

Jean and Art on the Road 3 – Between Summer and Fall

SUMMARY OF THIS TRIP — SO FAR

Jean likes to see where we're going with a map. My map tends to be in my head. My map route appears as a sort of a circle. It's probably a disorder of some sort.

I hate to confess it, but I also have a mental map of a year...my mental calendar is an oblong circle! You name a month and I can place it in my oblong.

Jean travels by written directions or a map she can read. Or the GPS.

This circle started at our place on Case Inlet on Puget Sound where we've been for four months. A small dot on most people's maps. Jean writes down the numbers on our Jeep odometer...151,360.

The circle headed southward through Long Beach on the Pacific Ocean just north of where the Columbia River pours forth. Then down the coast a few miles turning east a bit to the Willamette Valley before turning south again down the valley to Corvallis

Next we changed directions toward the east. Over the Cascade Mountains through places like Sisters and John Day and Baker City where the circle stopped going east and turned north. We are now in the northeast part of Oregon. The small town of Enterprise is in that beautiful area. Another small dot.

My mind sees a circle developing as we turned north back into Washington. It passed through places like Walla Walla and Colfax and miles of rolling wheat fields to Spokane.

This was the far "corner" of my circle. No more east and no more north.

Just west after Spokane, heading for Wenatchee, where the last report ended.

DAY 7 — On to Yakima, west and south from Wenatchee over Blewett Pass. Washington has many mountain passes. Each has a special beauty. I like the winding, climbing road and scenery along the way. It has more traffic than we like but there are enough passing lanes to keep us going. We pass by Ellensburg onward south (my circle isn't perfectly round!) over several smaller passes until we descend on Yakima.

Apple trucks are moving from orchards to warehouses. We are heading for the motel where we have often stayed while attending the annual *Turner Memorial Lectures*. It's one of the events I have attended for many years.

Our driving these days uses the "nap-along" strategy. Every hundred miles or so we make it a point to pull into a rest area or mall parking lot or park to catch a cat-nap. We rock back our seats, put a scarf over our eyes and drop off for a few minutes. Between 5 and 10 minutes max. We can go a long way (for us) using that strategy. We try to limit our driving day to no more than 3 "nap-along" stops.

We also make it a point to check into motels earlier. Partly to get our money's worth...but mainly to let our strength catch up with our bodies. We sleep well. (I used to wake up at night thinking how much money it was costing me an hour to stay awake in bed!)

A big part of the lectureship is seeing old colleagues and meeting some of the newer ones. There are quite a number who have been on my list for many years. The list gets smaller as we all age. But a few others add themselves every year. Interesting to stay in the conversation.

Jean doesn't come to many of the lectures, although she did more this year. When she comes she sits in the back, knitting. One dishcloth an hour. If the lecture goes beyond one dishcloth she's usually off someplace to read. She's great at meeting and greeting, a leftover practice from our pastoral years.

So, we made it to Yakima for October 3, 4 and 5. My mental travel circle is scheduled to be completed on October 6 when we go back to Puget Sound. That final report should appear in a few days.

I am sometimes asked what I do. The short answer for most of the past 40 years is, "*I do whatever comes next...and something always comes next.*" I know it's not the right way to run a life. Maybe that's why my road map is a circle and my annual calendar is oblong. "Moments" always seem to happen.

For the Moment... Art Morgan