



*Western
Adventures*

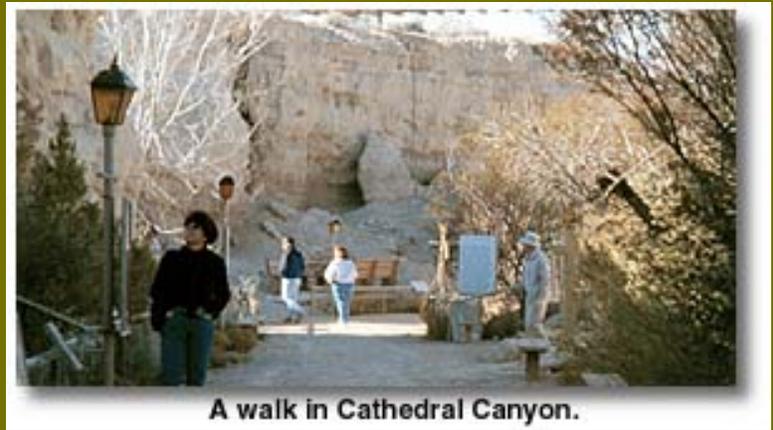
Chris, Connie & Montana

September 10-23, 2007



China Ranch Date Farm near Tecopa Hot Springs, CA. We loved the reuse of textiles to protect the ripening dates!





A walk in Cathedral Canyon.

Cathedral Canyon is also near Tecopa. It was built by an eccentric millionaire in memory of his daughter and was briefly a strange desert tourist attraction (per the picture above from the internet), but is now in ruins.

Creative visualization in Hurricane, UT- we asked for a nice café with shady outdoor seating, great coffee and omelets. Score!

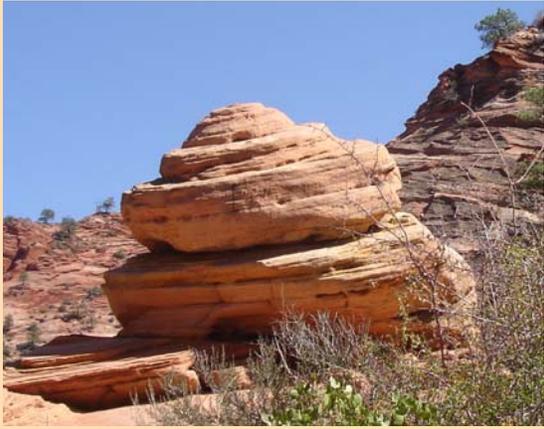
It was September 11 2007- the 150th anniversary of the Mountain Meadows Massacre when Mormon leaders orchestrated the brutal mass murder of a wagon train of Arkansas settlers bound for California. It was interesting reading coverage in the local paper of present-day Mormon

descendants wrestling with their feelings about this terrible heritage. Best reason for genealogy I can think of- to maintain the personal connection to the past & learn from its mistakes!

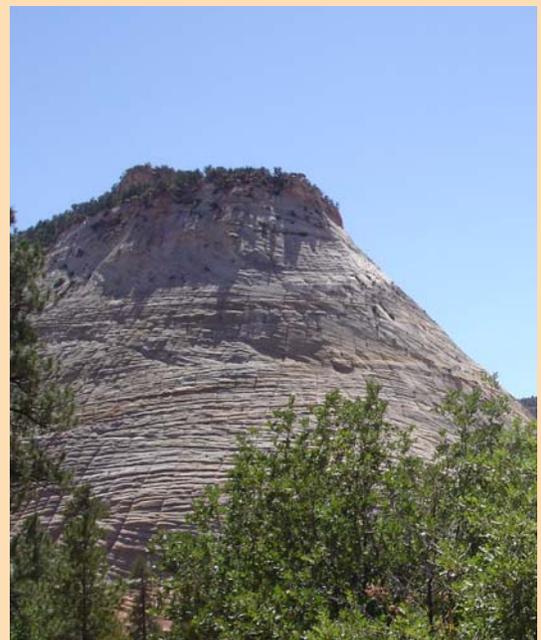


As we drove toward Zion National Park the lush valley of the Virgin River contrasted sharply with the surrounding desert.





Zion



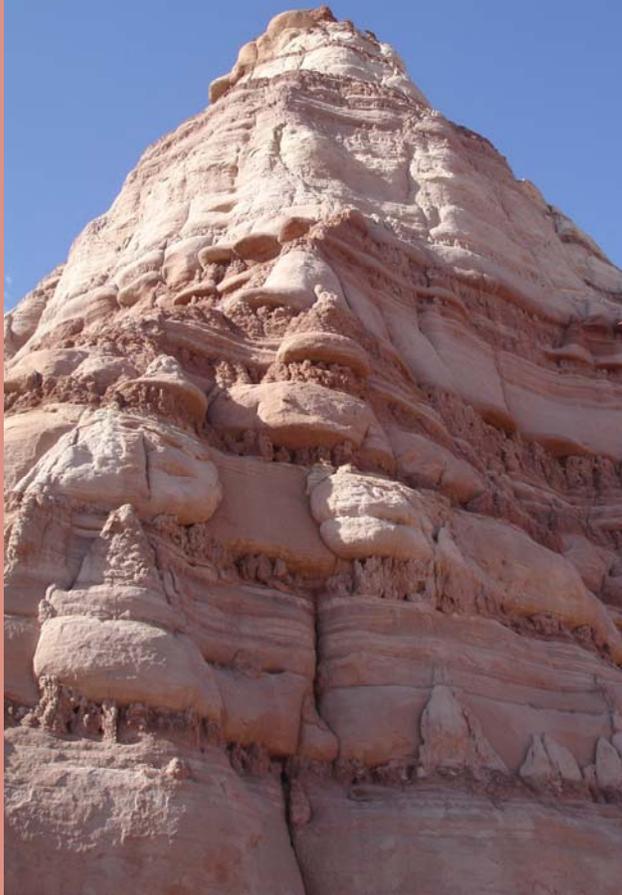


Lunch stop at a park in the small town of Kenab UT. What a great amenity for desert toddlers- a button-activated fountain!





