

# Further Adventures, 2008: More State Capitols, More Roadfood

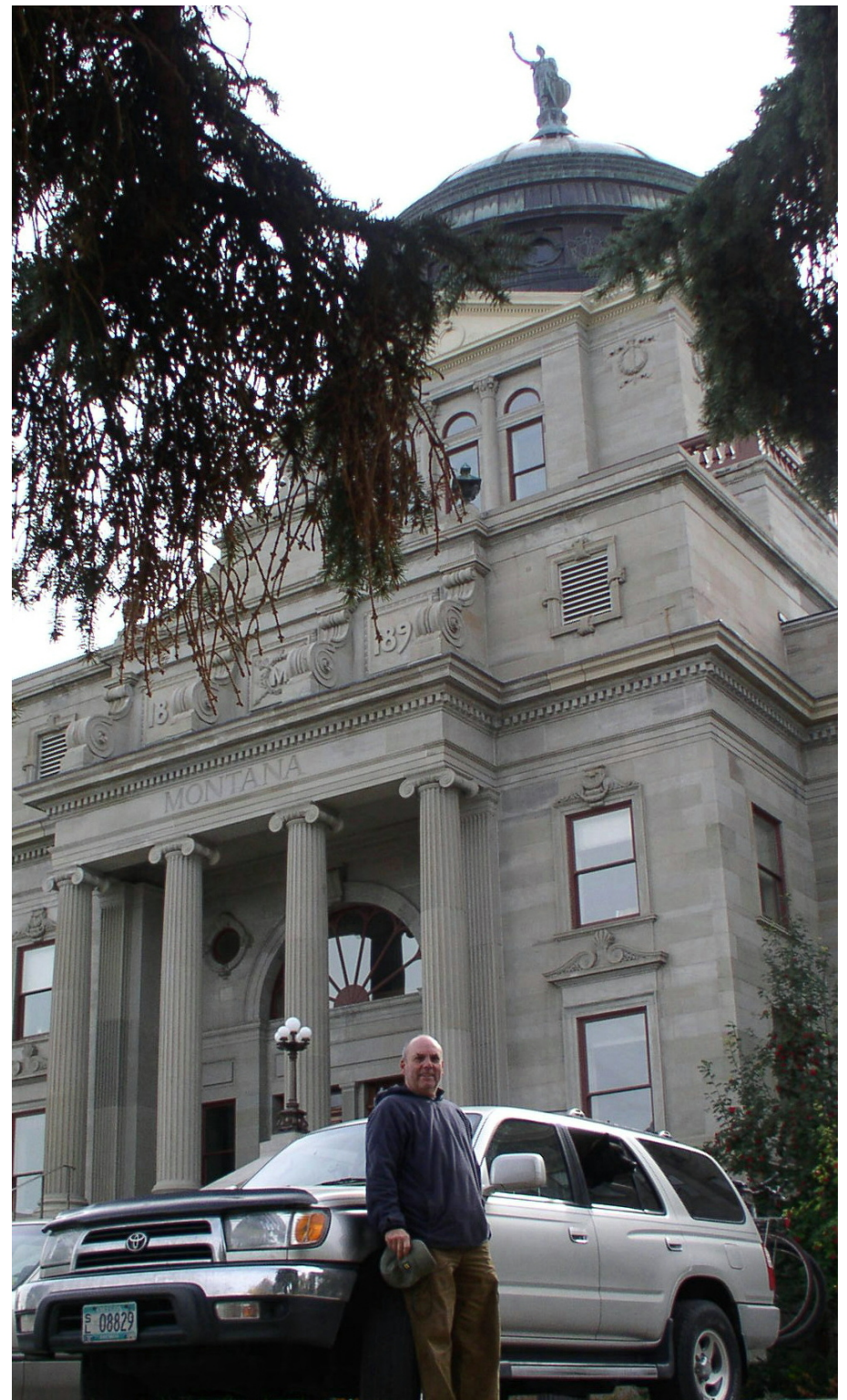
Jim Stembridge

Fall, 2008

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Ruthless and I left Salem October 15 on another lap around the country, our second, planning another 15 State Capitol visits, plus two State Capitol re-visits. (Last fall's trip took us to 25 State Capitols.) Again, we expect to try some local restaurants along the way, hike and bike, do some camping. see the sights. We'll stay a couple of weeks in Boston mid-trip, joined by Joan, then head west to Los Angeles to be with mom, Rena, at Thanksgiving, where we will also be joined by Joan, and perhaps Emily and Zane will be there, too.

This report is a compilation of the more than 30 e-mails I sent to family and friends while traveling.



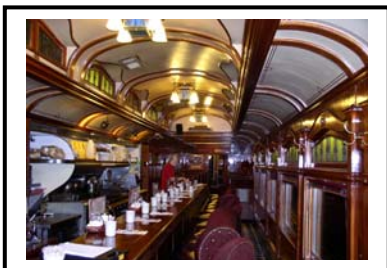


Here we are saying good-bye in the driveway in Salem. Joanie says she is happy to see me go. Hmm.

We visited Emily & Zane in Port Angeles (Greg was still away, doing hurricane-related security work along the Gulf Coast).



*With Emily's apple tree in Port Angeles*



*Frank's Diner in Spokane is worth the stop, for sure*

Ruthless & I did some hiking & biking (actually, Ruth does not bicycle, she runs along beside) in Glacier National Park. Going-to-the-Sun Highway is closed for repairs, so we pedaled a mountain road near Fish Creek, and I hiked up to Avalanche Lake. Glacier is a gem on par with Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Yellowstone; one of our best national parks. Kinda sad to see the condition of the trails, lodges, campgrounds, and roads. I can't help thinking of the billions being spent destroying and re-building in Iraq that could be spent maintaining our National Parks.

**Montana's** Capitol is on a hill on the south side of Helena. Little doubt that because of its location south of downtown; it faces north, presenting a photographic problem for fall and winter visitors. This afternoon's hazy sunshine gave the dome and Liberty (the statue atop) a backlit glow, so it will take some special skills to get the photo



Helena MT October 19, 2008

in usable condition. Inside, many picturesque features, including paintings, sculpture, archways, backlit stained glass, and a fine rotunda. Sculpture of former U.S. Senator Mike Mansfield and wife occupy a conspicuous spot on a second-floor balcony, visible in life-like silhouette from outside the front doors makes the building seem occupied warmly at all times.

I was surprised to find the rear basement doors unlocked, the only public entrance. Couple of security guys at a central desk in the basement; otherwise the building is wide open to visitors, well-lit. And

on Sunday, too! No sign-in required; no visitor badge, no electronic screening, no package search. Free to wander around, I did my usual route in the nearly-deserted building. Senate Chambers (gallery on all four sides) has scaffolding and tarps for repairs in front; House Chambers not open at all (possibly because of famous Charles M. Russell painting said to be behind the Speaker's Rostrum). But Supreme Court chamber gallery was open, with chamber well-lit. Plus barrel-vault stained-glass ceiling of which they are very proud. And plenty else to see and record. What a wonderful state, Montana.



*Look closely- You'll see me taking a picture in Montana*

**North Dakota's** Capitol was built the same decade as Oregon's (1930s) and in a similar style (art-deco), but the similarities end right about there. ND's is of the office-tower variety, like Nebraska, Florida, Arizona, and Louisiana. Unlike the Florida and Arizona office towers, which are hardly worth visiting, ND has put a lot of soul into the works, like the elaborate polished brass "bar" surrounding the house and senate floors, lots of rich wood--art-deco-style--in the legislative chambers and in between (an area called "Legislative Hall"), sculpted brass details on the elevator doors and above the revolving doors.



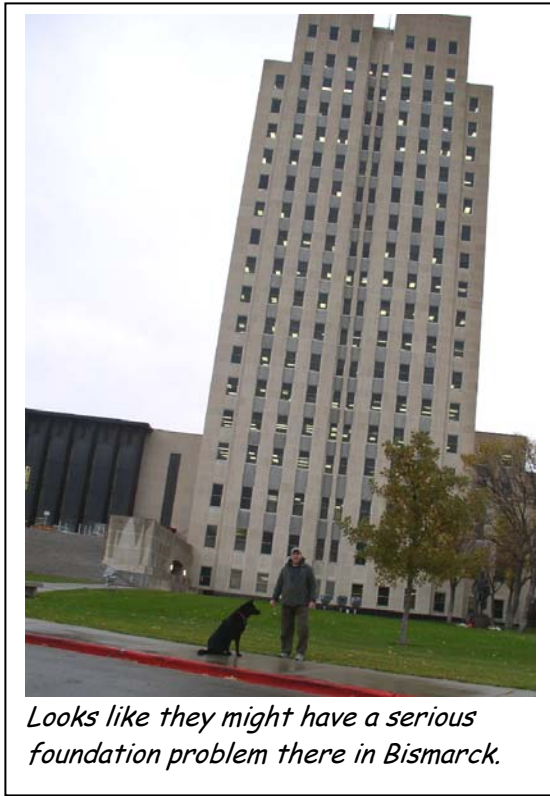
Lots of vertical glass, so lots of light in the public areas. Faces south across a wide expanse of lawn, with lots of viewing angles, which would have made for wonderful sunrise photography had it not been rainy and foggy this morning. Downstairs, something for everyone in the North Dakota Hall of Fame, including portraits of Lawrence Welk, Roger Maris, Eric Sevareid, Miss Peggy Lee, and a few dozen more, many of whose names you would no doubt recognize, ND natives all .

