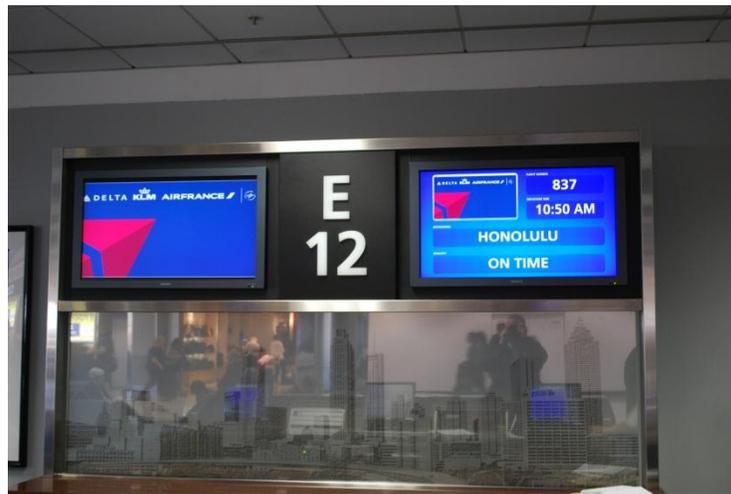


35th Wedding Anniversary Trip to Maui

We began our journey on Saturday, February 9th departing from Memphis International Airport around 6:00 am with a connection through Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. After a 9 hour and 22 minute non-stop flight, we arrive in Honolulu, HI at 4:00 pm. Then, we make the final leg of our trip with a short flight to Maui.



Aloha

When we land in Maui, our names are called to see the gate agent. This gate agent escorts us to the Hawaiian Airlines ticket counter. Hawaiian Airlines had a problem with our tickets and their codeshare program with Delta Air Lines. Mark was on the phone for a couple of hours with various levels of representatives at Delta before the issue is resolved and we are on our way.

We pick up our mode of transportation for the week, a silver, two door, soft top Jeep from National Car Rental. Now, we were ready for an adventurous week on the Island of Maui!

By now, it is dark for the drive from Kahului to Lahaina. We are disappointed we won't be able to enjoy the view but we will have plenty of other opportunities during the week. Once we arrive at the Lahaina Shores Beach Resort and get checked in our room, we witness the most amazing view from our balcony! We are Oceanside with an awesome view of the island of Hawaii off in the distance. We quickly get our luggage in the room and head out to find something for dinner. It is only 9:00 pm, but it's surprising to find the first couple places we visit are now only serving drinks and no food. Our first impression of Lahaina is this place is dead! (But, this was very misleading because the rest of our week, Lahaina was a happening place!) In the hunt for something to eat, we get to enjoy a nice evening walk through Lahaina and find a place named Cooler's Restaurant and Bar to dine on a light meal of salad and seafood.

Sunday, February 10th: We awake to begin our first full day on Maui. We find an interesting place for breakfast named Moose McGillycuddy's. It was a nice walk through town from our hotel. We order the macadamia nut pancakes with coconut syrup. So delicious! It was like having dessert for breakfast!



On our walk back to the hotel, we stop by Lahaina Harley-Davidson to rent a new Harley Electra Glide for the day. After taking care of the paperwork, we put on our rented helmets and head out on this beautiful, black iron horse. This is a very special day of riding for Team Campbell! It was not our beloved Gold Wing, but it was Mark's opportunity to ride a motorcycle in the 50th State. What an accomplishment to have completed a ride in all 50 States! I also need to note that while I haven't ridden in all 50 States, I have been with him as a co-rider for the journey through 45 States... Go Team Campbell!

We enjoyed the ride along the Hana Highway. This coastal highway had absolutely amazing views of the ocean, palm trees, bamboo forests, rocky cliffs and lush green valleys. There were several roadside stands selling tropical fruits, flowers, coconuts, coconut candy, coconut ice cream and banana bread. We decided not to stop and to continue the ride to Hana with the idea of making stops on our trip back to Lahaina. We enjoyed the curves that hugged the coastline with views that would take our breath away. This highway has 56 one-lane bridges with 617 curves and turns. Finally, we arrive in Hana. After accessing the time situation, we realize it took 2 ½ hours to ride about 40 miles. We take the time to dine at the Hana Ranch Restaurant. They served hamburgers made from Hawaiian beef. We dry out from the few short rain showers that we encountered on our ride there before we climb back in the saddle of our iron horse. We stop for a few photo ops on the ride back, but realize time is quickly passing by and we need to keep the stops in a minimum in order to be back by 5:00 o'clock for a Luau.



