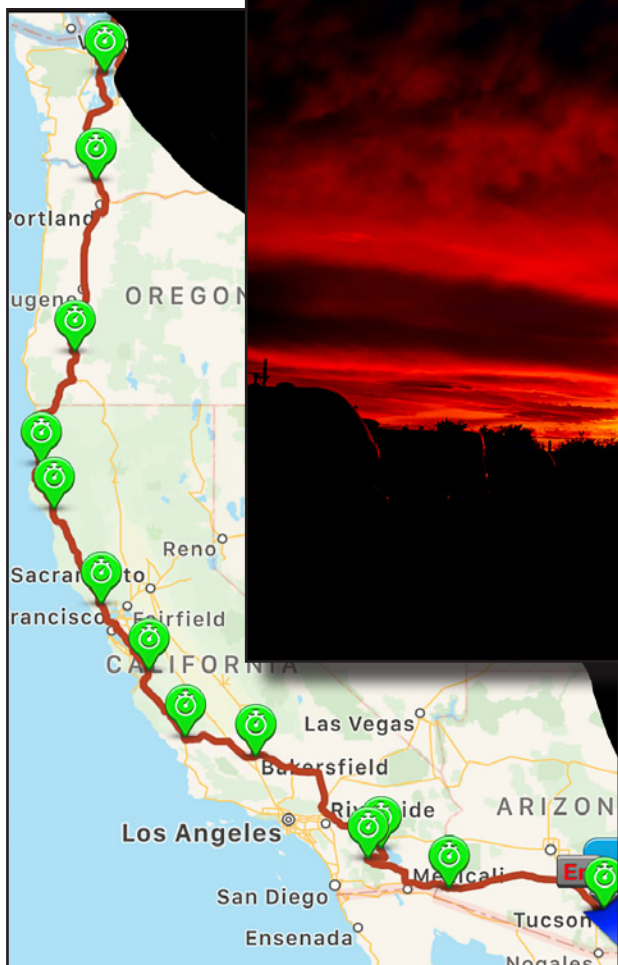
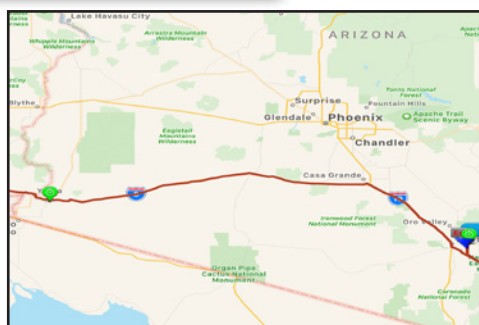




TUCSON TO POULSBO - 2018

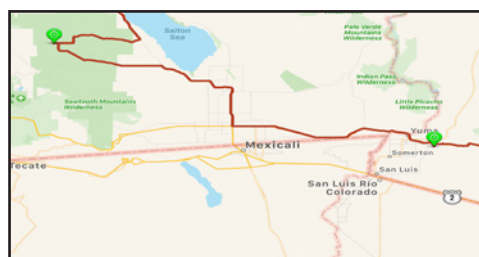


One last grand Tucson sunset and the next morning, along with our fellow Flying Pig Adventures charter members Tim & Evi Halpin, we exited Far Horizons Tucson Village for an overnight stay in Yuma.



Back	6:48:45	Total Ascent(ft):	2,051
Max Pos. Gradient:	Tucson-Yuma	Total Descent(ft):	4,426
5.2%			
Max Neg. Gradient:	Avg Speed(mph):	Distance(mi):	Max Speed(mph):
-4.0%	37.2	253.3	62.6

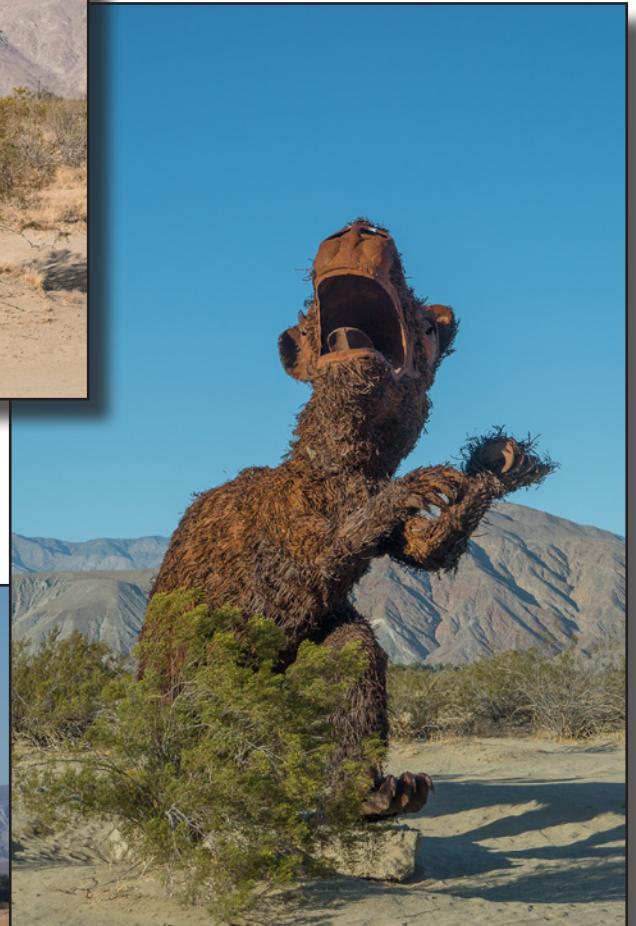
The next day we continued on to The Sky Art Sculptures of Borrego Springs, a place we have been eager to see for a few years.