We hiked through this amazing landscape in the Escalante National Monument in AZ.



We made a pit stop in Page AZ, which has a street of wonderful motels built in the '50s to house workers building Lake Powell.



We had a decision to make as it was getting late and there was a lot of desert ahead of us. We pushed on into the Navajo Nation and were glad we did. After some off-road adventuring we found ourselves in a campground on top of a mountain at the Navajo National Monument. So we slept in the car and woke to beauty.





If we'd been equipped for an all-day hike we would have gone into this valley to see the ancient cliff dwellings.



**There were lots of wild horses.
These twin colts were beside the
road as we left the Navajo National
Monument.**

**Driving back roads we saw lonely
homesteads often with traditional
hogans.**



**At the 4 corners monument,
Montana sat in 4 states in
about 1 minute. Human
granfalloon is OK with her
as long as there are treats.
We bought local crafts with
the bus tourists.**





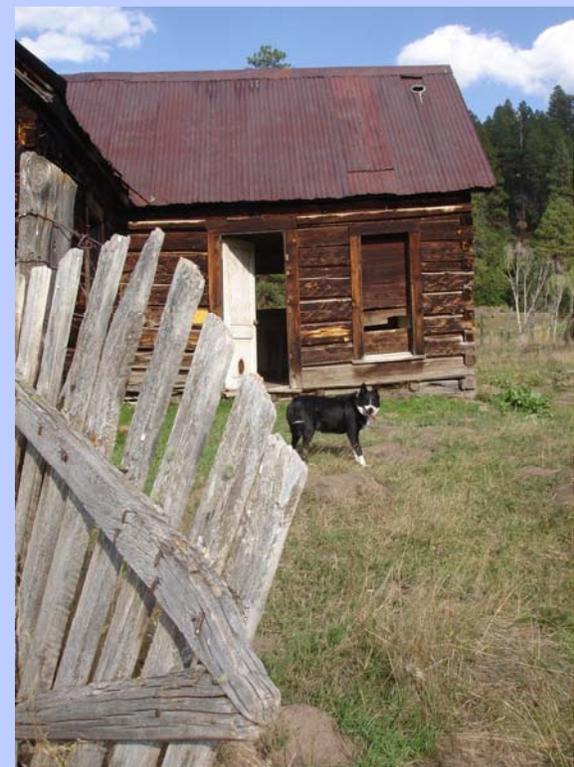
Pagosa Springs CO has a hotsprings resort which we didn't visit, but the river has hot spots where we soaked and splashed.

After a couple of days in the desert it was nice to see green again. We stopped at a campground on the Rio Blanco and took a hike to a 'point of interest' we saw on the map.



