

Saturday, Jan 11th

We were ready to leave on the 9th of January. Still, a slight problem with the camper's furnace and a snowstorm through Kentucky, Tennessee, and even northern Alabama, the decision was to leave a couple of days later to allow the road to be better for travel. Of course, after delaying the start by two days, it snowed in southern Michigan, but it wasn't much. The next morning (Saturday, Jan 13th), the discussion centered around potential driving conditions, but we figured that the roads would be plowed by noon. We were "hooked up," waited until noon, and finally rolled out to find clean roads heading for the first of two non-in-the-camper camping stops --this one, the Hilton Sparks in Shepherdsville, Ky. The roads were clear and clean of snow and ice, and traveling was a breeze. We stopped for gas in Fort Wayne at Sam's Club and a short time later for more coffee just off I-69. The day's scare occurred as we got close to Indianapolis; two cars who must have thought they were at the Indy 500 roared past on both sides (we were in the middle), going 90+. I slowed; they were weaving and cutting in and out what looked like many attempts to cut each other off. As an accident waiting to happen, one zipped where it should have zazzed, and suddenly, two cars were all over the road. We did not stop but drove slowly past the wreckage and living drivers. I thought to myself that if we stopped and helped, guns might appear; we did not want any part of that action. As we passed Franklin, IN. from the highway, we weaved to the Indiana Masonic Home Community Center, where my mother had spent her final day. As we passed Franklin, IN.(just south of Indy), we waved to the Indiana Masonic Home Community Center, where my mother had spent her final day, on to Louisville and south to Shepherdsville.

Sunday, Jan 12th,

We headed out from the Hilton Sparks, still heavy snow, to the next Hilton “Camping Experience” near Montgomery, Alabama, where we finally ran out of most snow, and the temperature trended toward 50. We realized just how much snow Nashville received as we passed: a guy we met on the way down told us they had received a foot of snow and generally receive only 3 to 4 inches yearly. It looked like a snowy winterland in Michigan. Sunday evening, we found ourselves again “Glamping” at the Hilton Garden Inn Montgomery (Alabama) East.

Monday, Jan 13th

Monday morn and Central time zone, we were on the road at 9:30 and our drive to the first stop on the 2025 camping adventure: Gulf Shores/ Pensacola West Lost Bay – 11650 CR 99, Lillian, AL 36549 (across the bridge to Pensacola and white sand beaches). We made it around 2 PM and set up, ready for a few weeks' stay. The first and only problem was the lack of heat from the furnace. Just before leaving, a sensor in the Dometic furnace was replaced (the propane would not ignite). I had wanted to replace the plastic Dometic wall gauge with a digital gauge but was told later that it could not be accomplished. Tuesday (the day after arriving) found us spending all day investigating the causes, calling various tech guys in the area, and, finally, partaking in a video call where the tech person from BISH told me to replace the furnace's motherboard: our day was finally coming to a close. But what about heat: fortunately, we also have a small space heater that has stepped up. The furnace's motherboard was replaced, yet it still would not ignite the propane. For some reason, the 12V was not

creating a connection. Looking at the Dometic Furnace gauge on the wall, I noticed a level on the top right that was always the way to the right– I attempted to move it, but at first, it seemed “stuck” and would not move– but I finally took off the gauge's case and moved the “unmovable” leveler to the left. WOW- the furnace started to heat the camper. I now have two good motherboards and understand how to replace a “plug & play” motherboard in the camper. We use the little electric heater to maintain a heat level and not waste the propane. Needless to say, the weather has not been conducive to spending time on the beach or the golf course– The rest of the week found the three of us trucking all over the place and seeing the various areas around Pensacola. One of the sights was built because European powers long considered Pensacola Bay one of the most important on the northern Gulf Coast.