Back	4:36:22	Total Ascent(ft):	1,349
Max Pos. Gradient:	Yuma-Borrego Springs	Total Descent(ft):	841
6.4%			
Max Neg. Gradient:	Avg Speed(mph):	Distance(mi):	Max Speed(mph):
-5.2%	30.9	142.3	61.0



It seems Tim was the bravest amongst us in exploring the prehistoric creatures, but even Tim had to be careful, scurrying along from time to time in order to avoid mayhem.





Some creatures were more approachable than others.





This was my favorite sculpture (on this trip). One evening I tried to get some still and video images with my new drone (and new skills). Apparently, the wind was a bit over the maximums for the drone's 'Automated Return To Home and Land' feature. My skill level and speed in taking over manually in cases of mayhem was also lacking. This resulted in an unplanned yet automated landing into a mesquite bush. All was okay though and there was no serious damage to the mesquite bush, drone or other living things (including the pilot... this time). A couple of lessons learned though; 1) wind trumps my drone's 'Automated Return To Home and Land' technology and 2) I need to get better and faster at manual overrides and control in cases of mayhem.

If you want to see the short WindowsMedia video you can find it via this link (I left the unplanned mesquite bush landing in the video for your entertainment as well).

www.WallyHampton.com/FPA/Drone1.mp4



From the DesertUSA web pages:

Something more than desert wildflowers and the spectacular Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is attracting visitors to the Borrego Valley in Southern California. People are coming from around the United States and internationally to see the amazing 130 full-sized metal sculptures here that are inspired by creatures that roamed this same desert millions of years ago. The artworks range from prehistoric mammals to historical characters, fanciful dinosaurs, and a 350-foot-long fanciful serpent.

As you drive through the roads that weave through the area you'll see sculptures of wild horses in a nearby field, sabertooth tigers in pursuit, and desert tortoises that seem as if they're crawling through the brush. The artist, Ricardo Breceda, brings life to his sculptures by capturing each creature in motion. They are so still, yet all you see is movement.

The late Dennis Avery, land owner of Galleta Meadows Estates in Borrego Springs envisioned the idea of adding 'free standing art' to his property with original steel welded sculptures created by 'Perris Jurassic Park' owner/artist/welder Ricardo Breceda based in Perris, California. There are over 130 metal sculptures located in Borrego Springs.

Read and see more at: <https://www.desertusa.com/borrego/bs-art.html>

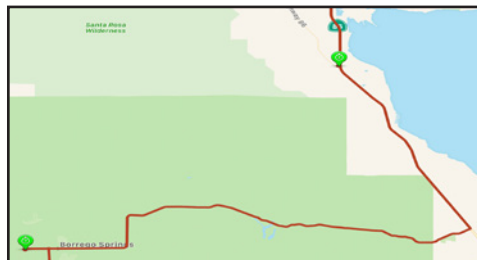


We hiked Pictograph Trail in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, near Borrego Springs. At the end of the trail was the nice overlook to the right.

Good to know... I guess...



After Borrego Springs we moved to Thermal for one night (a bit closer to Palm Springs) and explored that area.



Back		1:19:11		Total Ascent(ft):
		Borrego Springs-Thermal		465
Max Pos. Gradient:	3.6%			Total Descent(ft):
				1,231
Max Neg. Gradient:	-6.4%	Avg Speed(mph):	Distance(mi):	Max Speed(mph):
		33.4	44.07	56.9

I did not do much in the way of photography around Thermal, but did stop by the very interesting place called **The Thermal Club**, *"The ultimate motorsport club and resort community. An all-inclusive private destination for the distinguished motorsport enthusiast"...* they say.

We were not distinguished enough to qualify for entry to the **The Thermal Club**, but we could tour the BMW driving school next door. It was, though, a pleasant rebuff by the gate guard at **The Thermal Club**. There have been some interesting articles published about it, links below:

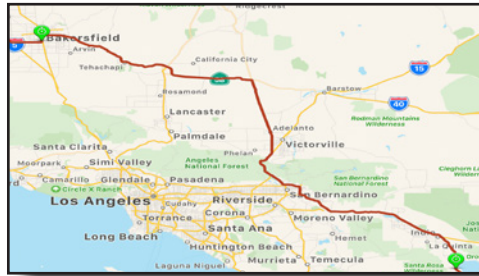
The Thermal Club: <http://thethermalclub.com/>

LA Times Article: <https://www.latimes.com/business/autos/la-fi-desert-racing-club-20140809-story.html>

Fortune Magazine: <http://fortune.com/2015/01/21/thermal-club-palm-desert/>



From Thermal it was on to Bakersfield for another one-night stay. This leg was a longer amount of time in the pilot and copilot seats than we typically spend.



Back	5:16:04	Total Ascent(ft):	8,592
Max Pos. Gradient:	Thermal-Bakersfield	Total Descent(ft):	8,274
5.8%			
Max Neg. Gradient:	Avg Speed(mph):	Distance(mi):	Max Speed(mph):
-6.8%	50.3	265.0	63.5

From Bakersfield it was a short drive to Paso Robles for a stay of a few days.