Wonderful statue of Sakawea (the female member of Lewis & Clark's expedition who was of some importance to the state), but it is away from the Capitol next to an access road. (Lewis & Clark spent their first winter a few miles up the Missouri River from here.) Again, no security screening, no security anywhere in sight even. Today, it had the buzz of legislative hearings—reassuring sights and sounds for a legislative addict. Ohhh boy . . . one can only imagine the important stuff being deliberated and decided upon in North Dakota.



*Big Timber Montana's Cole Drugs is now "Pamida Pharmacy". Yes, Pamida Pharmacy, that dreaded chain of midwest drug dispensaries, bought 'em out a few months ago. But the old-fashioned soda fountain is still there, at 136 McLeod in the heart of downtown Big Timber (in urban geography, we used to call their location the "PLVI", meaning "peak land value intersection"). "They come from miles around for the milk shakes," says the proprietress, so I think they'll not be eliminating the soda fountain any time soon. But you never know. Not much stock on the shelves, so I think the more people who stop in for milk shakes, the more likely the soda fountain will be there on into the future, financial crisis or no. My milkshake was wonderful!*

I'll bet the issues and language and personality-types are similar to ours in Oregon.



*Looks like they might have a serious foundation problem there in Bismarck.*

Later in the day, on my way south to that other Dakota, I passed through Strasburg, North Dakota, BIRTHPLACE OF LAWRENCE WELK!!!! North Dakota! Wunnerful! Wunnerful!

**South Dakota's** Capitol in Pierre (pronounced "peer") is of the conventional type, big rooms for legislative chambers on either side of the building, big ornate rooms and hallways connecting, dome and rotunda in the

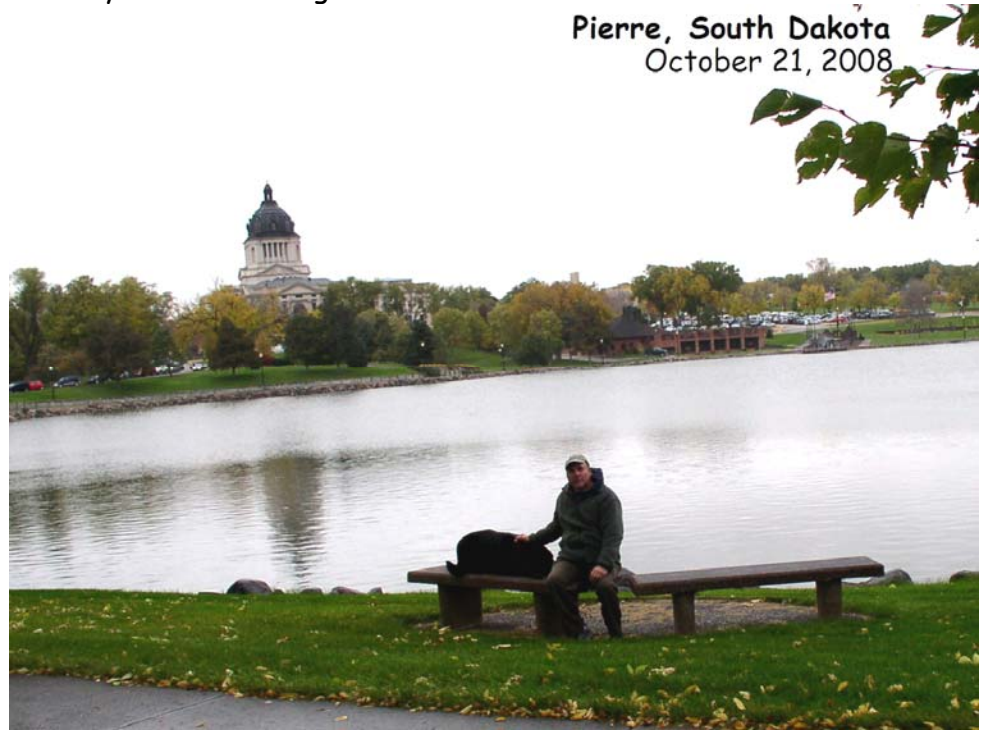
center, with room for Governor's office, Lt. Governor and other exec branch officials. It seems like a two-thirds-scale-model of some of the biggies like Texas & California & Pennsylvania.

Lots of light-bulbs highlighting architectural features, especially archways. Lots of stenciled decorations on ceilings and walls. Busy busy floors of random-pattern mosaic tile. Hardly any plain-painted surfaces anywhere. Dome reminiscent of South Carolina, low and dark, with, "eyebrow"-? features. Unlike many Capitols, both house and senate chambers were open and lit, as were their galleries, a happy bonus for visiting photographers. Again, free to roam without explanation or hassle.

Faces south, with a few good views of the front, (between this afternoon's rainstorms). As with many Capitols, employee and visitor parking is real close by, too close for auto-less photography, I'm afraid. I spend most of my time positioning myself where

bushes, walls, flowerbeds, and trees screen of most of the cars, "no parking" signs, floodlight banks, temporary barricades, "wipe your feet" signs, delivery vans, and police tape. The nearby lake provides picturesque perspectives, with the red automobiles reduced to looking like maybe beds of bright mums.

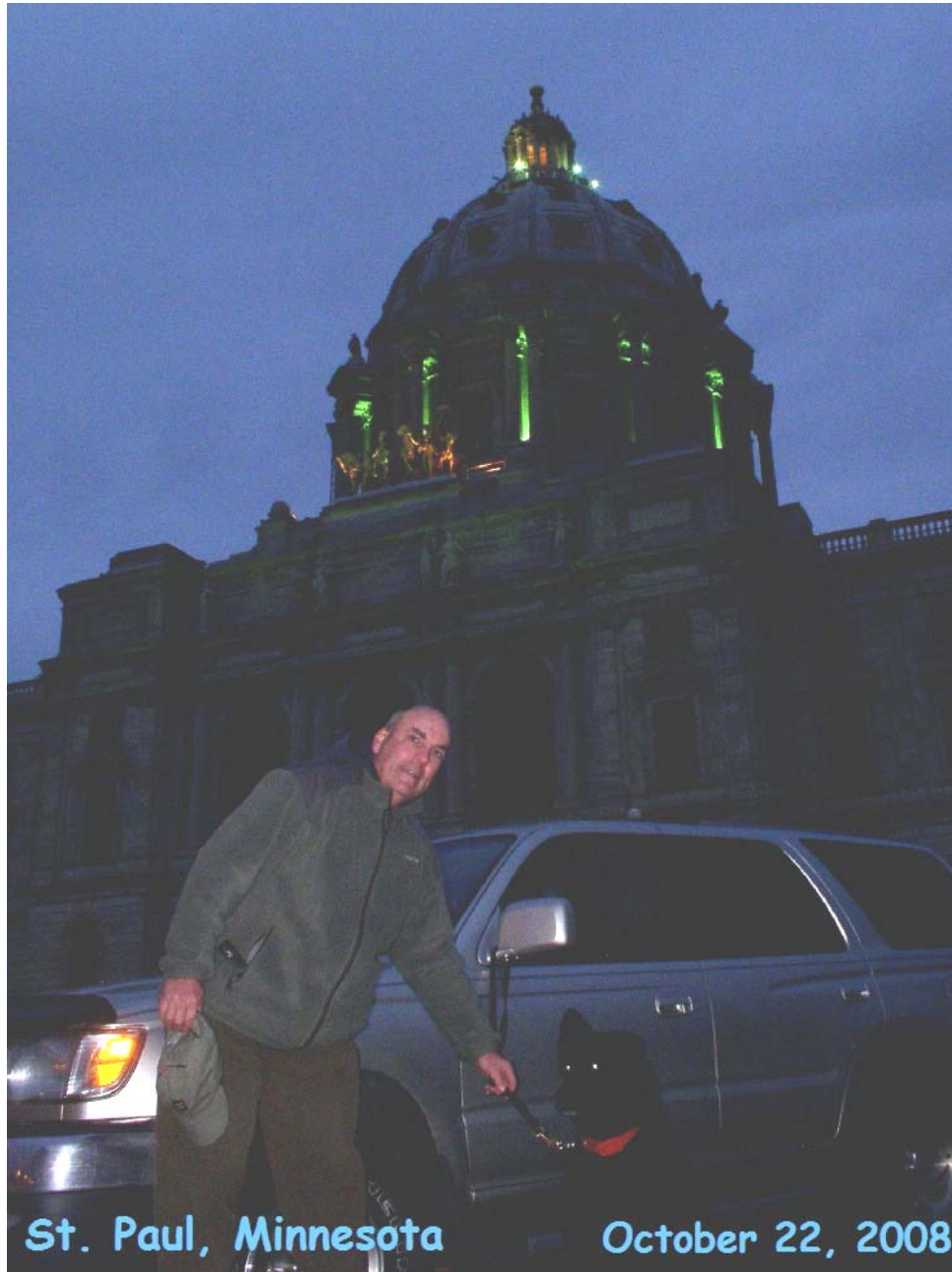
Pierre, South Dakota  
October 21, 2008



Pierre has a great bike path, several miles right alongside the Missouri River. This time of year, on a drizzly day, a mountain-biker and his dog have it all to themselves.