With depths ranging between 20–65 feet and about 13 miles, the bay afforded excellent anchorage and protection for ships. Pensacola Bay became US territory after the Adams-Onís

Treaty of 1819, also called the Transcontinental Treaty, in which Spain ceded East and West Florida to the US. In 1825, President James Monroe signed a law establishing a new navy yard and depot on the bay. Forts were needed to protect the natural bay and navy yard, and thus, Fort Pickens was conceived.

Fort Pickens was designed to defend Pensacola Bay and the Pensacola Navy Yard and Depot from foreign attacks. Its purpose would reach beyond the



physical boundaries of the Gulf frontier. Fort Pickens stood to safeguard the democratic institutions of the Federal Republic, and today, it is an enduring symbol of the Union.

On Tuesday, a vortex swooped down from the North and brought snow that began falling at 10 a.m. and remained steady for several hours. The state's 130-year record for snowfall was shattered, which stuck around through Wednesday. According to Jim Little, Troy Moon, Edward Bunch III, and Tom McLaughlin of the *Pensacola News Journal*, the band of snow dropped 8.8 inches over the

western Florida Panhandle. In Pensacola, the official snow measurement on Tuesday was 7.6 inches. Unlike the northern states, which would have many plows out plowing and salting, this area



without any equipment was brought to a near standstill as schools, government offices, retailers, and restaurants closed, as well as the Pensacola International Airport and, even though some roads and bridges were de-iced but there were no guarantees that the streets would remain open. Citizens were advised to hunker down if at all possible. Of course, the weather began to warm; however, the nights remained cool. By the time we left Pensacola, the temps during the day had climbed into the 60's.

It was an easy pull-out of the campgrounds heading to the "Big Easy" as we did not need to do much except ensure all inside the camper were secure. With stops in Mississippi and Louisiana, we had under 300 miles before finding our way to New Orleans. A significant slowdown occurred as we entered Orleans and dived across the Lake Pontchartrain Bridge. According to the New Orleans Police Department and St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office, a box truck crashed with a flatbed truck that sent the

box truck off the I-10 Twin Span bridge and into Lake Pontchartrain. We were on the bridge around 2 pm in the westbound lanes of the Twin Span when the crash happened. According to investigators and online sources, a box truck traveling in the far right lane struck a flatbed truck from behind with the impact, causing the box truck to veer off the bridge and into the water.



Crash on Twin Span sends truck into lake(WVUE)

We discovered that the box truck driver managed to escape and was rescued by a nearby boater. The driver of the flatbed truck was not injured. Initial reports suggested another vehicle was also involved and went over the bridge's side and into the water. At first, the driver could not be found, and police felt the car was under the track, but after pulling the box truck out of the water, police confirmed that no other vehicles were submerged. The mystery: did another car go over the side and into the lake? Welcome to New Orleans and 65 degrees. There was not a second vehicle.

Today (Thursday the 30th), Kathy spent a considerable time finding some mail that had been lost because of the southern storm that hit the entire south and stopped progress for everyone. Yesterday afternoon, we took a driving trip through the French Quarter, including the blockade of Bourbon Street, a 12-block historic street known for its nightlife, music, entertainment scene, and atmosphere. Bourbon Street invented the “go cup,” allowing noisy, raucous, and nocturnal individuals to continue to party “hardy” from place to place. We woke to beautiful 70 + degrees and light winds, which were not as light as yesterday.

Friday (Jan 31). Besides a planned golf outing today at Audubon Golf Course (par 62– sort of an executive course). On Monday, we went to find the only US national park, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, in the area. The park is approximately 15 miles south of River Ridge (where the camper is parked) in Marrero, LA. The opening to the six areas of the park indicated that in Jean Lafitte's day, silver and gold filled a pirate's treasure chest; today's treasures are people, places, and memories. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve allows us to discover New Orleans' rich cultural mix: alligators basking on a bayou's bank, walking in the footsteps of those who fought at 1815's Battle of New Orleans, and discovering the beauty of the Louisiana swamps are just a few things one can do. We walked the boardwalk over the



swamps and marshes and passed forest

Jean Lafitte's six parks are scattered over six
across south Louisiana, each with a unique
We went to the Barataria Preserve outside
Marrero, which offered a taste of Louisiana's
wetlands. The preserve's 26,000 acres include



areas.