Back	2:22:41	Total Ascent(ft):	1,954
Max Pos. Gradient:	Bakersfield-Paso Robles	Total Descent(ft):	1,627
5.9%			
Max Neg. Gradient:	Avg Speed(mph):	Distance(mi):	Max Speed(mph):
-6.4%	47.5	113.0	60.3

We passed by the junction of California State Route 46 (former 466) and California State Route 41, where James Dean crashed his 1955 Porsche Super Speedster (nick named "Little Bastard"). There is a commemorative monument near there, just a bit further west, but we did not stop to see it.

The intersection has grown since that accident. It is a busy intersection with only warning lights and demanded paying attention to the road. Especially with a big MoHo and towed vehicle that stretched out nearly 60 feet along the tarmac traveling at 55 MPH, coincidentally the same speed it was estimated James Dean was traveling when he collided head on with the other vehicle. We, fortunately, did not meet any other vehicles head on.





We visited Mission San Miguel Arcangel, a few miles north in San Miguel. Great place with lots of material for photography. Founded in 1797, Mission San Miguel is a National Historical Landmark that has been an important part of Central Coast history for over 200 years.

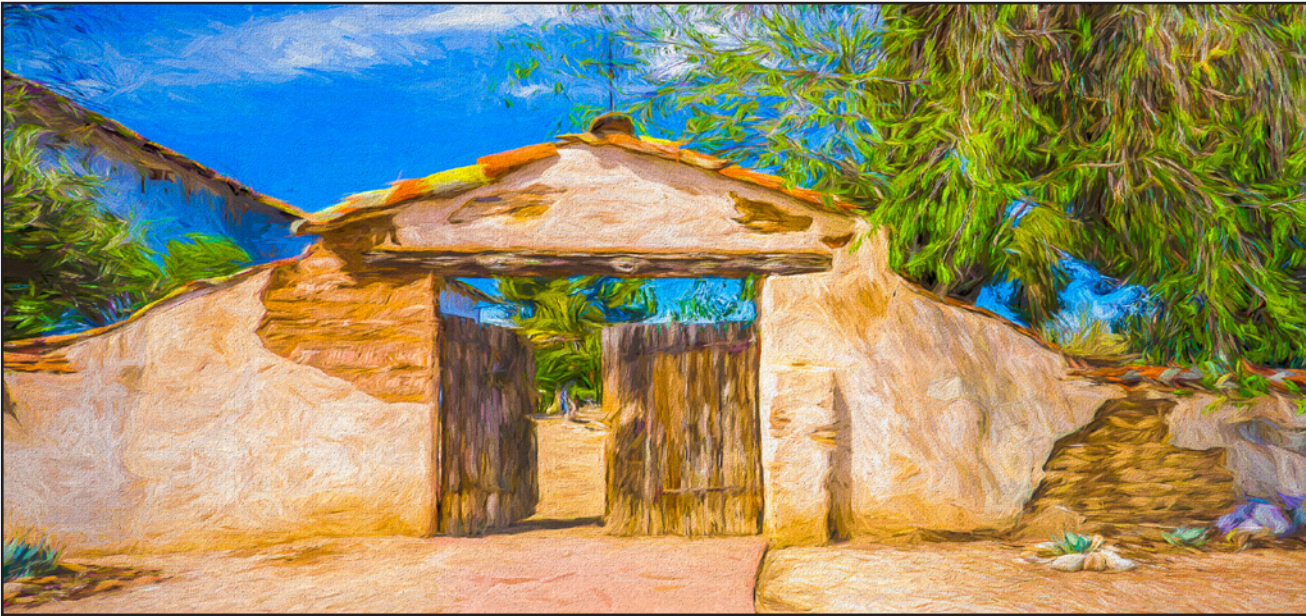
More information here: <http://missionsanmiguel.org/>

"The church's appearance today is much the same as when it was built. The inside of the church has never been repainted. The wall frescos are the originals that were painted by Salinan artists under the direction of Esteban Munras."



On the morning of December 22, 2003, California's Central Coast was rocked by a severe earthquake, the largest to strike the region in over 50 years. Mission San Miguel, just 34 miles from the epicenter, was especially hard-hit. The entire Mission complex was closed to the public, and the long process for raising funds for a retrofitting began. Monitoring, such as that shown in the photograph to the right, continues where lines are drawn on walls to monitor any movement.