**Minnesota** has built a premium Capitol. MIT-grad Cass Gilbert was the architect; he also did the West Virginia and Arkansas Capitols, which I'm scheduled to visit next month. Big; lots of architectural detail with columns, vaults, complicated passages, skylights in good repair (many of Oregon's have been roofed over), a spectacular dome with ornate rotunda underneath, and those special golden horses atop the front pediment ("Quadriga"). Not much stencil work, and not much needed. Completed in 1905. Big grounds, lots of views, facing south, for lots of good afternoon and evening angles, bright stone yields dramatic photographs, even on dark, cloudy days like

Wednesday this week. (We had altered our route to avoid a big rainstorm to the south, and our strategy worked for the most part, as it was dry in St. Paul). We arrived late afternoon, waited for the exterior lights to come on. I find that the full lighting at most Capitols, with dark sky, while dramatic indeed, is difficult



St. Paul, Minnesota

October 22, 2008

to capture on film. Better is to get the image as the lights are coming on; you get some "pop" on the stone building, but the sky is still lit, sometimes with pinks and deep blues. It takes some waiting and timing, but the effort is sometimes worth it. We waited until it was nearly dark, and, remembering that they do not turn on the lights at all at the Montana Capitol, I gave up, folded the tripod and put it all away, and I guess that's what they had been waiting for because the lights started coming on soon thereafter so I had to scramble back out and got mostly what I wanted. But, as a consequence, it was dark by the time I took our group shot. You can see the first of the lights just coming on, and, on my face, a bit of panic mixed with disgust.

I'm not sure what the security arrangements are for the Minnesota Capitol, as I entered through a main floor door I found ajar.

Garrison Keilor's fall run of St. Paul radio shows, "A Prairie Home Companion", starts next Friday. We can't wait the week, so will head south to Iowa, hoping the rain will have cleared by the time we get there.



Here's where we camped for the night in Iowa, a cold and windy hunting reserve, so no hunters.

**Iowa's** central tower seems a bit out of proportion to me, but I think they boosted it a bit so it looks like it fits with the four surrounding smaller domes on each corner. Inside, the huge rotunda, with a bonus extension all the way to the basement (as over in Kansas), buzzes with legislative talk. Lots of stencil work and other detail. A beautiful legislative/law library, lighted work tables surrounded by four floors of shelving, filled with books, accessed by two tall circular staircases, with big picture-window views of Des Moines downtown and the Iowa countryside.

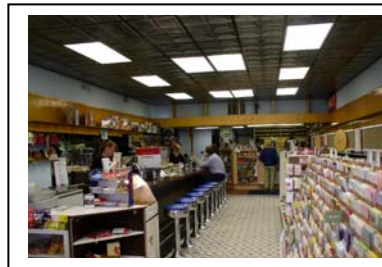


**DesMoines, IA**                      **October 23, 2008**

Each one of these State Capitols is lovely. Unique and richly endowed. Dramatic architecture as befits each building's purpose. Each makes me want to linger, think about what it would be like to be part of the action therein. I take my last picture, then another

last picture, maybe another. Each time it is time to go, I feel there's much more to be done, so am reluctant to depart. Iowa, today, was especially rewarding, big spaces filled with the legislative banter of employees, legislators, lobbyists, and a few tourists, including that photographer-guy from Oregon. The more commotion inside the better I feel. It's like what brings people back to casinos, I guess. Hearing and feeling commotion in the echoes through Iowa's cavernous Capitol, I feel a tug to stay, be part of it all.

Expansive grounds, as in neighboring Minnesota, with a tiered walkway-with-plantings down the hill toward downtown to the west. Yes, faces west by slightly south, so perfect for afternoon photography, all year. It was chilly, breezy, cloudy, and completely overcast in Des Moines, except for a few moments early this afternoon, when a spot of fog-filtered sunlight fell on the golden dome at the same time a patch of blue sky drifted behind. I think I captured the event, after having waited patiently out on the lawn, a suitable reward.



*Another drug-store fountain. Good one. In Des Moines. Real good chocolate soda.*



*I guess I'm especially attracted to these drug-store soda fountains because of the one I sometimes got to go to when I was a kid. Around the corner from where I grew up, it was Rogers' Verdugo Drug at the corner of LaCrescenta and Honolulu in Montrose, CA. Their fountain service ended when they moved across the street after the 1972 earthquake ruined the original building, and they have been gone altogether for many years.*

*Not so **Bauder's Pharmacy**. Busy place, too, kept going more by the drugs than the ice cream, I suspect, although there is probably a relationship there (between ice cream and prescription drugs) that I don't want to think about. Hey, right after, Ruth & I went for bike ride/run/deer chase, so we are, I think, staying healthy.*

**Wisconsin's** Capitol, in Madison, is unusual in an unusual way. Most Capitols have two wings, one for the Senate and one for the House (sometimes called the Assembly). That's the pattern for Oregon, Washington, California—the most common configuration. Minnesota has three, a big House of Representatives chamber having been built in back. Wisconsin's has four (4) wings, so the building is a giant X, with the main entrance at the west extremity, and open doors on all four sides at the cusps of the X. The dome is huge, the rotunda huge (but not quite as huge as the huge dome). Its location in a relatively crowded urban area close to downtown gives it an especially massive appearance, almost grossly so, especially because we didn't see it until we found ourselves almost next to it. I found it impossible to get the entire structure into one picture, even with my nearly-35-degree wide-angle lens, even with moving the orange barrels aside, even with setting up in the driveway out near the street. The police-tape-and-chain-link-fenced-off area along two sides didn't help. Oh, the woes of architectural photography! Inside, lots of dark-stone passageways, especially on the ground floor (all those columns needed to support the massive weight of the upper floors), and wonderfully intricate stone archways and vaults, dramatically-lit. One of my cliché pictures, taken of every rotunda, is the exactly-in-the-middle-camera-pointing-straight-up shot, the images that have recently been published poster-style by the National Council of State Legislatures (NCSL). But Wisconsin's rotunda was too big; I got only the central-most portion.

Wisconsin's Capitol was experiencing heavy use today. In addition to the usual lobbyists and staff people, business people in suits standing around in small groups, an "investiture" ceremony in the Assembly chambers, hundreds of school children roaming the halls and swarming the walkways. As in Oregon, the most common sound heard among the Wisconsin children, as well as their chaperons, is, loudly, repeatedly, almost incessantly, "Shshshshh!"

Perhaps a sign should be posted saying "Please do not say shshsh". Also, a wedding, with professionally-posed photography of members of the wedding party in all their permutations. Busy Capitol!

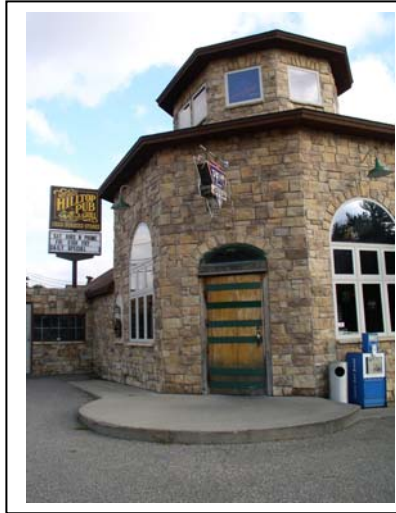


We're done with Madison, except for a morning bike ride and, maybe, an afternoon Big Ten football game. Heading north around Lake Michigan, intending to camp at the national seashore along Lake Huron, I believe (maybe Superior), then south to Lansing Sunday eve. Review of pictures shows that we have good results for all six Capitols so far, although the opportunities for numerous high quality detail were somewhat limited in

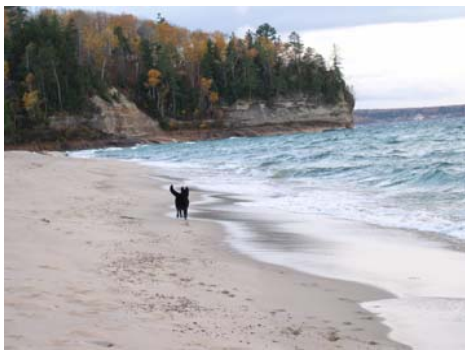
North Dakota by what I view as the sparse art-deco design of the building. Beautiful in its own way, but certainly not affording the photo opportunities of the dramatically ornate complex classic/gothic structures that support domes and rotundas and open vaults, all decorated to the hilt.



