

# MarkTime 138

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\$2 cash/stamps/trade/LoC

**Started 9/15/2021**

Greetings, all! We are just back from our summer vacation, a fun trip to the northern Rockies. I am beginning the travel report now while it's still fresh in mind.

I am going to do this issue a bit differently ... only a few of you know I have been preparing travel notes in zine form since the 2018 Brazil trip. I would put all my research together, especially from friends who live in places or travel a lot, websites that specialize in old and/or unusual places to visit or eat at such as <https://www.atlasobscura.com> and <https://www.roadsideamerica.com>, radio from <https://radio-locator.com>, and anything I might remember from previous visits. Flying back from Bozeman last night, I distracted myself from the mountain-winds turbulence by thinking up ways to use the Montana notes zine in this MarkTime.

Montana has had places on Nancy's and my own bucket lists for years, so we had been considering trips up there for years. Nancy read an article about Missoula in *Smithsonian* about 15 years ago and has since wanted to visit. While I had been to Montana three times and to all 50 US states, I had only been to 49 state capital cities. I would attempt to plan visits before but the main drawback was it would be either a long drive from home, flights into Montana cities were infrequent and expensive, or the nearest cities with good, inexpensive air service were still at least a full day's drive north or east. One of the trip ideas we had been looking at for Nancy's upcoming milestone birthday involved a drive from here to several National Parks on or near US 93 from here to Canada. While that big trip next year will be more exotic and on a different continent, the Montana trip came together for this year as Nancy's brother moved to Missoula and invited family up for a visit, and Southwest Airlines began serving Bozeman presumably because it is near-ish to popular Yellowstone National Park.

I was happy to see the Ontario airport is getting busier, even if it means longer lines through security and at the better food booths. Dunkin breakfast sandwiches were not much more expensive than at their few shops in the Inland Empire. The flight to Las Vegas was standing room only, and it was a long walk between gates at LAS. We did have a couple hours, so we planned on lunch between flights. There was the kid-favorite Burger King near our departure gate, but the pulled pork and brisket plate at the Brookwood Farms BBQ stand next door was calling our name. Also calling Nancy's name were the nearby slot machines, but she only gave them \$3. Andrew got a kick out of my calling them "one-armed bandits" and updated that to "one-button bandits" 😊. The Bozeman flight about 1/3 full, so they spread us around the plane to balance the load ... only to have to re-shuffle a few of us as the luggage was also off balance.

Several sets of turbulence later, we landed at Bozeman airport, quiet but nice to look at with woods and earth tones. The airport is actually in Belgrade, a suburb a few miles northwest of Bozeman. This put us on the right side of town for our drive to Helena.

Soon after we got on westbound I-90, Nancy saw a billboard for the Wheat Montana bakery. It was on US 287

just north of I-90, right where we needed to be for our path to Helena. We arrived about 4:30, glad we did not stop elsewhere first as they closed at 5:00 due to short-staffing, a common problem in general these days and especially noticeable on this trip. I found that rare delicacy marble rye bread, so we bought a loaf along with a bag of bagels and two huge cinnamon rolls to snack on before we left.

Four miles north on 287, we saw what at first looked like a herd of strange horses on the side of a hill. This turned out to be the Bleu Horses sculpture installation. Otherwise, it was corn fields, some clusters of houses, and the occasional "Potatoes for sale" sign until Helena.

Helena was high on my Bucket List, being the only state capital city I was missing. We stayed at the Baymont Hotel just off US 12 between I-15 and the state capitol. It was a decent place, most notable for the piece of old towel in the bathroom with a story of "The Rag" attached. Cool, and Matthew made good use of the rag to clean up some stray shower water. Dinner was down the street at Slim Chickens, which vaguely reminded us of Raising Cane's though with a much larger list of side dishes. I found out later Slim Chickens is a small chain, based in Arkansas with franchises scattered about the US and the UK. We liked the chicken, but the fries and the fried pickle chips were too salty. Again our timing was good ... we arrived after 6:30, and they closed at 7:00. We hoped for souvenirs at the Walgreens down the street, but alas most Walgreens are not like they used to be for local souvenirs. We saw only face masks from both major state universities and from both local high schools.

"hot" breakfasts are coming back to hotels. Baymont's mini omelets were good. After checking out, we drove to the capitol building. There were free parking lots across the street. We were there right after it opened for the day, too early for the guided tour so we made do with the self-guided tour. As with most capitols, county courthouses, and city halls, it was a beautiful building inside and out, but not enough office space for any but the top officials.

The Montana Historical Society Museum, just east of the capitol, features Montana history, art (featuring an exhibit of local favorite C. M. Russell), flora and fauna. They also had a good gift shop with lots of postcards, and their information rack had state highway maps.

Brent Swanson had this suggestion for Helena: "If time is limited in Helena, see if the tour tram is running (Last Chance one hour tour train, 225 N. Roberts St., 11 AM and 3 PM; <https://lctours.com/>). It does a pickup at the Montana Historical Society and will give you a tour around the older parts of town." We just missed the 11:00 tour train, so instead we drove over to the old mining district Last Chance Gulch for a brief walking tour. Park St. Bakery only had pre-made sandwiches and pizza for lunch, so we made do with some great cookies to tide us over, and we drove past the beautiful, large-for-such-a-small city Cathedral of St. Helena and over to Steve's Café.

I saw someone eating a bowl of Steve's chili. It looked thick with beans and chunks of meat. I considered getting the chili but I went one better with their chili burger, as it was served open-face like a California "Chili Size" plus it came with a choice of fries or salad. I chose the latter as I expected Montana was another place where vegetables were optional. Andrew had the meatball sandwich, Matthew the Rueben, and Nancy opted for huckleberry pancakes.

Capital Transit's offices and transfer center was just a few blocks north, on the way out of town. I wanted to stop in for schedules and tokens, but the public waiting room and

information window were still closed For the Duration, and I had just missed the 1:00 route meetup.

Here is the updated places, eats, shops, and radio listings I had compiled for the Helena portion of the trip:

## Helena To-Dos

- 📍 Capital Transit - [www.ridethecapitalt.com](http://www.ridethecapitalt.com). Several loop routes, weekdays only. 85c a ride, day pass \$2.60; tokens available at the office, 1415 North Montana Avenue, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- 📍 **State Capitol** - 1301 East Sixth Ave. Open 9:00-5:00 daily, with tours hourly 10 AM-2 PM. A walk-through of the capitol building is interesting. C. M. Russell's giant-size "Lewis and Clark Meet the Flathead Indians at Ross' Hole" is in the legislature's chamber.
- 📍 **Giant Buffalo Skull - Montana Historical Society Museum**, 225 N. Roberts St. "Herd Bull" is made of metal, weighs over two tons, and is 15 feet long and 21 feet wide. Sculpted by Montana artist Benji Daniels in 1990, who says it's the largest buffalo skull in the world: 12 times the size of a normal buffalo skull.
- 📍 **Last Chance Gulch** - off Main St. Last Chance Gulch Walking Mall – Last Chance Gulch between 6th Ave. and N. Broadway
- 📍 Boy and the Boot statue - inside the US Bank building, 302 N. Last Chance Gulch St. at 6th Ave. First appeared in Helena in 1890, escaped destruction in a 1935 earthquake, has been displayed in a bank lobby since 1965. Treasured and preserved, as are all Boy with the Leaking Boot statues across the U.S. M-F 9 AM to 4 PM
- 📍 Great Northern Carousel - 989 Carousel Way, off Lyndale Ave. Kids of all ages are invited to ride one of the 37 hand carved animals; including some animals found in the state of Montana such as a bobcat, grey wolf, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, antelope, and river otter. <https://www.gncarousel.com/>
- 📍 Lewis & Clark Montana Experience – Great Northern Town Center, 40 W. 14th St. Outdoor displays on Lewis & Clark's Montana Explorations, including statues of animals they encountered.
- 📍 Stonehouse in Reeder's Alley. One home in the historic strip hides secret compartments and the ghostly songs of long-gone canaries. THE oldest intact strip of Helena, Montana, is like stepping back in time. The street is lined with charming brick buildings once home to the miners who settled the area in the late 19th century. In the early 1900s, Laura and George Duchesnay bought one of the quaint stone buildings at the top of the street. Laura had a particular love for animals and took to filling their home with the singing, sunshine-colored canaries she raised. Stonehouse Restaurant is permanently closed, but the historic building can be seen in Reeder's Alley.
- 📍 Guardian of the Gulch - Fire Tower Park. The old fire tower is one of the last of its kind in the United States. The Guardian of the Gulch was built in the 1870s after a particularly bad blaze destroyed much of downtown.
- 📍 **Cathedral of St. Helena** - 530 N. Ewing St. Modeled after Votive Church of the Sacred Heart in Vienna, Austria. The windows (there is a gallery of different designs on the church's official website) were made and installed by the F. X. Zettler Firm of Munich, Bavaria. It took years to finish installing all of the church's 59 windows, which were hand-

