



ROAD TRIP PHOENIX 2019

A travel blog by Steven F. Shundich

DAY 1



Steven Frederick Shundich is at [Narrow Gauge Brewing Company](#).

February 17 · Florissant, MO ·

ROAD TRIP, Day 1 (Chicago to Florissant, MO): What do you get when you add a fab and completely full to the roof 2018 Dodge Caravan rental + a beautiful Simpson-esque Springfield, Illinois, landscape + friend Steve "Ole" Olson (and his baby, [SoccerSTL.net](#)) + Narrow Gauge Craft Brew??? ROAD TRIP! DAY 1! Chicago to Florissant, Missouri.



Narrow Gauge Brewing Company

\$ · Brewery

5.0

1595 N US Highway 67, Florissant, Missouri 63031



Cheryl Smith, Derek White and 9 others

9 Comments



Like



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DAY 2

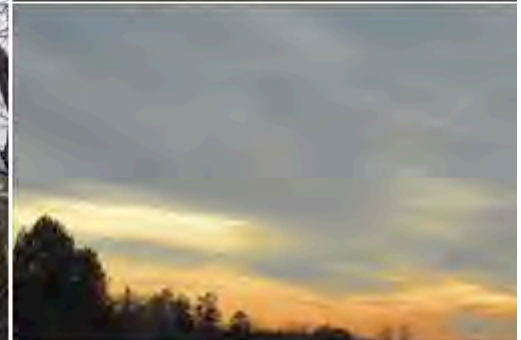
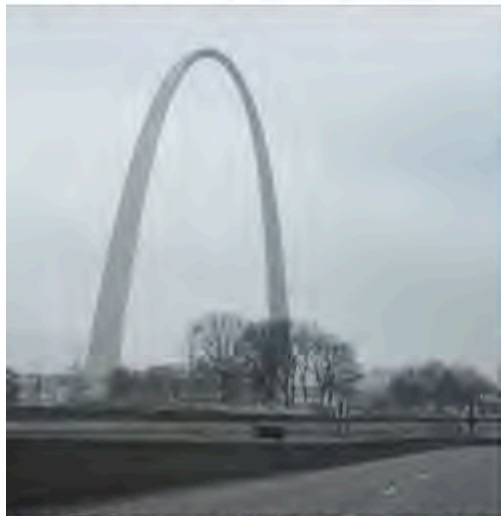


Steven Frederick Shundich is in Hot Springs, Arkansas.



February 18 · 🧑🏻‍🦲

ROAD TRIP, Day 2 (Florissant, MO to Hot Springs, AR): Another day, another 415 miles, mostly along US 67. St. Louis is but a distant memory ... I'm heading to where the air is free — not \$1.00. Did you know Hemingway's second wife, Pauline, was from Piggott, Arkansas? And that's where he wrote part of A Farewell to Arms. Northeast Arkansas has been hit hard with rain, and the Black River is at flood level. For the record, the White River is too. That's the huge Pentecostal church outside of Little Rock, which I could barely see past the Gun Show billboards (FYI, Jacksonville, AR, March 9-10; Searcy, March 16-17; Conway, March 23-234; Little Rock, March 30-31). The sun sets on the freshly paved US 70 to Hot Springs, which readies for the newly approved huge casino complex at Oaklawn race track. Two days to come with fraternity brother Vince Signorelli in the boyhood home of Bill Clinton and the birthplace of baseball's Spring Training.



Derek White, Judith Marquardt and 15 others

9 Comments

DAY 3



Steven Frederick Shundich is at West Mountain Overlook.



February 19 · Hot Springs, AR ·

ROAD TRIP, Day 3 (Hot Springs, AR): An overlook of downtown Hot Springs from the National Park. That's me and Al Capone outside the Ohio Club. No, he did not need a tunnel to get around town, according to the ladies of the historical society here. He and the other criminals walked the streets with impunity. Speaking of ne'er do wells, that's Bubba Clinton's boyhood home. I think the NO TOURS sign is not original to the property. The mural is his fave BBQ joint. And fraternity brother Vince Signorelli stands next to a display of a handful of his company's products at HQ. Tanners is the worlds leading producer of baseball accessories, and they have quite an operation here. They co brand with Rawlings and own Vulcan. If you play Pickleball you may be using (or will be soon) Vince's products!



Keith Colton, Jeff Rizner and 13 others

Like

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DAY 4



Steven Frederick Shundich is in Dallas, Texas.