*In Stevens Point, Wisconsin (an hour or so north of Madison), **Mitchell's Hilltop Pub & Grill** uses local lake perch in their fish & chips. Good! The chips are their "criss-cut" fries. With cole slaw, tarter sauce, about \$10.*



**Michigan's** Capitol has a dome, but, like Iowa's, it seems out-of-proportion. Michigan's seems too narrow. Which turns out to be fine for inside photography. Huge rotundas are too big for even my wide-angle lens. Not so Michigan. Michigan's interior is almost all wood. Dark wood. Wood stairways, wood paneling, wood trim. Not much stone, not much metal. The building is eerily devoid of legislative buzz - no issue talk, milling media, strolling staff, lingering lobbyists, or bustling bureaucrats today. Groups of elementary-school children at their various stops, station-to-



*Ruth was the most animated I have seen her, aside from when she's chasing deer or rodents, at the beach along Lake Superior. Pretty big waves of fresh water! Plenty of opportunity for snapping at the crashing foam! Can you see both ears are up? I think we are both having a grand time!*

station, choreographed I think. Several simultaneous lectures can be heard echoing through the halls, then several different groups moving to their next lecture location. First, bottom of rotunda (the glass floor), then House Chamber, then 3rd-floor rotunda rail, then into the Supreme Court Chamber, then perhaps the Governor's Office.

Michigan's Capitol faces east toward downtown Lansing, so lighting is good most mornings any time of year. The City of Lansing has grown up, crowding the Capitol. Several trees have grown up right next to the Capitol. Thus it is impossible to picture the entire Capitol from the grounds. Across the street are the Lansing City Hall and another (newspaper-?) skyscraper. I'm tempted to see what can be seen from high above, but I decide to stay with the ordinary visitors' view, and so I spend my time trying to be creative in capturing as much as I can. Today is tough, again, as it has been all week, heavy cloud cover, showers, cold wind. I'm lucky in Lansing, as I have been at several other locations journeying east—sunshine breaks through enough for me to get a few sunny pictures, which can be especially dramatic when white stone or gold leaf shines against a dark background.

In the photo, do you see Ruth on the stairs? Stay, Ruth. Good girl, Ruth!



Lansing, Michigan October 27, 2008



Security in Michigan's Capitol is minimal--a single entrance, walk past a security desk, and you're in. Legislative Chamber rooms are open, as are the chamber galleries, neatly maintained and modestly lit.

*I set my GPS direction-finder for the **Jefferson Market and Cakery** in Ann Arbor, Michigan, but I thought it had made an error when it said my destination was here, right in the middle of a residential neighborhood. Accross the street was an elementary school, and I had arrived just as school was letting out. This is Ann Arbor, home of the giant University of Michigan, so I saw lots of daddies and mommies and their kiddies who reminded me so much of our little family way back when in Eugene.*

*But, between two Eugene-looking homes, there it was! The Cakery.*



*My first cakery, I think. You ever been to a cakery? The Jefferson Market and Cakery is for real, lots of choices in the glass cases, very cute clientele. The appearance of the "apple flip" was especially pleasing. The pecan pie bars were terrific. The cranberry-apple pie was crunchy, fruity, & sweet. Enough for two days' snacks plus one breakfast! And now you know: I don't limit myself to ice cream.*



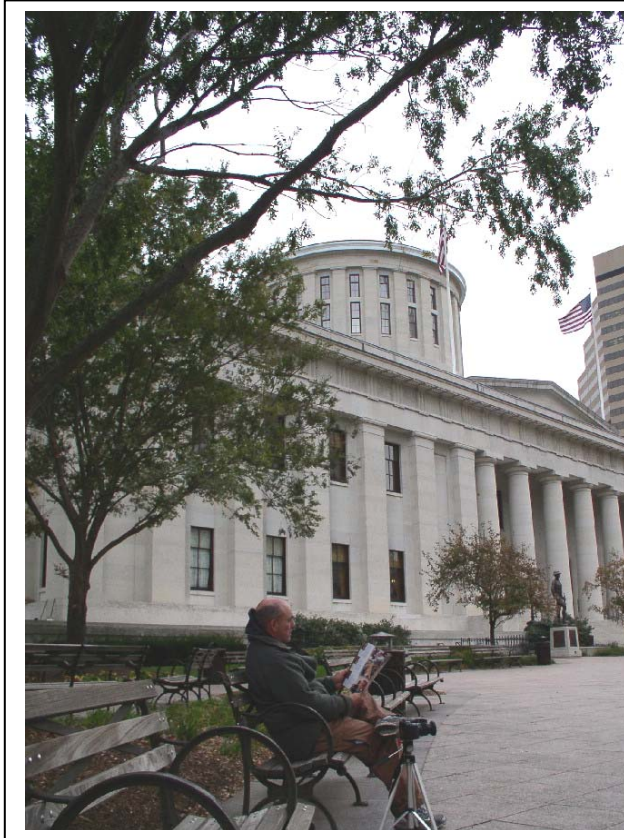
I was at the **Ohio** Capitol last year, but didn't get inside, so this trip I got inside. The Ohio Capitol is deceptive—its low turret-shaped top makes it look like a modern design, but it dates from the 1860s. Outside, the best-manicured grounds of any we've seen. Also the most compact grounds, as the City of Columbus has certainly surrounded and dwarfed the building so that it seems like it is in a bit of a hole. Inside, lots of the original building exterior has been "glassed in" so it is now part of the interior. Again, as in Michigan, eerie quiet inside, so different from Iowa and Wisconsin, especially. Big spaces, massive stone, huge pillars—it's quite austere and formal.

As always, I let people know what I'm doing and where I'm from. At the single entrance (no search or mechanical screening), I'm told, "Sure take pictures anywhere you'd like." So in I go, into the House gallery (the Chamber floors are closed but the observation galleries above them are open), then out into the rotunda, and after I take a picture of the Abraham Lincoln sculpture, I am approached by State Police Officer Dinwiddie who, after I tell him who I am and what I'm doing, instructs me to go downstairs to the Capitol Administration Office where they will tell me exactly what I can take pictures of and what I can't take pictures of. After I find my way down to the Administration Office and tell them who I am and what I'm doing, they say, "You're fine. Go right ahead." "But, I say, Officer Dinwiddie said you would tell me exactly what I was NOT allowed to take a picture of. So, what would that be? I wouldn't want to accidentally take a picture of the wrong thing." "Well, Mr. Stenbridge, You are just fine. Don't worry about it. Actually, I cannot tell you what it is that you cannot take pictures of." Security concerns I imagine, along the lines of what you know you don't know and what you don't know you don't know. So I imagine they just didn't want me to know what I probably already didn't know. Back up in the rotunda, Officer Dinwiddie was nowhere to be found. But they have police officers stationed in most rooms; that's their security system, and I assume that through the radio system they all knew about the so-called photographer from Oregon. Maybe it was the tripod that had them worried, like in North Carolina. Maybe it was the extra

camera in my pocket. Maybe it was extra front overhang from pecan-pie bars. Maybe just an extra-slow day in the Capitol.

Whatever, it was uncomfortable this morning. I'm now safely in West Virginia, so I must not have photographed anything on the "no-photo" list. The "National Security" hysteria has resulted in a near police-state in some locations; providing long-coveted rationale, I think, for control-freaks to seize control.

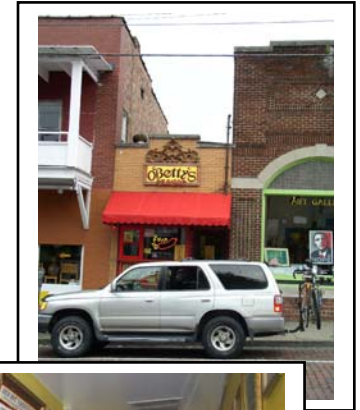
So I'll add Ohio to New Jersey, Virginia, North Carolina; nominees for "most paranoid".



**West Virginia's** Capitol was built a couple of miles out of downtown Charleston after fire destroyed the centrally-located previous structure. So it is strange to see the massive building up-river, out of the urban setting common to most Capitols. Every one of the Capitols I've seen on this trip is in city or town settings. West Virginia's seems out in the countryside. The setting doesn't seem so unusual until viewed from across the river. Save for the robust Capitol itself, there are no buildings taller than the trees, so the view is entirely of the river, a long horizontal band of trees, and the hugely-impressive Capitol rising above the trees, pale stone highlighted against the hillside, ornate golden dome thrusting into the sky.

