

Our Vacation #2



On Thursday we thought we would go to the coast. The goal was to have dinner at a place that had clam chowder! We thought we'd drive the Cow Creek By Way (an Oregon Back Road, Scenic Bicycle Route developed by the National Forest Systems). In our minds we were going to go to Marial, Oregon first and then go on to the Coast. We were hoping to end up in Gold Beach.

So, we headed out. It is a beautiful drive up these roads, and we crossed over from Douglas County to Coos County. We are on roads that are not on regular maps, and had to watch for signs carefully. We knew that folks died out in these parts and so were particularly careful. Of course, the roads are marked fairly well, and we both wondered how people got lost out there.... we found out the answer to that later... If you drive out Pruner Road and go past Riddle, the road follows Cow Creek then eventually turn off at the West Fork (of Cow Creek) Bridge and go out that way, well about 22 miles and then you have made it to Murial. Between West Fork and Murial, you'll run into a sign that says "Coast, Murial, and Merlin" on it. That is what I called the Bobby Creek cut off, and following it takes you over to Road 33, which is part of the Glendale/Merlin/Powers Bicycle Route (road) a scenic National Back Road circle of about 70 miles. While

on this road we saw some really pretty sights, but the thing I found most interesting on this particular leg of the journey was some 'grass' that was obviously in end of it's bloom. I'd say it was even almost done making seeds. I don't know what it was, but, as the day went on, and we got closer to the coast, we saw a lot more of it. And here it is: <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/02.jpg> and it's seeds: <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/01.jpg>

We headed for Murial first. And what we found was that we went over the top of some mountains and down into the Rogue River Valley. We found the Rogue River Ranch which seems to be at Murial, and after having crossed dry mountains colored with yellow grasses the Ranch seemed like an oasis in the desert. The valley was green all around the ranch, it was truly beautiful. <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/06.jpg>

There was a museum there, but it was closed due to repairs being done. So, we didn't get to do that part! Dern it! Rogue River Ranch was settled in 1898 by the Billings Family. They replaced an old miner's cabin and put on a real house, built a store, and soon it became a supply station and weight station for weary travelers from all around. A year after moving in Mr. Billings started an operation to keep miners on the West Fork of Cow Creek supplied with necessities. In 1931, the Ranch was sold to a man from Hollywood and the ranch became a resort for folks taking boat rides down the Rogue Rapids.... in the 1970's the Ranch was sold to the Forestry Department. Today, there is a camp site associated with the Ranch, and one can ride mail boats up the Rogue and be dropped off to camp, and then ride the boats farther up the river. <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/05.jpg> According to the signs around

the Ranch, a town or some place called Illahe was only a mile away, but we never did find it. We headed back to Road 33 and continued on our trek to the coast. We stopped only so that Clyde could shoot one of his .22 pistols. I shot it a couple times too, it is a fun gun to shoot. Out of the six shots I actually hit my target (a cardboard box that held the shells) 1/2 the time!!! Clyde told me that the thing he liked the best lately was getting to take me places where he knew I wanted to go. Doesn't look so nice or romantic in black and white here, but the way he said it, and the way I took it...well, let's just say it made me very happy. Every heard of something making your heart sing?? I could have said that, and it would have been true!!! He dug me up Rhodies which don't look too healthy today. He dug me up Tiger Lilies, and their bulbs. The first Tiger Lily's we found were not much bigger than a quarter, and had roundish shaped leaves...and when he dug up the bulb they were a a lot of these tiny little bublets, that kind of fell apart in his hands. He was so sorry he broke them, I was happy to have them....I was happy he made the effort. I've been married before and no one in my past ever cared about what flowers I liked. http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/IMG_7763b.jpg

<http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/07.jpg>

Clyde dug me up what looked like full sized Tiger Lily's too, but their bulbs were more like flakes..My friend, Patty says they are called Scales, and each one of them grows...I took a ton of photos of Tiger lily's because I love them so much...most of them are close ups, I'll include one of the full sized one's here, because it shows the whole plant, but gotta warn ya, it's fuzzy!! (the whole plant for you,

Patty!) <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/04.jpg>

All that day, we stopped and dug up flowers, and took pictures: <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/03.jpg>

While taking the picture you just looked at, I saw a tiny pod containing seeds next to it, and just thought that could make a great picture too, so I took that one: <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/08.jpg>