February 20 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑

ROAD TRIP, Day 4 (Hot Springs, AR to Dallas): Totally unprepared for cold and rainy in Hot Springs, but my final morning was full nonetheless. Breakfast at the Colonial diner followed by a stroll atop the Tufa Terrace Trail and Grand Promenade. That's Bathhouse Row, which dates from the 1830s but due to fire what's left is 1911 to 1939. Spa treatments included sitting on ice blocks and enemas — a Golden Age of Bathing. But the hot springs still flow, and people line up to fill jugs and plastic bottles with the natural water. The Arlington Hotel, built in 1924, was tops back in the day and played host to gangsters as well as baseball stars such as Joe DiMaggio, Lefty Grove and Hank Greenberg. The plate commemorates the longest recorded home run, hit by Babe Ruth in 1918. The ball travelled 573 feet and landed in an alligator farm across the street! It helped convince management to convert Babe from pitcher to outfielder. Made it to Dallas despite torrential rain. Crash pad provided by Jeff and Michelle Weech. On to New Mexico tomorrow. But where?



Derek White, John Wagner and 8 others

4 Comments



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DAY 5

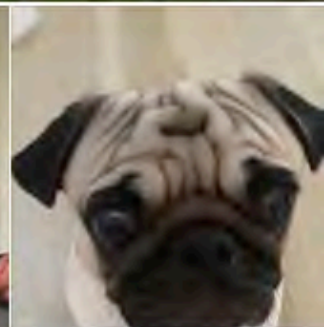
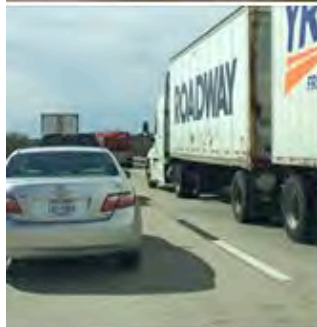


Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to Roscoe, Texas.



February 20 · 🧑🏻‍🦱

ROAD TRIP, Day 5 (Dallas to Roswell, NM): Welcome to West Texas. On my way to Roswell, NM, to see the aliens (so this may be my last post). Thanks to Jeff and Michelle Weech for the overnight hospitality. That's Mojo the companion animal. There are also two egg laying hens (and a pig across the street), which is pretty hilarious for a Valleydale Drive address in Dallas. Only 250 more miles today. Then, with any luck, an abduction.



Piper Sauter, Ann Grob and 22 others

10 Comments

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DAY 5

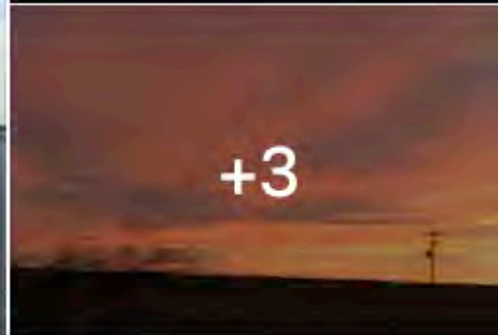
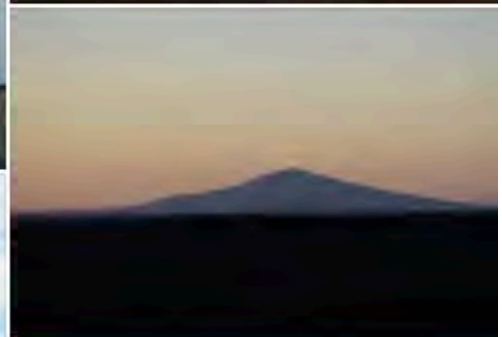
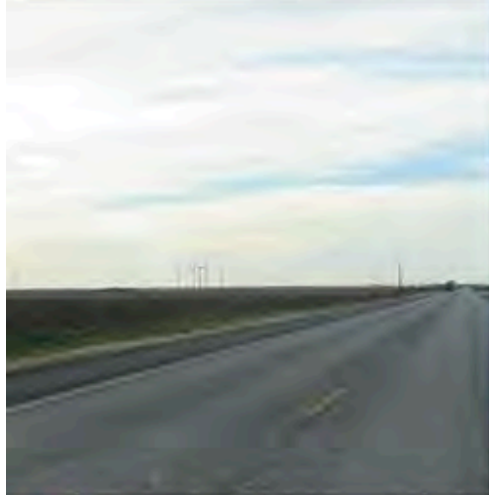
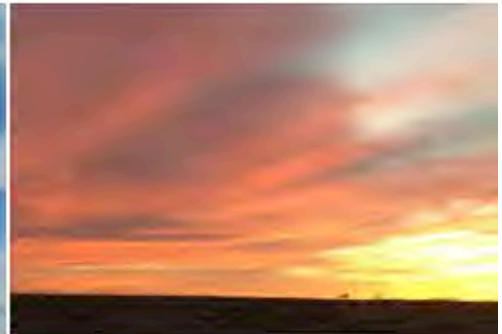
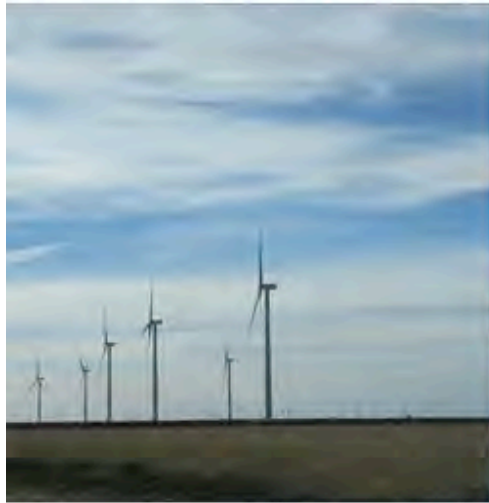


