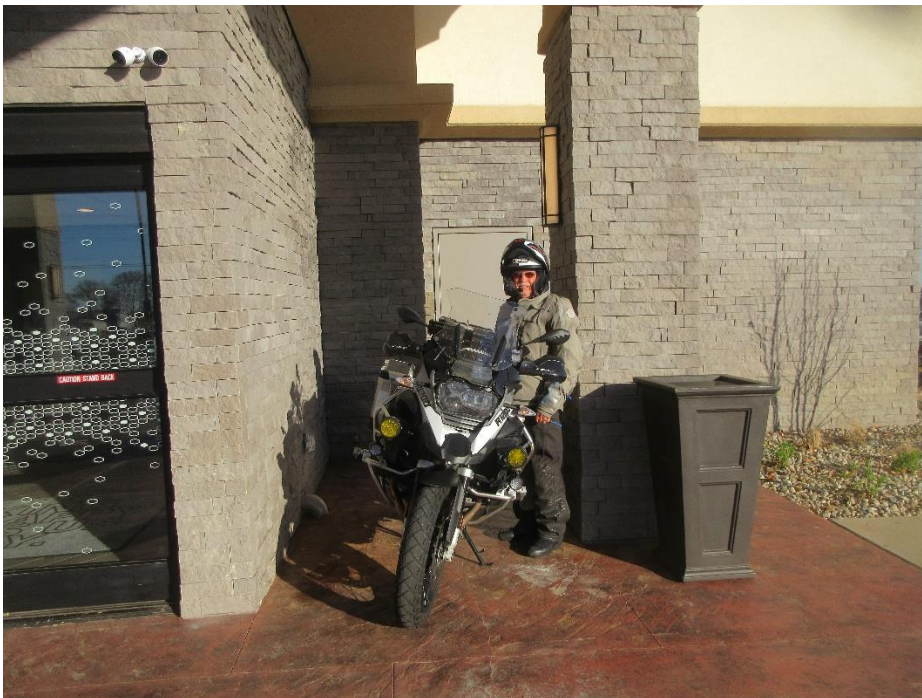


Alan and Laurissa go eagle watching

We belong to a group called The Motorcycle Tourers Forum. This group maintains a web forum where riders from all over invite riders to lunch and just talk about motorcycles and rides. I check it every week for updates and about 2 months ago this RTE and eagle watching boat tour was posted for north west TN. That caught my eye so I opened the post to get more info. This is actually an annual event that is held at Reelfoot Lake in Tiptonville TN. It is a RTE at Boyette's Restaurant and Landing where there was a morning and afternoon 2 hour boat tour of the lake looking for Eagles. The event was on Saturday 4-1-2023 so we rode up on Friday.

The ride up was going to be about 333 miles in 7 hours and we chose to ride the river road all the way up. The weather man said it was going to be windy with possible storms Friday night. We expected to hit rain about ½ way there but somehow at the end of the day we only got about a thimble full on us. We stopped just south of Memphis for fuel and lunch. With a strong wind blowing east we were getting 50 MPG! While fueling up the first of several people walked up to warn us of storms headed our way. It really is nice that people make the effort to give a heads up of possible hazards.

We continued north on 61 and through the heart of Memphis. It was cool to notice the names of the local businesses. "Discount Wigs, Nails and Beauty Shop", "All Be Good Auto Parts" and "Jumping Jimmy's Liquor" come to mind. Went by St Jude's, Beal Street, and after what seemed like forever we made it through. Then a whole bunch of little towns before we made it to our hotel in Union City. We found a nice cubby hole by the front door that I nicknamed the bat cave to park the bike under. I was protected on 3 sides and overhead, prepared for the storm.



Well it was now sprinkling and by the time we got checked in the storm hit. Very good timing. The Storm lasted about 90 minutes and when it stopped we headed out to find someplace to eat. Well the electricity to the hotel went out but the rest of the town was still lit up. However everything but Taco Bell was closed because of the storm. I bet that the Waffle House would have been open as well but I did not waste time looking. As we finished eating the Dorito Tacos a crusty looking old dude walked over and said he once owned a motorcycle. A Harley in fact. Then he said that he sold it to his brother for \$200 bucks. Giving him the benefit of the doubt I said you did not sell it you gave it away. He responded, I needed bail money. Back to the hotel for a little TV and rest.

Day 2 Saturday: No rush, only a 30 minute ride to the landing. The morning temp was at 50 with 30 mph winds gusting to 45. I had picked a great road and while putting my helmet and gloves on a dude walked over for a quick chat. He asked where we were going and what road we were taking. He acted surprised and said but that road is very curvy. I smiled and said "I know". The road was great but the wind was bad. I almost hit a metal garbage can lid that was being blown by the wind and rolling like a car tire across the road in front of us. I had it under control until one of those gust of wind showed up and tried to push me into the lid. Laurissa was unhappy and even without the communication on I could hear her back seat riding instructions. Maybe the guy with the road advice was on to something. The lunch of fried catfish was very good and we visited with the 30 plus people that had made it. We made friends with several of them. After lunch the temp was up to 58 and the wind had died down. The morning tour had been canceled and the park rangers debated canceling the afternoon tour. Instead they changed the route to more protected water and it was smooth sailing. This lake is 15,000 acres with an average depth of 5 feet. The lake was created by many earthquakes in the winter of 1811 – 1812. It was reported that the MS river even flowed backward. They currently have several small earthquakes a month now. Not sure what I was expecting but with 80 nesting pairs I expected to see eagles everywhere. 15,000 acres is a very large area for 160 or so eagles to live so seeing 10 of them with nest was a good number. It was hard to see the nest high up in the trees and away from open water. Two of them had fish in their talons while sitting on limbs. They also had 2 injured eagles and a large owl in a cage for viewing. After a day at the lake we rode back to the hotel in Union city and found even better roads than we had that morning. It was Church time and then supper at a great Italian restaurant. We went back to the hotel for a little TV.

Day 3 started at a chilly 39 degrees but gradually made to 75. Because this is not Arkansas or east TN the roads have few curves but there was lots of great scenery. We headed out on Hwy 45 south through Jackson, TN then Hwy 18 through Holly Springs on into Oxford for lunch at Walk On's. We watched pickle ball on the big screen while eating and then headed on out. Hwy 7 took us to Grenada and it has been a while since we had been on 51 so we took it on home. A very good 3 day spring ride.















