

ALASKA OR BUST 2011

Greg and Luana Giskaas



It's the middle of June and the rain doesn't want to stop, we're bored and the summer is slipping by. So we start making plans for the Blue Ridge Parkway back east. I start working on a route, checking on highways, campgrounds and the like. Then, after figuring out which way to go and return, we checked to see what the weather out there was up to (you guessed it, we put the cart before the HOG). We learned there were tornados, hurricanes and temps in the hundreds, and did I mention the flooding going on between here and there? Anyway, we had a short discussion, did a left face, and set our sights for Alaska, figuring that we would escape all this rain, right?

Took the bike into Big Sky Harley for a look over and new front tire, which I wouldn't have replaced except for the fact that, hell man this is Alaska we're talking about here.... and so on July 5th, 11 AM, the White Stallion is oiled, gassed and ready to run, Alaska look out, here we come. Headed south to Helena, damn we're going the wrong way, went over McDonald Pass and headed for Missoula. We made it as far as Thompson Falls at around 6:30 PM, a little over 300 miles, at 30 mpg not a bad first day. After a second two gallon gas can purchase at Wal-Mart in Kettle Falls Washington, into Canada we go.

We entered Canada at Osoyoos border crossing, where we had our only shake down search of the trip. Proceeding north thru what will be a wine buying trip in the future, we ended up in Merrit for the night. Our journey then took us thru 70, 100 and 150 Mile Houses thru Williams Lake and into Quesnel, BC. By this time we had been running in what would be a long journey in the rain. Approximately one hundred miles further up the road was Prince George, and now a decision must be made. Do we head for Smithers or do we head to Fort St. John, roads bad both ways. Check with the HD dealership and they said, the best route was through St. John, however, the road had been washed out and may not be passable. We talked to a few people about storing the bike and taking a cage the rest of the way, but one guy who owned a trucking

business said they had opened one lane of traffic, and since that's all we needed, it was damn the torpedoes full speed ahead. We traveled in the rain off and on all that day ending at the junction of highway 29 and the Alaska/Alcan Hwy.

Okay, the Alaska Highway, what can be said about this strip of road that hasn't already been said, and yah, it's the first time we'd ever seen it. Still raining, we continue our journey through Pink Mountain, Ft Nelson, Summit Lake, Muncho Pass, Contact Creek (the point where the 2 groups of soldiers meet during the construction of the Hwy) and on into Watson Lake. Here we had ridden out of the rain for the time being, and set up our tent in a campground on the edge of town, just inside the Yukon Territory. I need to mention here, that Watson Lake has the largest license plate and road sign configuration I've ever seen, there are plates of every shape and size from all over the world. It is a must to see.



Next night in the capital of the Yukon, Whitehorse, and the road goes downhill fast. We left Whitehorse in rain gear and headed for Beaver Creek on the Alaska border. At Destruction Bay the pavement ends and with all the rain and mud, things are getting a little hairy to say the least, a hundred plus miles of potholes, washouts, mud, road snakes and frost heaves. Thank God there weren't very many other idiots out there running around or it would have been a lot worse. This is the stretch of road I was glad we had a Trike, three wheels on this part of road is definitely better than two.



We continued on from Beaver Creek to Soldotna by way of Tok, Glennallen, Palmer and Anchorage, with a late night stop at the Brown Bear Inn. Bikers all over the place, and I'm not

sure, but I think the only thing the door on our room would keep out is, well nothing, but we took the room anyway and slept in our sleeping bags. One more rain storm on Whittier Moose Pass and then we got to my brother Gary's abode. Eleven days on the road and my wife and I are still best friends, but we weren't home yet. We spent 5 days with him, took a ride to Homer and one to Seward, as he has a 2003 Road King. Changed oil on our bikes and changed the air cleaner, as I was getting a lot of blow-by and my filter was saturated with it. Oh and did I mention, washing it, damn near took an entire day along with an entire bottle of bug and tar remover.

As with everything it must come to an end, so again we saddled up the White Stallion and bid adieu to my little brother and headed south. We took the same route as far as Ft St John, there we went on into Dawson Creek to mile marker zero, where we stood in the middle of morning traffic and had our picture taken. Notice all the cars...



From there it was off to the great plains, very boring and with a lot more traffic, but better highways. Our descent took us through Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge. Home again and knock on wood, the trip, the two of us and the White Stallion all were great, and Luana and I are still best friends. Miracles never cease to happen!



Here are a few things we encountered along the way that I thought might be interesting. Any brand of beer, theirs or ours, an 18 pack was \$55.00 plus, no hamburgers less than \$12.00 anywhere, gas 1.50 to 3.00 a liter and there is 3.73 liters to the gallon, in the bars beer was at or around \$6.00 a glass, well I think you probably have gathered by now, not cheap. The motels we stayed in weren't much but were all over \$100.00 a night if you could find one. Some campgrounds were good, some not so good.

Would we do it again....absolutely, but instead of a month, we'd take two months, and stop and smell the fire weed along the way. Alaska really is a trip everyone should take on a motorcycle. It will give you a lifetime of wonderful memories!

If any of you are interested in looking at all the wild life and fantastic scenery pictures we took along the way, they are available on Luana's facebook, under the Alaska or Bust Album, and the Big Sky HOG Facebook page.

By the way, the trip home was 8 days, and ten days after we got back we were in Sturgis. Where to next, not sure, but there won't be any grass growing under the White Stallion as long as we keep having.... HOG DREAMS....

I wanted to mention that we HOG members need to be thankful for the dealership we have, you don't find many on the road that will help travelers like Brian Moen.