Steven Frederick Shundich is in Roswell, New Mexico.



February 21 · 🧑🏻 📌

ROAD TRIP, Day 5 (cont.) (Dallas to Roswell, NM): The beauty of desolation. Big skies. Crazy colors. Most Roswell hotels completely full due to an influx of railroad construction workers and some event at the military college. My phone died so I had to knock on hotel doors. After seven tries (\$85-\$225) I found one with an open room. I mean, when's the last time anyone has had to go door to door looking for a hotel room? Seen previously advertised on Priceline at \$22 but \$53 plus tax in person. I've wrapped myself completely in cellophane, so don't worry. Watching Denzel in The Equalizer. International UFO Museum in the morning. Already have encountered several female-like aliens masquerading as hotel receptionists. That's how it usually begins. I am ready for them. :)



Keith Colton, Andrea Shundich and 24 others

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DAY 6

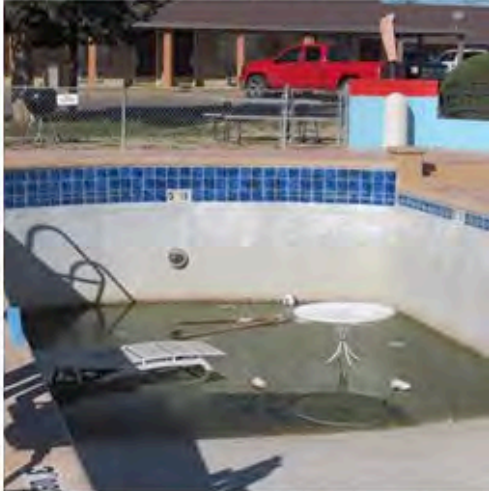
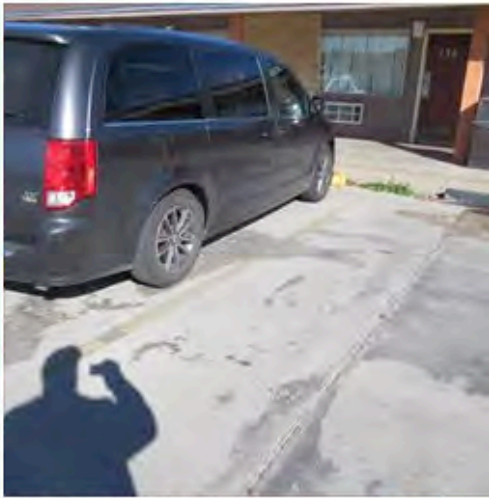


Steven Frederick Shundich

February 24 · 🧑🏻‍🦲



CATCHUP, Day 6 (Roswell): Just a couple of shots of my fabulous accommodations in Roswell. I swam for a bit, but the water was way too cold. Give them credit, though. The \$22 room was clean.



👍🤔 Donn Davis, Derek White and 9 others

5 Comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

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DAY 6



Steven Frederick Shundich

February 24 · 🧑🏻‍🦱



CATCHUP 2, Day 6 (Roswell): A few "normal" shots from downtown Roswell. The UFO Museum. A beautiful statue of cowboy and cattle baron John Chisum, who was involved in the Lincoln County War and knew Billy the Kid and Pat Garrett. He died in surgery at age 60 as doctors tried to remove some growth from his jaw. I don't think this was depicted in the movie starring John Wayne, "Chisum." There are lots of nice murals on city walls and a tribute to veterans in front of the county courthouse. That is the first time I have seen WAR ON TERROR listed alongside WWI, WWII, KOREA, and VIETNAM in a war memorial.



👍 Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 4 others

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

DAY 6



Steven Frederick Shundich

February 24 · 🧑🏻‍🦲



CATCHUP 3, Day 6 (Roswell): For those of you expecting friendly encounters with aliens, think again. Just look at how we have treated them in numerous visits since 1947. We dissect and enslave them. Put them in jars. Put their heads on street lamps. Put their children to work in lowlife cafes. Make them dress in unsophisticated ways, with little or no fashion sense. When will the madness end?!



