bev and I just took a lap around the store. We bought something and left. The item I will remember is the picture display of some woman bow hunter. Her thing was hunting cougars (pumas?) with a bow. She was shown in several photos standing with one of her kills. Big cats!! One showed a bobcat. Nice little pussy cats.

We drove on to Datil – another fork in the road – that supported a few stores (the largest enterprise was for sale). We headed east to Magdalena. Surprise, on this road we came upon the National Radio Astronomy Observatory. We had visited it several years earlier.



These dishes are mounted on cars that move on railroad tracks. Two sets of tracks at right angles to each other stretch for miles over this flat terrain. There are quite a few dishes. 12? As you might remember from I earlier explanation, there is a “small” command center full of computers. Scientists worldwide timeshare these dishes for collecting data. Thru the Internet they don't

ever have to come here to work. Oh, yes, there is a hangar-like building in which I could see on of the dishes in for repairs or enhancements.

Well, we go to Magdalena. It's heyday like for so many of these towns was the mining that petered out years ago. The big mine southeast of town is abandoned. The town is really run down. The streets are broad. The few houses are old. No two alike. No trees – just dusty ground with tall patches of grass. It was like a movie set for Tennessee Williams movies.

We were in luck. We found that a restaurant was open. It opens only two nights a week – Thursday and Friday 4-7 or 8. Two sisters run it. The place was packed with locals and the food was good.

The next morning we left town in snow showers that had begun the night before. There was snow visible on the hills. No telling how long it would last when the sun finally got through the patchy clouds.

It was snowing in the foreground lightly in each picture. I suppose you call that squalls. Anyway it looked real neat in the distance.

We drove on through Socorro and north to Albuquerque.

That was it for Item 1. I am part way into Item 2.

