

Our Trip Takes Us

By Becky Hirn

A couple of days before we pulled out of town for the second half of our trip, I had the chance to speak with my former boss. Talking to him again was great, even if we did end up talking about the weather. But who isn't? I saw the headline on weather.com, "Winter Chill: No End in Sight." Weather is common ground for my boss and me now anyway because he travels a lot too. He asked where we were headed next and I wanted to say it would be someplace warm like Louisiana or Texas. Instead I had to say I wasn't sure how far south we'd have to drive to get away from freezing temperatures.

Another question my boss asked was if I watch the weather more now as a traveler. I had to confess that I'm terrible at tracking it. That's probably why we almost ended up in the midst of Hurricane Ida in the fall in North Carolina. Only luck and our trip's inertia saved us from having our RV home toppled in a tropical storm.

After the talk with my boss I felt the urge to check the national forecast before leaving Delphos. The plan had always been to follow good weather around the country. We spent the summer in the north and all along the east coast. In the fall, we enjoyed the mild Midwest temperatures. Then in November and December we went South until Christmas. It was all working according to plan until now. When Dan and I went online to plan the next few weeks, I was stunned. "The worst winter in 25 years," and "...even Key West isn't immune to winter," and "...waves of arctic air are pushing into the South." Quickly, I searched the forecast for Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas. I found that escaping the freezing temperatures would be more difficult than we thought.

That's when I finally made the suggestion, "Let's just wait this thing out. We can stay here for another week." Maybe I was getting comfortable in my nice, big, warm home. Maybe I just wanted to wait for the South to get back to normal. Dan resisted my idea. He convinced me that we really should get going, stay on schedule. I reluctantly agreed. We figured that with our propane furnace, an electric heater and a bunch more blankets, we could survive the sub-zero weather wherever we went.

Now I'm looking forward to a stop in St. Louis, where we'll explore the Museum of Westward Expansion at the base of the big arch. I'm also very interested in Hot Springs, Arkansas. From what I read, a traditional bath there includes a 100-degree bath in the healing waters, a few minutes in a steam cabinet, and hot packs for aches and pains. Maybe that will ease the chill in my body that I'm still carrying from Ohio.

I may not be big on New Year's resolutions, but something Dan said when he insisted that we get moving gave me new resolve. "An object at rest tends to stay at rest." Newton's first law of motion. The reverse is also true. Whenever we're in motion with something in our lives, our eating practices or an exercise routine, we tend to keep it up. Human habits are very powerful.

Getting back on the road in the middle of the nation's deepest freeze may have been a challenge. It was also the start of the next part of our journey and the beginning of getting back in motion. Happy New Year.

Becky Hirn is a Delphos resident traveling America with her family for a year. She documents the journey at www.ourtriptakesus.com. Follow the Hirn family in photos, blogs, on Facebook and Twitter. Or learn how to partner with the trip as an advertiser. You may e-mail Becky at beckyhirn@ourtriptakesus.com