

## Our Trip Takes Us

By Becky Hirn

I remember when there were still 100 days until we left for our cross country trip. That was when the whole year was ahead of us. I was anxious and excited, wondering if my master plan would actually work. I was building a website that I didn't know if anyone would ever visit. I was also squirreling away as much money as I could.

I also remember when we were 100 days into the trip. As "seasoned travelers" we already experienced a major breakdown. We'd visited 15 states. Autumn was coloring Minnesota beautifully. We volunteered for National Parks Day, cleaning up the banks of the Mississippi River.

One hundred days ago from today was December 1. We had to drag ourselves away from the beach in the Florida Keys. That evening, we drove with the windows down as we passed through Miami. We were still so captivated by the tropical Florida climate even after spending more than a week in the state.

We can burn up 100 days pretty quickly, especially when everyday is like the weekend. Now we're down to just 100 days left in the trip. I'm starting to wonder if I'm squeezing all the experiences that I can out of it. Are we accomplishing all we set out to do? It's like cramming for a big test. How much more can I fit into the time I have left?

We just found out how much while revising our trip itinerary last week. Since we're staying in Phoenix for the month of March, working at Camelback Ranch for Spring Training, we had to adjust our schedule to fit in the 13 states we haven't visited yet. If I had to rank the states by the amount of time we spent there, Arizona just beat out Florida. I'm okay with that, because the weather and sunshine can't be beat. A couple years ago when Dan and I were planning our trip we talked about stopping to work, if we needed the money or if the right opportunity knocked. This seasonal job at the Dodgers and White Sox facility came at the perfect time, the start of baseball. The best part is, it hasn't put a stop to our trip.

We continue to meet people from all over the country. Our new managers are from Chicago, Los Angeles and St. Louis. Some of our co-workers are from New York, Florida, Nebraska and Michigan. Customers at the team shop where we work come from all over to be a part this special pre-season. It's like the melting pot of people, just like when we're traveling from state to state.

Since last June, the list of things we've accomplished is long. I feel comfortable saying we've broadened our horizons. We've indulged our wanderlust. Most importantly, we've met people, characters in our lives that weren't there before: Joe and Linda from Connecticut, Jan and John from Florida, Tim from Ohio, Janet from Rhode Island and David and Veronica, who are on the road like us. One hundred days before the trip started, my friendship circle didn't encompass the entire US. Hopefully, 100 days after the trip is over I'll still be keeping in touch with the people who help make our trip so memorable.

Becky Hirn is a Delphos resident traveling America with her family for a year. She documents the journey at [www.ourtriptakesus.com](http://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](mailto:beckyhirn@ourtriptakesus.com)