

VOTR

Retrospective

The trip started with lots of excitement. The crew, for the most part, met at Red River Harley Davidson in Wichita Falls. Before we get too far into this, I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to Phil and Kristina Davies and Stephen Shellberg for volunteering to be group leaders and help me to stay out of the ditch.



After getting the paperwork out of the way we formed up and headed for Amarillo. Here is the group formed up at our first rest stop.



Our twin goals were a steak dinner at The Big Texan Steak Ranch and seeing the musical TEXAS at the amphitheater in Palo Duro Canyon. We accomplished both, but not without some excitement along the way.



The dinner went well and we were on schedule to see the play and that's where the drama started in more ways than one. No one was up for trying eat the 72 oz. steak dinner. Oh, to be 18 again! At that age, someone might have given it a shot.

Filling up at the Big Texan Steak Ranch:







We'd been watching the lightening flash over the rim of the canyon along with the play. The longer we watched, the closer it got. It looked like it was going to be a race between the end of the play and start of the storm. It was close, we reached the grand finale and the skies opened up. We had man's water features

steaming up from the ground and nature's water features streaming down. All in all, it made for a wet ending to the evening, but to the cast's credit, the show did go on.



There were some incidents due to high water between the canyon and the hotel, but everyone eventually made it back safely. Day 2 went great until we got to the first turn. Fearless Leader missed the turn and tried a detour. As it turned out, we ended up on the second worst road in Amarillo, gravel, pot holes and mud. It was a mess, but there was no where to go but up from there.

We had some interesting experiences in Colorado Springs, including Pike's Peak, Garden of the Gods, the Olympic Training Center and The Rabbit Hole. One of several interesting and quite good restaurants brought to us by Ronda Broussard. As it happened they did actually specialize in tasty dishes containing rabbit.



Here is a selection of additional photos from the Colorado Springs area:



Pikes Peak:



The drop-offs were stunning and somewhat pucker inducing.



They like Corvettes here!!

Made it to the top.



Denver was interesting as we hit some museums and saw the sights. Unfortunately, the Coors Brewery had switched to winter hours and was closed the day we were there. So, onward to Estes Park.

I believe those are the Parkers in the rearview.



Right again! This shot was from atop the tramway in Estes Park.



Strolling Estes Park was a lot of fun. The volume of taffy per capita is impressive.

A big Italian dinner:





The view from our motel:



At the Stanley Hotel:



Later at the Stanley Hotel after the ghost tour and a couple of hours before a bear showed up in the lobby:



Headed for Rocky Mountain National Park:



Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park:



The ladies are having big fun. It was a little cooler as we were over 12,000 feet at times.





Fun on the road. Are those Florida plates?





Visibility was less than ideal in a few places as we entered the clouds.



Elk along the road in Rocky Mountain National Park



We finally arrive in Steamboat Springs. This year's home for Vettes on the Rockies. A little bit of statistical house cleaning before we go any further with VOTR. There were 29 Corvette clubs represented from across the United States. Other than the host club, Lone Star Corvette Club had the most Vettes at VOTR with 24.

Gathering to make the drive to downtown for the show:



Phil doing his pre-win happy dance. I'm not sure if he was that sure that he would win or if it was the dance that cinched it. LSCC entrants are parked in the background. It was a beautiful day for a car show.



Downtown Steamboat Springs was full of Corvettes. Shots from the show:





ZR1 alert!!



Some of the group pre-banquet and at the banquet:



Mr. Phil Davies won the show award for the C5 Stock Class.



There were numerous scenic drives that club members took advantage of. Needless to say, we were well represented at the car show. I believe the group as a whole enjoyed the event and the town.

Apparently, the city was very impressed with the whole event and is willing and anxious to try it again. My understanding is that VOTR will be back in 2020.