Our day as Harley posers came to an end as we arrived back in Lahaina. We topped off the tank and returned the once shiny hog to the local Harley-Davidson dealer. Of course, now it is covered in road grime and has a few more miles on the odometer. What an amazing ride!

This evening, we had reservations at the Old Lahaina Luau. We are able to do a quick change of clothes and head out to enjoy the traditional luau & feast. As we arrive, we are greeted with a friendly welcome and given a traditional fresh flower lei. We also enjoyed a Mai Tai. This is now known as Karen's new favorite drink! The Mai Tai is made with light rum, pineapple juice and a float of dark rum. We are seated at a table with three other couples, two are from Wisconsin and the third couple is from Australia.

The whole hog is unearthed before the large crowd of visitors and transported down the sidewalk to the buffet area. We enjoy a meal of traditional Hawaiian cuisine that included: Kalua Pua'a (roasted pork), Pulehu steak, lomi lomi salmon, rice, sweet potatoes, salad, poi and banana bread.



We enjoyed a spectacular Pacific sunset while dining and waiting for the entertainment to begin. The rest of the evening was a musical journey from old Hawaii to the present with hula dancing,

chanting and singing. One of the final songs of the evening was the song “Aloha ‘Oe” written by Queen Liliuokalani. I mention this because the weeks leading up to our trip, I would sing the short phase “Aloha ‘Oe”. It was quite a surprise of both myself and Mark to have the history of the song explained and performed for us.

Chorus:

Aloha ‘oe, aloha ‘oe
E ke onaona noho I ka lipo
One found embrace,
A ho ‘I a ‘e au
Until we meet again

Monday, February 11th: Since the evening temperatures were mild, Mark opened the sliding door to the balcony during the night. We awoken to the sound of the ocean water splashing on the sandy beach and a fresh breeze coming through the screen door.

Today, we scheduled a helicopter ride over the island of Maui. “Blue Hawaiian Helicopter Tours” was a first class operation! First, we watched a safety briefing before boarding the helicopter along with the pilot and four other guests. Our tour was about an hour long. During the ride, we have spectacular views of whales in the ocean, the west Maui Mountains, Haleakala (volcano), waterfalls, the town of Hana, the estate of George Harrison, coastal cliffs and lush green valleys. The helicopter was equipped with 4 cameras with views from inside and outside of the helicopter. At the end of the tour, we were able to purchase a DVD of our helicopter experience. This tour absolutely took our breath away with the true beauty of the island and ocean.



After this amazing aerial tour of the island, we head out to see some sights that we missed on the day before. The afternoon started with lunch at Mamas Fish House. This is actually a converted beach house in a coconut grove on a secluded white sandy beach. The view is absolutely

brehtaking! The meal was superb and our desserts were even more amazing! Karen enjoyed a Crème Brulee while Mark enjoyed the most amazing creation called “The Black Pearl”; it actually looked like it could have been a huge black pearl, but was a delectable creation of chocolate mousse nestled in a clam shaped cookie.



After lunch, we continue a short distance down the highway to an overlook area on Paia Bay where we observed surfers out on the waves. We also noticed several green sea turtles “body surfing”. We drove down to the lower level of the overlook area to the beach to get a closer look. Here, we discover a big sea turtle sunning himself. We are able to get up close and personal to view this astonishing creature. WOW!

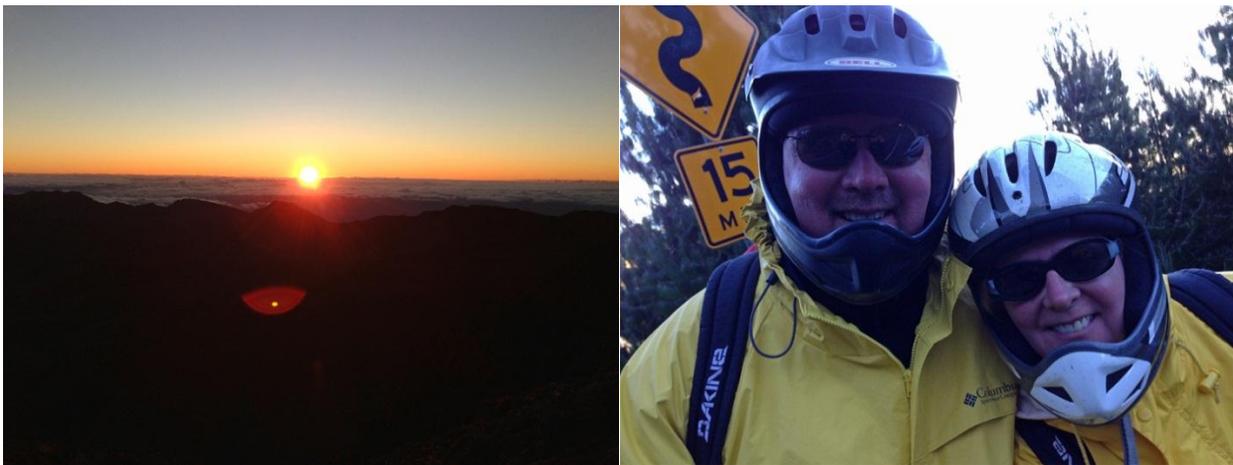
Since we had an early morning wake-up call, we returned to our hotel room for a quick afternoon nap. After getting some rest, we dined at Moose McGillicuddy’s. On the walk back to hotel, we browse through some of the shops and purchase a new charm for my Pandora bracelet. The charm is a sterling silver, sea turtle made locally on the island. This is a perfect addition to my bracelet. Now, if we thought the wake-up call on Monday was early, the 1:30 am wake-up call on Tuesday would come even earlier, so we returned to our hotel to turn in for the night.