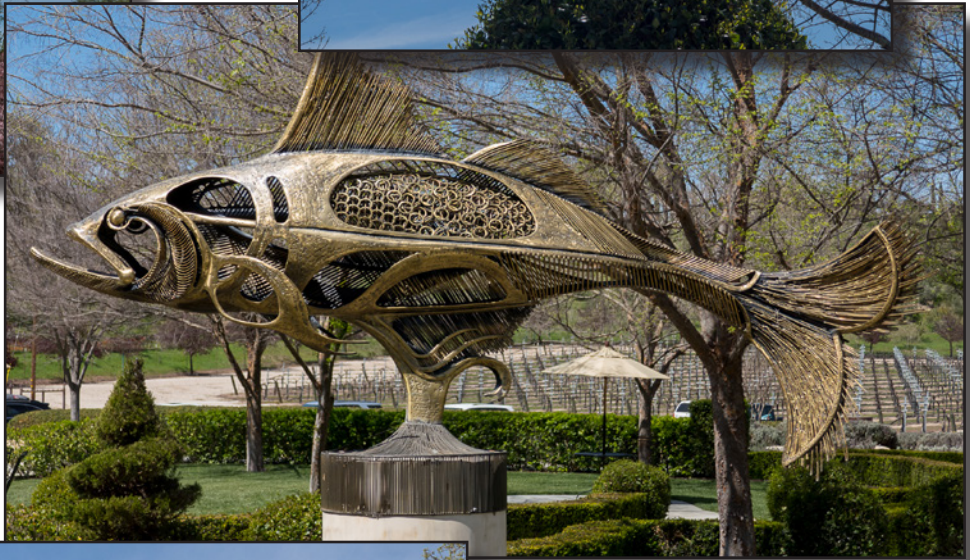
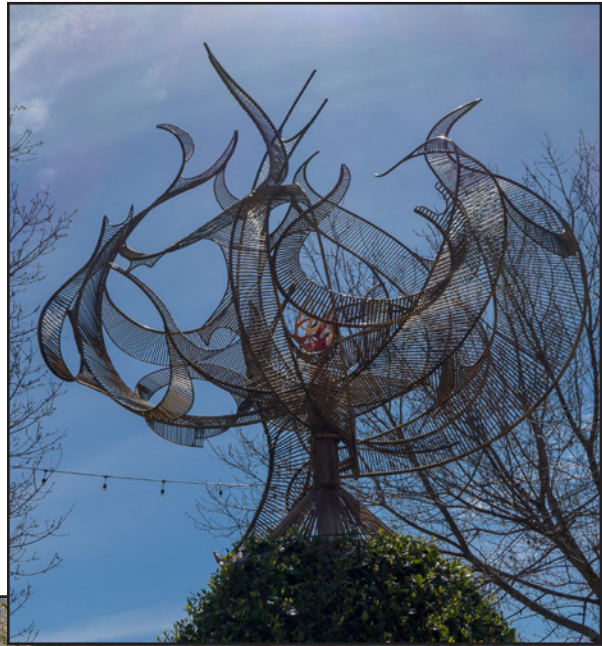






Our favorite winery visit in this area was to Sculpterra Winery & Sculpture Garden. The wine may have been great, but the sculpture was even better!







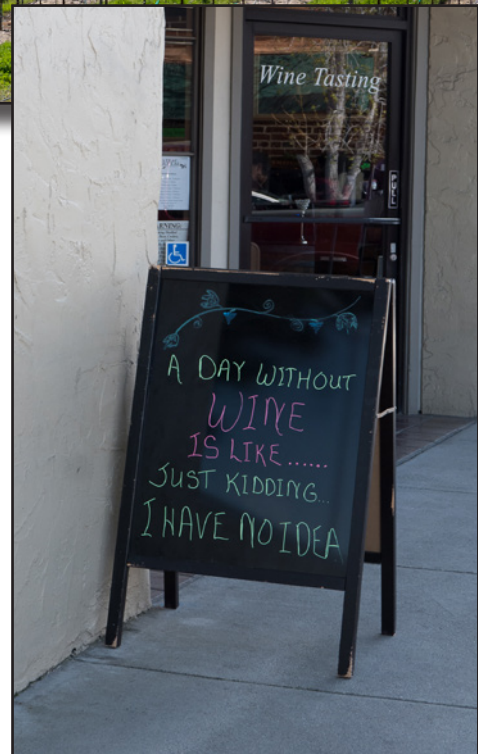
I learned a bit about one of my favorite wines as well.

RHONE VARIETALS

The Rhone region in southern France on the Rhone River was first cultivated in grapes in 600B.C. The origins of Syrah and Viognier may be due to the Greeks bringing the Syrah grape from the Persian city of Shiraz, or as some say from the Sicilian city of Syracuse by the Romans.

The Rhone varietals got a tremendous boost by a group called the Rhone Rangers in California. Gary Eberle of the Estrella River Winery planted Syrah, and made the clones available to the grape growers of the Paso Robles appellation. A second wave of plantings began in the 1990s by grape vine cuttings of Chateauf-du-Pape varietals imported from the Rhone region by Tablas Creek Vineyard.

Chateauf-du-Pape (also known as GSM), contain various proportions of Grenache (for fruit and acidity), Syrah (for dark color, spice and mineral), and Mourvedre (for tannin and structure). The Paso Robles terroir has turned out to be, ideal for Rhone wines and Rhone blends.





From Paso Robles we made several easy trips out to the coast, exploring to the south and north. Each time we drove back and forth on the same highway, the landscape and atmosphere seemed to change.



Morro Bay images....





On one of our trips over to the coast, we went to the Hearst Castle. From the visitors center which is down on the flats along the coast, it was a long winding road up to the top via the tour buses.

The Neptune Pool had long been under repair so still no swimming on this day. The California State Parks announced on August 14, 2018 that the project to repair and restore the world-famous Neptune Pool moved into the final phase and the department began refilling the 345,000-gallon pool.



There is a lots of pool-side sculpture to admire though.