👍😂🤔 David Bryan Mcavoy, Kathy Collins and 3 others

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

DAY 6



Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to **One Eyed Jack's Sports Lounge**.

February 21 · Show Low, AZ · 🧑🏻‍🦱

ROAD TRIP, Day 6 (Roswell, NM, to Show Low, AZ): I start the day with aliens and end it trapped in a blizzard at 7,000 feet 153 miles short of where I need to be (Phoenix). Both exit roads closed. Praying for the alien abduction to happen now. But will they take the minivan? Sigh.



👍❤️😱 Andrea Shundich, Derek White and 8 others

3 Comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

DAY 8



Steven Frederick Shundich is at Wekopa Resort & Conference Center.

February 24 · Fountain Hills, AZ · 🧑🏻 📍

ROAD TRIP, Day 8 (Fountain Hills, AZ): Although I lost a day in Show Low (24+ inches of snow in one day — Flagstaff got a record 36+!), I made it to my final destination, Phoenix, where I have a booth at The Great Fair in Fountain Hills and the Maricopa Home and Garden Show in State Farm Stadium, Glendale. I was one of the first cars they let through on Route 60, which had been closed due to the weather and a UPS truck which had slid into the guardrails. The 160 mile descent from 8,000+ feet through canyons was still pretty disconcerting in the Dodge Caravan, which doesn't have a low gear. Up and down and switchback after switchback. You could see pavement but sometimes there was only one lane or 1.5 lanes instead of two, with mountains of snow on either side ... so you drive on the wrong side of the road until someone comes along. But I trusted the ADOT guy (who had worked on clearing the road) and got through. And I didn't miss a thing because the first day of the show was pretty much washed out. Snow, rain and temps in the low 30s were the last things I expected in Phoenix, but it will be back into the 70s by Monday. Just in time for trips to Mesa (Cubs), Goodyear (Reds) and Taliesin West (architecture).



DAY 8



Wekopa Resort & Conference Center

\$\$ · Hotel Resort

10438 N Fort McDowell Rd, Fountain Hills, Arizona 85264



David Bryan Mcavoy, Jessica Beauchemin and 11 others

11 Comments

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DAY 9



Steven Frederick Shundich checked in to Fountain Hills, Arizona.



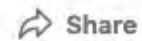
February 26 ·

ROAD TRIP, Day 9 (Fountain Hills): A little about Fountain Hills, which hosts The Great Fair (200,000 attendance over three days) and the Disc Golf Pro Tour Memorial Championship (only in America!). That fountain was the world's tallest according to Guinness from 1971 to the late 1990s. Two pumps shoot the water 330 feet up every hour on the hour (unless the wind speed is more than 10 mph). On special occasions, a third pump kicks in to push the water up to 560 feet! The town has grown to about 30,000 and has been on the "Top 50 Best Places to Raise a Family" list. One of my customers (who has a patent on cat litter) here told me his property tax on a \$1.2 million, 5,000 square foot home is \$5,000 — way less than what I paid for 1,400 square feet in downtown Chicago. Maybe think about that when you vote for Mayor of Chicago today.



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 8 others

2 Comments



DAY 10



Steven Frederick Shundich

February 28 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑



ROAD TRIP, Day 10 (Fountain Hills to Tempe, AZ): The Great Fair was such a success, I made the local paper (below — usually the typo is in the last name, but this time it was my middle initial)! Monday was a mellow recovery day, with an easy Overlook Trail hike and a walk around that massive fountain; a late lunch at Georgie's (he's from Macedonia, with a waitress from Ukraine); and an hours long search for a reasonably priced AirBnB or hotel in Scottsdale. I settled on Tempe. NOTE: Why does AZ make me feel like I am in that episode from Star Trek where the grass is acid and the fruit is poison? The only plant that doesn't want to kill me is the Totem Pole cactus. Steppin' out to Eden, yeah brother.



