

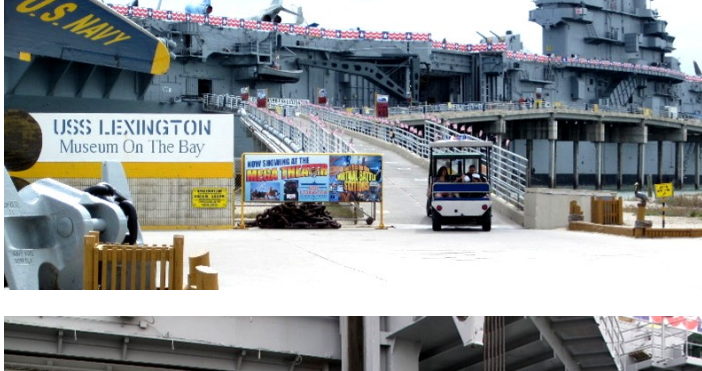


Until I sat down to write this newsletter, I had forgotten how much we accomplished during the month of March! After we left Edinburg, TX, with Henry & Anne, we made 8 stops before we arrived in Myrtle Beach, SC. At stop number 7, we left Henry & Anne behind in Foley, AL, to get back to work for Trailer Life. The travel time extended over 23 days. During this trip we had some new sight seeing experiences, like the King Ranch in South Texas and the Capital City of Montgomery, AL with all its history. Then we revisited some old favorites to us but new to Henry & Anne which was just as much fun. These included a tour of the USS Lexington in Aransas Pass, TX; Mardi Gras in Dason, LA; Bourbon Street in New Orleans, LA and finally Foley, AL, home of Lamberts Restaurant and still more ship tours. We connected with many friends along the way, which made things even more enjoyable. Isn't this what our life style is all about? So lets get on with it!

On our way out of South Texas, we planned on stopping at the King Ranch which was both interesting and educational. Back in the mid 1800's Richard King, then a Steam Boat Captain bought land with the intention of starting a ranch for cattle and horses. He had partners but eventually became the sole owner and the ranch remained in the family to the present time. The ranch produced the Santa Gertrudis breed of Cattle, capable of tolerating the ecological conditions in South Texas. They also have their own herd of Quarter Horses. The ranch has grown to 1,000,000 acres with holdings in other states and nations. They have a history of treating their employees well, providing living quarters, schools, and other necessities on the property. Most of the current employees are descendants to the original families who came from Mexico to work on the ranch. We took advantage of a 90 minute bus tour of the immediate ranch area, which was an overview. In time, the local community of Kingsville grew up because of the ranch, which is where the museum it located.

After the ranch we stopped at Aransas Pass, TX. We stayed at Southern Oaks RV Park, where Jerry & Terri Hopman of the 400 Chapter park. They joined us in touring the USS Lexington, a magnificent retired Navy aircraft carrier. There were different tours on board or you can walk through on your own. See pictures to the right of our happy group and the US Navy plane going through the restoration process.

The next stop was Beaumont, TX just for an overnight stay. Since Ben & Betsy Brock were here also, we all spent the evening together socializing at dinner. Since Ben & Betsy also work for Trailer Life, and know Henry & Anne through their work, they had much to talk about.

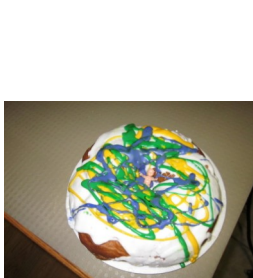


Mardi Gras

Then on to Dason, LA and some local Mardi Gras celebrations. First of all, Henry & Anne had never been to a Louisiana Mardi Gras celebration and once again we had Buddy & Shirley Barbe to guide us. As I write this, Shirley is getting ready for her final chemo treatment and doing very well! Way to go Shirley! What fun we had together!! The parades were the focus and let me tell you, Henry & Anne really 'got into the act quickly' as you may see from pictures of Anne on the right. We made friends with some locals while watching the parade, who offered us a taste of some 'BOUDIN' hot off the grill! Yum!! This is a popular variety of LA sausage. Wanting to buy some of our own, they directed us to 'NuNu's', a popular LA style grocery store, where we had fun shopping for a 'taste of Louisiana'. Shirley was also celebrating her birthday and borrowed a sign, one of our new friends had for the parade route! It was absolutely perfect for Shirley!! How many of you know what a 'King Cake' is? Well, it is a special traditional cake made during Mardi Gras. Usually it is much bigger than the one shown here. Besides being delicious, they plant a tiny baby doll in the cake for someone to find.

From this location we also took them to the *Tabasco Factory Tour*. After the tour we browsed the gift shop, where I found some interesting spicy treats. Since the weather was very pleasant, we all took a local swamp tour, one of many in Louisiana. This is the second or third one we have been on and each has its own special characteristics. Rayne, LA has a really neat candy store we found near the fair grounds at a previous rally, called *Candyland Cottage and Ice Cream Shoppe*, which has the old fashioned type candies. See Henry in the picture below holding a very long Gummi Worm! This is a really fun store!

Before leaving LA, we did stop and visit New Orleans. This was also fun to say the least, especially Bourbon Street. This presented some *interesting sights*, Mardi Gras or no Mardi Gras!!!



Alabama

On March 14th, we arrived in Theodore, AL, where some friends of Henry & Anne connected with us. We visited the battle ship, Alabama and had another great meal at *Lamberts*, home of the 'throwed rolls'. In the picture to the right, Bob and Henry are sitting in the lobby of Lamberts, appearing very philosophical!! The next picture down is of the Battleship Alabama, where we toured the ship and viewed other military equipment on the grounds. From here, Henry & Anne took us to Foley, AL and Bella Terra RV Resort where we finished up our tour and said 'good by' for a while. We had a great run together despite a messed up initial schedule. We have been together since December 22nd. For Henry & Anne, it meant back to work.

For Bob & I it was on to Montgomery, AL where we visited the State Capital, which is both elegant and classic at the same time. The city is also steeped in so much history. Nearby is the King Memorial Church, where Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. was Pastor from 1954 to 1960. It was also from here that the Montgomery Bus boycott was organized on 12/2/55, after Mrs. Rosa Parks was arrested and fined for not surrendering her seat to white passengers. See picture of church on lower right column.

For lunch, Bob & I found Chris', an eatery in the down town area, which dates back to the year 1917, that brags about their hot dogs. After lunch we checked out the museum located in the historic train station and then walked down to the Alabama river. The post in the lower right shows the high water mark just below where the bird is sitting. The sign below talks about that flood. As we all know, this Spring brought much devastation to areas of Alabama, right around Montgomery. The hairs stand up on the back of my neck thinking about it, especially after just having been through there!

Well, it is almost April and we are almost to Myrtle Beach. I hope you enjoyed the journey!