sites

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wild

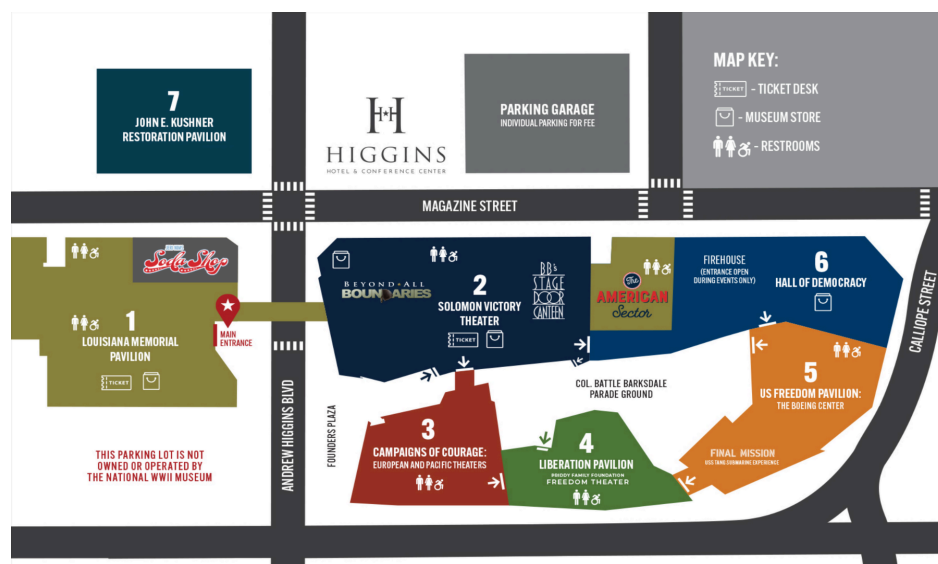
bayous, swamps, marshes, forests, and over 200 species of birds. Admission to the
preserve is free.

Tuesday (Feb 4), we secured a service at the campsite to watch
Champlin so we could go to the World War II museum. Initially, the
museum was called the D-Day Museum, but it changed. The
museum is located in New Orleans because the landing craft
used to land on Normandy Beach was built in the "Big Easy."
Senior general admission tickets were 33\$ each. The National
WWII Museum tells the story of the American experience in the
immersive tour of World War II that changed the world: through



exhibits, multimedia, and personal presentations, the museum attempts to present to all
generations an understanding of the price and meaning of freedom. This is a map of

the content of the seven (7) different buildings.



Building one is the Louisiana Memorial Pavilion, which features the museum's original D-Day exhibit. Opened June 2017 in the Louisiana Memorial Pavilion, *The Arsenal of Democracy*, which opened June 2017, relates the story of the road to war and the personal narratives and evocative artifacts to highlight facets of WWII-era American life through an experiential narrative.



Building two, Solomon Victory Theater shows an exclusive movie, Beyond All Boundaries, in The National WWII Museum's Solomon Victory Theater. This Museum-produced experience is narrated by executive producer Tom Hanks, with Phil Hettrema serving as show producer and creative director. *Beyond All Boundaries* features dazzling effects, CGI animation, multilayered environments, and first-person

accounts from the trenches to the Home Front, read by Brad Pitt, Tobey Maguire, Gary Sinise, Patricia Clarkson, Wendell Pierce, and more.