👍 Derek White, Robin Smith Costanzo and 8 others

2 Comments



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DAY 11

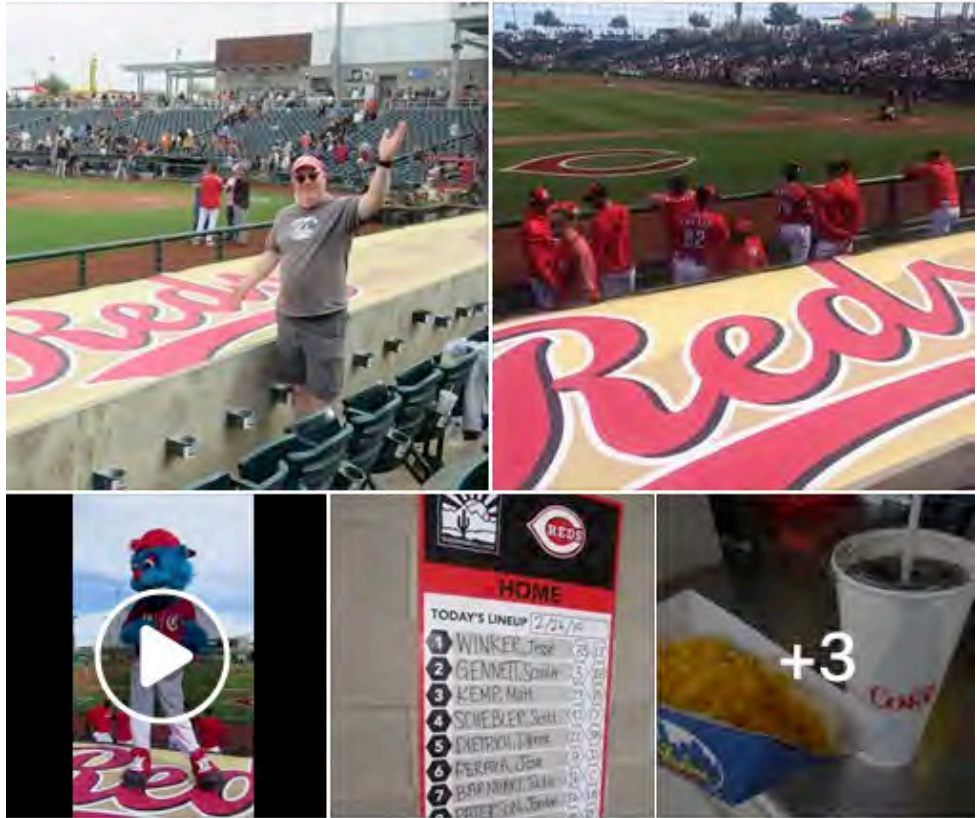


Steven Frederick Shundich is at Cincinnati Reds Spring Training.



February 28 · Goodyear, AZ · 🧑🏻👤

ROAD TRIP, Day 11 (Goodyear, AZ): Enjoyed a thoroughly relaxed afternoon at the ballpark in Goodyear for some Redlegs action. The small crowd included folks from Dayton; Georgetown, KY; Atlanta; Portland, OR; and, San Francisco directly around me. Skyline needs to send a quality control person out here because it took me three bites to hit the tiny hot dog in my Coney and the grated cheese-like substance was utterly flavorless. The highlight after the game was literally running into the Cowboy Jeff Brantley, as he popped out a door with luggage in tow. All I could muster was, "I'm from Terrace Park!" as I shook his hand.