crafted in Bavaria and shipped to Montana. Many of the windows are part of a series that tells the story of the church from the fall of Adam and Eve up through the early 20th century.

- 📍 Upper West Side – between Last Chance Gulch and Mount Helena. AKA the Mansion District. Many large homes from Helena's Gold Rush era
- 📍 Little Free Libraries - The Helena area has over 20! <https://littlefreelibrary.org/ourmap/>

## Helena Eats

- 📍 Bagel Company – 735 N. Last Chance Gulch, or 1421 11th Ave.
- 📍 Benny's Bistro - 108 E. 6th St, near Last Chance Gulch. "Locovore" locally sourced lunch and dinner. Considered "Fine dining"
- 📍 Big Dipper Ice Cream – 58 N. Last Chance Gulch
- 📍 The Dive Bakery & Cafe - 1609 11th Ave. Baked goods, breakfast and lunch
- 📍 The Frozen Moose - 1015 Boulder Ave #1D. Frozen yogurt
- 📍 Karmadillo Southwest Cafe - 139 Reeder's Alley. Mex-Southwest lunch and dinner
- 📍 MacKenzie River Pizza - 1110 Road Runner Dr. – Brent Swanson says: "A Montana-esque version of California Pizza Kitchen. They're not bad, but you don't need to be in any hurry to eat at one."
- 📍 Shellie's Country Café – 3122 Prospect Ave. (US 12 East)
- 📍 **Slim Chickens** - 1450 Prospect Ave.
- 📍 **Steve's Cafe** - 1225 E. Custer or **630 N. Montana**. Breakfast and lunch

## Helena Radio (bold = most enjoyed)

550	KBOW	Butte	Country
560	KMON	Great Falls	Country
580	KANA	Anaconda	Oldies
<b>680</b>	<b>KKGR</b>	East Helena	Classic Hits
950	KCAP	Helena	Talk
88.5	KYPH	Helena	Public Radio
89.1	KGLZ	East Helena	Public Radio
90.1	KHLV	Helena	Christian Contemporary
91.1	K216GJ	Helena	Religious = KAWZ
91.7	KUHM	Helena	Public Radio
<b>93.1</b>	<b>K226BI</b>	Helena	Classic Hits = 680
<b>94.1</b>	<b>KOPR</b>	Butte	Adult Hits
94.9	K235BW	Helena	Country = 107.3
95.5	KMBR	Butte	Classic Rock
95.9	K240EM	Helena	Talk = 950
96.3	K242CX	Helena	Country = 107.3
97.3	KNEH-LP	Helena	Religious
97.7	KCCH-LP	Helena	Religious
98.1	K251AC	Helena	AC = 105.3
98.5	KHGC	Montana City	Religious
99.5	KBLL	Helena	Country
100.1	KMEH-LP	Helena	Variety
100.3	KEAJ-LP	Cell Site	Travelers' Information
100.7	KRU	-LP Helena	Religious
101.1	KZMT	Helena	Classic Rock
101.9	KHFG-LP	Helena	Christian Contemporary
102.3	KMXM	Helena Valley NE	Top-40
103.1	KVCM	Helena	Religious
103.5	KZMY	Bozeman	Hot AC
104.1	KJPZ	East Helena	Christian Contemporary
104.5	K283BP	Helena	Country = 107.3

105.3	KMTX	Helena	AC
105.9	KWLG-LP	Montana City	Travelers' Information
106.5	KYPX	Helena Valley	SE Public Radio
107.3	KIMO	Townsend	Country

We headed west on US-12. I was looking forward to the Continental Divide signs and the views at the MacDonald Pass overlook. However, there were no signs, and the road up to the vista point and Continental Divide trailhead was poorly maintained rutted dirt. The view would have been sucky anyway thanks to smoke from wildfires in western Montana. We gave up and continued west on US-12 to I 90 to Missoula.

Another note from Brent Swanson: "If you're driving I-15 between Butte and Helena, then you'll pass Basin, the epicenter of 'Radon Health Mines.'" Weird after many years of Public Service Announcements warning of radon-infested basements, that there were a cluster of radio health spas in the mountains between Butte and Helena!

Brent had another suggestion, for a lunch stop on the way to Missoula: "(In Drummond,) Off I-90/US-12 heading for Missoula. The home of Parker's Cafe, 32 E Front St., where they have 135 varieties of hamburgers." Darn, we already had a most filling lunch, and Missoula was calling.

Ninety minutes and several traffic roundabouts later, our first Missoula stop was at our Airbnb rental, a 1930s-era Craftsman near University of Montana. Kudos to Nancy for finding a rental house convenient to five local bus routes! The older parts of the house featured lots of wood, and the kitchen, the bathroom, and the attic were tastefully remodeled. The attic was a 3<sup>rd</sup> bedroom with a separate sitting room.

After we settled in, Matthew and Nancy sat on the front porch watching buses pass while I napped until it was time to leave for Nancy's brother Donald's house. They live up in the hills south of the main city, a good hour's walk mostly uphill from the nearest bus stop (the one I used at the Walmart!). Along the way, some larger lots had horses and one had a mule. The large suburban grass lawns were being enjoyed by deer. Donald says the deer are called "Montana Rats". We got tour of their house, then it was off to dinner at Fiesta en Jalisco Mexican restaurant. The restaurant shared space with a small casino, one of many we encountered in Montana cities. We also planned on meeting for breakfast at 10:00 Friday morning, late enough for sleeping in but (just) early enough to have our meal before it was time to collect other family members from the Missoula airport.

I was up early Friday to get in some bus riding before meeting everyone at Paul's Pancake Parlor. I was only slightly sad their system is fare-free so no souvenir day pass to purchase. I caught the downtown-bound Mountain Line route 1 across the street from the house for a quick, uneventful ride past the University of Montana to Mountain Line's downtown transfer center. Service had only that week been restored to 2019 levels, so frequency and connections were better that I had planned. I had just enough time to purchase a small hot chocolate from the take-out window of the center's Golden Yolk Griddle coffee and breakfast stand and take a quick walk through the inside of the bus station before route 12 arrived to take me south and west. This bus had some copies of the *Missoulian* stamped "Bus Copy" for riders to read or take. The Sports section was dominated by Friday night high school football predictions and of Saturday evening's college home game vs. Western Illinois. I looked up from the paper to see we were high up above town then taking a steep ride back down. I got off near the Walmart, where

shopping for batteries and kid's mouthwash was amazingly quick and painless. It helped that both items were not locked away like at their stores around here.