*When I was first dating Joan, there was, in Santa Monica, a little place called the Dog House that served nothing but hot dogs, fixed lots of different ways. Well I ate few hot dogs back then and I eat few hot dogs now, but I enjoy a good hot dog now and then.*

***O'Betty's**, in Athens, Ohio, specializes in hot dogs. O'Betty's has many varieties. The restaurant is about eight feet wide; so, from lots of varieties listed & their lengthy descriptions, you make a selection and order, then squeeze past the stools into the back, where the tiny rooms are decorated in what might best be characterized as "burlesque".*



*My bacon-cheese-chopped onion dog -- almost as good as the Santa Monica Dog House deluxe of memory -- was about \$3.*



*PS - Athens, Ohio, about half way between Columbus, Ohio and Charleston, West Virginia, is another college town. Ohio University. Reminded me of Greenville, North Carolina, when I was, briefly, a university professor. The comparison turned especially vivid when I was told I should stick around for the wild*



*Halloween celebration expected later this week. "No thanks!" I said cheerfully, remembering the tear gas sent through downtown Greenville and the resulting 200-arrest "riot" in 1975 (the police version was that students were starting to crowd into the streets, requiring immediate action). Cute town, Athens, an Obama town in the hills of McCainly southeast Ohio. I hope they survive Halloween, ominously scheduled for a Friday night this year.*



Charleston, West Virginia October 28, 2008

Inside thoughts: All stone. No wood. Opposite of Michigan, not much metal trim, few fixtures, no light-bulb high-lighting common

to many Capitols. Seems to depend on huge chandeliers. Rotunda chandelier undergoing repair, dropped on its chain to the main floor where the area is separated by police-tape. Almost deserted, too. Doors all unlocked, including the front door. Actually, one of the few Capitols that the public can walk into the building through the door the architect intended for entry—the front door. (Oregon is another, Wyoming another.) The scale is huge—overwhelming. Dark. Cold. Chamber galleries are locked, views from the chamber floors are not very picturesque, but by the time I get back to the chambers, they are locked, too, so, no chamber pictures, I guess. Conclusion: I may not have enough views to fairly characterize the structure; I think maybe I will need to come back. I might need to add West Virginia to Idaho (renovation to be completed in 2009) and Utah (renovation completed 2008), my "need to return" list.

Outside thoughts: "Hmmm. The hillside backdrop is reminiscent of Vermont's, except that Vermont's is dark green evergreens. West Virginia's hills are covered with the fall colors of Appalachia, a most beautiful sight, if there could just be some sun; any sunlight at all; even just a brief break in the heavy cloud-cover. Please! I've been waiting right here, patiently with my dog, out in this cold wind, waiting for a break in the weather so I can get that once-in-a-lifetime Ansel-Adams-type glimpse. The gold-plated dome would look wonderful fronting the muted golds, oranges, and reds of the hills, not to mention the dramatic dark-gray sky. Here comes a light area in the clouds. And there it goes. Dark again, and evening approaching. Snow forecast for tomorrow. I'm far enough away so that the scaffolding won't show. Much. If I position the camera right over here, the shrubs will screen off that worker's outhouse, the bright green one. Maybe this will be good enough; I can try to "push" the lighting on the computer. . . . "

Frustrating afternoon in Charleston, West Virginia.

Returning in the morning, however, the lighting was much better, chambers open. Good.

*I started coming to the National Fire Academy, in Emmitsburg, MD, as a student, in 1985. My last of some 15 trips (teaching two -week classes) was in about 2000. My favorite fancy eating spot was a few miles up the road, just over the border (the Mason-Dixon Line, actually) in historic Gettysburg PA, the **Dobbin House Tavern**. So, I stopped by Wednesday, on my way to NYC. The colonial-era Springhouse Tavern and authentic-looking eatery is in the*



*basement. My favorite order, the steak sandwich, is about \$12. Ruth liked her little bite of steak. (That's my deal with her: she waits patiently in the car, on condition that I bring her a sample). In the basement, also, a small room encloses the spring that was the reason for the original structure, dating from 1776. Upstairs, fancy restaurant and gift shop. Too self-conscious or touristy, maybe, the Dobbin House Tavern is not on the Roadfood website, but it should be.*



**Dobbin House Tavern**



**Thursday, October 30, 2008: My perfect day in New York City**

**6:30 a.m.** Awake at campsite along Raritan River in western New Jersey, join the NYC morning commute.

**8:30 a.m.** Through the Holland Tunnel and onto Manhattan Island.

**10:00 a.m.** Having wound our way to Eighth Avenue and north on Eighth to the southern part of Harlem, just above Central Park, we find perfect parking spot; near 115th St & Fifth Ave—it doesn't need to be vacated until 9:30 a.m. Friday (ostensibly for street cleaning). We know this is a good one, our third attempt at a legal spot, because, as we prepare the bicycle for our outing, a driver asks if we are coming or going (he wants the spot, too).

**10:30 a.m.** Bicycling south on the bike path around Central Park, we come upon preparations for the New York City Marathon (to be run Sunday, November 2).

**11:00 a.m.** At the Ed Sullivan Theater at about 54th St on Broadway, while Ruth waits with the bicycle at the front of the theater, I fill out the forms and enter the lottery for a ticket to that afternoon's production of Late Nite with David Letterman. During our chat while we wait to be screened by the audience coordinator, intern Jamie Lee discovers that I am traveling with a dog, that the dog's name is Ruth short for Ruthless, and that the dog is waiting right out front, and Wow! Jamie Lee gets to meet Ruth and Ruth, of course, is wonderful and, as it turns out, something of a "chick magnet", because Jamie Lee tells me to go on down Broadway where Letterman staffer Jody is also recruiting audience members for that evening. So on down Broadway we go and there Jody is, just where Jamie Lee said she'd be and after some chit-chat, I have my voucher, good for a Letterman ticket if I return at 2:00 p.m.

**Noonish** Having stopped at a one of those Manhattan convenience store/cafeteria places, loaded up on a \$7.00/lb lunch, a can of "pull-tab" dog food, and two throw-away bowls, Ruth and I move back up through Central Park as far as the merry-go-round, and there we find a table in the sun and happily munch lunch listening to the mighty Wurlitzer mechanical Band, a Mary Poppins suite, a Wizard of Oz suite, and, apropos of our journey, "Raindrops Keep Fallen' on My Head" from that Paul Newman movie Butch Cassidy, plus "Do You Know the Way to San Jose?"

**1:00 p.m.** Back at the car on 115th St, Ruth is exhausted, fed, watered, pooped (in Central Park), and ready for a nap, so I leave her in the car and bicycle back through the park to the Ed Sullivan Theater.

**2:00 pm** Pick up ticket for David Letterman, receive instructions to return at 3:45.

**2:45 pm** Check out the discount show tickets available at TKTS down on 47th St & Broadway, but line is too long; will need to return after Letterman.

**3:45 p.m.** Back at Ed Sullivan Theater; get briefed on what is expected of Letterman audience (lots of laughing and clapping needed, even if you might not think it so funny; no whistling; no groaning).

**4:30 p.m.** I'm in the Theater, about in the middle of the audience as the taping of Late Nite with David Letterman begins. Guests are Ashley Olsen, Paul Rudd, John Legend, and Cole Hamel. I'm not familiar with any of the four; jokes seem, uh, not so funny. Oops, I mean, they might be funny, so lots of laughing and clapping. The house band (Paul Schaefer's group) is great. Seeing the set in person is quite a pleasant jolt, and there he is himself, David Letterman.



Seems like an off-night, like the writers handed the writing over to the interns or something. All-in-all, a fun experience. I thank Jamie Lee and Jody, and tell them Ruth says hello.

**6:00 p.m.** At TKTS, a good ticket to the Monty Python Spamalat musical is available. Half price costs only \$65. What luck! (\$65 not much compared with expense of gasoline on this trip) Row N seat 10 at the Schubert Theater on 45th St.

**7:00 p.m.** I have bicycled back up to 115th Street parking spot to check on Ruth; she gets short walk & back into car to resume nap.

**8:00 p.m.** I have bicycled back down through Central Park for the third time, arriving at the Schubert Theater in time for the start of Monty Python's Spamalat.

**10:30 p.m.** The show is zany, silly, lots of fun; I especially enjoy the dramatic duet.

**11:00 p.m.** There's time left in the evening to stop at the Carnegie Deli, 7<sup>th</sup> Ave at 55th St., for blintzes with sour cream, plus a half pound of pastrami, to go, for lunch on the road tomorrow. The Carnegie Deli is



one of my favorite restaurants anywhere, so I include it as one of my Roadfood Sites. Pastrami and blintzes are my favorites, along with the crowded Manhattan atmosphere.



**Midnight** I'm back at the car (some 30 or 40 miles logged on bicycle for the day), Ruth is fine, and we continue using our Manhattan campsite for the evening. In the morning, 8:00, it's good-bye NYC!

**Maine's** State House in on sweeping, majestic property overlooking the Kennebec River. Its literature says it is made of granite, but it looks like painted plaster, for the most part, with painted wood trim. Inside, the feel is similar to the Virginia Capitol, historic and elegant. We had bright sunlight today, the first sunny day Capitol visit of the 2008 trip. As with Connecticut, New Hampshire, and several others, Maine has a bright, new underground connection with adjacent office buildings, so legislative staff as well as Executive-Branch agencies are just a cozy stroll away. Maine's is thus a fine working State House (as some states call their

Capitols), with big rooms devoted to House and Senate chambers, plus lots of legislative offices, nice dome, nicely finished rotunda, though not nearly the majesty of some of the big ones. Portraits include Edmund Muskie, Margaret Chase Smith, and Hannibal Hamlin. How many of you remember that Maine's Hannibal Hamlin was Lincoln's Vice President on the 1860 ticket?