👍 Elizabeth Clarke, Derek White and 14 others

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💬 Comment

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DAY 11

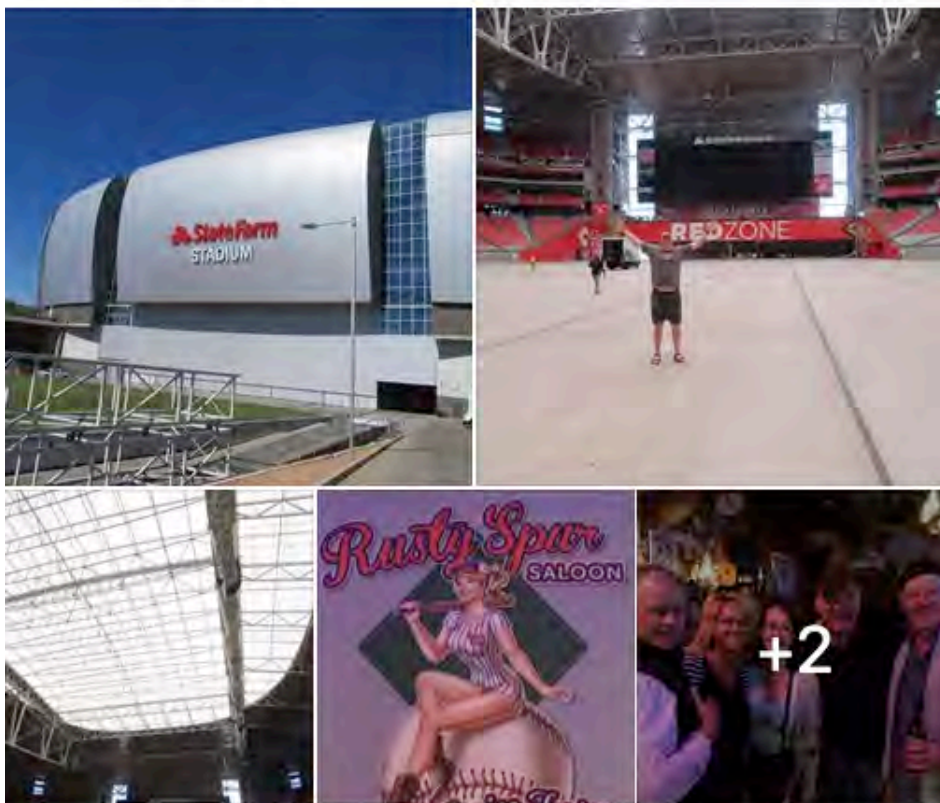


Steven Frederick Shundich is at Rusty Spur Saloon.



February 28 · Scottsdale, AZ · 🧑🏻‍🦱

ROAD TRIP, Day 11 (Glendale in the morning; Scottsdale at night): Before and after the Spring Training game in Goodyear, there was work to be done. I had to set up my booth for the weekend Maricopa County Home and Garden Show inside cavernous State Farm Stadium (home of the Arizona Cardinals). It's not as big as Jerry World in Dallas but is still pretty impressive nonetheless. And it was fun driving the minivan across the field. The evening started with a bite to eat at Bottled Blonde and ended with new friends from Wisconsin (of course) at the Rusty Spur Saloon, a tiny hole in the wall with live country music. The dude on the left was buying all night for anyone and everyone and tipped the bartender \$200. I had one of the best tequila shots ever — and that's saying a lot: Don Julio 1942. Way better than Pepe Lopez.



Rusty Spur Saloon

\$\$ · Pub

4.6

7245 E Main St, Scottsdale, Arizona 85251



Derek White, Carole McGillicuddy and 7 others

7 Comments



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DAY 12

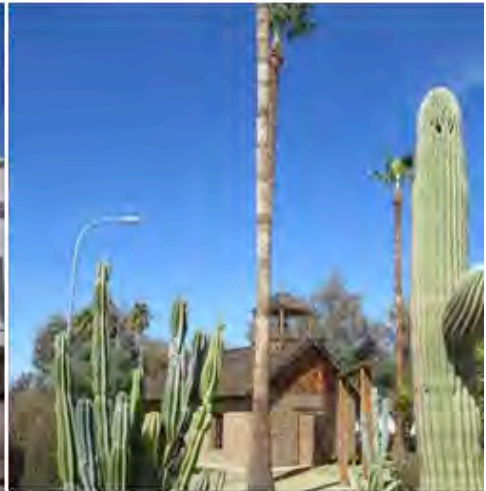


Steven Frederick Shundich is at Mesa Historical Museum.



March 1 · Mesa, AZ ·

ROAD TRIP, Day 12 (Mesa, AZ): Spent a few hours at the Mesa Historical Museum, doing a little more research on the Cactus League. The museum has a small Cubs-related exhibit at Sloan Park, in the area where former stars give (sell) autographs. The museum was preparing for this weekend's Lehi Day's, which celebrate the origins of Mesa. They also have a fun exhibit called Gadgets and Gizmos, which celebrate tools that helped modernize life in Mesa from the late 1800s to mid 1900s. There is info on ancient canal systems used to irrigate the land. My fave was a fascinating story about a woman who devised a clever way to stop the crows from destroying her corn crops. She thread human hair into each planted seed. Crows that then ate the seeds would choke as all their comrades watched in horror. Behavior altered. Problem solved!



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 5 others

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DAY 12



Steven Frederick Shundich is at Wrigley Mansion.

March 1 · Phoenix, AZ · 🧑🏻‍🦱

ROAD TRIP, Day 12 (Scottsdale): Given all the time I've spent researching Chicago baseball, I couldn't pass on the chance to visit the Wrigley Mansion (one of five residences; built from 1929-31) to pick up a few more tidbits. There's a small switchboard room with wallpaper made from chewing gum foil, some beautiful tile work and light fixtures and a (now worth \$12 million) player piano — one of only two ever made. It only plays Rhapsody in Blue now, but what's super cool about that is the recorded track — one of those paper scrolls with punch holes — came directly from the hands of composer George Gershwin, who was William Wrigley's friend. An eccentric Hormel heir purchased the home in 1992, so now there is eclectic art on the walls (e.g. A can of Spam).