So quick, I was able to catch an earlier route 7 than originally planned. This allowed me to take the 7 all the way to the transfer center to catch yet another route, and to meet Nancy and kids back at the house so we could go together to the restaurant.

Random question from a woman on the 7 ... "Have you read the book *Give a Mouse a Cookie?*" I surprised myself by not ignoring her ☺ ... I could not recall ever reading that specific book until Nancy reminded me later that yes we had it and had read it for the kids. However the title did remind me of a series of books by Laura Numeroff. The first one I could think of was *If You Give A Moose A Muffin*. She then asked if I knew the meaning of these books. I noted now one act sets off chain of unforeseen events, and she liked that answer just in time to make her transfer at Southgate Mall. Nancy is glad I did not tell her that Mathew considers it to be about the welfare cycle. I got downtown in time to make the route 6 back to the house and get a bathroom break before we all drove to Paul's Pancake Parlor.

Alas, a lot of people were driving to that same spot. The restaurant is small but very locally popular, so wait would have been 45 minutes. While the kids and I were OK with the wait especially since The Book Exchange used bookstore was next door, there was no waiting time built into the itinerary as there were more family to pick up at the airport so instead we picked up McDonald's breakfast to eat at Donald's house.

We used this bit of downtime to visit the local Pattee Creek Market to buy sliced cheese and turkey to go with our rye bread, while the kids were checking out the Hope Thrift Boutique next door. We also drove over to campus to look over the U of Montana Grizzly wear at what they still call the campus bookstore despite the lack of books for sale. They had a clearance sale on postcards, so we bought about half of their remaining stock, 21 for \$1.05. We also mailed off the postcards we already had ready to go. The visitor parking was near the trailhead for the "M" trail, which takes you 700 feet up in 1.3 miles to the letter of the same name on the side of Mt. Sentinel just behind campus. Letters painted on or cemented to the sides of mountains is a common feature in the western US, including the "C" hovering over UC Riverside and the "M" overlooking Moreno Valley.

The rest of Friday was spent hanging out at Donald's house eating pizza and salad. Andrew and I took a short walk to a Little Free Library, which happened to be near a street called Mark Court. We passed at least 10 deer along the way, either along the streets or in a children's playground.

The big family event for Saturday morning was hiking the "M" trail to the top. Between the elevation and the heavy dose of wildfire smoke in the local air, I opted out of the full trail. My morning instead began with catching Mountain Line's Saturday morning farmers market shuttle from near the house up to the north end of downtown. There was a farmer's market next to the old Northern Pacific train station, also surrounding a train engine on display in front. Amazing variety of fruits and veggies. They had the local delicacy huckleberries, though a bit out of season at \$18 a pound. Three blocks south, there was a two-block long "People's Market" with arts, crafts, and other merchandise. The far end of this market was conveniently just across the street from the Mountain Line transfer center, where I caught route 6 to the stop nearest the trailhead. It was almost 8 hours to gametime but there were already many maroon-clad Griz fans on

campus. Nancy and most of the others were on their way back down the trail by that point. Andrew had expected to only go halfway up the trail but made it all the way to the "M." Once all were down at the bottom, most of us had lunch and beer (or root beer) at the Tamarack Brewery downtown, then walked down to A Carousel for Missoula. The merry-go-round had been built by volunteers in (years). Nancy had read about it in a *Smithsonian* article about 15 years ago, impressing her enough to add Missoula to her travel bucket list. It was a fun, speedy ride.

After stops for drink mixers and a birthday cake, we were back at Donald's house for the rest of the day and evening. Sitting on the deck, I saw why I had no memories of my previous time in the Missoula city limits ... you could see I-90 in the hills north of the city, and I don't think we exited the interstate in Missoula when a friend and I drove I-90 from Billings to Spokane during a 1980 trip. The only stops I remember at all were for radio stations in Billings and Butte. My other Montana visits to this point had been a brief side-drive into Wibaux county during a Dakotas tour in 1992, and the Amtrak Empire Builder ride from Glenview to Portland in 1997 (sadly, it was in the Glacier National Park area at night both directions).

Nancy's sister was already up and out of the house by 6:00 Sunday morning for her early flight back to the bay area. We checked out of the house and met the remaining relatives at Donald's house for a farewell breakfast.

The thrift stores were closed on Sunday, but the Big Dipper ice cream shop was open as were the Board of Missoula snowboard and skateboard shop and Ear Candy Music across the street. I found a CD from the "Have a Nice Day" series I thought I needed, so we would have something to play in the radio dead zone through the mountains ... Oops, no CD player in the rental car. Nancy and Andrew had their own adventures, such as trying to figure out where the gas tank button was on the rental car.

Here is the updated places, eats, shops, and radio listings I had compiled for the Missoula portion of the trip:

## Missoula To-Dos

- 📍 **The Mountain Line** - free-fare transit -- [www.mountainline.com](http://www.mountainline.com). Twelve weekday routes, plus three "U-Dash" college shuttles; eleven Saturday routes, including a Saturday morning market shuttle on Higgins. Routes 1, 6, 12, U-Dash Red, and Saturday Market shuttle run near the "house"
- 📍 **Downtown Transfer Center** - 200 West Pine St. Monday to Friday 6:00 AM to 8:45 PM, Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
- 📍 **The "M" Trail** - a 1.2 mile scenic, heavily trafficked out-and-back trail on Mount Sentinel east of the University of Montana campus. The trail is rated as moderate and is primarily used for hiking and running. Dogs are also able to use this trail but must be kept on leash. Elevation gain 643 ft. with 13 switchbacks
- 📍 **University of Montana** - Including Grizzly Statue on west side of main quad; the **University Center** - student union, bookstore ... Thursday 8 AM - 5:30 PM, Friday 8 AM - 5 PM; closed weekends; Montana Museum of Art and Culture - 32 Campus Dr. Football - home game vs. Western Illinois, Saturday 6:00 PM
- 📍 **A Carousel for Missoula** - Caras Park, 101 Carousel Drive. A classic carnival ride, created by a local woodworker who agreed to carve ponies for a carousel so long as the town

promised that no one would ever take it away. To this day, the carousel continues to surprise and delight visitors. Open daily - At least 11:00 to 7:00 June through August; check September hours. \$2.25 for adults; 75¢ for children (<16) and seniors (>55)

- 📍 **Clark Fork Riverfront Trail** - along Clark Fork River downtown including Caras Park -- [Former Milwaukee Road rail right of way?]
- 📍 **Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail** - uses Broadway St. in Missoula; also runs through Bozeman
- 📍 **Farmer's Markets** -- Clark Fork Farmer's Market - under Higgins Ave. bridge -- Saturdays 8 AM to 1 PM, and Missoula Farmer's Market - Circle Square, north end of Higgins Ave. - Saturdays 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM
- 📍 **Fort Missoula** - 3400 Captain Rawn Way
- 📍 **Missoula Art Museum** - 335 N. Pattee St. -- Free, in a former Carnegie Library
- 📍 **Missoula Natural History Center** - 120 Hickory St.
- 📍 **The Squashed Cat** - 128 W. Main St., Missoula. Large cement cat sprawled out in the streets of downtown Missoula.

