

STEPPING OFF THE EDGE

travels of a reluctant retiree

MARCH 6, 2020 BY MIKE T

A lonely road, a fab kitchen, and the reenactment of the Bataan death march

Leaving beautiful San Antonio we found ourselves on a bleak but beautiful road reminiscent of a Hopper painting of the plains. Sticking out like a sore thumb, or perhaps a soon to be torn down feed shed, was Baldy's Diner. When I say this was the only place around, I am talking about the big around, like miles around, like you are going to drive for hours before there is food around. It featured, in addition to one pump of regular at \$1.90 a gallon, a full breakfast for \$5.95. Had to get it because it was the most expensive item on the menu, including the chicken fried steak. Have I mentioned that I am on a fried food fast until New Orleans? Well, for the princely amount of \$9.79, Mrs. T and I ate.

We landed in Galveston at dusk to an Airbnb as big as our home in Capitola. A welcome change from bedrooms which would not let us both get out of bed simultaneously in fear of breaking a hip! And, dare I say it, two bathrooms. Now this seems like a needless luxury for only two nights, but when you are waking up in the middle of the night at a new place every other night, figuring out where the hell you are not to mention where the hell is the bathroom now, well this was a treat. The kitchen was more than complete with a prep island and a multitude of host supplied breakfast items and snacks. Alas, only two nights...

Early the next morning our host informed us that the island was laid out with numbered streets running down the short side and avenues running the length. The interesting thing here is the streets were numbered from 1 to 100 but the city fathers, in their wisdom decided to make the avenues the letters of the alphabet... warning, there are only 26 letters and more than 50 avenues. Solution? Worthy of any mad idea the Capitola City Council could come up with... we will make every other street one half of a letter... A, A1/2,

B, B 1/2 and so on... brilliant.

Mrs. T “let’s walk along the famous Galveston Seawall”

Me: “sure, I have been told there is a trolley that runs the length also by our host”

Mrs. T: “but we need to walk”

Me; “yes dear, most certainly we will walk”

And so, after a 10 block walk from our home on S 1/2 to the seawall (more on Galveston blocks later) we reach the lovely seawall and, all of my complaining aside, it was good to be at the gulf after many many days of Texas. Now we are on 61 St, our goal is to reach that day’s mardi gras parades on 20th... time for a brief math quiz... I get 41 blocks, how about you? Yes 41 blocks and not sane blocks like, oh, I don’t know, New York or Capitola but rather monstrous blocks that go on forever. I did get to see a memorial plaque to a former elected official, see below;



Who knew?

Oh that's right, the trolley which reportedly ran every 15 minutes like clockwork... lets just

say it ran a regular as the second coming of Christ! we walked the 41 block with me constantly looking over my shoulder and never ever saw the trolley. We did, in fact, see them running the opposite direction at a pretty regular interval. More on this later. We arrive at 20th street and turn inland to the city downtown to see some pretty down home bead throwing and carrying on family style.





And now onward back to our little nest and we walk down along the seawall the opposite direction... is there a trolley in sight? YES! Too bad they are now going in the opposite direction. Perhaps before noon north and after south? No, that cannot be it, so we trudge on, too weary to speak and all of a sudden a trolley passes us going our way. It seems the stops are well marked and on our 41 block trek we are squarely between stops whenever a trolley goes by. Arriving home...

Mrs. T: "we could have taken an UBER"

Me: “why didn’t you call one?”

Mrs. T: “you never said you wanted one”

Me: ” “

Later that night after nursing our poor feet, having made them carry us for what turned out to be a ten mile stroll, we made it to Willie G’s at the harbor for oysters that were the freshest I have ever eaten, and believe me, I have thrown down a few. It was like eating straight out of the gulf. This dinner, along with a few Grey Goose on the rocks, healed what ailed us. Those that know me know that if my lips touch alcohol I never ever get behind the wheel. This night I am not certain if it was the terrorizing hike or the fact that there were daiquiri drive throughs everywhere we looked, but I did get us home with two cocktails in me.

Tomorrow we escape Texas after almost two weeks of driving through and making two night stays.... Louisiana here we come. Having seen photos of our three night lodging in the apartment adjacent to an artist’s studio, I can only imagine what is in store for the vagabonds in Lafayette, LA.

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