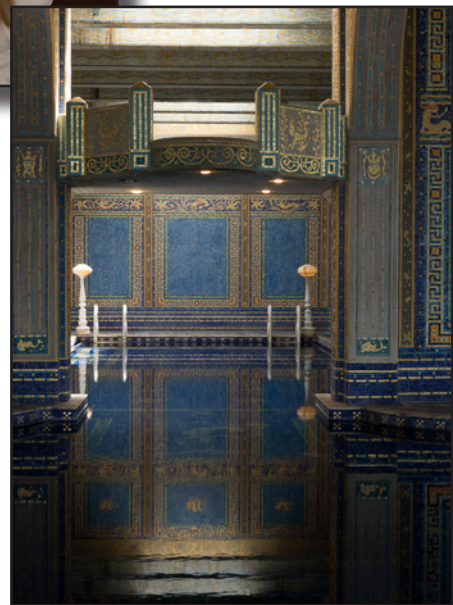
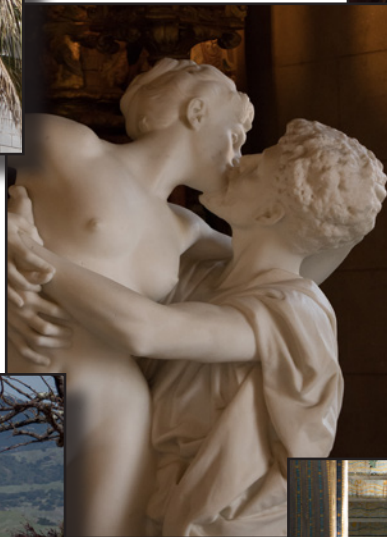




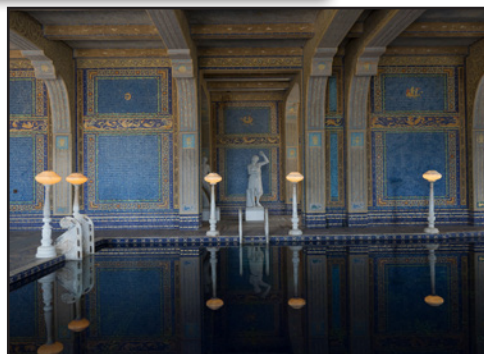
It was crowded, but it was still very enjoyable to walk the grounds enjoying the architecture and other art.



This seemed to be the preferred 'I was here' photography spot with the grand view of the hills behind, (all part of the Hearst Ranch we were told).



The indoor pool... still no swimming allowed..





This interesting trailer, called a Bowlus Road Chief, was parked near us at the Paso Robles RV park where we stayed. I looked it up on the Internet for more information. Very special, with very special prices! You can ogle and find out more here:

<https://www.bowlusroadchief.com/>



This drone photo is of our RV pad in Paso Robles. It was very nice, even being so close to highway 101, and convenient to our adventures around this area.

Our fellow Flying Pig Adventures travel companions Tim & Evi Halpin departed us here as they needed to be back in Williams Lake, BC in a couple days. They headed back east to Interstate 5 and then directly north.

We stayed here a few more days and then headed a little bit further north on highway 101 to explore some more.

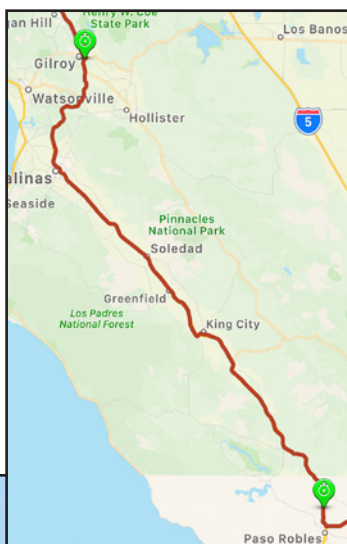




From Paso Robles it was a pretty easy drive up to Gilroy, the garlic capital of the entire universe, where we spent another few days.

From Gilroy, we took a day trip to one of the more obscure national parks, Pinnacles National Park. Our primary goal was to see and photograph the California condors that are released there after having been hatched in captivity.

On this trip we did not see any, maybe we will have better luck next time.



I packed my camera, big 600mm lens and big tripod 3 miles up to the Balconies where the California condors were SUPPOSED to be, but we saw nothing except a few vultures waiting for our possible demise.