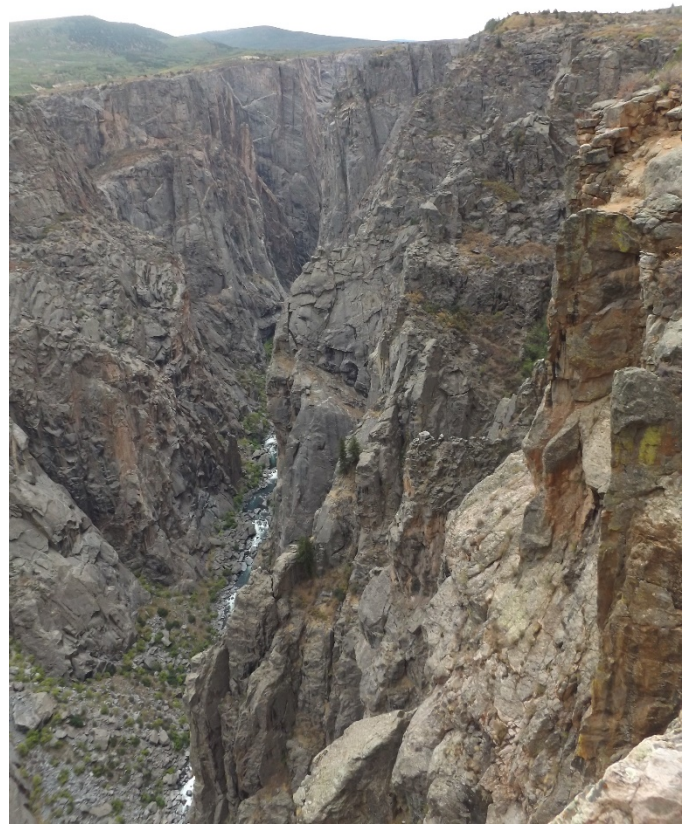
As we ready ourselves to depart VOTR and head across the Grand Mesa:

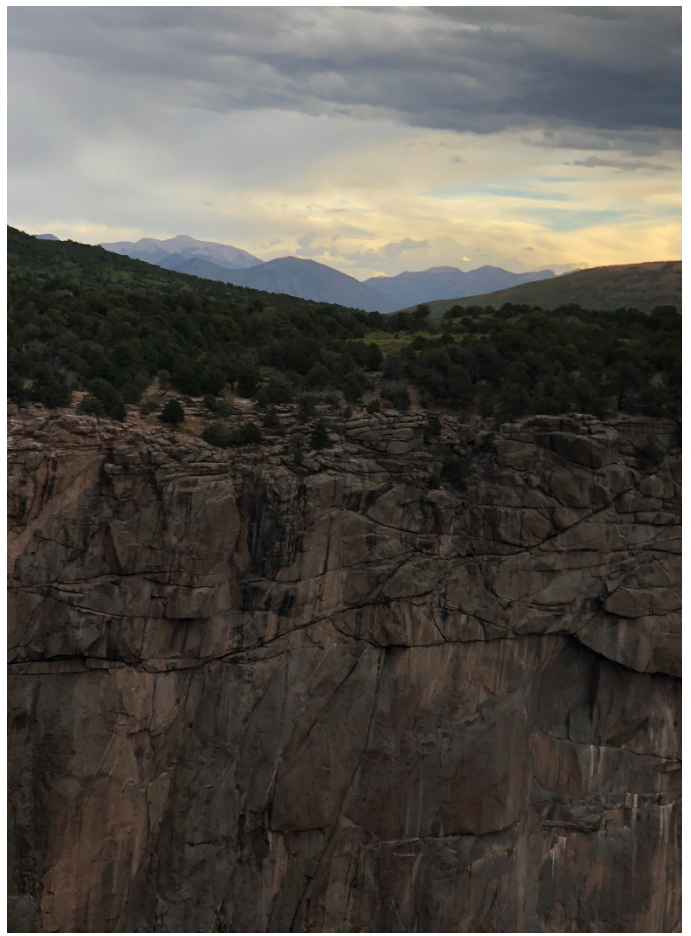


Typical view on the Grand Mesa:



After several hours driving across the Grand Mesa we arrived at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. The weather was threatening, but we managed to get our sightseeing in before things got crazy. The canyon itself is deep and narrow. There is a road to the river now, but the weather and the threat of falling rocks kept us on the rim.





