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INTRODUCING GAS GUZZLERS ANONYMOUS

by William C. Anderson

Most dyed-in-the-wool motorhome owners seem to think we aren't really motorhoming unless we put our pedal to the metal and head hell-bent for Moose Mange, Alaska, Kaopectate, Mexico, Slopjar, Saskatchewan, or some other place a jillion miles from home. Not that these destinations should be missed—on the contrary. But if yo-yoing gasoline prices and the rubber-bottom economy have you hanging on the ropes, take heart. There is hope on the horizon.

For those who are hooked on long-range motorhome trips, and are afraid to embark on a lengthy journey for fear the gas prices may soar to the point where you have to sell your motorhome to get enough money to buy gas to get home, be of good cheer. There is a solution.

I'm happy to announce the formation of a brand new organization called GGA (Gas Guzzlers Anonymous). To help frustrated long-distance motorhome trippers with their withdrawal symptoms, the GGA philosophy is simple: Instead of taking several gas-guzzling trips a year, it is possible to take much shorter ones and still capture the rapture of motorhoming.

It has to do with playing in our own backyard. Like New Yorkers who have never seen the Statue of Liberty, but will fly all the way to France to see the Eiffel Tower, it is just quite possible that some very interesting things are available in our own neighborhood. Dortha and I decided to check it out. Having recently returned to our old hometown of Boise, Idaho, after being AWOL for half a century, we set out to find out if there was anything of interest in our own vicinage.

To this end we tracked down Arthur Hart. Hart is a distinguished, tall drink of sarsaparilla, sporting a thatch of white hair and an ingratiating sense of humor stolen from Will Rogers. His most redeeming qualities are the fact that he is the Historian Emeritus of Idaho, and he has a pretty wife named

Dee. Figuring a state historian would know as much about our state as anyone, I approached him with my questions.

As luck would have it, Hart was about to conduct a tour of Idaho in conjunction with the state's centennial. He was escorting a busload of people, and if we promised to behave ourselves, he allowed as how we could hop aboard.

We did.

After 10 days of crisscrossing our panhandled state and being informed, entertained and feted by the foremost authority on the state of Idaho, Big Red and I emerged knowing more about our old stomping ground than anyone since Lewis and Clark. Little did we realize what fascinating things went on in our own bailiwick.

It is not the purpose of this treatise to extol the virtues of Idaho. This has been done to excess of late, and as a result we are seeing the population rising much too fast. Instead, it is an endeavor to open our readers' eyes to the many fascinating spots that exist in one's own home state in which to tether a motorhome, whether it be in Arizona or Wisconsin.

For instance, we were amazed to find that just a few gallons away from Boise was Idaho City, a neat little ghost town that headquartered one of the largest gold sources ever discovered, with a great old cemetery that would bring drool to the lips of Alfred Hitchcock.

A ham sandwich farther on is the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, where mountain peaks touch the azure sky in splendor that is seemingly unmatched in the world. There are more great white-water rafting trips here than you can shake a wet T-shirt at. Still farther on are lakes Pend Oreille and Coeur d'Alene, so beautiful that God takes his showers there, and the latter so big that it served as a submarine navy base during World War II.

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