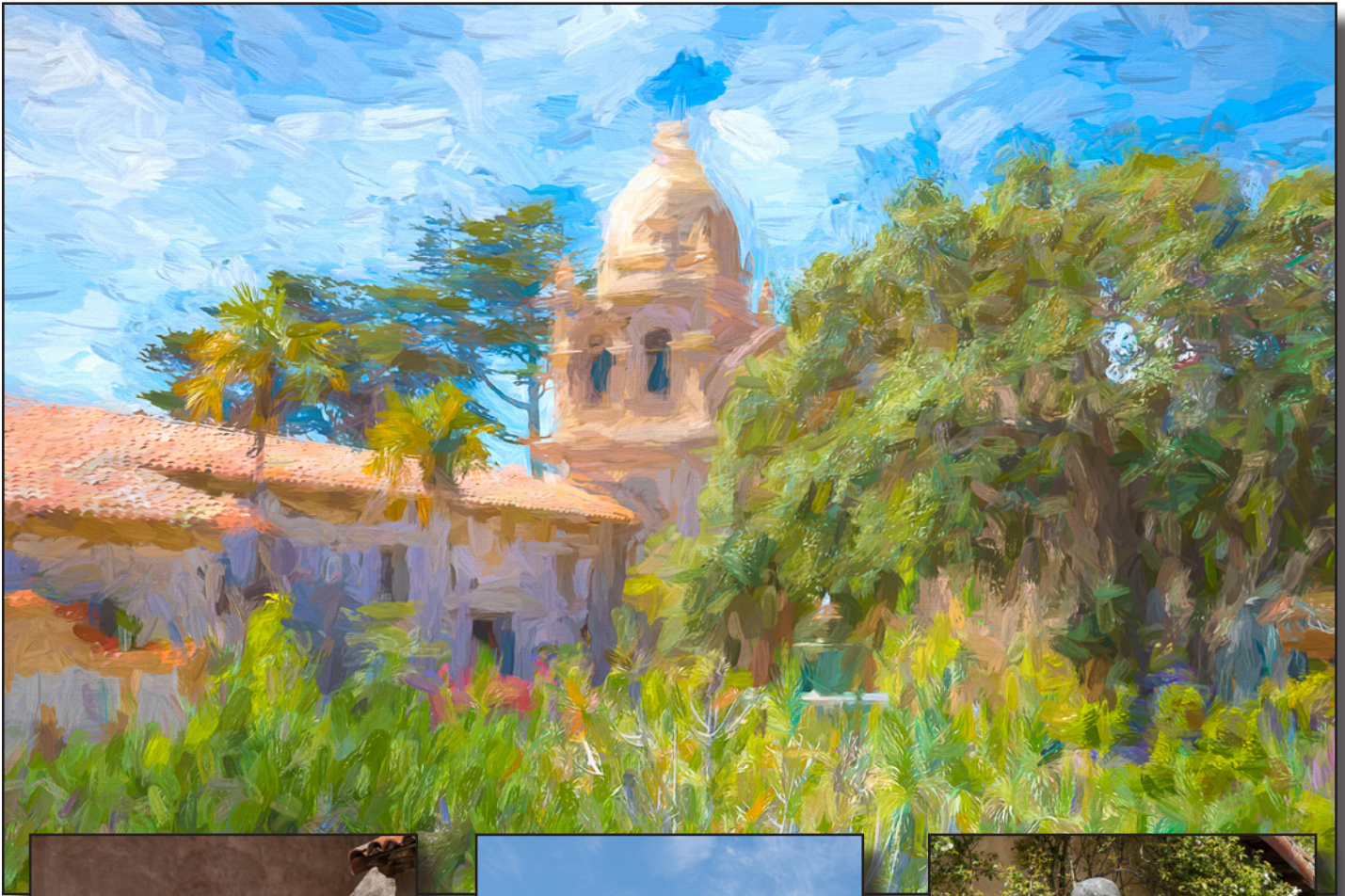
In the 1990s, a student biologist, Olivia Messinger, did a census of bees at Pinnacles. She found that the park has more bees per unit area than known anywhere else on earth, around 400 species. Most of these bees are solitary bees, not living in colonies like

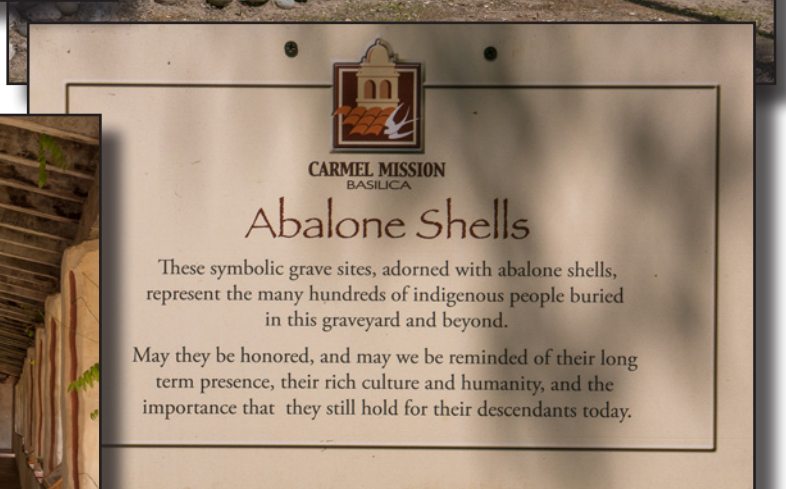
like European honeybees. Most live for only three to four weeks, and since flowers bloom here throughout the growing season, many niches are available for all the bee species. We did not see much in the way of bees either.





From Gilroy it was a short drive over to the Carmel and Monterey area. We visited Mission San Carlos Borromeo de rio Carmelo, (or Misión de San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo). The mission was first built in 1797, and is one of the most authentically restored Roman Catholic mission churches in California. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Landmark. The mission was the headquarters of all Alta California missions from 1797 until 1833. It was headed by Saint Junípero Serra from 1770 until his death in 1784. It was also the seat of the second presidente, Father Fermin Francisco de Lasuen, who was in charge of completing nine more mission churches.