**Little Free Libraries** - The Missoula area has at least 30!  
<https://littlefreelibrary.org/ourmap/>

## Shopping

- \$ **The Bird's Nest Bookstore** - 219 N. Higgins Ave.
- \$ **Board of Missoula** snowboard and skateboard shop - 618 S. Higgins Ave. Open Sunday
- \$ **The Book Exchange** - 2335 Brooks St.
- \$ **Ear Candy Music** - 624 S. Higgins Ave. Open Sunday
- \$ **Fair Trade Store** - Jeannette Rankin Peace Center, 519 S. Higgins Ave.
- \$ **Fact and Fiction Books** - 220 N. Higgins Ave
- \$ **Hope Thrift Boutique** - 702 SW Higgins Ave.
- \$ **Muse Comics** - 2301 S Higgins Ave. Around the corner from the rental house
- \$ **Noteworthy Paper & Press** - 219 S 3rd St W.
- \$ **Rockin Rudy's Records** - 237 Blaine St. - music, posters, gifts, etc.
- \$ **Rockin Rudy's Record Heaven** - 845 Ronan St.
- \$ **Shakespeare & Co Books** - 103 S 3rd St W.
- \$ **Underground Thrift Store** - 705 S Higgins Ave.

## Missoula Eats

- 🍷 **Acropolis Gyros & Greek Specs** - 117 South Ave West ... a block from the "house"
- 🍷 **Bernice's Bakery** - 190 S. 3rd St. West - coffee, baked goods, sandwiches
- 🍷 **Big Dipper Ice Cream** - 631 S Higgins Ave., and 2700 Paxson St., Suite F
- 🍷 **Biga Pizza** - 241 W. Main St. -- uses fresh, local ingredients on innovative pies like the Flathead Cherry Pizza topped with housemade sausage, flathead cherry chutney, smoked gouda, mozzarella, garlic oil and parsley.
- 🍷 **Cambie Taphouse and Coffee** - 2413 S Higgins Ave. ... beers and coffee, close to the "house"
- 🍷 **Drum Coffee** - 600 South Ave W.
- 🍷 **Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakhburgers** - 4855 N. Reserve
- 🍷 **Golden Yolk Griddle** coffee and breakfast stand - Mountain Line's downtown transfer center, 200 W Pine St. - coffee and breakfast (blue corn pancakes on weekends!)
- 🍷 **The Greek Pastry Shop #1 Gyros** - 520 S 5th St W.

- ☛ Hob Nob Breakfast - 531 S Higgins Ave.
- ☛ MacKenzie River Pizza - 5210 Grant Creek Rd., and 3820 S. Reserve St.
- ☛ Nonna's Neighborhood Eatery - 1221 Helen Ave. Open 9 AM to 2 PM
- ☛ The Notorious P.I.G. BBQ - 247 Front Street (downtown) and 3621 S. Reserve aka Old U.S. 93 (south side)
- ☛ Paul's Pancake Parlor - 2305 Brooks St.
- ☛ Scotty's Table - 131 S. Higgins Ave. - fancy fare
- ☛ The Shack Café - 222 W. Main St. - locally-sourced breakfast, lunch
- ☛ Tagliare Delicatessen - 1433 S Higgins Ave.
- ☛ **Tamarack Brewing Co.** - 231 W. Front St.

**Laundromats** (for when we considered lightening our luggage load by packing only 3 or 4 days of clothes)

- Sparkle Laundry - 812 S Higgins Ave, Missoula, MT 59801
- Zootown Laundry - 1210 W Kent Ave #104, Missoula, MT 59801 [limited parking]
- Merrys Laundry - 1963 S 14th St W, Missoula, MT 59801

### Outside of Missoula

- ☛ Garden of One Thousand Buddhas - 34574 White Coyote Road, Arlee (north of Missoula) -- This giant meditative chakra is working on just as many Buddhas as advertised. Established as an international center for peace in 2000, the 750-foot circular monument sits on ten acres of rich natural land comprising the garden. The statuary is arranged in the formation of a "wheel of dharma" meant to represent the "Noble Eightfold Path" which encompasses the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth. Driving directions north from Missoula: From US I-90 N, turn north onto HWY 93. Travel 19 miles north (2 miles past Arlee). Turn East (right) onto White Coyote Road. Continue 1/2 mile. Turn left at 34756 White Coyote Rd. Watch for signs and directions for parking.
- ☛ Side-trip to get Idaho -- US-12 Lolo Pass Rest Area - 43 miles south and west of Missoula, via US 12 ... nearest point to Idaho. Make 8-mile detour on US 93 south for an extra Montana county. Michael Bischoff added this suggestion for a longer side-trip: "If you're on a driving vacation and you have the time, take US-12 through Lolo Hot Springs and all the way over to Lewiston. It is one of my favorite drives of all time. Not much for radio but great scenery. AND as an added bonus you get to go through Orofino, home of the Idaho State Mental Hospital, which overlooks the high school football stadium for the Orofino Maniacs."

[Spoiler alert: We changed plans with the Alternate Route, "West Yellowstone to Idaho border about 10 miles via US 20, but only if we go to and enter Yellowstone via US 191/US 20"].

Travelers' Rest State Park - 6717 US-12, Lolo, MT 59847, on way from Missoula to Idaho state line

### Missoula Radio (bold = enjoyed)

750	KERR	Polson	Country
930	KMPT	East Missoula	Talk
1290	KGVO	Missoula	Talk
1340	KYLT	Missoula	Sports
1450	KGRZ	Missoula	Sports
88.3	KJCG	Missoula	Religious
89.1	KUFM	Missoula	Public Radio
89.5	K208EF	Missoula	Moody Bible = KMBI

89.9	KBGA	Missoula	University of Montana
90.3	KJFT	Arlee	Religious
91.1	KMZL	Missoula	Christian Contemporary
91.5	K218AI	Rattlesnake Valley	Public Radio = 89.1
91.9	K220JX	Missoula	Christian Contemporary = KEFX
92.7	K224AA	Missoula	Sports = 1450
93.3	KGGL	Missoula	Country
93.7	K229BU	Missoula	Top-40 = 104.5
94.3	K232CI	Missoula	Country = 97.9
94.9	KYSS	Missoula	Country
95.3	K237DZ	Missoula	Country = 97.9
95.7	K239AP	Missoula	Country = 93.3
96.3	KBAZ	Hamilton	Rock
96.9	K245AP	Missoula	Adult Hits = 98.7
97.5	KYMI	Charlo	Christian Contemporary
97.9	KDXT	Lolo	Country

HD2 - Country 95.3

HD3 - Oldies 94.3

HD-4 - religious Fresh Life

98.3	K252FP	Missoula	Talk = 1290
<b>98.7</b>	<b>KHKM</b>	Hamilton	Adult Hits
99.3	KQEZ	Saint Regis	Adult Contemporary
99.7	K259DD	East Missoula	Talk = 930
100.1	KZOQ	Missoula	Classic Rock
101.1	K266BK	Missoula	Religious = 90.3
<b>101.5</b>	<b>KAMM</b>	Frenchtown	Alternative
101.9	KSMZ-LP	Missoula	Religious
102.5	KMSO	Missoula	Hot AC
102.9	K275BS	Missoula	Top-40 = 104.5
<b>103.3</b>	<b>KDTR</b>	Florence	Adult Album Alternative
103.7	K279CP	Missoula	Classic Hits = 102.5-HD2
104.1	K281CH	Missoula	Dance = 102.5-HD4
104.5	KKVU	Stevensville	Top-40
104.9	KWLY-LP	Missoula	Religious
105.5	KFGM-LP	Missoula	Variety
<b>105.9</b>	<b>KYJK</b>	Missoula	Adult Hits "Jack FM"
106.7	KXDR	Pinesdale	Top-40
107.1	K296FM	Missoula	Country = 97.9
107.5	KENR	Superior	Top-40
107.9	KHDV	Darby	Classic Hits [and 103.7??]