Security is typical - only one way in, past a staffed "meet and greet" visitors' kiosk then past a small stand-up desk staffed by a silent police officer who seems to be doing brief visual assessments of visitors. I haven't shaved for a couple of days, I'm wearing my XXL jacket, plus carrying the deadly-weapon tripod, but I am not detained. (So if they let me right in, who would they stop?)

One unique feature is a third-floor veranda in front -- an easily accessed, open-to-the-public balcony, overlooking the expansive grounds, complete with a dozen or so giant rocking chairs.

Maine's State House faces east by slightly south, so afternoon is not the best for light if the sky is clear. We'll spend the night here in Augusta a few blocks from the State House, and go back there in the morning to try for some morning twilight and dawn pictures before heading to Boston, where we intend to spend a couple of weeks with JJ, Joel & Koren.

I want back over to the Maine State House early Friday morning to catch the early rays of the dawning sun. I think the results look good, don't you?



If you want to go through a disturbing revision of your understanding of colonial Boston, read (or listen to CDs while driving) Nathaniel Philbrick's *Mayflower* (2005) and Sara Vowell's *The Wordy Shipmates* (2008). Oh my goodness, these do not seem to have been nice ancestors. But ancestors they were, without having the benefit of our perspectives from the future. And a very important aspect of how we got where we are--wherever that is-- and however harshly we might be judged by our own descendants.



Massachusetts

November 14, 2008

Yesterday, I walked a mile from the Boston Stembridges' house (with its newly-remodeled bathroom) to the commuter rail station, took the train into Boston (about five miles), passing The O'Bryant Math &

Science High School, where Joel is Headmaster, to the Back Bay station, a block away from the Boston Public Library, where Koren is part of the management staff. Ruthless was assigned car-guarding duty back at Joel's (please do not let her know that the car didn't need guarding). I walked the last mile through Boston Common and up Beacon Hill to the **Massachusetts** State House, carrying camera and tripod in my bag.

The building is surrounded by low wrought-iron fencing with locked gates, the only front entrance is off on the east side. Few Capitols allow use of the front doors these days, such a shame, as the front doors were designed and built to be such grand entrances. But no, go through the basement side entrance, past the scrutiny of security staff suddenly brought to attention by your appearance. Through the metal detector. Wait while your bag of camera gear goes through the x-ray, the guard looks you over once more and sends your bag back through the x-ray again, this time with more frowns and pointing, then, the "OK", you have your bag and, somberly recalling that Boston's Logan Airport was the origin of two of the 9/11 airliners, you are on your way through spare basement passageways looking for a way to climb up into the grand public spaces.

Stairways lead up to the main floors, the ornate Hall of Nurses, Grand Staircase, and other features. Statuary of lots of men you never heard of, but important, I'm sure, for the understanding of Massachusetts history. Not much to be found of John Adams or of J.Q., the original father-son Presidents. The uppity Dorothea Dix among the more recent additions, belatedly including women among the most honored.

Originally competed in the late 18th century, with several additions since, the Massachusetts Capitol ("State House") is a wonderful mixture of old and new. The original building was designed by the wonderfully-named architect Charles Bulfinch, who also went on to design the beginnings of the U.S. Capitol in Washington DC. What now appears to be a rotunda, with high, ornate arched ceiling, is not

directly under the exterior dome. The Senate Chambers (at one time the House Chambers) are under the dome in the original Bulfinch-design. The House (with its 160 members) meets in a splendid wood-paneled chamber in a rear addition, now more than 100 years old. The Great Hall of Flags, a bright, glassed-in assembly area in the rear between two four-story wings is a most modern-appearing space. A luncheon with speaker fills the hall, cheers fill the State House. Lots of excited talk about President-elect Obama here, in this center of the heart of the Democratic stronghold that is Massachusetts. Governor Deval Patrick is thought to be a special ally.



*On the way back to the outside world, past the relieved security guards, off to the side of the State House, but still inside the wrought-iron fencing, is the statue of Mary Dyer, who was in 1660 hanged for heresy (stated she didn't believe in the trinity) by our founding Puritans. Sarah Vowell tells her story. Now Mary Dyer is a monument to religious freedom, in the same peculiar way that Civil War memorials are said to be monuments to peace.*

*We did a little hiking on the Appalachian Trail, before a snowstorm closed in. I crossed the trail while driving over the hill from Thurmont, MD to Hagerstown, MD, noticed the sign, slammed on the brakes, and decided it was time for the two of us to stretch our legs. Thinking of Joan & Joel, who hope to hike the trail farther north; now we (Ruth & I) have a leg up, perhaps, having hiked a half-mile or so of the continent-spanning trail. My goodness it was a well-marked path here in Maryland, if not a well-beaten path. What a pleasure to walk through the woods, even though there is the feeling that a group of civil war soldiers might be just around every turn.*



Strolling through the Capitol of the Commonwealth of **Kentucky** this morning, in Frankfort, I was thoroughly enchanted. "What makes this one so wonderful?" I asked myself.

Lots of people have asked which Capitol is my favorite, which ones I've liked best. I have found it easier to list the ones I didn't particularly care for, with some of the reasons. Now, I think I'm starting to develop some criteria, my own personal criteria, of course, for actually rating them.

I think the Capitol should be the center of state government, for example. In Arizona, Florida, North Carolina, the Capitol remains the symbol of state government, but the building itself is empty of all but symbolism. Same with Nevada and Alabama. But not so, Kentucky. Here in Frankfort, on one side of the building, across a cavernous space, is the Senate chamber, with the House of Representatives chamber across an equally cavernous space, on the other side. Governor's office in between. Supreme Court's chambers on another level, an entire area of the Capitol dedicated to the court and its staff. Elected officials' offices up and down the halls on several floors. Portraits of legislators, governors, and judges fill the walls. No legislative meetings this morning, but still, muffled issue conversations and urgent footsteps mix with school tours, to echo through the cavernous spaces.

And the architecture. Oh, my, the architecture. Not huge like Texas; not darkly ornate like Minnesota; not opulent like Pennsylvania. But pleasingly human-scale Kentucky limestones, Vermont marbles. Lots of clerestory windows and skylights illuminating the whites and light grays of polished stone. Lots of elegant stairways and vistas, lines and arches, with purpose--leading the eye up two levels toward the far entrances to the Senate and House chambers, all centered around the rotunda.

The rotunda is comparatively narrow, with a statue in the middle, so it is not possible to get the cliché symmetrical view up into the

underneath of the dome. And who do you suppose gets the position of honor in the center of the rotunda? Might it be Henry Clay, perhaps the most powerful Kentuckian in the nation's early days? No, he's in the rotunda, but not at the center. Muhammad Ali, maybe, known as Cassius Clay when growing up in Louisville, at one time probably the best-known American and most popular person in the world? No. The central figure is none other than Abraham Lincoln, who, you may remember, was born in Kentucky, lived several years of childhood in Kentucky, and, in spite of all his Civil War conflicts with the people of Kentucky, is claimed by Kentucky as a Kentuckian. (And next year is the big Lincoln bicentennial celebration, don't forget.) Lincoln is prominently present in many state capitols, including, in addition to Kentucky, Kansas, Wyoming, and Illinois.



The Kentucky Capitol's main entrance is the front door! How about that?? Unusual, these days. True, visitors have to show identification, go through the metal detector, sign in, have their possessions inspected (but no airport-type x-ray machine) and wear a badge showing that they have gone through the entrance procedure. But, once in, everyone is free to roam; chambers are open, chamber



galleries open, Supreme Court, state reception room, all open with lights on, ready for public inspection.

And the grounds, the sweeping views, the trees in fall color, lots of grass, lots of angles (although north-facing makes winter photography problematical), and a swell view from the cemetery up across the ridge behind Daniel Boone's grave marker.



Kentucky not perfect, however. No restaurant with grill. No eggs. No toast. No bacon. Snack bar only, with a few plastic tables along the basement walls. Now, did I tell you about that great breakfast they made for me at the downstairs restaurant in North Dakota?

So, criteria. Lets start making a list; eventually maybe assign point values. More on this soon.

The **Tennessee** Capitol is on the west side of Nashville, so, consequently, it faces east. It is up on a hill, so Nashville skyscrapers don't block much of the early sun. Parking is allowed all around the building, but it is possible to screen out the cars in views from the slopes below. Trees and adjacent buildings block most of the views, leaving only the head-on up-the-stairs angle, the extremes of the wings obscured by trees. Just as well, as there is

maintenance work, with cables, orange fencing, lifting machines, and plywood marring the wings.

The building has no dome, but has a tower without any corresponding interior space up into the exterior tower. The entrance is in back, controlled by an officer with walk-through screening machine (but no x-ray), plus a sign-in, identification verification, and badge for visitors to wear. Inside, there is not all that much to see. Or hear. There is something of a rotunda, but it does not extend above the third-floor ceiling. It is relatively small and dark inside, not many architectural photo opportunities greet my eye. The House chamber fills one wing, but the Senate is off to one side of the other wing. They are proud of their three Presidents, the two Andrews (Jackson and Johnson) and James (Polk). Jackson, of course, is especially prominent, arguably by far the most significant of the three Presidencies. They had a good chance to have a fourth President in 2000, but Tennessee-native Albert (Gore) did not get the 11 electoral votes from Tennessee that would have won him the Presidency. Not that I blame Tennessee for eight years of invasions, destruction, Constitution-trampling, and economic collapse.