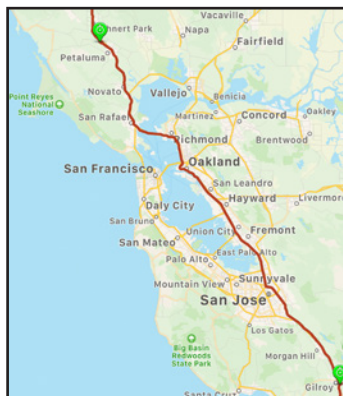






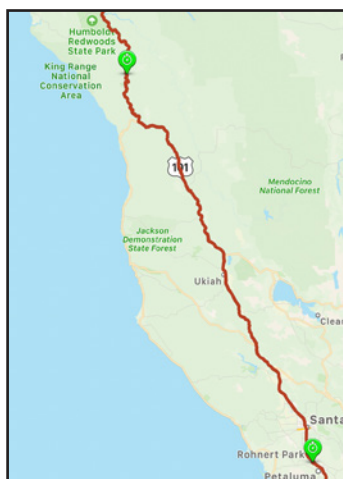
From Gilroy we headed further north to Petaluma in order to visit with our son Scot and his fiancée Karen Fass in nearby Graton.

This time through the bridge toll booths I choose the appropriate lanes for large vehicles, leaving no further paint samples on any bollards. We looked for the samples I'd left before but did not see them.



After a few days of visiting Scot & Karen, our next stop was overnight at Benbow, further north on highway 101. We have stayed here a few other times and enjoyed the historic Benbow Inn for drinks and dinner. It is just across the highway from the RV park we stay at and is accessible via a short walk on a paved sidewalk that goes under the highway. No Uber or designated driver necessary, and it has always been very good food.

<https://benbowinn.com/>





After the great meal at Benbow Inn and a bit of sleeping in, we journeyed on north to another frequent layover for us, Arcata. We stayed in Arcata a few days to explore and do some birding.



The infamous rest stop where on April 25th, 2016 we first saw Ken & Martha Wiseman's MoHo and the RV Navigators. I decided to photo-bomb their parking spot.



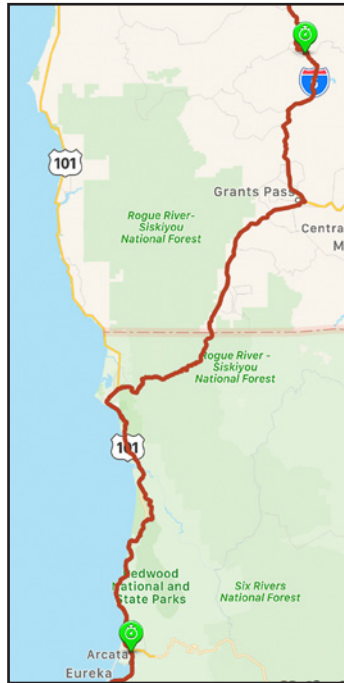






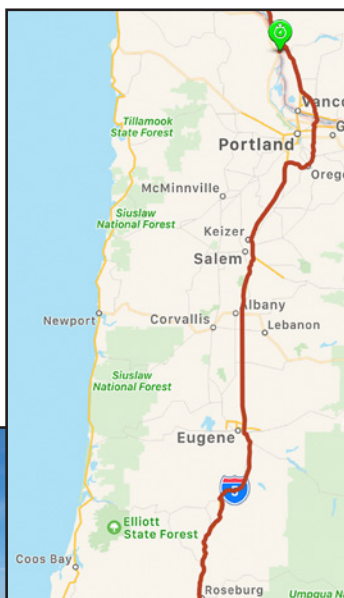


The next stop headed back to Poulsbo was a one night stop in Canyonville, Oregon. Yet another frequent stop on our trips up and down Interstate 5. There is a casino here, Seven Feathers, with their first class RV park across the highway. They have a free shuttle that will pick you up right in front of your RV and bring you back (with the idea you may try your luck and drop a bit of cash there, of course). It is also a nice walk back and forth, which works well to stretch a bit after a day of piloting the MoHo.

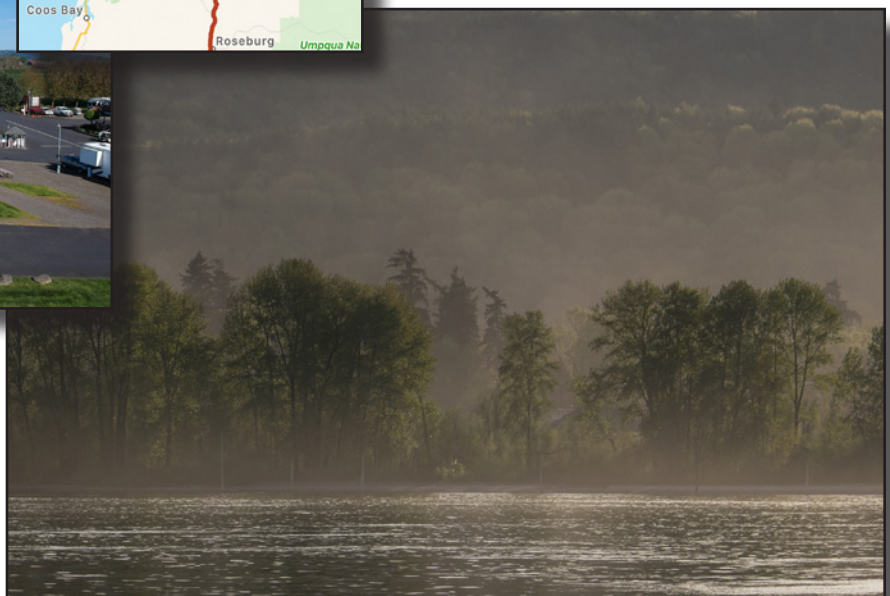


Our next and last overnight stop was another of our favorite spots on our Interstate 5 corridor journeys, the Columbia Riverfront RV Park in Woodland, WA. As the name implies, it is right along the Columbia River. We really like seeing all the big ships going up and down the river and if we can get one of the front facing spots to the river it is very cool! I've posted several images of the ships passing by in past *Flying Pig Adventures* travelogues.