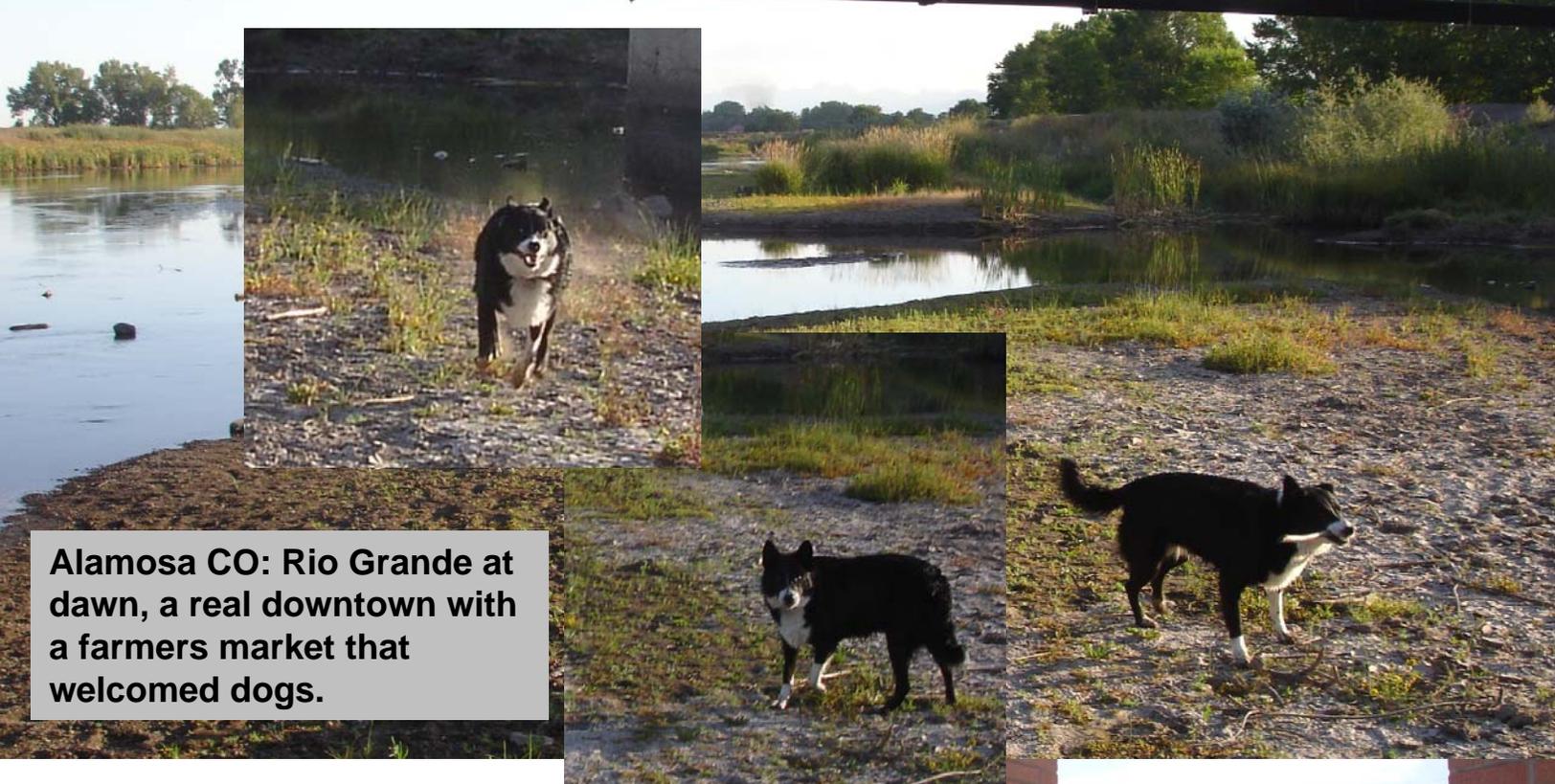


It was the old “Murray homestead,” apparently uninhabited for 50 years or so.



We crossed the Divide late in the afternoon and stopped for gas in Chamas NM. I went across the road to look at this blacksmith's shop and got in a conversation that lasted till sunset. He told me of portents and pain, a memorable and somewhat disturbing encounter.





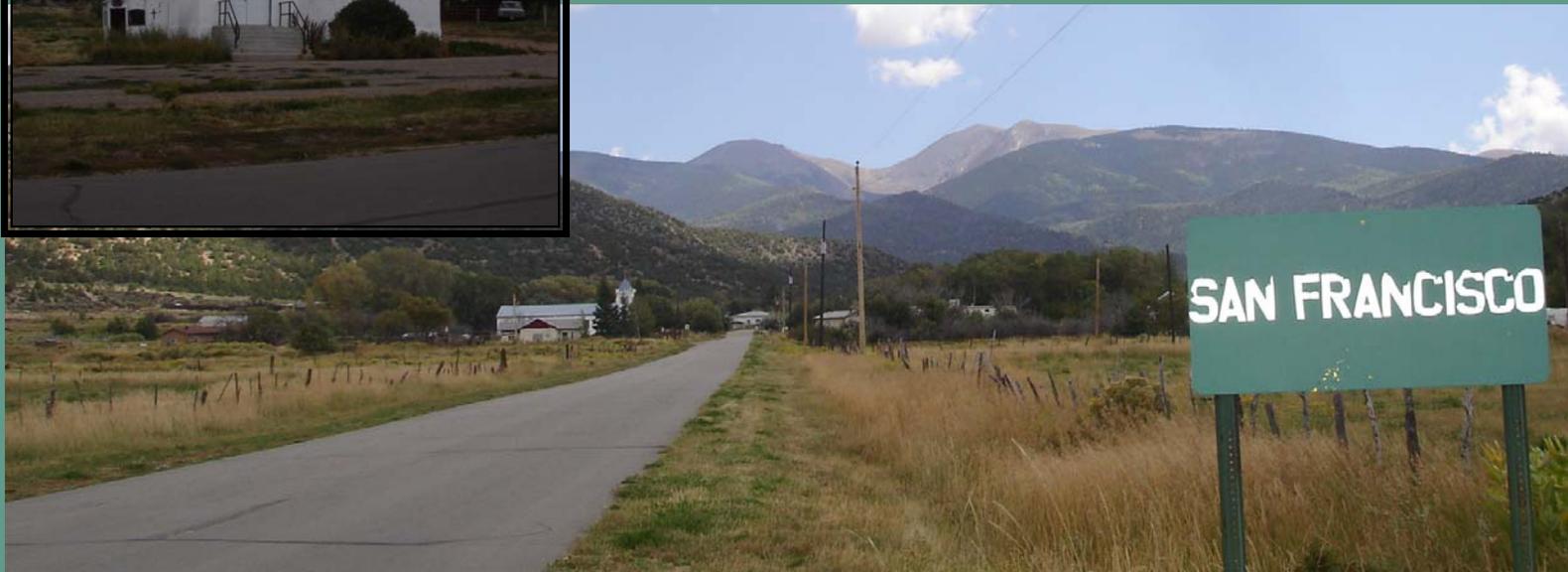
Alamosa CO: Rio Grande at dawn, a real downtown with a farmers market that welcomed dogs.