Tuesday, February 12th: This morning starts very, very early with a 1:30 am wake-up call! We leave the hotel room shortly after 2:00 am. It was an hour drive to the Haleakala Bike Company in Haiku. Today, we would witness a sunrise at the top of Haleakala and then ride a bike down from a staging location near the top of the volcano. As part of the tour, we were issued a rain jacket, pants, gloves, helmet, backpack and most importantly a Trek mountain bike with heavy-duty, disc brakes.

Our tour guide was very informative with history about the Hawaiian Islands, including food, plants and animals. He also explained the downhill bicycle route in detail as he takes us up to the volcano summit. He also points out where to turn, recognizable landmarks to remember, a couple

places to stop for breakfast, safety tips and guidelines that will be useful for our bicycle ride back down.

We are transported in a van through the Haleakala National Park to a viewing area at the crater summit. We arrive about an hour before sunrise. The temperature was between 38 to 42 degrees. The raingear we were issued and the fleece jackets we brought from home kept us comfortable while waiting for the sun to pop-up over the crater. The beautiful sunrise ends with a traditional Hawaiian song from a native Hawaiian lady. I'm not sure if she was fat but I guess the saying "It ain't over till the fat lady sings" applied since our tour guide said we had until 7:05 am to return to the van (just after the lady finished her song).



Quote from the van driver/tour guide "It's all downhill from here!"

All the bike riders returned to the van on time. We were transported back to the staging area, at 6,500' in elevation, where the self-guided 23-mile downhill bike ride began. We were met at the staging area by a second van that brought all the bicycles up. The bikes are quickly distributed and we were on our way. We have until 4:00 pm to return to the bike shop and complete our ride. We enjoyed the first several hundred yards without many curves. This allowed us to get comfortable with our bicycle before hitting an area that had several switchbacks. At the end of the switchbacks, Mark and I stop at the Kula Lodge for a hot breakfast which included our new favorite breakfast entree of macadamia nut pancakes with coconut syrup.

After enjoying this delicious breakfast, which was about halfway through the downhill ride, we continue on our way. The view was amazing and what an experience it was! We probably pedaled no more than a total of 100 yards during the whole 23-mile ride.

We arrived back at the bike shop about 2 hours after starting this downhill adventure of a lifetime.

Once again, we took a short afternoon nap to recover from the early 1:30 am wake-up call. Then, we take another evening stroll through town for dinner. We ate a delicious prime rib and mashed potato dinner at Kimo's Restaurant with a Mai Tai to top off the evening. Afterward, we enjoyed the nice stroll back to our hotel. On the way back, we browsed through some shops to admire sculptures and paintings created by local artists.

Wednesday, February 13th: Once again, we awake to the sounds of the water crashing onto the sandy shore and decided to enjoy another stroll through town for breakfast at Moose McGillicuddy's. This morning, we order eggs, sausage, home fries and their delicious macadamia nut pancakes with coconut syrup.

After breakfast, we walked through more of the shops and decided to take a seat on the curb across from a celebration to honor the Chinese New Year. A group of local school children were escorted down to the performance by their teacher. Each student was wearing a brown paper bag puppet on their hand. These puppets were made to look like the dancing Chinese lions.

The festivities started with the bang from a string of firecrackers that were hanging from a light pole. Performers dressed in lion costumes danced to Chinese music. Note of caution, when taking a seat along a curb do not set by a fire hydrant. After the performance, Mark reminds me that fire hydrants are a dog's best friend.