Building three is the Campaigns of Courage: European and Pacific Theaters, which is, in my opinion, the most critical theater and the first place we began. The building follows in the footsteps of the citizen soldier in 360-degree displays that take us through all of the key settings in World War II, serve as an immersive timeline, and provide a service member's view of the war. We walked through the Road to Berlin, which brought to life the drama, sacrifices, personal stories, and strategies of America's campaign to defeat the Axis powers. We then walked through the Road to *Tokyo: Pacific Theater Galleries* retraces the grueling trail that led from Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay by way of New Guinea and Southeast Asia, the Himalayas, Burma (my dad served in the India/Burma theater), the islands of the Pacific, China, India, and Alaska.

Building four was the Liberation Pavilion that explored the end of World War II, the Holocaust (Anne Frank), faith in wartime, and the postwar years, plus the sacrifices of the WWII generation, of which now [2025] only about 60,000 vets exist. Stories of loss and liberation reveal the true horror of the conflict as victors and vanquished alike began rebuilding their shattered world. The second floor of Liberation Pavilion, The Goldring Family Foundation and Woldenberg Foundation *Forces of Freedom at Home and Abroad (1945–Present)*, explores the war's impact in the postwar period and its lasting legacies today. Exhibits examine the rebuilding efforts of a world destroyed- how the Marshall Plan assisted Germany to get back on its feet-- the war crimes trials, the emergence of the United States as a world "superpower," movements for social change and civil rights, new technological innovations, and the war's impact on foreign policy. One of the small details is doing the laundry and the cost of machines at each of the

campgrounds. This campground had good machines: the washer was \$2.00, and the dryer was \$1.75. On the 9th of Feb., we packed up and headed for Montgomery, AL, and the Backyard RV Resort.

In general, the first couple of days at a new campground, we piled into the truck and performed a reconnaissance throughout the area.

Friday (Feb 14) found us visiting the Hank Williams Museum (tickets \$15.00ea)



I started listening to Hank Williams when I enrolled at Western Kentucky University (then it was a state college) in 1962. If you had asked if he was mourned, many would have said that they rejoiced that he lived every second while on this earth and his music left the world a better place. After all, country music is mostly story verses that are put to note. Every experience Hank Williams had was put to song. Hank Williams was a simple earth farm boy from the fields of Alabama who happened to inscribe his name on the tablet of time. The Hank Williams Museum, as they say on their website, is not a tourist stop but a step back into the life of Country Music's first superstar – Hank Williams. We enjoyed the charm of the Museum and all of his music and the artifacts of his life, including the 1952 baby blue Cadillac. We understood that

Hank Williams is a treasure to the City of Montgomery and the State of Alabama. It was an excellent tribute to his life and why this magnificent legend survives uniquely in the history of music.

According to the website, the museum is 6000 sq ft and houses his 1952 Baby Blue Cadillac, in which he made his final journey, along with suits, boots, hats, ties, awards, furniture, horse saddle, portraits, records, albums, and other authentic items.

After visiting the museum, you realize that Hank Williams crowded a lot of living into twenty-nine years. Perhaps the difficulty, after visiting the museum, “was understanding how a man who possessed such a natural gift could produce this abundance of musical wealth in a few short years with a total disregard for proper rest, relaxation, or moderation, even to the extent of his untimely death” (The Hank Williams Museum).

On Saturday (Feb 15), we headed to a municipal golf course, Gateway Park, which was close to the Backyard RV resort. The course was sort of a “cow-pasture” but a good trak.

Sunday (Feb. 16), we decided to see *The Legacy* and *The National Memorial for Peace and Justice*, which is set on a six-acre site. Set on a six-acre site, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice is the nation’s first comprehensive memorial dedicated to the victims of racial terror lynchings. The outdoor memorial uses sculpture, art, and

design to contextualize racial terror.