*The **Loveless Cafe and Motel** is a locally-famous spot a few miles west of downtown Nashville at the northern terminus of the Natchez Trace motorway. When they closed the motel many years ago, rather than changing the name and sign, they just put out a permanent "no vacancy" notice, which remains a prominent part of the logo. They have quite the tongue-in-cheek thing*



*going there, with stores, souvenir shops, and mail-order business. Food was real OK. Ham & egg breakfast, with lots of biscuits and orange juice came to about \$13, so it ain't cheap.*



*Eight years ago, Joan & I stopped at **Craig's Bar-B-Q** in DeValls Bluff Arkansas, just a couple of miles south of the main thoroughfare, I-40, on the way between Memphis and Little Rock. I think Craig's could be the proto-type of the Roadfood concept. I mean, you would never think to stop there without the Roadfood reference. I went by again yesterday evening and the experience was similarly good. The place hasn't changed a bit. The food is great, and you feel like you are getting in on the local tradition, as lots of people drive up to place their orders. Lots of local banter, local vehicles. That's Alice, who graciously allowed me to take the inside picture, so you can see the inside matches the outside decor. Wonderful bar-b-q, lovingly prepared and served, and all you see pictured, pork dinner including the bar-b-q pork (medium-hot sauce), bun, sandwich fixings (on top of a scoop of cole slaw), baked beans, PLUS a little bag of Fritos all for \$7.*



AR. That's **Arkansas**. Home to Wilbur Mills, William Fulbright, Mike Huckabee, Orval Faubus, and William Jefferson Clinton. And what a fabulous Capitol. Big on the outside, big and light inside, with lots of views, dramatic spaces, lots of architectural detail. We arrived early to capture the east-facing building in the pre-sunlight dawn and during various stages of "reveal" as sunshine flowed over neighboring buildings. They say the angle of the building on the lot may have been a mistake, but the French-curve sweep of the walkways leading up to it add tremendous beauty, make the building look of more recent origin than 1915. Enter under the main stairs, carry everything right on through the magnetic walk-through thing, and you are in. No search of your belongings, no x-ray, no mandatory sign-in, no identification needed, no visitor's badge required. There is in the rotunda a portraits of a very-young-looking Bill Clinton. The wings boast stairways and skylighted vaults leading up to dramatic entrances to the legislative chambers at either end. With the House of Representatives preparing to meet today, the building was a-buzz with legislative banter. Plus, a wonderful little cafe, which I will write about separately. Plus, outside, a memorial to the nine students who attempted to integrate Little Rock's Central High School just over 50 years ago in August 1958. The Central High School incident is also commemorated in an interactive museum/memorial a few blocks away.



Unfortunately, Christmas holiday decorating was well under way, something I thought I could avoid by getting through my route prior to Thanksgiving. This is the first place on my tour that the architectural grandeur has been adorned with cheesy holiday cheer. Except that I really must admit that the Arkansas decorations are substantial, not cheesy. Put Arkansas in with Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Nebraska, Connecticut and the other first-rate American state capitols.

*Inside the Arkansas Capitol, down in the basement, next to the Capitol Hairdresser Shop, is the **Arkansas Capitol Cafe**. What great food! What a great atmosphere! With the lobbyists huddled in the corner, the House of Representatives is preparing for session upstairs. And what a cook/server . . . the "hon"-type . . . calls everyone hon or "babe", comes around the counter to hug the people she knows (not me), and carries on a pretty constant banter on food, the up-coming lunch specials, knows if her regulars want toast or a biscuit with breakfast. And the meal—eggs, bacon, potatoes, fruit, orange juice, plus that biscuit, all for less than \$7. (Yesterday's Loveless breakfast came to about \$13.) So the Capitol Cafe is not a*

*Roadfood site, and its open weekdays only, breakfast & lunch only. But what fun!*



I'm cheered to see several instances of inter-racial hugging, here, fifty years after the shameful incidents surrounding efforts to integrate the local public schools. In our sometimes-troubled country, fine things are happening, some of them right here in Arkansas.

It is wonderful to see a Capitol that so thoroughly reflects the state. **Oklahoma** is the only capitol with an oil well on its grounds; the well derrick still prominent on the landscape (right behind me in the picture).



When the Oklahoma Capitol was built just after the turn of the (previous) century, the legislature had authorized three stories. The designers and builders, hoping for more, called the first floor the basement, added a sub-basement, and above the first floor added what they called the mezzanine. So, they got six floors, but ran out of money before they could complete a dome. So, around the turn of the century (the most recent one), they finished the dome. So now Oklahoma boasts the most recently-completed dome, and a splendid rotunda, filled with bright, colorful murals depicting Oklahoma history. And Oklahoma has quite the colorful history, with tribal relocations, land grabs from the tribes, consequent land rushes by homesteaders, and the discovery of oil, plus Sooner football. You may recall that homesteaders who jumped the gun were called "Sooners". A little different combination on security - entrance is through the tunnel under the front steps (a feature common to many capitol

buildings), through a metal-detector, with possessions (including cameras) run through the airport-like x-ray, but no sign-in, no identification, no badge requirements. Inside, lots of views, lots of angles, lots to photograph. Prominent Oklahomans represented in statue and portraits include Carl Albert, Mickey Mantle, Jim Thorpe, Woody Guthrie, and most prominently, Will Rogers. Outside, Oklahoma sunsets in November are perfect lighting for the south-facing building, especially after all the employees take their cars home. Makes ya feel like singing "Oh, what a beautiful evening!"

Oil well, murals, Will Rogers, plus a new dome. Oklahoma, more than OK, it's a real gem.

*Over the years, I've had two really great restaurant steaks, both at the **Cattlemen's Cafe**, down by the stockyards in Oklahoma City. Both times I've had dogs as my companions. I think that fact says a lot about my social life! In 2002, Dakota and Scout, the Drake dogs, had to share the scraps. This time, Ruth got 'em all. Cattlemen's must have tables for a couple of hundred steak-eaters, but*

*Friday evening about 6:00, there was a 30-minute wait for a table, so I went right for the counter. Lots of Oklahoma cowboy hats, and there's no place to set 'em down, so they are worn throughout the meal. I tried to blend in with my Alaska baseball cap, but I think my hiking boots and pants gave me away as a visitor from the West Coast. Oklahoma was the most McCain of the states. He won 66% of the vote here. Not an inexpensive stop, about \$20 for the rib-eye dinner. But, like I said, I've never had a better steak. Three dogs enjoyed their snacks, too.*



**New Mexico's** may be the best representation of a state in its Capitol. New Mexico's building is completely round, with broad walkways extending from (unlocked and unguarded) doorways in the four cardinal directions. From above, it is the form of a giant Zia sun symbol, the familiar circle with four groups of parallel lines, extending north, south, east, and west. The same symbol resides on the New Mexico flag. I don't know any other state whose flag is also a plan view of the state capitol! Most unique. Also, the shape is that of a kiva, the ceremonial and religious center of tribal life before (and continuing after) European invasion, although the official symbolism is the Zia sun.



The Capitol's interior design and decoration also represent the state very well. A shallow, skylight-lit three-story rotunda right in the center, with spacious Senate and House chambers on opposite sides out from the rotunda, galleries out from that, and bands of offices along the outside. Governor Richardson's office, on the upper floor, has a spacious, well-decorated entry (talk here is that he will

soon resign as Governor, moving to Washington as President Obama's Commerce Secretary). The Capitol's many connecting radius and circumferential corridors are loaded with New Mexican art -- historic art, native art, contemporary art, and contemporary interpretations of historic and native art. Several levels of circular corridors give it a Guggenheim feel. Lots of native craft furniture. And historic Santa Fe, of course, is lovely, the central plaza just four or five blocks to the north.

The round structure, crowded with vegetation, faces west, and was somewhat difficult to photograph due to the lack of space and lack of views. From right out front, steps drop off to the west, so photos must be taken from too close or too low, take your choice. And such wonderful southwest hues illuminated by the setting sun -- afternoon/evening beauty all seasons of the year.

Under the Capitol's surrounding walkways, hidden from view, is parking. Also, a lovely long decorated and sky-lighted walkway connects the Capitol with staff offices; the equivalents of my Oregon Capitol offices would be in the adjoining building in New Mexico, which also boasts lots of art and a smaller rotunda.

In Santa Fe, lots of art galleries beckon to visitors, but the richest display may be right in the Capitol.

This is the last of the 15 Capitols on my 2008 adventure. I've only Idaho (interior), Utah (interior), and Hawai'i left to photograph. Idaho's renovation will be complete late next year; I'll wait until then to view Utah, whose renovations were completed earlier this year. And in the mean time, Hawai'i looms!

