

Date: 4/14/2012 9:13:12 PM

Subject: Postcard

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We left Oklahoma, crossed the Texas panhandle, leaving the grim, gray skies with their insidious, incipient tornados behind, and hit New Mexico. Blue skies! White, puffy clouds! Mountain Daylight Time! Vacation begins!

We headed south on US-54 stopping in Santa Rosa to fill up. We filled up Murray with 10% ethanol (he gets a nice buzz but still drives OK) and filled us up with a couple of cheese and chillies omelets at Joseph's Bar & Grille. We headed south once more on 54 to Carrizozo. We were enticed there by ads we've be seeing in New Mexico magazine promoting 20 inexpensive acres with great scenery at a development called Valle Del Sol. It's very near Ruidoso, our next destination, so there we went.

Fabulous scenery. Huh? How about the whole dang place is in a fog!



Fog in New Mexico. Huh? How about you need humidity for fog. The wind was blowing up to 49 mph (we were literally holding each other up while we evaluated the real estate). Doesn't wind blow fog away? Oh well, Valle Del Sol made no sale and on we went, up the mountains to Ruidoso.

Shouldn't we be getting beyond the fog?



Apparently not.

To our hotel. Shouldn't we be getting above the fog?



Apparently not.

I complained to the desk clerk that New Mexico was too dry for fog and we should be above it anyway. Hilarity ensued. Fog? Where are you from, Kansas? This is dust from White Sands National Monument. When the wind blows hard, it sends tons of the stuff airborne to Carrizozo and Ruidoso. It's cute that if you don't want to make the drive, White Sands NM delivers. But honestly that leaves us feeling only so-so.

And we got stopped by the police. We also got stopped by the fire department. Actually everyone had to stop to let a law enforcement cortege past.



We went to Santino's for supper. We polished off two perfectly prepared *Frutti del Mare* which promised to be an excellent finish to a challenging day – when the lights in the restaurant went out. The lights on the street went out. The lights for miles around went out. All the police and firemen who had been at the wake were now racing around town with sirens howling. Half of them seemed to be looking for would-be terrorists who blew up a sub-station and the other half were giving out speeding tickets. Mayhem! Chaos! And Santino's wouldn't give us dessert!

They did manage to get the bill added up, though. Must have had an app on their iPhone. So we made it back to our room, miles away, and it still had the lights on.

We'll try to get this trip cranked up tomorrow.

D&S