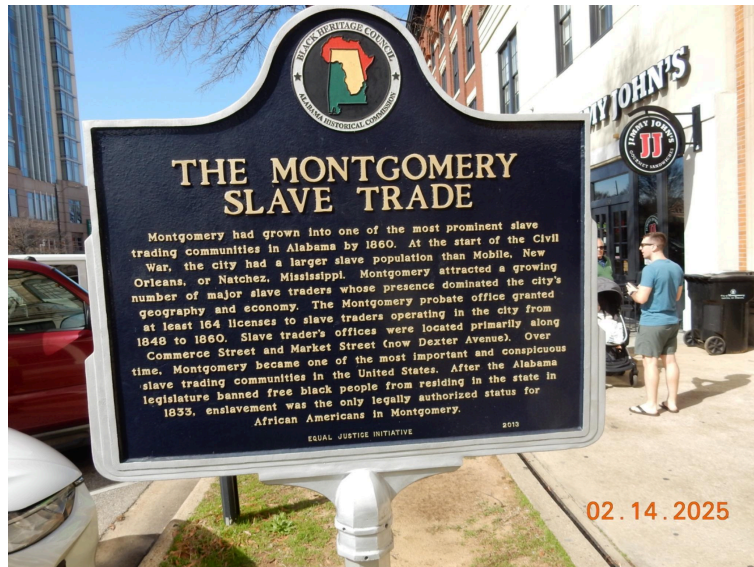


The 17-acre outdoor memorial is built on the banks of the Alabama River and explores the experiences of enslaved people in America. The world-class sculptures animated an unforgettable historical journey culminating in a first-of-its-kind monument honoring enslaved people in the U.S.

The Legacy Sites invite visitors to reckon with the history of racial injustice in places where that history was lived. The various Legacy Sites are situated on lands occupied by Indigenous people and in the region that once held the largest population of enslaved Black people, which would later become the heart of the Civil Rights movement. The Legacy Sites offer a powerful opportunity to engage with history. As a nonprofit law In 1989, Bryan Stevenson was instrumental in the Equal Justice Initiative that represents clients sentenced to death and condemned to die in prison. In addition, Equal Justice challenges inhumane conditions of confinement and works to expose racial bias, discrimination, and the inequality deeply rooted in America's history and today's criminal legal system. The Legacy Site aims to foster a new era of truth and

justice in America. The more that I moved through the National Memorial for Peace and Justice (one of three Legacy sites), the more I was consumed by how and who started this enslavement. Who thought about going to Africa— kidnapping humans, bringing them back to America, and forcing them into a working living hell? Between 1501 and 1867, nearly 13 million African people were kidnapped, forced onto European and American ships, and trafficked across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas, including the British, French, and Spanish colonies that would later comprise the United States. While over two million people died during the passage to foreign lands, the global trafficking that separated millions of women, men, and children from their homes, families, and cultures destabilized African countries and left them vulnerable to conquest, colonization, and violence for centuries. The trafficking of African people permanently shaped coastal communities across the U.S.. Local economies in New England, Boston, New York City, the Mid-Atlantic, Virginia, Richmond, the Carolinas, Charleston, Savannah, the Deep South, and New Orleans were built around the enslavement of Black people. Kidnapping, trafficking, abusing, and dehumanizing African people and their descendants created generational wealth for Europeans and white Americans across occupations and industries, from early European colonists to priests and popes, shipbuilders to rum and textile producers, bankers to insurers. The Transatlantic Slave Trade generated the capital to build some of America's greatest cities and most successful companies. Many families, businesses, and institutions continue to benefit today from the enormous wealth produced by enslavement, but few have acknowledged or honestly confronted this history. But slavery in America did not end; it evolved.

A major player in this slave trade was Montgomery and its slave trade. Beginning in the 17th century, millions of African people were kidnapped, enslaved, and shipped across the Atlantic to the Americas under horrific conditions.



Nearly two million people died at sea during the agonizing journey. For the next two centuries, the enslavement of Black people in the United States created wealth, opportunity, and prosperity for millions of Americans. As American slavery evolved, an elaborate and enduring mythology about the inferiority of Black people was created to legitimate, perpetuate, and defend slavery. This mythology survived slavery's formal abolition following the Civil War.