**Costilla County,
southern
Colorado:**

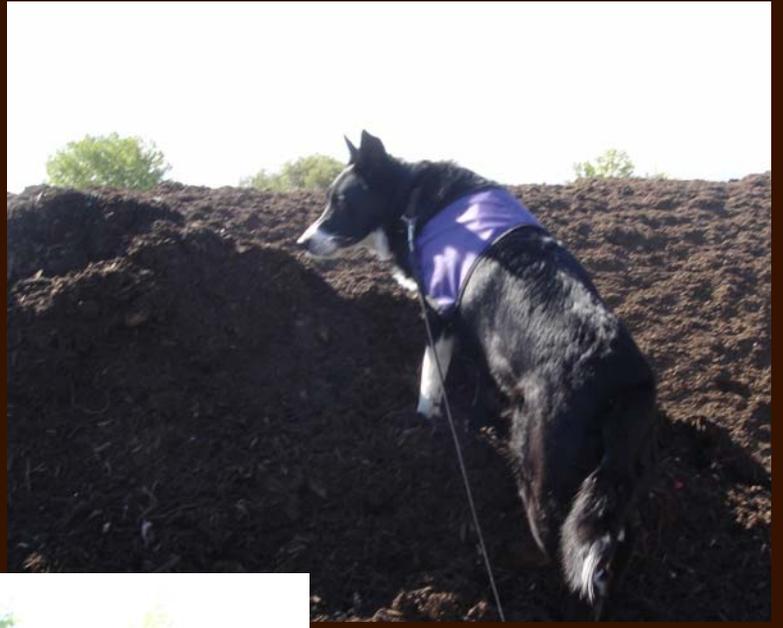
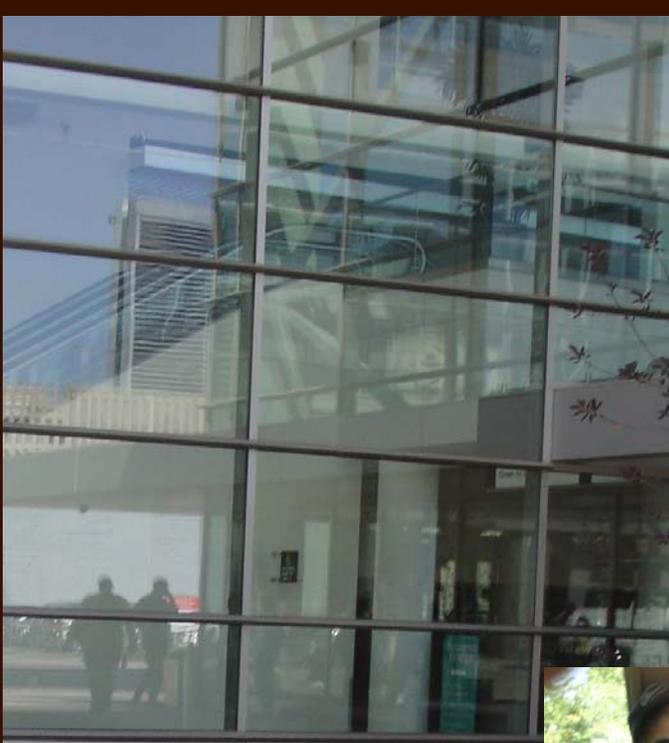
**open lonely
spaces,
abandoned
adobes that date
to the first
European
settlements.**





**Denver greenways,
wonderful urban
walks in the heart of
downtown- we
walked along
Cherry Creek to its
confluence with the
Platte River every
day.**





The National Recycling Conference: it was an excellent and invigorating professional meeting, but for me the highlight was having Montana with us everywhere – convention center, bus tours to compost facility and Boulder MRF!



More Denver scenes.




The Department of Parks and Recreation
Welcomes You To
SKYLINE PARK
This park was created for all to enjoy.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO:

- VISIT THE PARK BETWEEN 5 AM AND 11 PM.
- USE A PARK CHAIR, TABLE OR BENCH. PLEASE SHARE THEM.
- ENJOY THE PLANTERS WITHOUT ENTERING OR PICKING THE FLOWERS.
- WALK YOUR DOG, PROVIDING YOU LEASH IT, AND CLEAN UP AFTER IT.