A couple rain showers since Thursday gave us clearer skies for the first part of our drive east on I-90. By Deer Lodge the grungy skies returned, so much so that when I briefly spotted the World's Largest Smokestack in Anaconda it was too late to point it out or get off I-90 to view it up close. Besides, we had our priorities ... it was already past lunchtime.

So much so, several of my top choices for lunching in Butte were already closed for the day. Google maps said Sparky's Garage Butte was open until 9:00 PM, and the driving route took us past more than a few historic downtown buildings so we aimed for it. What Google Maps did not know was they were short on staff so it would not open until 3 PM. We were prepared to wait the 20 minutes but yay someone poked their nose out to invite us to wait inside and yes the bathrooms were open and oh yes let's just go ahead and seat you now. We really enjoyed our meals! We had fried pickles to start with. Then I had Chicken Fried Steak with lumpy mashed potatoes (yes!!), the kids each had mac and cheese, Andrew's topped with pulled pork and Matthew's with hot wings, and we think Nancy had a Black & Bleu Burger.

The Our Lady of the Rockies statue was visible from Sparky's parking lot. See the write-up below. The interstate was more mountainous leaving Butte, and yay there was a Continental Divide sign but no place to pull over to take a picture.

We wanted to go back to Wheat Montana bakery and it was still before 5:00 ... except on this day they had closed at 3. We continued east to Belgrade and our lodging for the next two nights at their Quality Inn. Hotels are expensive and "No Vacancy" signs are common in the Bozeman area thanks to being the nearest city to Yellowstone park. The hotel was nice though the room was very small especially for the price. Nancy and I drove to the post office to mail more postcards, and past Albertson's to instead shop at the local Town & Country Foods ... yay, they carried Wheat Montana breads, including the marble rye! We also picked up cheese and meat, so dinner was sandwiches and Sparky's leftovers.

Leaving the Town & Country parking lot, Nancy spotted a Taco Time! We had not eaten at one since their brief attempt to expand into California years ago ... Nancy had good memories of one in Humboldt County, while I had mixed memories of the Taco Times in Los Angeles and Garden Grove. I checked and besides Belgrade there was also one in Bozeman, so they were penciled in for maybe lunch on Monday or Tuesday,

Here is the updated places, eats, shops, and radio listings I had compiled for the portion of the trip between Missoula and Bozeman:

### To-Dos Along the Way

- 📍 Golden Spike of Montana - 1200 Main St., Deer Lodge. The Montana Spike has outlasted the railroad that it was built to celebrate, which went out of business in 1985. South edge of town, on the northwest corner of Main St. and Conley Ave.
- 📍 Old Prison Museum - 1106 Main St., Deer Lodge. Former prison with the expected colorful history. "Cement shoe soles were mandated for all prisoners with a history of escaping over walls." The Old Prison includes the Auto Museum (over 120 old cars), Frontier Museum, and Montana Law Enforcement Museum. M-Sat 8 AM to 6 PM, Sun 9 AM to 6 PM. I-90 exit 184 (or 187) and drive south (or north) on Hwy 90/Main St. The prison will be on the west side of the street, at Texas Ave. The gift shop is on the east side of the street, in an old Texaco gas station.
- 📍 Granite Ghost Town - Contract Mill Road, 5 miles east of State Highway 1, Philipsburg -- A little-visited ghost town state park offers a glimpse into Montana's "Silver Queen." Cell service around Granite is spotty to nonexistent. The 5-mile road from Phillipsburg to Granite can be rough on a passenger car; take it slow, and don't attempt the drive if the road is wet or muddy. Use caution when exploring the mine area. Only the mine shaft itself is officially fenced off but climbing on any of the structures can be dangerous.
- 📍 Anaconda Smelter Stack State Park - A smokestack so large, the Washington Monument could fit inside! The viewing site for the Anaconda Stack is located at the junction of Park Street (MT Highway 1) and Monroe Street at the eastern edge of Anaconda, adjacent to Goodman Park. Access is limited to the viewing/interpretive area only.
- 📍 Uptown Butte is the historic district, where you'll find the Copper King Mansion and the World Museum of Mining. Either one will eat a couple hours. (Per Brent Swanson)
- 📍 Evel Knievel's Last Jump ... His Grave - Mountain View Cemetery, Harrison Ave, Butte -- Grave site of the daredevil driver. His tombstone, with its cartoon rocket car, was chiseled in 1974 and ready in the event that he perished when jumping the Snake River Canyon in Idaho. Evel lived through his many crazy stunts and finally ended up under his rocket car tombstone in 2007, age 69. Mountain View Cemetery is south of town, on the east side of Harrison Ave. Enter main cemetery gate, turn left at trees, grave is on right among more trees. A very peaceful final resting place. His monument is taller than most of the others, so it's not too difficult to spot. Look for all of the American flags that people leave at the headstone. M-F 8:30 AM to 5 PM.
- 📍 World Museum of Mining - Mining Museum Rd., Butte -- A sprawling museum located on the site of the Orphan Girl Mine. The underground mine tour is a separate admission or can be bought with regular admission in a package deal. Tour times vary so call ahead of time to ask about them.
- 📍 Socialist Hall - 1957 Harrison Ave., Butte -- One of the last socialist halls still standing in the United States, though now housing a pawn shop.
- 📍 Statue of Auditor, the Strip Mine Dog - Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St., Butte -- Auditor was a strange dog. For more than 17 years he lived alone in the barren waste dumps, leach pads, and mine roads surrounding the rim of the huge Berkeley Pit strip mine. The statue will eventually be put on permanent display at the Berkeley Pit Viewing Stand, along with a plaque telling Auditor's story. The dog no doubt would use it as a urinal. I-90/15 exit 126, drive north, then immediately turn right onto George St. The Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce will be on the right. Auditor is displayed indoors, so may not be visible on Sunday.
- 📍 Our Lady of the Rockies - 5970 MT-2, Butte -- High in the Rockies the third largest statue in the U.S. opens her welcoming arms and lights up the night sky. It's only four miles from Butte as the crow flies, but it takes a good two and a half hours to get up and back to see "Our Lady of the Rockies," 8,500 feet above sea level, high on top of the Continental Divide. The spot is east of I-15 as you head north from Butte. You can see the Lady any time from a distance (she's very big) but bring binoculars if you plan to see from the roadside. Plus it's lit up at night, and well worth the wait. Besides the statue itself, the site has a small chapel with an observation deck, and a Women's Memorial wall, where anyone can underwrite a tile dedicated to a woman who made a difference in their lives. From June through October there are scheduled bus tours from town directly up to the site, including the Lady, the Chapel and the Wall of Women monument. To get this close, private vehicles are not permitted. Bus tours up the mountain to the Madonna depart from the office in Butte Plaza shopping center, on the east side of Harrison Ave. just south of I-90/15 exits 127 and 127A. The round trip takes two and a half hours (weather permitting), and to make reservations call 406-782-1221. Check the website for admission fees and other details.
- 📍 Berkeley Pit Viewing Stand - 200 Shields Ave., exit 126 off of I-90, Butte -- Pay two dollars, walk through a tunnel cut through the pit's side, and emerge at the Overlook and

Interpretive Pavilion, with picnic tables, restrooms, and a snack bar. You're kept safely out of the Death Zone and serenaded by honking horns that try to discourage birds from landing on the toxic brew. The water level is rising even though the lake is literally eating its way down through the bedrock, and its deadly contaminants can display a dazzling palette of colors -- red, yellow, neon green -- in the sunlight. New fungal and bacterial species call this deadly lake home. Copper from this former open pit mine helped to electrify America. Now it is filled with more than 40 billion gallons of acidic water, heavy metals, and unique microscopic lifeforms. One of the only places in the world where you can pay to see toxic waste. The sheer scale of the site is something to behold. In aerial photos, it appears simply as a huge black splotch. The pit is one mile long by half a mile wide, and over 1,780 feet deep, 1,000 of which are filled with acidic water with high concentrations of heavy metals and toxic chemicals, including copper, iron, arsenic, cadmium, zinc, and sulfuric acid. The iron-rich water near the surface is reddish, yielding to a vibrant lime-green hue not far below the surface, where copper concentrations are higher. There are signs clearly pointing the way, and ample parking. Viewing stand is open Mon-Sat 8 AM to 8 PM and Sun 9 AM to 6 PM.