As you can see the weather was closing in. We gathered everyone up and headed back to the motel before the storm struck. The next morning, we headed for Ouray, Silverton and Durango via the Million Dollar Highway. Downtown Ouray is in the photos below.

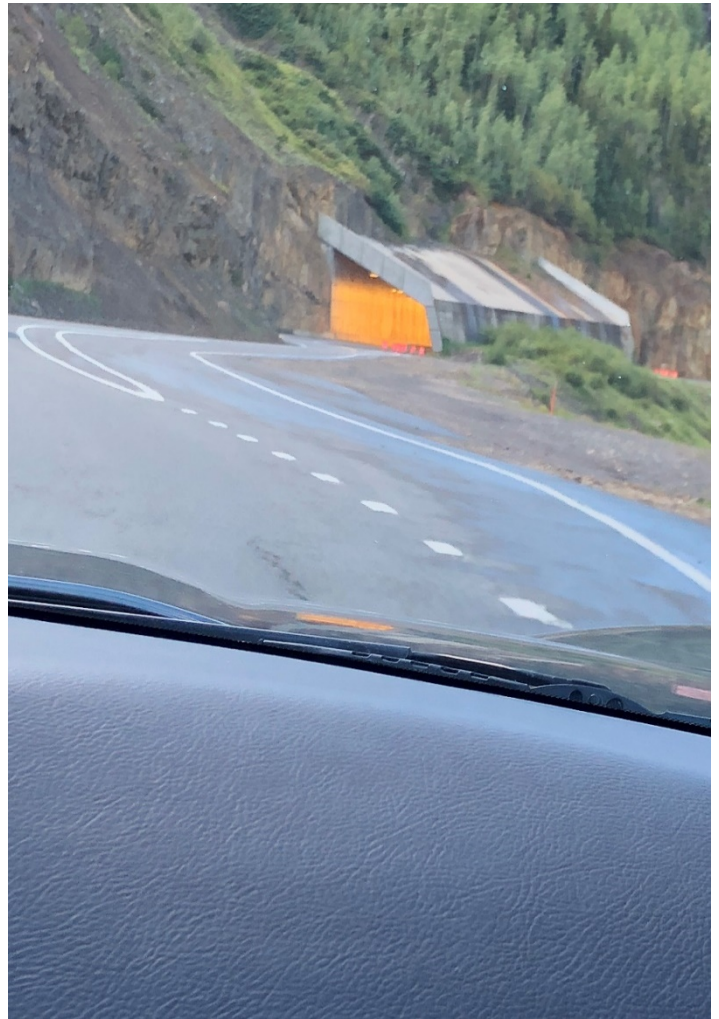


The Million Dollar Highway:





Oh goody, an 18 wheeler!



Picturesque Silverton:



We took a side trip to Animas Forks, an old mining town east of Silverton. Thanks to the Thorntons and San Juan Backcountry for taking care of us. The number of mines in the area is astounding.





This was in many ways an isolated place to live and work as it was snowed-in for a good portion of the year. As you can tell, some parts of Animas Forks are in better shape than others. From the grandest house in town to absolute ruins. The wreckage in background was the stamping mill that was eventually moved downstream. The small bridge in the foreground was built as a toll bridge over the river. Apparently, it was a pretty lucrative business.

We did stop to see the Rio Grande Gorge just west of Taos.



We had planned to see the Taos Pueblo as well, but unfortunately there had been a death in the tribe and the pueblo was unavailable for tours while the funeral services were in progress.

From Taos we drove directly to Santa Fe. We had dinner at La Fonda and spent the evening and the next morning exploring downtown Santa Fe. That was our last official evening together as people in the group were headed different directions from there.





I'm not sure where this picture was actually taken, but it appears that everyone was having a barrel of fun. So, we'll close the book on the VOTR trip at this point. I hope everyone had fun and for those of you who missed it, I'm sure we'll try it again.