

Hitchhikers

Written by

Wednesday, 27 September 2006 16:00



Okay, maybe that's not the right word. On Tuesday as we were driving south from the Canada/US border, we came across a well packed tandem bicycle with two cyclists aboard, pedaling south. As we passed them we simultaneously said "Wow!" and wondered where they were cycling from and where they were going. Yesterday when we took our little motorcycle jaunt back up Hwy 89, lo and behold, we came upon the same pair still heading south.

When we were returning from Memorial Falls, about 10 miles from White Sulphur Springs, Rick could see them ahead and slowed down to talk to them. As it turned out they were just pulling off the road for a snack break so we stopped too.

Koen and Lotje landed in Vancouver in early July from Belgium to begin their yearlong cycle trek through the Americas. They are young, enthusiastic and obviously energetic and speak English perfectly. It turned out that they were headed to White Sulphur Springs for the night so we invited them over to our "house" for a visit and to learn more.

Koen is a music teacher; primarily teaching the flute and other wind instruments, on a 1 year break and Lotje quit her two jobs; one working in a bookstore and the other at a radio station. They had their tandem bike custom made for their big adventure and so far it has been great. We asked them where they were headed and learned that they wanted to be in San Francisco no later than the 1st of November. They are making tracks at roughly 50 miles a day and with fall in the mountains, comes snow, so they figured they may have to "bus" some of the way. That's where we came in.

We offered to give them a ride as far as Yellowstone Park because that's where we were headed and where they wanted to get to by the weekend. It saved them three days of pedaling, gave them a much needed day off and we had some company. Check out their [website](#) (it's written in Dutch) where there are pictures. After San Francisco, they are renting a small camper for three weeks to drive to Colorado (Lotje's parent are flying in to join them for a week) and afterwards, the pedaling duo are flying (with bike) to Chili to continue their trek. Bon Voyage Lotje and Koen, it was a real pleasure to meet and travel with you!

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We said our goodbyes at Mammoth Hot Springs, inside the park and proceeded to West Yellowstone, outside the park where we will spend the night. Having been here before (together in 2002 and I was here once with Jim 10 years before) we think we will forgo a tour of the park. The weather is superb so we may change our minds in the morning...stay tuned!