- 📍 Pekin Noodle Parlor - 117 South Main Street, Butte -- The oldest continuously operating Chinese restaurant in the United States has been in business since 1911. A narrow flight of stairs leads up to the vintage interiors of the Parlor, whose distinctive orange booths (with matching orange curtains) are individual cubicles offering a truly intimate meal. When the food arrives, it is rolled into the booths in trolleys. Open from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday, and open from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.
- 📍 Pizza Hut - 3040 Busch St., Butte -- only noted as it has a Little Free Library. Franchise restaurants in Butte are relegated to areas away from the main city, mostly south of I-90
- 📍 KBMF-LP - 102.5 -- Something else you might find interesting about Butte:  
<http://www.butteamericaradio.org/home>. (Yes! I have only heard the Saturday afternoon shows but so far very enjoyable. I most recommend the "Americana" music of Boomer Radio, noon to 2:00 PM Mountain time -- Mark)
- 📍 Madison Buffalo Jump State Park - 6990 Buffalo Jump Road, Three Forks -- For thousands of years, Native American hunters drove buffalo straight off this cliff in Montana's Yellowstone Country.
- 📍 Bleu Horses - off US 287, Three Forks -- These giant metal horses graze on a hilltop. Bleu Horses can be seen from a turnaround accessible from the southbound lanes of Highway 287, approximately 4 miles north of Three Forks.

### Butte Eats

- 📍 Annie's Café - 801 E Front St. Open til 2:00 PM
- 📍 Bonanza Freeze - 1040 S Montana St.
- 📍 Hanging Five Restaurant - 2110 Harvard Ave.
- 📍 Matt's Place Drive-In - 2339 Placer St. -- milkshakes made from house-churned ice cream hand-cut fries, and the Nut Burger, a 100 percent lean Montana patty cooked on a cast iron grill and topped with a mixture of mayo, chopped cashews and pecans

- 📍 Oasis Casino & Restaurant - 2320 Amherst Ave.
- 📍 Pork Chop John's -- 8 W Mercury St.
- 📍 **Sparky's Garage Butte** -- 222 E Park St.
- 📍 Taco John - 1960 Harrison Ave.

### Belgrade Eats – near the Bozeman airport and our hotel

- 📍 Bar 3 Bar-B-Q – 100 S. Broadway
- 📍 Bubby's Burger Barn - 403 Jackrabbit Ln
- 📍 MacKenzie River Pizza Co. - 103 Alaska Frontage Rd.
- 📍 Taco Bus "Authentic Mexican Food" - 6202-6220 Jackrabbit Ln
- 📍 **Taco Time** - 100 W Madison Ave.

### Bozeman / Belgrade Area Radio (bold = enjoyed)

1090	<b>KBOZ</b>	Bozeman	oldies
1230	KOBB	Bozeman	Sports ( <i>off?</i> )
1340	KPRK	Livingston	Talk
1450	KMMS	Bozeman	Talk
1480	KYWL	Bozeman	Rock -- CP from 1490
1490	KYWL	Bozeman	Rock
88.1	KOFK	Bozeman	Religious
88.7	K204GR	Livingston	Public Radio = 102.1
89.3	KLBZ	Bozeman	K-Love
89.9	KYPM	Livingston	Public Radio
90.3	KZBN	Bozeman	Religious
90.9	KGCM	Three Forks	Religious
91.5	K218DN	Gallatin Gateway	Religious = KAWZ
91.9	KGLT	Bozeman	College
92.7	KMEA-LP	Bozeman	Religious
93.7	KOBB	Bozeman	???
<b>94.1</b>	<b>KOPR</b>	Butte	Adult Hits
94.7	KMMS	Bozeman	Adult Album Alternative
95.1	K236CY	Bozeman	Talk = 1450
95.5	KMBR	Butte	Classic Rock
95.9	KGVM	Bozeman	Variety
96.7	KISN	Belgrade	Top-40
97.1	K246BA	Bozeman	College = 91.9
97.5	KOZB	Livingston	Classic Rock
98.1	K251CU	Bozeman	Public Radio = 102.1
99.1	KCMM	Belgrade	Christian Contemporary
<b>99.9</b>	<b>KBOZ-FM</b>	Bozeman	<b>oldies = 1090</b>
100.3	K262AZ	Bozeman	Religious = 90.9
100.7	KXLB	Churchill	Country
101.5	K268AS	Bozeman	Religious = KAWZ
<b>102.1</b>	<b>KBMC</b>	Bozeman	Public Radio
103.5	KZMY	Bozeman	Hot AC
104.1	K281CX	Bozeman	Rock = 1490
104.7	KBZM	Big Sky	Classic Rock
105.7	KKQX	Manhattan	Classic Rock
106.3	KJZS-LP	Bozeman	Religious
106.9	KSCY	Four Corners	Country

We woke up early, if not bright, on Monday morning. The Quality Inn also had a real hot breakfast, including waffle makers and three types of sausage (link, patty, and chopped cheddarwurst). We then pointed the rental car south to take on as much of Yellowstone National Park as we could in one day. We were happy to see the park welcome sign along US-191, in a spot where it was easy to pull over for a photo op. The AAA Yellowstone map showed US-191 sneaking into Wyoming for a few miles, but there was not even a Park Service state line sign for either crossing into Wyoming or back into Montana.

At West Yellowstone, we took a 10-mile side trip west on US-20 to get Idaho for Nancy and the kids, and a new county for me. There was a Continental Divide sign posted underneath the Welcome to Idaho sign, but it was 96% obliterated by stickers. No Continental Divide sign on the other side, but thankfully the Welcome to Montana sign was mostly free of stickers or bullet holes. Traffic on eastbound 20 was much heavier, especially as we got into town and closer to the park entrance. We used the McDonald's as a bathroom break but it was also good for iced tea and bypassing a couple blocks of the park entrance traffic jam.

Our main goals for Yellowstone were to see Old Faithful, Mammoth Hot Springs, and yes some bears and bison. Our only bears were spotted from a distance, a big bear and a little bear lounging in the Madison River. In the Fountain Paint Pot area we saw many small geysers and hot springs, and several large bison one of whom seemed to enjoy his proximity to a geyser! The few parking spots were taken, but traffic was slow through here so we still got good views until the geysers took a break. We soon had another bison opportunity when a couple were strolling along on the road blocking northbound traffic and slowing down southbound.

There was a lot more outbound traffic than inbound in the Old Faithful area, a good sign as we had just missed a show at around noon. A sign in the gift shop predicted the next show at 1:08 PM  $\pm$  10 minutes which gave us time to search for a nice patch, any postcards, and a buffalo toy for Nina's dog Duke. Toy Buffaloes were very hard to come by at the park, but there were plenty of bears, moose, and a few wolves.

We were also early enough for a great viewing spot. We had to stand, but it was worth it. We let the exit traffic thin out a bit with a futile search for the ranger station. The Old Faithful Visitor and Education Center should have also had a place to sign up for the Junior Ranger program, but that building was closed. As was the visitor information building at Madison Junction. We continued up to Mammoth Hot Springs at the northern end of the park. There we found a staffed ranger station where we signed up Andrew and received a nice patch, toured a neat little museum about the park and Fort Yellowstone, and got to see rangers trying to shoo away a small herd of elk and a larger herd of stupid tourists who were trying their best to be trampled and gored by male elk during "rutting" season. We found more postcards, and a small late lunch which had to be eaten outside in the off-and-on afternoon drizzle.