Lest you think I sat on my bum all the way around the USA, in between stops for sugar, starch & fat, I should point out some of the fine bicycling spots Ruth and I experienced. I didn't photograph any, saving my pixels for Capitols and food. Nevertheless and bethatasitmay, here are some word descriptions:

*Where's Roque?? Roque will be back on the Plaza in March, they say. Roque runs the carnitas cart on the Santa Fe plaza. The famous carnitas cart. The one with the long line. He's in the Roadfood list, too.*



*Yesterday, however, a crisp November Monday morning, on the Santa Fe Plaza, it was **El Molero Fajitas**, and it is hard to imagine Roque's could be any better. Wonderfully warm & spicy shreds of steak grilled with onion and peppers, topped with sour cream & guacamole, all heaped on a bed of lettuce on a flour tortilla, all for \$4. No fork. No spoon. Just roll it up and enjoy. Leaning over the plate helps keep things from getting messy. Having a dog along helps too. Ruth and I dream of returning to Santa Fe for some priceless El Molero fajitas!*

One fine bike path is along the lake at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Wide, flat, hard-packed gravel, and not too crowded if you ride during a football game at Camp Randall Stadium a few blocks away. (The Badgers beat Illinois that crisp Saturday).

New York City I told you about, except to add that we did a similar outing on our return. Central Park is a wonderful bike outing for man and dog. Although we saw lots of bikers and lots of dogs, we were the only biker-dog team. Ruth is so attentive and so obedient, and stays so close; I can ride a bike and hold her leash, too, although I'm ready to drop it at the first sign of trouble.

Many cities have turned their riverfronts into bicycling paths. We found fine paved bike paths in front of the West Virginia capitol (along the Kanawha River), near the South Dakota capitol (on the

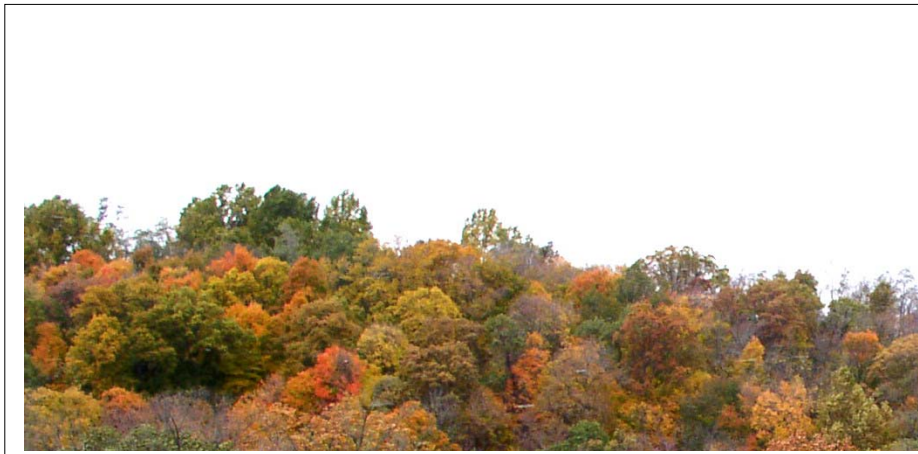
Missouri River), and in Memphis, Tennessee (along the Mississippi River). On paved bike paths, I ride my old Schwinn ten-speed.

We also found three great mountain biking areas to tell about over the weekend. All three are designated bike trails; all three have fabulous scenery, if you dare look up. One is in **Palo Duro State Park** in the Texas panhandle, twenty miles or so south of Amarillo. Wonderful shallow canyon with several loops of relatively-smooth single-track. Another in just up the canyon from Santa Fe, New Mexico, the **Dale Ball Mountain Bike Trail** system, is a series of loops with a variety of terrain, lots of ups and downs, ravine crossings, switchbacks, rock ledges, compound slopes, and other challenges (I was off the bike pushing it across rough spots quite often). A third area is the **Camp Beal Loop** north of Kingman Arizona, many miles of well-engineered BLM smooth dirt and flat-rock single-track, a joy for a somewhat advanced novice such as myself. Plus, at Kingman, the sign says dogs must be on a leash and/OR kept under control at all times. Ruth was in complete control except when she spotted the rabbit. Both of us sleep well the night after a day that has an hour or two of biking.

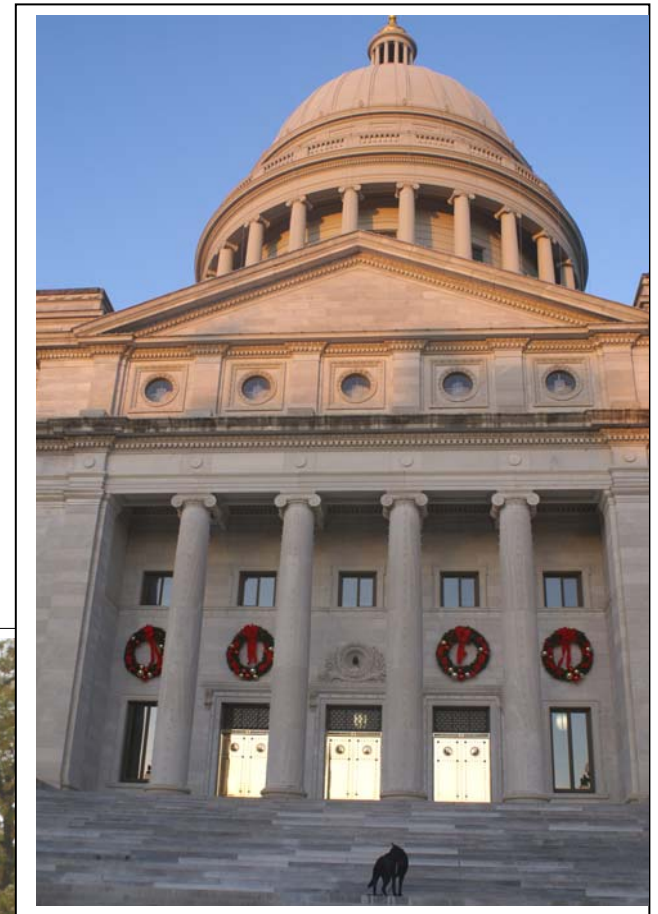
Tomorrow starts our family's reunion in Los Angeles.

Thanks for all your comments on these adventure messages; I sure had fun composing them, and thinking that someone might actually be enjoying coming along in this fashion. 'Til next time, bye.

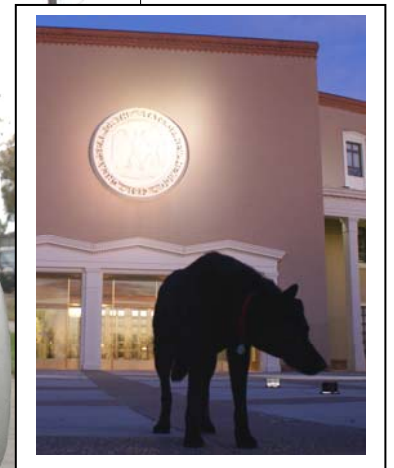
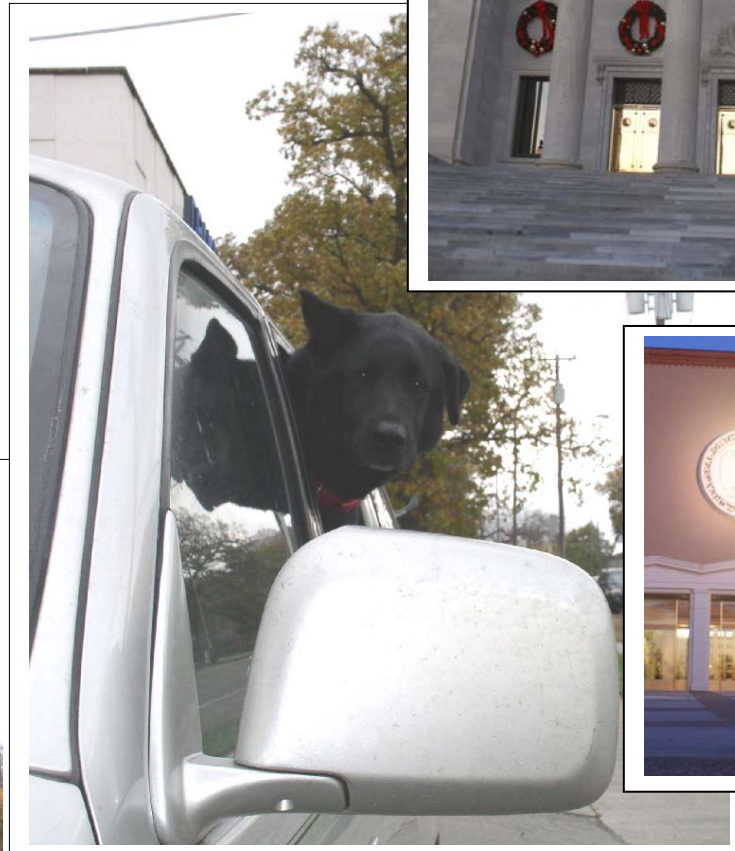
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Little  
Rock >



DesMoines  
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Santa Fe

< West Virginia countryside