I did notice that today's flight time of 4 hours, 38 minutes and 59 seconds was within 60 seconds of yesterday's flight time.



Our last sunset on this adventure. The sunset atmosphere gave the Columbia River a tropical feel. The actual weather? ... well... not so much, it was April in the NW after all.

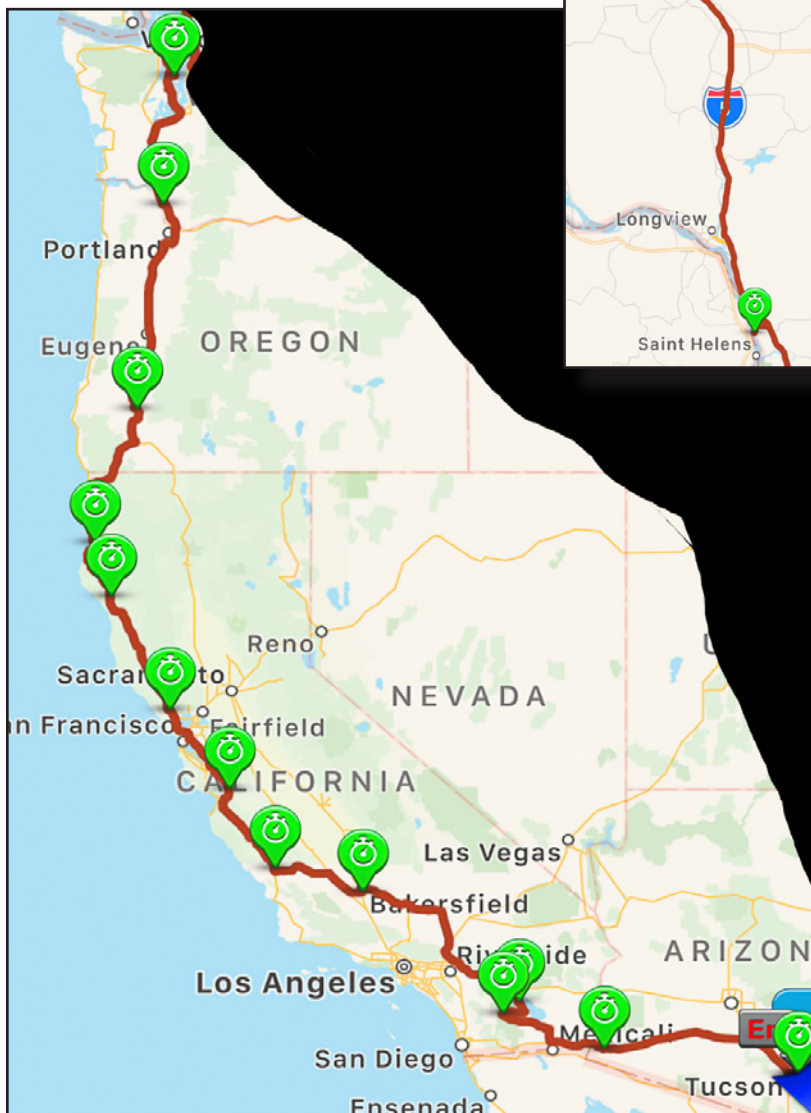
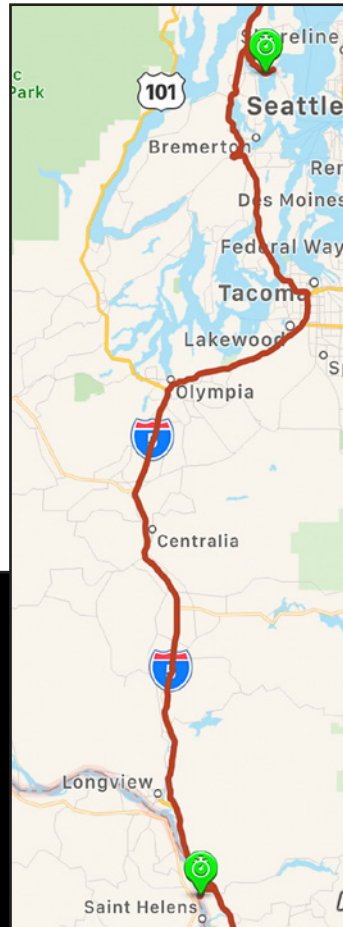




The next day we arrived back in Poulsbo. We generally end and start our trips at a nearby RV park in order to spend a few days unloading, cleaning and readying the MoHo for summer storage. This year we were able to find space at our first choice, Cedar Glen RV Park about 4 miles away from our house. For the past couple years we been able to store the MoHo north of our home about 10 miles.

Each year it is a bit of an adventure to find a place to store the MoHo for the 3-6 months we are there.

We are still looking for that perfect one story home (or land to build our own vision on), within walking distance of downtown Poulsbo, and with room to have our MoHo parked there. So far 'that' place has been elusive.



And that is the end of this Flying Pig Adventure! The next Flying Pig Adventure will be about our month long Danube-Main-Rhine river trip from the Black Sea to the North Sea.

.END