In the South, where the enslavement of Black people was widely embraced, resistance to ending slavery persisted for another century after the 13th Amendment passed in 1865. Today, 150 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, very little has been done to address the legacy of slavery and its meaning in contemporary life. In many communities like Montgomery, Alabama—which by 1860 was the capital of the domestic slave trade in Alabama—there is little understanding of the slave trade,

slavery, or the longstanding effort to sustain the racial hierarchy that slavery created. In fact, an alternative narrative has emerged in many Southern communities that celebrates the slavery era, honors slavery's principal proponents and defenders, and refuses to acknowledge or address the problems created by the legacy of slavery. After the Civil War, Confederate veterans, former enslavers, and other white leaders organized a reign of terror to enshrine white supremacy, nullify Black voting rights, and exploit Black labor. During Reconstruction, the 12-year period following the Civil War, lawlessness and violence perpetrated by white leaders created an American future of racial hierarchy, white supremacy, and Jim Crow laws—an era from which our nation has yet to recover. Thousands more were attacked, sexually assaulted, and terrorized by white mobs and individuals who were shielded from arrest and prosecution. White perpetrators of lawless violence against formerly enslaved people were seldom held accountable—instead, they were often celebrated. Emboldened Confederate veterans and former enslavers organized a reign of terror that effectively nullified constitutional amendments designed to provide Black people with equal protection and the right to vote. And the US Supreme Court did not help as they blocked Congressional efforts to protect formerly enslaved people. Within a decade after the Civil War, Congress began to abandon the promise of assistance to millions of formerly enslaved Black people. Violence, mass lynchings, and lawlessness enabled white Southerners to create a regime of white supremacy and Black disenfranchisement alongside a new economic order that continued to exploit Black labor. White officials in the North and West similarly rejected racial equality, codified racial discrimination, and occasionally embraced the same tactics of violent control seen in the South. Lynching of African

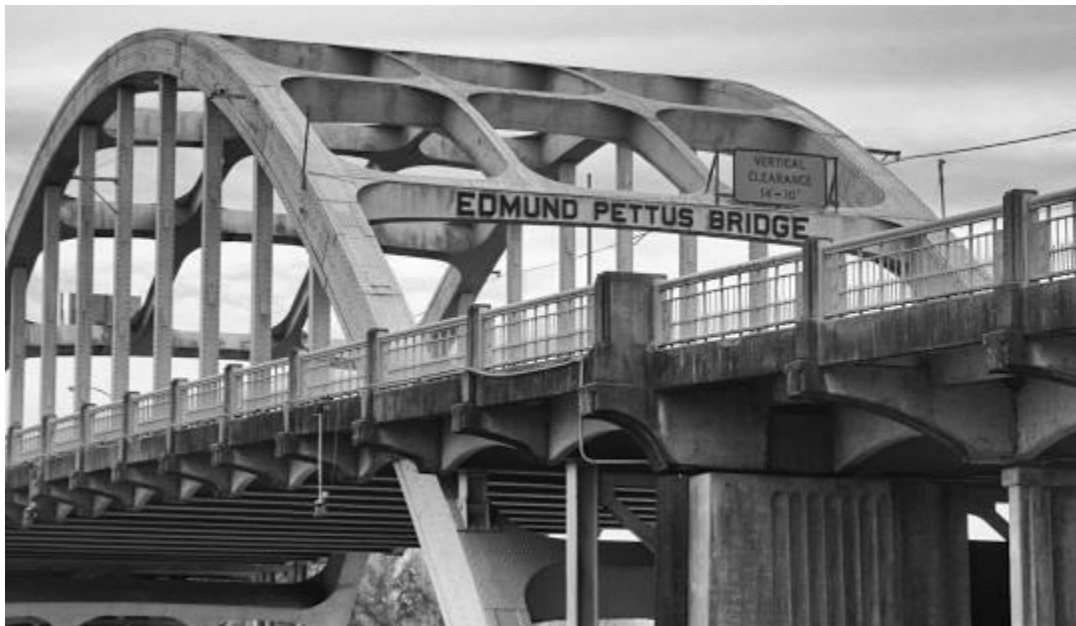
Americans was terrorism, a widely supported phenomenon used to enforce racial subordination and segregation. Public lynching events after the Civil War were designed to terrorize all Black people to re-establish white supremacy and suppress Black civil rights. This was not “frontier justice” carried out by a few vigilantes or extremists. Instead, many African Americans were tortured to death in front of picnicking spectators for things like bumping into a white person, wearing their military uniforms, or not using the appropriate title when addressing a white person. Lynch mobs included elected officials and prominent citizens. White people were celebrated—not arrested—for torturing and killing Black people. Spectators bought body parts as souvenirs and posed with hanging corpses for picture postcards to mail to their loved ones.