When we left Murial we saw a sign that said that the coast was still 42 miles away. It was well after lunch time by this time, so we knew we had to keep going if we were going to make Gold Beach for dinner!! We followed the signs, and drove, and drove, and drove... our paved road with good signs turned into a graveled wash board. We began to worry about where we were, and if we were going the right direction. And Clyde

who is diabetic was getting hungry... and grouchy. I learned this day to always carry something for him to snack on, just in case we don't get to the destination on time. On Washboard drive, we saw a mother deer and her two babies: <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/12.jpg> As we finally saw signs of life, and realizing after all that driving we were still in the Rogue Valley and not any closer to the coast, we FINALLY ran into another sign that said that the coast was still 42 miles away, and that we were just a few miles from a town named Agnes. Agnes as the welcoming sign said had a population of "small". It had a post office, and a store, and an outhouse. The store had closed at 5:30 p.m. but there were three men sitting out side chatting who gave us directions to the coast. Clyde said that those three men were probably 1/2 the population of the whole town! LOL A sign that said that the coast was 42 miles, Illahe was only 6 miles away, it also said that Merlin was like 38 miles, and Grants Pass was 52 miles. Or something like that...we discussed it and opted to go back to Grants Pass because Clyde was VERY hungry now, and I was concerned about his sugars--and because we knew our way around the outsides of Grants Pass, whereas if we got lost on the way to the coast anymore than we were, Clyde could have ended up in trouble (at least in my mind...) At 9:30 p.m. we pulled into the Denny's parking lot in Grants Pass. It was a beautiful ride back from Agnes to Grants Pass. We ventured a guess, that the road which was paved and rough in some spots was probably an old highway. We saw many camp sites, where no one was camping....not even in july. We got more flowers... And following the Rogue River into Merlin gave me more perspective into the history of the area. I found it fascinating. One of the things we had discovered this day...one of the things that really excited both of us was a waterfall we found. Somehow, we had crossed over onto Road 33 which followed the South Coquille River. We saw a waterfall from the roadway and had to stop. We wanted photos: <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/09.jpg> But, there was seemingly no way down to the falls to get those photos... Clyde followed a very steep path part way down and determined that we could get down, if we got rope and other climbing paraphernalia, so we

vowed to get what we need and go back the next day and get those photos. If you look down at the bottom of this photo, you can see the beginnings of the path we took the next day, and you can see, it gets lost pretty quick, because it pretty much goes straight down! <http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/11.jpg>

I told Clyde, we could remember where the falls were because right across the street was a baby waterfall, which he poo-pooed that day... too small for him to pay much attention too. But, I found it beautiful, and thought they'd make a perfect place for a couple to say their marriage vows to. So, I took a picture:

<http://i192.photobucket.com/albums/z177/pegrowe62/7-19-2007/10.jpg> We got home around midnight. We were very, very tired...and we set the clock for 7:30 a.m. the next morning, and we barely made it up and out of bed! Before, I quit this note, I'd like to say how thankful I am to my friend Patty, and her daughter in law, and son, and her grand daughter, BG (Big Girl). Patty has efriended me in a most precious way. We met via either FreeCycle (Roseburg) or Craig's List...I don't remember, what I remember is that I was giving away some Passion Flower. She came to my house to collect her flowers, and I showed her my "brand new" really OLD house, and my yellow yard with so much potential. And she just was so excited about what I could do with my yard. When it came time, she shared Iris with me....and since she has shared so much more. It has been so nice to meet someone who shares my passion for gardening. But Patty has also shared her grand daughter the same age as my youngest daughter, and the two little girls think so much alike, they never fight, they play for hours on end...they get along. Patty has taken my baby into her home for a week, two months in a row so that she could go to vacation bible school with BG. Diane loved the time with BG and Grandma Patty, and Patty seems to love my kid. And Clyde and I had not had time to ourselves in months, and months... the last time we had alone was in April on our trip down to Mendocino County for his brother's memorial, the time before that he was in the hospital getting open heart surgery. Patty made our trip and alone time, possible. Thank you, Patty, and her whole family for sharing your time, and your heart with Diane. And with us. I've got only one more batch of photos to share now...pictures of not one waterfall, but a series of waterfalls that we found on the South Coquille River, in Coos County, Oregon. P.s: during this ride all day long, we both questioned people's sanity and how in the world they could get lost out there... and die even!!!! The road is paved (most the way), there are signs...there are gates to keep people off of gravel BLM roads that frequently intersect this National Back Road. By the end of the day, when we knew we had failed to procure our clam chowder, we realized how easy it would be to get lost in a few feet of snow that could cover up a sign... we also determined that it was a good possibility that someone had vandalized a sign because we drove a good 40 miles only to find that the coast was the same distance away as it was four hours earlier in the drive. By the end of the day, we

were humbled, and understood how folks could get lost and die, and we were sorry we questioned folks! Big Ol' Hugs, & Love, Peg