There were supposed to be Wyoming and Montana state line signs plus a 45<sup>th</sup> parallel marker along US-89 at the north end of Yellowstone, but if there were we missed them in the drizzle and evening exiting crowds along the more mountainous roads in that stretch. We did get to drive through the Roosevelt Arch as we were leaving Yellowstone. The only standout part of the drive from Gardiner to Belgrade via Livingston and Bozeman was the excellent job being done along many miles on US-89 by a center line painting crew.

Here is the updated places listings I had compiled for the Yellowstone portion of the trip:

Bozeman to Old Faithful via US 191/West Yellowstone = 121 miles, approx. 2 hours 50 minutes

Old Faithful to Bozeman via US 89/Gardiner = 135 miles, approx. 3 hours 15 minutes

From Brent Swanson: "(Yellowstone) will be a big steer to swallow. You could do one of two things, both of which will require an early start. If everybody wants to see Old Faithful, then drive south through the Gallatin Canyon to West Yellowstone--about 90 minutes. From there, enter the park and keep going east through Madison Jct. and on to the Old Faithful complex. Don't stop at the other basins unless you have time on your way back. Parking at Old Faithful is like parking at Disneyland. If Old Faithful isn't on your list, drive east from Bozeman through Paradise Valley and over to Gardiner and the northwest entrance. Take the switchback-y road up to Mammoth and spend some time at the terraced hot springs. Head northward from there to more hot springs. You might have time to make it as far as Norris Geyser Basin (home to Steamboat), but that would be about the limit."

Yellowstone National Park - <https://www.nps.gov/yell/index.htm>  
Visitor center information - <https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/basicinfo.htm>

Entrance Fees - non-commercial vehicle \$35.00; good for entry into Yellowstone National Park for seven days from the date of purchase.

Traffic alerts:

- Grand Loop Rd., from Old Faithful to Old Faithful Ranger Station -- Construction on the bridge entering and exiting the Old Faithful area. Expect up to 15-minute delays (*we lucked out here, with just a couple minutes wait at the "one-way" section inbound*)

- Tower--Roosevelt to Canyon Village - road is closed for a rebuild

- North Entrance -- may be delays during rebuild of North Entrance building and approach roads (*work was mostly done for the season when we passed through*)

Free public Wi-Fi is available at Albright Visitor Center (Mammoth). Cell service is extremely limited, with reception only available in or near major developed areas: Mammoth Hot Springs, Old Faithful, West Thumb and Grant Village, Lake Village and Fishing Bridge, Canyon Village to Tower Junction, and near the West Entrance. In summer, service is often maxed out in these areas.

### **On the way to Yellowstone**

Earthquake Lake - US Route 287, Cameron -- An apocalyptic seismic event in August of 1959 created a deadly chain reaction that ends with a 6-mile long lake developing within weeks. The Visitor Center is 27 miles NW of West Yellowstone, MT on US Route 287

Motel Built Around Fancy Train Car - Holiday Inn, 315 Yellowstone Ave., West Yellowstone, MT -- You can walk through the restored interior of a fancy 1903 train car built for a railroad executive, without having to leave your motel. South side of downtown, on the northwest corner of Yellowstone Ave. and Electric St. The rail car is inside the restaurant attached to the motel.

Grizzly and Wolf Discovery Center - 201 S Canyon St., West Yellowstone -- The residents at this Yellowstone wildlife park will certify your cooler as "bear-proof" where fully grown



carnivores feast on all manner of insulated food containers on behalf of the Forest Service.

## Inside Yellowstone Park

📍 **Grand Prismatic Spring** - US-191, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming -- The largest hot spring in the United States is, as the name suggests, a stunning show of natural color. From Madison Junction head south towards Old Faithful. Or travel north from Old Faithful. Park in the Midway Geyser parking area, and it is a short walk uphill on the boardwalks. Parking is limited, and the boardwalks become crowded if 3 or more tour buses arrive at the same time. There is parking at a picnic area 1/4 mile north

📍 **Old Faithful Geyser** - Continental Divide Trail, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming -- One of nature's most well-scheduled phenomena resides in Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park. The Old Faithful Geyser erupts every 92 minutes (on average) – a timeframe it's so good at keeping, crowds of people gather around the geyser on bleachers and benches to see it at just the right moment, as though it's performing on a stage. (*No bleachers, just a few benches that filled up quickly*)

Geyser time predictions:

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/nature/hydrothermal-features.htm#onthisPage-4> or

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/exploreoldfaithful.htm>

The average interval between eruptions of Old Faithful Geyser changes; as of February 2019, it is 98 minutes ± 10 minutes, with intervals ranging from 79 to 109 minutes. Old Faithful can vary in height from 106 to more than 180 feet (32.3–54.8 m), averaging 130 feet (40 m). Eruptions normally last between 1½ to 5 minutes and expel from 3,700 to 8,400 gallons (14,000–31,800 l) of water. At the vent, water is 203°F (95.6°C).

📍 **Morning Glory Pool** - Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming A beautiful geyser under environmental threat. The delicate blue water is created by thermophilic bacteria, which thrive in the pool's searing heat. For over a century, the Morning Glory Pool—a hotspot in Yellowstone National Park—has suffered from inconsiderate visitors who have thrown coins, bottles, and trash into its waters. The trash has slowly built up and blocked some of the thermal vents and reduced the heat of the pool, allowing other bacteria to begin working their way in at the edges, creating a red and yellow ring around the pure blue center. While this rainbow hue is indeed beautiful, it is a fragile beauty, as the invasive yellow bacteria continues to close in. Occasionally, often following seismic activity, the pool erupts in a geyser. There is hope that these eruptions may clear the pool of trash. Attempts have been made to artificially induce geysers but have been met with mixed results.

📍 **The Wreck of the E.C. Waters** - Stevenson Island, Yellowstone Lake, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming -- No Gordon Lightfoot song, only a barebones monument to greed.

📍 **Lone Star Geyser** - Continental Divide Trail, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming -- A cone geyser that erupts approximately every three hours. Though the height of the eruption is not as tall as the nearby Old Faithful Geyser, it does erupt considerably longer—up to 30 minutes. The eruption can reach heights of 35 to 40 feet (11 to 12 m). The

intensity also fluctuates during the eruption, going up and down, then back up again. The geyser is in a picturesque spot, located in the forest near the Firehole River. The geyser is not as heavily visited as Old Faithful due to the hike and semi remoteness, but the show it makes is worth the effort. The trail is an easy hike, not too strenuous. It is an old service road for most of the 2.4 miles. Near the geyser is a pedestal containing an eruption log book. Check the log to get an idea of when the next eruption could occur. Be sure to update it with your eruption time so the next guests can calculate the next eruption. The trail head is approximately 3 miles south of Old Faithful, heading towards West Thumb/Lake Yellowstone. If the parking lot is full, park at the nearby Kepler Cascades parking lot. The hike is about 4.8 miles (7.7 km) round trip. Pack plenty of water and a snack. Biking is permitted on the trail, but they are not permitted past the barrier near the geyser. Be sure to carry insect spray and bear repellent. Yellowstone now rents bear repellent - check for details at any of the visitor centers.