In writing about the Legacy Sites, three different sites exist: The Legacy Museum, The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, and the Freedom Monument Sculpture Park. Lynching shaped the geographic, political, social, and economic conditions African Americans experience today. Critically, racial terror lynching reinforced the belief that Black people are inherently guilty and dangerous. That belief underlies the racial inequality in our criminal justice system today. Mass incarceration, racially biased capital punishment, excessive and disproportionate sentencing of racial minorities, and police abuse of people of color reveal problems in American society that were shaped by the terror era. We got out for nine holes at the local course, Shadow Ridge Golf Course, an excellent course. .

The cold weather would just not leave us alone. The bad news about the Backyard RV Resort was that we were almost flooded out with the downfall of all the rain. On February 18th, we headed to Hattiesburg, MS, which was some 250 further

south on Tuesday [Feb. 18] in an attempt to get rid of the cold and rain. However, that move did not eliminate the cold or the rain. But, thank goodness, on Tuesday, we were greeted by sunshine, no rain, with temps of 60+ degrees. On the trip down, we went through Selma (a poor town), famous for the 1960s Selma Voting Rights Movement and the Sela to Montgomery marches.

I remember watching the cover of “Bloody Sunday” in March of 1965 on one of the three TV networks (CBS, NBC, or ABC)-- that’s all there was to the TV channels in 1965. Ultimately, twenty-five thousand marchers entered Montgomery to press for voting rights; however, this did not happen until the third march, which began on March 21 with protection from military policemen and Army troops. The first march led by Dr. King (Martin Luther King) was turned back at the Pettus Bridge by a court order that prevented the marchers from marching from Selma to Montgomery.



Getting to the campground took much longer than estimated, as the GPS gave us a strange “around-the-world” trip to Hattiesburg/ Okatoma KOA Holiday

campgrounds. As we checked in, I mentioned that to the front desk, and she replied, "Didn't you check your phone for a text? We sent you a text with directions, so you should not use your GPS." Thanks, I said, and sure enough, there was a text with the proper directions.

The next day the rain caught us again, and we just used the day to investigate Hattiesburg—Wow, a Walmart, Sam's Club, and Dick's. We did not realize that this community has the fourth-largest population in Mississippi. It is of interest that the development of the state's interior took place during the Civil War. Before that time, only properties along the major rivers were developed as plantations. Hattiesburg was named for the founders' wife, Hattie, and is nicknamed "The Hub City." Hattiesburg is also a college town, home to several small colleges, but the primary college is the University of Southern Mississippi, which is known for its production of teachers.

