

## *MM Email Blue Sheet from California! Mostly about Jean*

A half dozen unfinished and unsent “blue sheets” are somewhere in this computer. They were written in Wenatchee, Yakima, Spokane, Idaho Falls and Ontario, Oregon. Our last mailing said we were making some visits before heading home for Corvallis by October 15.

**Guess what. It didn’t happen as planned.** A phone call turned into an airplane flight to Los Angeles. I’m writing this on a Thursday morning from a hotel in Garden Grove next to Disneyland. No, we didn’t go to Disneyland.

**I will send a later report about some of our stops**, including the “pre-memorial party” for a devoted blue sheet friend (she has printed out and saved every blue sheet received since getting on our list). The story of her party is one you will want to read.

**Right now I want to talk about Jean.** She’s the technical manager, administrator and Garmin assistant, plus. I wouldn’t leave home without her. Hardly ever have in 62 years.

**Besides making connections** with various people along the way, she arranges motels and in this case even plane reservations while driving through remote places as we speed along. Jean hears phone talk better than I do, so gets the job even though she would rather not.

**I thought about doing her a page** during one of our trips out from our hotel. We have a rental car, but we (or she) had foresight enough to bring our Garmin Global Position System device. It is possible to use the device without an aide, but sometimes “Mrs. Garmin” doesn’t speak clearly, or even gives false information. Jean keeps track of her...and me.

**It is not unusual to have six fast moving lanes** on the freeway. The street in front of our hotel...let me count...has nine! The lanes are often very congested. You can’t take the off-ramp if you are four lanes away. Or, if you are in the right lane too soon it may take you off before you are ready. Jean has extra eyes to detect these unpredictable problems. After all, she was a first grade teacher!

**Some may have noticed** that I don’t hear everything like a might. Jean patiently repeats what I don’t understand. I not only appreciate the repeating but especially her patience. Yesterday we went about 25 miles, taking several different street arterials plus three different freeways. It was a luncheon party with cousins at the famed Huntington Library and Gardens. Of course there were detours for construction that “Mrs. Garmin” hadn’t heard about. But Jean got us there. We never missed a turn.

**Contrary to folk-lore**, California drivers are exceptionally good. They have to be in order to survive. We outsiders have to do our best not to get in the way. Hesitation is not safe. Jean is great at keeping us up to speed. She encourages what seem like “forced mergers” to me, but which is actually the way traffic moves from lane to lane, from on-ramp to the freeway, and from two lanes to one. Jean covers my blind spots so we don’t cause more trouble than necessary. Everyone needs someone to cover the blind spots.

**Travel can be/is tiring.** Travelling with someone can test a relationship. If you can’t do it together you most likely won’t get there. Jean has a Valentine Card she puts out every year. It says: “Everything is more fun when there are two instead of one.” From the driver’s point of view it’s more than that. I would say, “If it weren’t for her we wouldn’t get there.” We’ve had lots of practice.

**In a few minutes** we will go back for one more probably final visit with our California friend. It’s only five or six miles from here. All surface streets, most posted at 45 miles an hour. I think I know the way by now. But just in case, “Mrs. Garmin” and Jean will steer me straight.

**I’ll try to fill in some of the gaps** in our activities...some of the special “moments”...very soon I hope. Maybe a couple of Jean “moments,” like when she applauded after someone dropped a cake, or how she went into the smoky hallway of our hotel trying to warn other guests. But I’m at the bottom of the page. She still has to get us back to the Los Angeles airport tomorrow! For the Moment...

— Art Morgan, October 24, 2013