Wrigley Mansion
\$\$\$ · Continental Restaurant
4.6 2501 E Telewa Trl, Phoenix, Arizona 85016

👍 Derek White, Bob Bastedo and 12 others

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💬 Comment

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DAY 12

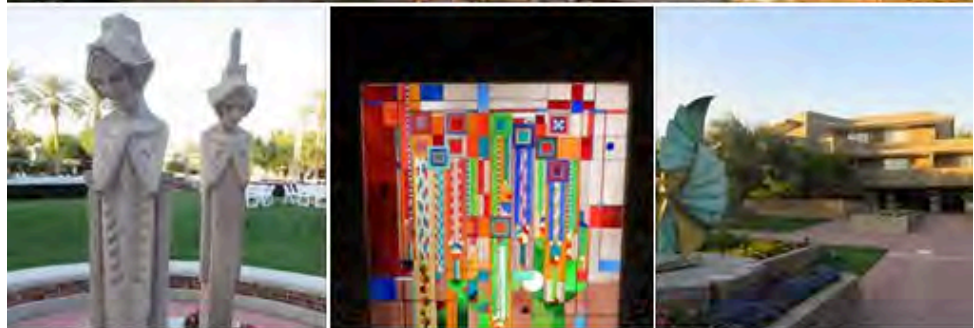


Steven Frederick Shundich is at Arizona Biltmore, A Waldorf Astoria Resort.



March 1 · Phoenix, AZ · 🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻‍🤝‍🧑🏻

ROAD TRIP, Day 12 (Scottsdale): Just beneath the Wrigley Mansion is the Arizona Biltmore, which opened in 1929 and later was also owned by William Wrigley. I thought Frank Lloyd Wright was the architect, but it turns out he was a consultant. The architect was Albert Chase McArthur. What's confusing are all the FLW elements, like the Sprite statues, the famous Saguaro stained glass window and a bar named "Wright's." Wright also wanted square blocks, but McArthur won out with his patterned rectangles. The design is known as a Biltmore Block. The Tequila Sunrise also was first served here — and probably today by the thousands to Zurich employees in town for a massive corporate shindig.



Arizona Biltmore, A Waldorf Astoria Resort

\$\$\$ · Hotel Resort

4.6

2400 E Missouri Ave, Phoenix, Arizona 85016



Derek White, Robin Smith Costanzo and 5 others

DAY 12

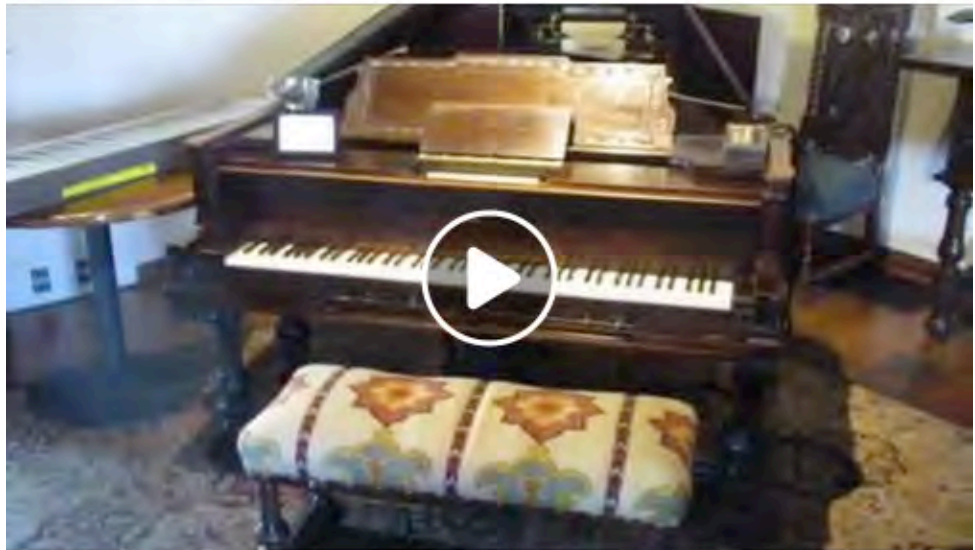


Steven Frederick Shundich

March 1 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 ▼



ROAD TRIP, Day 12 (Bonus): Here's the Rhapsody in Blue clip from the Wrigley Mansion. Just imagine George Gershwin sitting on that bench, pounding away ... playing the United Airlines theme song. 😊



Andrea Shundich, Derek White and 3 others

1 Comment

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DAY 13



Steven Frederick Shundich is in Taliesin West, Arizona.



March 2 ·

ROAD TRIP, Day 13 (Scottsdale in the a.m.): Took the 8:45 am Insights and Desert Walk tour at Taliesin West. Of all the Frank Lloyd Wright structures I've seen, I honestly don't know where I would rank this. The desert makes everything different here. The color. The land. It's a gem, and they are doing great preservation work. The controversial critic Aaron Betsky, who taught at UC and directed the Cincinnati Art Museum from 2006-2014, has been the dean of the architectural school here since 2015.