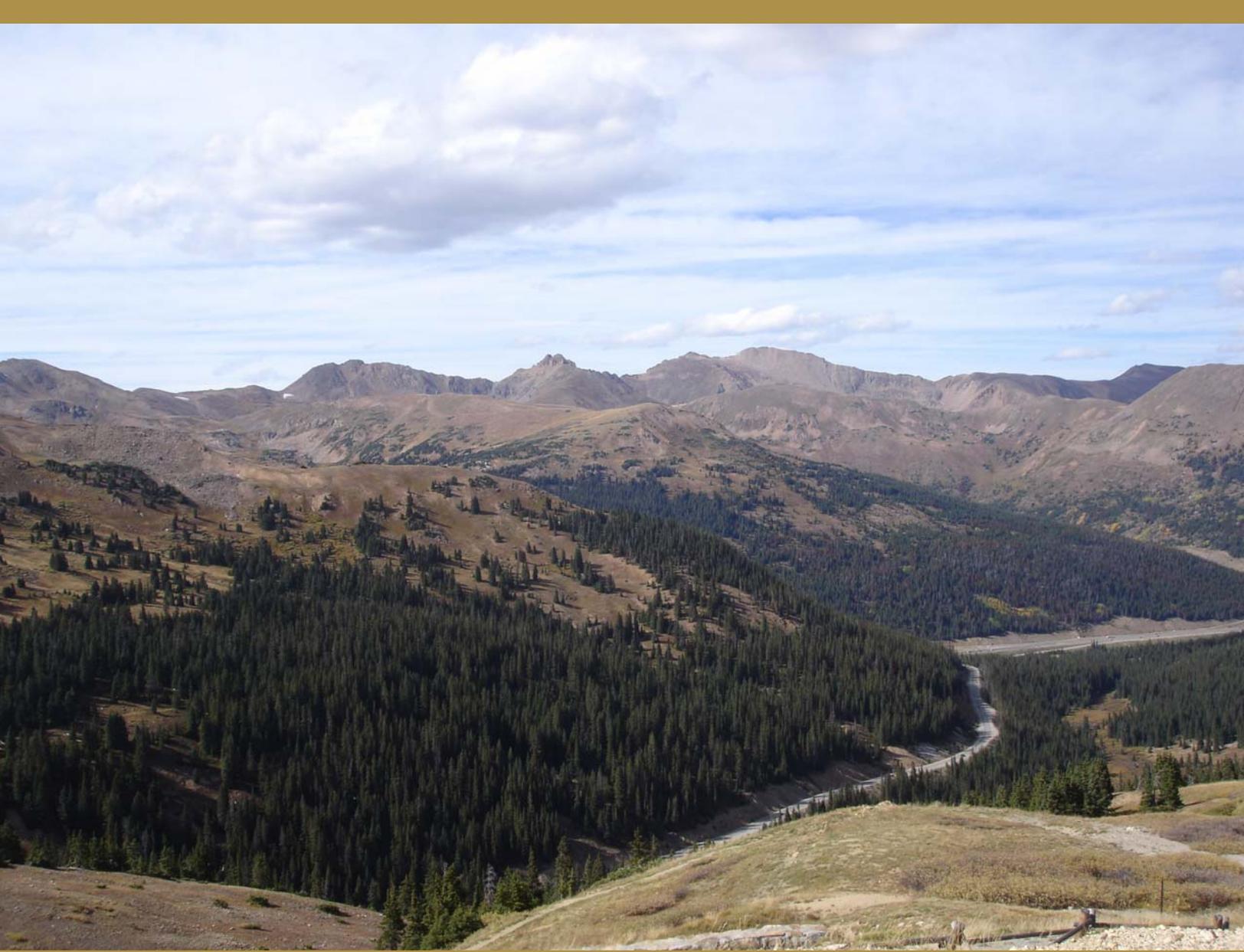
THE FOLLOWING ARE ALLOWED ONLY WITH A CITY ISSUED PERMIT OR LICENSE:

- SELLING OR CONSUMING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
- ORGANIZED SPORTING EVENTS OR EXHIBITIONS
- AMPLIFIED MUSIC IN COMPLIANCE WITH CITY SOUND ORDINANCE
- ORGANIZED OR ADVERTISED PERFORMANCES
- SALE OF GOODS OR SERVICES

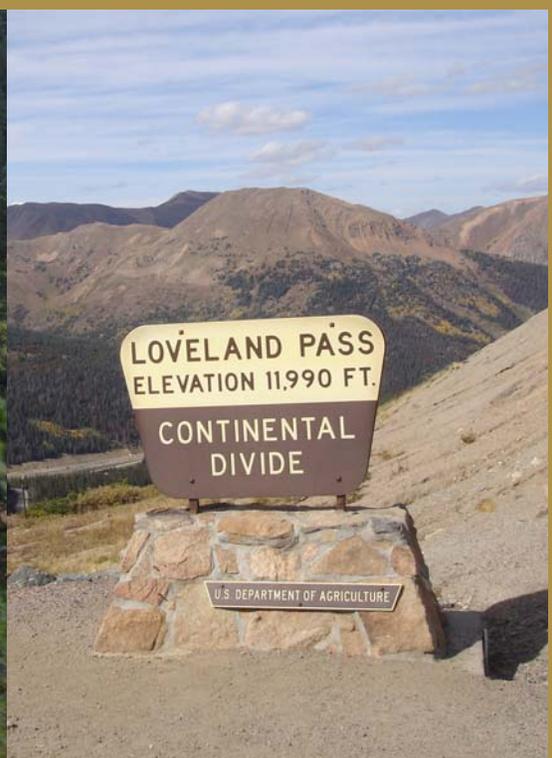
THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE PARK:

- ILLEGAL DRUG USE
- GAMBLING
- USE OF GLASS BOTTLES OR CONTAINERS
- DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD OR BEVERAGES
- AGGRESSIVE PANHANDLING
- SKATEBOARDING, BIKING OR IN-LINE SKATING
- LITTERING
- WEAPONS, FIRES OR FIREWORKS
- DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES THAT DISTURB OTHERS
- DAMAGING OR DEFACING PUBLIC PROPERTY
- OBSTRUCTING PARK ENTRANCES AND WALKWAYS
- REMOVAL OF PARK FURNITURE OR FIXTURES
- BEING IN THE PARK BETWEEN 11 PM AND 5 AM

*Violators are subject to police action and fines.
Chapter 39 - Revised Municipal Code*



Out of Denver and back across the divide....





We spent the night in Grand Junction CO and visited our friends the Trasks. We caught them on moving day as they left their rented house for a beautiful new place.

