

Our Trip Takes Us

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By Becky Hirn

The longer we're on the road, the more I am convinced that time moves faster while traveling. I always felt that way when I was a kid on summer vacation. I also always felt that way when I took a day off work. Time speeds up. Before you know it, time's up.

Before we left for the trip I made a list of things I wanted to accomplish. I figured since I'd had the time, I'd better make use of it. I planned to exercise, meditate, read to my kids, read for pleasure and write every day. I had a couple other things on the list too. Who knows what they were. Time has gotten away from me now.

Time, that funny thing, it zips by when no one is looking. What I have found is that just like at home, just like when I was working 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., I have to make time for the things I value. Just because I changed where I live or how I live, it doesn't change who I am.

Time not only moves quickly, it is slippery. In so many of the places we've visited, we get immersed and we want to stay longer. It happened in Boston, in New York and at most of the beaches we've been to. Last week it was the Mammoth Caves in Kentucky. We took a two-hour cave tour to learn the amazing story behind how these natural wonders were formed millions of years ago and how they were discovered centuries ago by brave spelunkers.

When our guide did the lights out part of our tour, I finally understood the phrases "pitch black" and "deafening silence." The best description for the caves I came up with is that it's like being in an Indiana Jones movie and finding an underground world. I half expected to see a big bolder come rolling down the tunnel at us. We even saw a bat on the wall of one of the cave walls. I'm still shocked that all these levels of caves exist right under our feet while walking through the campground and even under the roads as we drove into the park.

While camping, we enjoyed watching deer walk within five feet of our RVs. Also, fall was in full swing, the leaves were changing, the smell of the forest was damp and earthy. There was a refreshing chill in the air. We could have spent a month there. We spent only one night. It was time to move on. Time to get going.

We are already past the four-month mark and none of my pre-trip goals have become daily habits. I know now when we pull into a beautiful place that time won't allow us to stay much longer than a day or so. That's okay. I'm no longer interested in stopping time. I'll settle for slowing it down, taking it easy. That's my new goal for the trip.

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