📍 **Museum of the National Park Ranger** - US Hwy 89, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming -- Everything you ever wanted to know about rangers in the National Park Service is exhibited in a log cabin and a couple of rooms. 9 AM to 5 PM, seasonal. 20 miles south of Mammoth Hot Springs (*alas, was still Temporarily Closed*)

📍 **Mammoth Hot Springs** – US 89 near Mammoth, Wyoming (north end of park)

📍 **45th Parallel in Yellowstone Park** - N. Entrance Rd, Yellowstone, MT -- The sign proclaiming the important mid-point between the Equator and the North Pole was recently shifted north from Wyoming into Montana, when it was discovered that it was in the wrong spot. On US Hwy 89/N. Entrance Rd about 2.5 miles south of Gardiner and less than a mile north of the Wyoming border (*As noted above, we missed this ... either missing, or was oriented only for southbound drivers?*)

## Livingston

📍 **Depot museum** in nearby Livingston has a lot of historic rail exhibits.

📍 **Homemade Kitchen** - 111 S 11th St. Breakfast and lunch to 2:00 PM

📍 **Hungry Mexican** – 206 S 11th St. – 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM

📍 **Los Pinos Mexican** - 102 Rogers Ln. – to 9:00 PM

📍 **Mark's In and Out Drive-In** – 801 W. Park St. -- 50s drive-in burgers

📍 **Rosa's Pizza** - 5237 US-89 – to 11:00 PM

Dinner was to simply be picking up something from the Wendy's next to the hotel, but when we walked over there they were only doing drive-thru. Well, if we needed to drive it would have been silly to just drive next door ... we went to the Taco Time. It took time to read the menu, but I found my old favorite the taco salad was still on it, and I was even happier to hear they still served it with Thousand Island dressing. They had some new dish, basically a taco served in a Doritos bag which reminded me of the "Frito Pie" I had once in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Nancy and I got taco salads and we got the kids the Doritos taco. I was sad to find a side of sour cream instead of 1000 Island, but I did use most of it anyway. We ate at a table in the lobby while filling out and addressing more postcards.

Tuesday was a sleep-in day. I did get up early enough to get hotel breakfast and bring some up for the kids, then when

all else were up we packed our stuff, checked out at 10:30, dropped off the rest of the postcards at the Belgrade post office, then off to the short visit to Bozeman.

The vote was for lunch first, then the Museum of the Rockies. We drove downtown, finding a free 2-hour parking lot a block off the Main Street. Our intended stop was for brunch at the highly-rated Western Café, but we saw several huddled groups waiting outside. Plan B was Tarantino's Pizzeria, in what looks like an old bank building. They had four of their pizzas available by the slice. Nancy and I had their vegetarian, which could also be called Mediterranean as it included feta cheese and kalamata olives. The kiddies went with, what else, pepperoni. We also shared a large garden salad just to get some rare vegetables.

The Museum of the Rockies is on the Montana State University campus. Their primary exhibit is on dinosaurs, with extensive fossil displays. Other exhibits covered the geological history of Montana, the people and animals who lived in the area before the white guys showed up, past and current activity around Yellowstone, and a temporary display of Norse artifacts. They have a planetarium, with a program on constellations in the past and now in the far northern hemisphere. There is also an outdoor Living History Farm, but that was already closed for the season.

We barely had time for a quick, futile look through the Montana State University bookstore, with an equally futile request for an information pamphlet for the local Streamline transit (they had not yet received their annual supply ... "But you can look online" uh, thanks) then it was out of town and on to rental car return.

Here is the updated places, eats, and shopping listings I had compiled for the Bozeman portion of the trip:

## Bozeman To-Dos

- 📍 Streamline Transit – fare-free bus service in the Bozeman area. Some routes operate weekends and late-night. Four trips each weekday to Belgrade, and weekdays mid-October to mid-April to Livingston. <https://streamlinebus.com/>
- 📍 Montana State University, including Museum of the Rockies - 600 W. Kagy Blvd. -- Dinosaurs, regional history, a planetarium, and more.
- 📍 American Computer and Robotics Museum - 2023 Stadium Dr. Suite 1A -- Visitors to the museum are guided through a 20,000-year timeline detailing the origins and history of the information age. From the ancient writing system of the Sumerians to early versions of the calculator and early computers. Near Montana State University and Museum of the Rockies
- 📍 Yard Sculptures of Ted Koterwas - 403 W. Alderson St. -- Ted Koterwas uses his yard as a gallery for the big, goofy sculptures he makes out of junk metal. South of downtown, in a residential neighborhood. In the front and side yards of the house on the northwest corner of W. Alderson St. and S. 4th Ave. Private property; visible from the street.

Little Free Libraries

The Bozeman map shows 11!

<https://littlefreelibrary.org/ourmap/>

## Eats

- 📍 Pharmacy - 83 Rowland Rd
- 📍 Ghost Town Coffee Roasters - 104 Bridger Center Dr. A
- 📍 MacKenzie River Pizza - 232 E. Main St.
- 📍 Montana Monster Munchies - 24875 I-90 Frontage

- 📍 Naked Noodle - 27 S. Willson Ave. -- Pastas topped to order, salads
- 📍 Pickle Barrel - 809 W College St
- 📍 Roost Fried Chicken - 1520 W Main St
- 📍 **Tarantino's Pizzeria** - 321 E. Main St. #1F. Exotic pizzas, by the slice even
- 📍 Western Café - 443 E. Main St. -- Breakfast and lunch diner fare, their signature dish chicken-fried steak.

## Shopping

- \$ Isle of Books, Bozeman's Used Book Emporium - 8492 Huffine Ln.
- \$ Country Bookshelf - 28 W. Main St.
- \$ Vargo's Jazz City & Books - 6 W. Main St. Also sells CDs and vinyl

The Bozeman airport is pretty quiet between flights. The gift shops outnumber open eateries 3-2. One of those shops is associated with Yellowstone National Park. The chow is limited to a bar that also has pizza, and a sit-down restaurant with burgers and sandwiches. The latter, Copper Horse Restaurant and Bistro, was decidedly more family-friendly.

The flight out of Bozeman was less than half-full, though they did not overtly spread people around the plane this time. Thankfully there was less turbulence than when we flew up. This was supposed to be a direct, one-plane flight BZN-LAS-ONT, but as we landed in Las Vegas it was announced we would have to change planes anyway. Us, the crew, and the flight number had to follow us on the long walk from concourse B to concourse C. We at least got to pre-board ahead of the "A" group, though it took extra work as the system already had us as checked in up in Bozeman. The homebound flight was Standing Room Only, with far too many people wearing Las Vegas Raiders shirts and Dodger caps.

**Counties** ... all new for Nancy, Andrew, and Matthew:

Idaho – Fremont [also new for me]  
Montana - Gallatin, Broadwater, Jefferson [brief but for sure], Lewis and Clark [new for me too], Powell, Granite, Missoula, Silver Bow, Park  
Wyoming - Park, Teton [both also new for me]

Dagnabit ... we all missed Madison County, Montana, just a few miles south of I-90 near Three Forks.

The new state and county scoreboard reads thusly:  
Andrew and Matthew – 3 new states for 20; 12 new counties for 211  
Nancy – 3 new states for 32+DC; 12 new counties for at least 260  
Mark – 4 new counties for 2,351 ... 74.8%, 792 to go

## The End Times

9/27/2021

I will have to save the Montana trip pix for next time. Which should be out soon, as I already have letters-of-comment and other writings that were to be in this issue.

Hey, my WFMU show was on September 7<sup>th</sup>, and I am on the regular schedule once a month. Next show is Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM EDT/5:00 PM PDT. Find archived old shows and the schedule for the next round of new shows at <https://www.wfmuplaylists/WG>. Hey hey, also Don-O Fields is back on WFMU, at least part time ... he's on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM EDT/5:00 PM PDT. Slowly recovering from their fire in Bullhead City. = 30 =