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Subject: Postcard

Road Trip



On desolate roads there is an unexpected social interaction between drivers. This is a desolate road. It's Colorado route 10, the 73 mile stretch between La Junta and Walsenburg. We used to see 2 or 3 cars on this drive and now we see 10 or 12. So, not exactly high usage. And it could be US 350 to Trinidad or it could be KS 156 through Jetmore, it's still the same: the locals acknowledge you when they pass from the other direction. Might be a wave but most often it's the one finger (index) lifted off the steering wheel. Not everyone does it; it's more men than women; it's more older than younger; it's never from a phoner. But it happens often enough that you feel rude not returning it. Remember – index finger.



The control freaks are out in force. This is US 160 somewhere between Alamosa and Del Norte and it is the sixth time in 2 days we have been stopped by a flagman to take turns at a one-lane construction constriction. Stopped

by a flagman, as in "Fines Double in Work Zone" "Be Prepared to Stop" "Flagman Ahead". I'm pretty old but I can't remember a flagman who ever had a flag. Seems like they used to hold stop signs. They still hold up stop signs except now the signs say "slow" on the other side. Hmm, maybe my point about being old and can't remember is a bad one for me to be making.



Steep downhills have runaway truck ramps to, uh, stop runaway trucks. We have seen them many times but they have the appearance of having been raked by guys whose day job is sand traps. Or they are overgrown and full of rocks and would stop the truck but kill the driver. We make fun of them. And in any case we have never seen one employed. Today after crossing Wolf Creek Pass we started the long, steep trek down to Pagosa Springs. The speed limit for heavy trucks is 25 and we got right behind one that was doing well over that. Oh yeah, and his brakes were burning. A sign said there was a runaway ramp ahead. We came around the curve and watched with anxiety as he *passed* the ramp and continued down the hill. And, you ask, why did he pass the ramp? It was occupied by *another* runaway truck. We're thinking our trucker is now frantic. He started cutting corners, crossing yellow lines and somehow he didn't hit anyone. After five minutes of us having a cow just watching, the grade flattened a bit and he brought the rig under control. Whew! Takeaway: never again mock runaway truck ramps.

There's some vacation coming eventually, we're sure.

D&S