For lunch, we walk back to Lahania Coolers restaurant, so Mark can try their delicious scallops. I had them our first evening on Maui and knew Mark would really enjoy them. Our server informs us that scallops are not available for lunch, so we have to make another selection. I try the fish tacos for lunch since I had seen them advertised numerous places around the island.

We take a little break in the afternoon to just relax and chill out. I take this time to do a small load of laundry and start the notes for this trip report. That evening, we enjoyed a nice walk through town to the Maui Theatre for the performance of Ulalena.

Ulalena is spectacular theatrical sensation that outlines the captivating story of Maui's creation, transformation and rebirth from the island's beginnings. This included the time from its first Polynesian explorers to the arrival of Europeans and finally to the present day. We really enjoyed the performance and found it to be similar to a Cirque du Soleil show.

After the performance, we returned to Lahania Coolers for our evening meal. Since we were not able to get scallops earlier in the afternoon, we returned to order them for dinner. They were good but I was a little disappointed that they did not seem to have been prepared the same as my order the first evening here. They were slightly different in the way the chef prepared them.

Thursday, February 14th: Today is Valentine's Day! Today, we scheduled an Ultimate Whale Watch boat ride late in the afternoon. This allowed us the day to explore the island since we did not need to be there until a little before 5:00 pm. So, we took a trip in our rented Jeep. Our destination was to drive around the North West Shore. This was a part of the island that we hadn't visited yet.

As we head out of Lahaina, I asked about stopping for fuel. Mark said "We have a quarter tank of gas that should be plenty. After all, we have been driving for a little while and the gauge hasn't moved". Looking at the map, it seemed to me like the area we were headed to might be somewhat remote with limited options for fuel. We have traveled several thousand miles on a motorcycle and have never ran out of fuel, so I trust Mark and assume today will be no different.

As we enjoyed the beautiful view driving around the coast, I read the information listed in the sidebar of the map out loud. There were descriptions of the different beaches and surfing areas, parks, amounts of annual rainfall etc... All of a sudden I laugh out loud while reading a note listed on the map. It stated: *The road around this north side of Maui is desolate, but very picturesque. It also has a very narrow section of road with a sheer cliff and no guard rail before you reach Kahakuloa. Not for faint-hearted. Drive at your own risk.*

As we drove around a cliff with a beautiful view, the road seemed to narrow. I mention "Is this what they are talking about?" About this time, we noticed a road sign stating "End of State Road". I quickly realized what that note on the map was talking about!

Since completing the ride around the north shore, I recommend the Maui Tourist Dept. revise the note to read something like: *Route not only narrows but changes to ONE lane with a sheer drop off, no guard rails and no place for oncoming vehicles to pass before reaching Kahakuloa. Not for faint-hearted. Drive at your own risk. File your last will and testament as you may die!!!*

After several very uncomfortable miles, I see a sign stating “Start of State Road” and a two-lane road, complete with a center stripe. This was a very welcome sight! I wanted to jump out and kiss the road!



Remember, I stated earlier about the amount of fuel we began our journey with... that quarter tank of fuel. Well, I thought our fuel, or lack thereof, was my big concern for the morning but the road condition quickly changed that concern. Part way through our drive around the North Shore, there was a beep! Since I had one hand gripping the dash and the other hand gripping the door handle, as I was quietly chanted “I’m going to die!” I paid no attention to the beep! I am not sure what I thought it was because in this remote area of the island, I am sure there was no cell phone service. As we get back to civilization, Mark stops and asks a local citizen about a gas station and she proceeds to give him directions. We tried to follow the directions, but did not come across a gas station. We continue down the road. At this time, I am still trying to regain my composure, I am not thinking anything about fuel. As we enter another town, we pull up beside another person walking down the side-walk and again ask for directions to a gas station. She gives us some new directions to another gas station. Once again, we have no luck finding it. Since we are going out of town toward another remote area, Mark stops to turn around. He states “We have to find a gas station! You know the beep you heard awhile back. That was the fuel light!” What??? It seems that we drove down what I now refer to as “THE HIGHWAY OF DEATH” with our fuel light on! I’m just glad that I didn’t ask any questions about the beeping noise or that I couldn’t see the fuel light from my side of the Jeep. As I’m sure it would have only convinced me more that “I was going to die!”

Before I move on with these notes about our trip, I do need to mention the view along the North Shore was absolutely amazing, or at least what I saw of it, when my eyes were opened! I just recommend you have your last will and testament completed before making the journey. ☺

Up until now, we had not eaten breakfast. Not only were there NOT two-lane lanes, guardrails or a center line along the road around the North Shore, but McDonald's hasn't figured out how to build a facility hanging over a steep cliff either!