Montana and Mocha were ecstatic to see each other again.



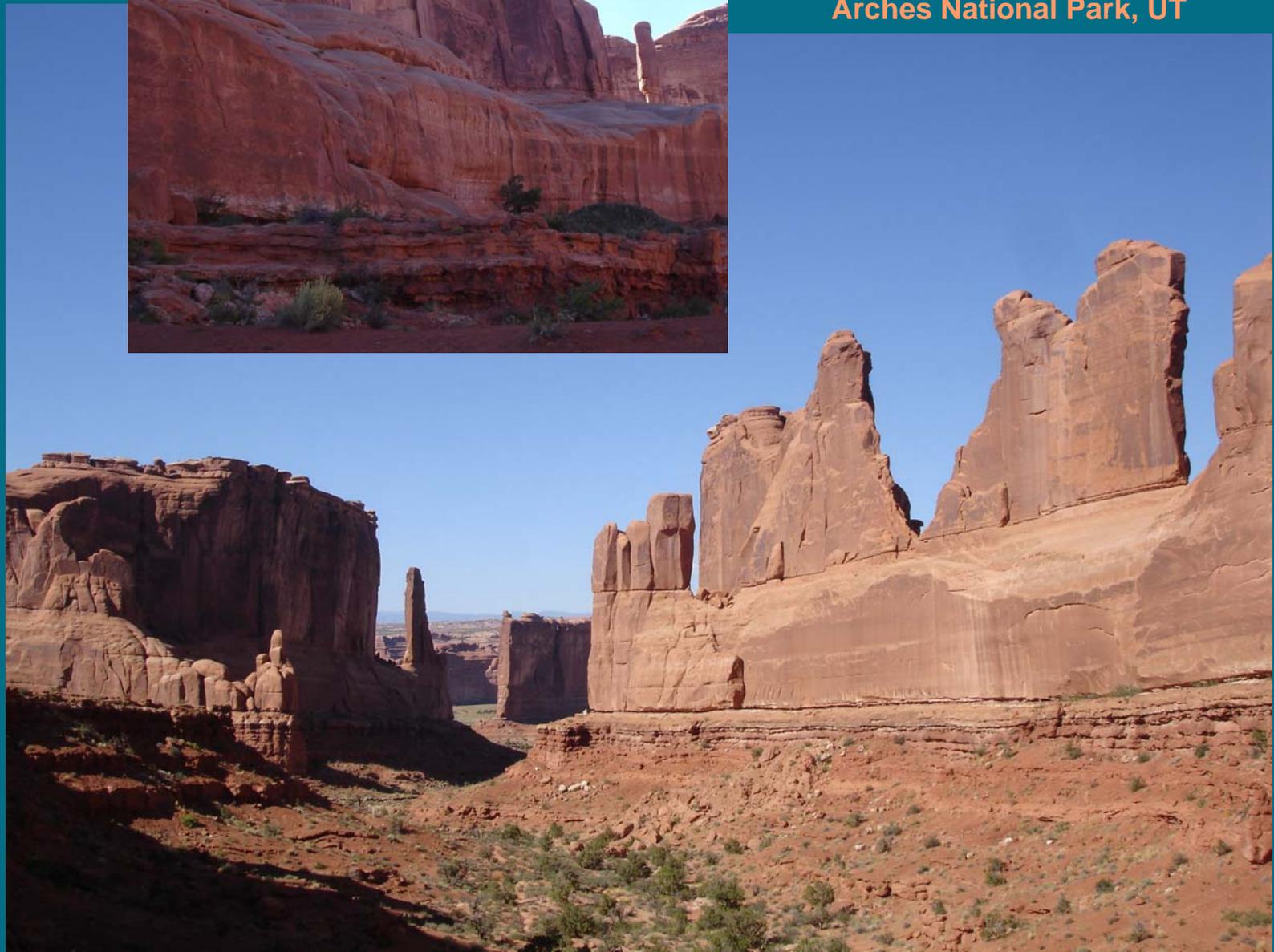
Grand Junction has a lot of really nice public art. This one was at the botanical garden.

Good opportunity to stop at a drop-off too.