Thursday (Feb 20). Before we left, I read Wright Thompson's book, The Barn — the story of the murder of Emmett Till, a young 14-year-old black child. The story outlined the events which took place on the night of August 28, 1955. In addition, the principal individuals involved were identified, and others brought the truth to light. Emmitt Till's murder has become a symbol of discrimination, was one of the most infamous in American history, and exposed to the world deep ceded Southern racism, which still exists in many places just below the surface. What I found odd is although Wright Thompson, the author, grew up just a few miles from the Barn, he knew nothing of it until he left Mississippi— just an illustration of how deep the cover-up continues. Over his five years of research, Thompson learned that every part of the standard account of Till's killing was wrong. To summarize the murder: In the summer of 1955,

14-year-old African-American Emmett Till had gone on vacation from Chicago to visit family in Money, Mississippi. He was shopping at a store owned by Roy and Carolyn Bryant—and someone said he possibly whistled at Mrs. Bryant, a white woman. At some point around August 28, he was kidnapped, beaten, shot in the head, had a large metal fan tied to his neck with barbed wire, and was thrown into the Tallahatchie River. His body was soon recovered, and an investigation was opened. It took fewer than four weeks for the case to go to trial: Roy Bryant and his half-brother, J.W. Milam, were accused of the murder, and an all-white, all-male jury acquitted both of them. No one else was ever indicted or prosecuted for involvement in the kidnapping or murder. Bryant and Milam, who, today are long deceased, later confessed and told a magazine journalist all the grisly details of their crime.

Feb. 25, our last full day in Hattiesburg, the weather finally became sunny and warm. It allowed us to head for the Longleaf Trace, South Mississippi's premier running, biking, hiking, and equestrian trail. The Longleaf is a beautiful 44-mile linear park extending from Hattiesburg through Sumrall, Bassfield, and Carson to Prentiss. A Rails-To-Trails conversion trail is 10 feet wide and paved.

The next day, we were up and on our way to the warmth and sun: Panama City Beach (PCB), Florida. Most of the territory we traveled to PCB we had already been through. We jogged down through Mobile on US98, made our way to Pensacola (I-10), and decided to take US98 across to Destin and PCB instead of staying on I-10 and then dropping down to PCB on US 331 or something like that. That was a mistake; we hit all kinds of traffic: not sure if it cost us time, but it certainly felt that taking this way did. We

did not get to the PCB KOA Holiday campgrounds until a few minutes before 6 PM. Finally, seventy degrees and warm winds. We spent some time going to Dog Beach, which welcomes dogs on the beach in PCB. Panama City Beach offers many trails, making it an ideal biking destination. Numerous marked bike trails meander throughout PCB, revealing the stunning beauty of the region's beaches, bays, and wildlife. There are 12 dirt trails, with some sandy spots, that crisscross 2,900 acres of preserved wilderness and cypress domes and range from 0.6 to 11 miles. We made several outings and found some of the best bike trails Panama City Beach offered, such as Gayle's Tails, which provides three routes totaling 19.5 miles round trip along flat, paved trails. The trail's west end connects to another excellent place: Conservation Park.

March 13-Thursday, we packed up and headed north with the first stop back to the Backyard RV Resort in Montgomery, AL, as we had to pick up some prescriptions that were not forwarded to PCB. We stayed the night at the Backyard RV Resort and had dinner at a favorite place: Baumhower's Victory Grille. The following day (March 14th), we were up early and headed out quickly to keep ahead of the weather for a stop-over in Nashville, TN. The Grand Ole RV Resort & Market (Goodlettsville, TN) was tremendous and offered food for dinner that we ordered and ate on the deck with good oldies playing by a trio. This would be an excellent place to stay for a couple of days, with visits to the Grand Ole Opry and Nashville's other sights. Of course, it rained that night and some as we quickly headed out to Lake Haven Retreat (Indianapolis, IN) to visit my niece (Megan) and her family. We arrived in the rain and left the following morning in the cold. Not a lot to say about Lake Have as the weather kept everyone in their campers, and, besides, we were just staying for one night, and our plans called for

us to meet Megan's family for Mexican food. March 16— after almost three months on the road, we finally arrived back to the beginning.