So, as we arrive safely back in Kahului, our thoughts turn to food. Mark makes the suggestion that we eat at Denny's. I suggested that we stop at the Harley-Davidson dealership and ask some bikers for a good local place to eat. As we all know, bikers know the best places to eat! Mark wanted to see about getting a couple more Harley t-shirts anyway. Once inside, we recognize the guy that rented us a Harley in Lahaina. He was working at their sister location in Kahului. He suggested earlier in the week that we check out Mama's Fish House. We certainly didn't go wrong by taking that suggestion. Now, he recommends we check out a local establishment called "Da Kitchen". Or, I believe he put it something like "Unless you don't want to be adventurous you can eat at Denny's". Now, this made me laugh since I just completed the ride around the North Shore quietly chanting "I'm going to die" and Mark was the one that had suggested earlier that we eat at Denny's. Since I suggested we check at the Harley dealership for a local place serving home-style Hawaiian cuisine, I guess we are all adventurous in our own way.

Well, Da Kitchen turned out to be another winner! I have to mention we dined on an appetizer of Spam and rice, wrapped in seaweed then deep fried. Believe it or not, it was very delicious! And, our meal of Teriyaki chicken & rice was also very good. Since it was Valentine's Day, our server brought us a single long stem red rose, a small red velvet cupcake and a box of Valentine hearts along with our check for the meal. This was unexpected and a really nice surprise!

After we arrive back at our hotel, we take a short nap before going over to start the whale watching tour. Now, this is our last scheduled event for the week and much anticipated since we have been seeing glimpses of whales all week long. We have spotted whales from the helicopter to seeing water spouts from whales as we drove along the coastal highways and even seen signs of them from the balcony of our hotel room. This tour will allow us to get up close and personal. Wow, we were not disappointed with taking the Ultimate Whale Watching tour! It was awesome!

This time of year, the humpback whales make the journey from Alaska to Hawaii. They do not eat while in Hawaii since they focus their energy on giving birth and mating. We saw several babies swimming alongside their mothers and learning to breach. We also saw several water spouts and adult whales flipping their tails out of the water as they start a long dive to deeper waters.

Female whales do not swim alongside other female whales. Together, they might confuse their babies as to which whale is their real mother. When we spotted a few adult whales swimming along together, we were told these were males trying to mate with a female. Even if the females just gave birth, they were physically capable of mating again if they chose to do so. The gestation

period is about 11 to 12 months for humpback whales. The baby will stay with its mother for about year after birth. This allows time for the baby to make the journey back to Alaska with its mother to show them how to feed and make the migration back to Hawaii for the winter. At the end of this one year period, the mother whale boots the baby out on their own. The mother is probably ready to give birth to another baby and start the process all over again.



After the Ultimate Whale Watching tour, we are at the end of our week on Maui. We dine one last time in Lahania at the Mai-Tai Lounge. This place was advertised as serving the best Mai-Tais for the past five years. We both decided to have Lobster & Shrimp Scampi with penne pasta and a basil cream & parmesan cheese sauce for dinner and of course their signature Mai-Tai for dessert. We were not disappointed!

Friday, February 15th: We awake from one last night of sleeping with the sliding door open and listening to the sounds of the water hitting the shore and the palm trees swaying in the breeze. We take one last walk down to Moose McGillycuddy's for a breakfast of eggs, sausage, home fries and their delicious macadamia nut pancakes with coconut syrup.

We stop at the Lahaina Harley-Davidson to purchase a couple more t-shirts, since we couldn't find any we liked at Harley dealer in Kahului. Then, we return to our room to pack our belongings back in our suitcases and check out of the hotel. We have until almost 7:00 pm to enjoy one last day on Maui. We stop at the Maui Ocean Center to enjoy the afternoon at the aquarium and see exhibits of sharks, jellyfish and turtles.

As I look back on the week and if asked what my favorite thing was, I have to say "time". That's right... the time spent with Mark at this gorgeous location!

It was special to join Mark on the motorcycle ride in his quest to ride his 50th State. From the ride on a Harley down the Hana Highway to my first ever helicopter ride, sunrise on a volcano summit,

23-mile bicycle ride downhill, traditional luau and feast, seeing humpback whales up close and personal, and the theatrical performance on the history of Maui. It was all amazing!
I will close this trip report with a quote by an unknown author that I find very fitting to this trip:

“Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take..... but by the moments that take our breath away”