Arches National Park, UT



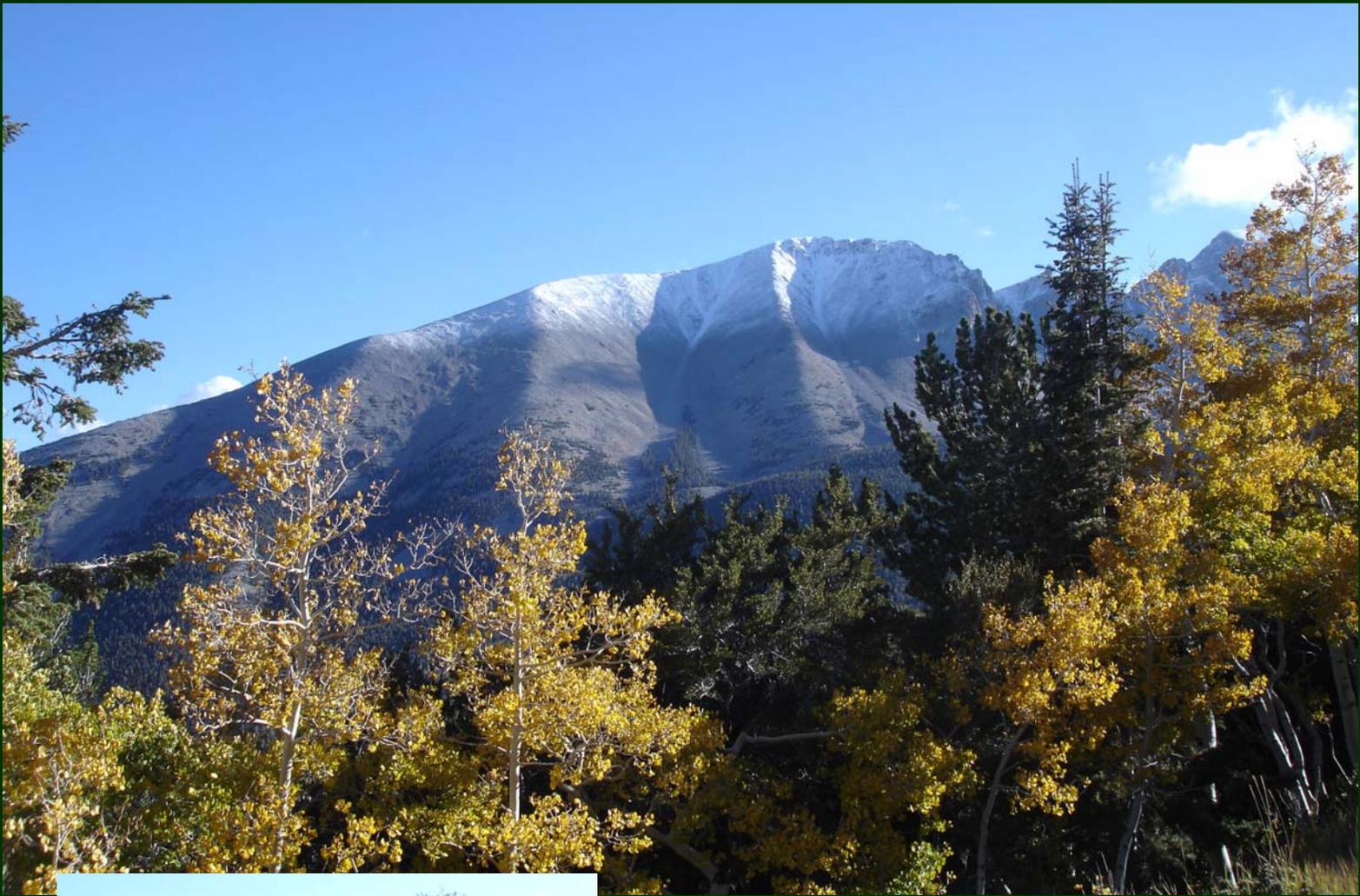




Green River UT: the river at dawn.

From there we drove to Great Basin National Park. We bought sandwich makings at a grocery store on the way and picnicked in the parking lot before going into the Lehman Caves. Pictures weren't allowed so I stole these off the internet. Montana behaved perfectly in her first cave!



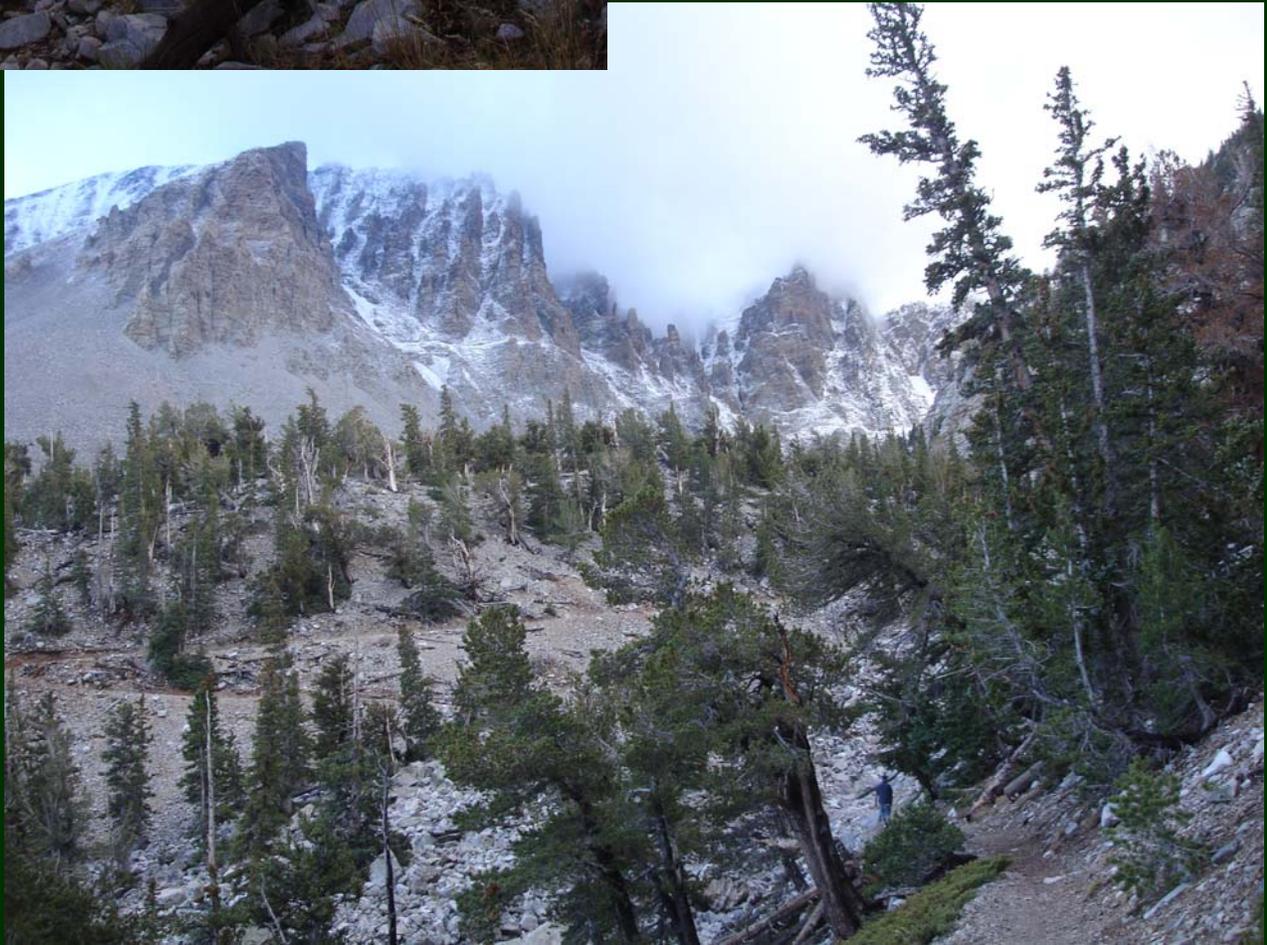


Wheeler Peak (the highest entirely in NV), aspens glowing in the late afternoon sun.



When we got to the trailhead to the bristlecone pines, I almost wimped out. It was cold and the air was thin and fog was rolling over the edge of the mountain.

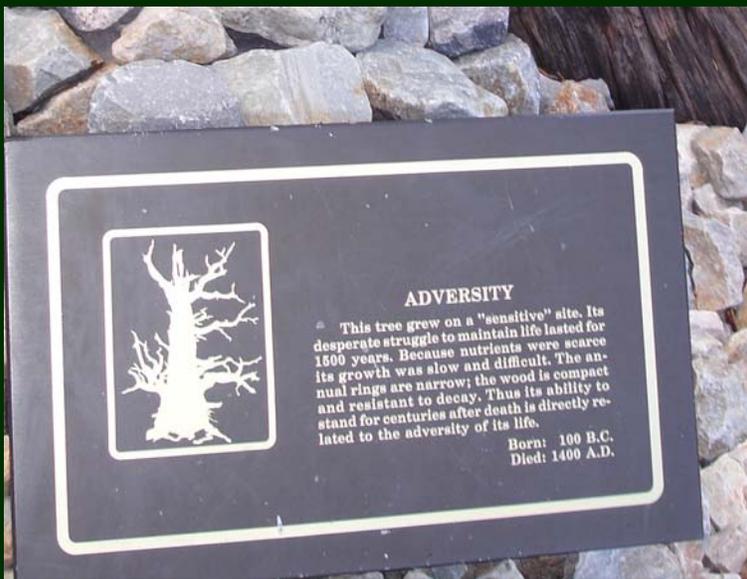
Chris talked me into going on and I'm so glad he did.







Among the oldest living things on Earth...



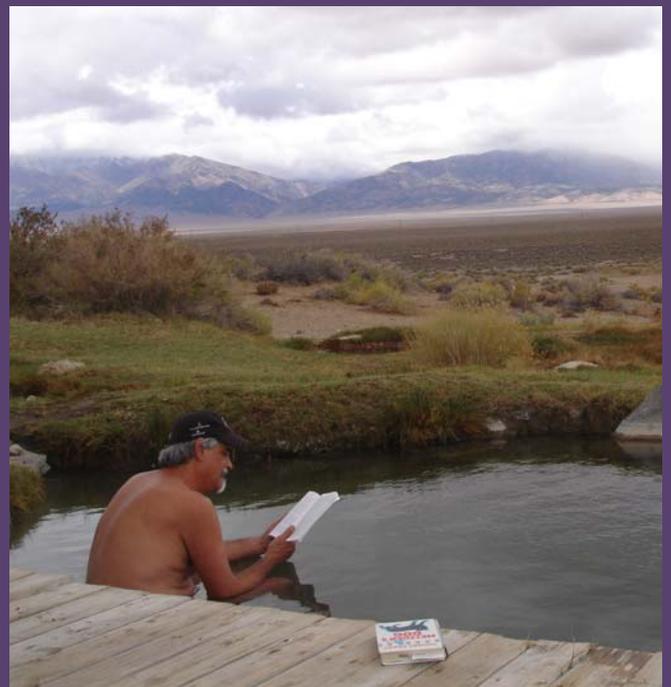


Hwy 50 through Nevada is the “Loneliest Highway,” no one else on the road for miles at a stretch. We stopped at a petroglyph site, then Chris turned onto an even lonelier road!





Hot Springs!





On we went up over a mountain. A little rain was falling, and the moss and lichens were glowing.





On the way to Diana's Punchbowl.



This thing is amazing, a great stone caldron with steaming water 'way at the bottom.



The guys with the bikes were planning a route to avoid going back the way we came over that mountain and into the storm. But we did it and came through OK.





**Back on the Loneliest Highway,
headed into the sunset and home.**