Katy Michaud, Derek White and 16 others

3 Comments

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DAY 13

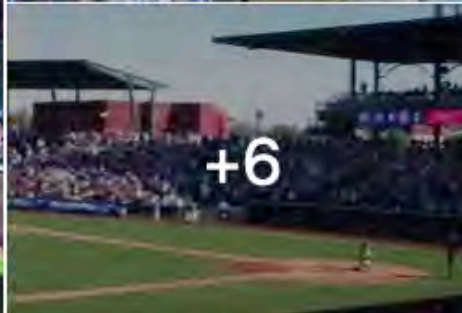
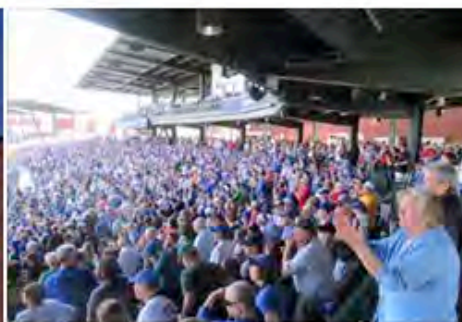


Steven Frederick Shundich is at Sloan Park.



March 2 · Mesa, AZ · 🧑🏻 📍

ROAD TRIP, Day 13 (Mesa in the p.m.): I never went to Spring Training until I worked as a newspaper reporter in Port St. Lucie, Florida (NY Mets), from 1992-94. The best by far was Dodgertown in Vero Beach, where a rope served as the outfield wall and fans could mingle with players as they strolled from the clubhouse to the park, which was part of a golf course. The Cubs complex in Mesa — the largest Spring Training facility here by far — would be fantastic were it not for the fact these are simply practice games with a lot of unknown faces. More than 15,000 regularly attend the games here, and there are lines, ATMs, metal detectors, \$11 beer an retail galore — just like Wrigley Field! This attempt to replicate the major league ballpark experience solely to squeeze a few extra dollars (actually, way more than a few) from your most diehard fans is a mistake, in my opinion. There is nothing quaint about Sloan Park. That said, I still had a nice time, completely different from Goodyear. And I got to tell Blue Moon Odom that the A's made me cry when they stole Game 2 of the 1972 World Series from the Reds — one of the first baseball games I remember attending with my dad.



DAY 14



Steven Frederick Shundich is ¹⁴ attending Giants vs. Reds at Scottsdale Stadium.

March 2 · Scottsdale, AZ ·

ROAD TRIP, Day 14 (Glendale and Scottsdale): After a grueling 12 hour day at the Maricopa Home and Garden Show at State Farm Stadium, I was coerced into attending a third Spring Training game to watch the Reds vs Giants in Scottsdale — with weekenders Todd Tritsch and his son, Tyler, from Terrace Park. It was a treat — I got to shake George Foster's hand AND drink a \$14 Anchor Steam. The Cubs have set the bar; the Giants are not far behind. The challenge for tomorrow? Finding a pub where we can watch some Bearcats basketball and the FC Cincy debut.



David Bryan Mcavoy, Bob Bastedo and 14 others

Like

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DAY 15



Steven Frederick Shundich is at State Farm Stadium.

March 3 · Glendale, AZ ·



ROAD TRIP, Days 15-16 (Glendale): For three days, I lived in the bowels of State Farm Stadium, but at least I got to talk to the pride of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Hannah Sjostrom, American Honey Queen, in the booth next door. That's a gigantic door along the bottom, which opens when they need the grass field (kept outside) for sporting events. That's it in the bottom left part of the photo — they just roll it in. Saturday night after the show, I did squeeze in Cold Beers & Cheeseburgers (a local sports bar chain), where I watched the UC Bearcats in basketball (W) and FC Cincy's debut (L), with Todd Tritsch and his son, Tyler — and dozens of other Cincinnatians in town for Spring Training. The way-less-full minivan departs for Marfa, Texas, tomorrow.



Todd Tritsch, Mike Graham and 4 others

4 Comments



Like



Comment



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DAY 18



Steven Frederick Shundich is 🍽️ eating Mexican food at Leo's Mexican Food Restaurant.

March 4 · El Paso, TX · 🧑🏻‍🦱

ROAD TRIP, Day 18 (Drive from Phoenix to Marfa, TX): Since 1946, Leo's has been setting gringo mouths en fuego. Ay Caramba! That's a cinnamon sopaipilla for dessert.



Leo's Mexican Food Restaurant
\$\$ · Mexican Restaurant
7520 Remcon Cir, El Paso, Texas 79912

👍 Jeff Rizner, Derek White and 13 others

👍 Like

💬 Comment

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DAY 18

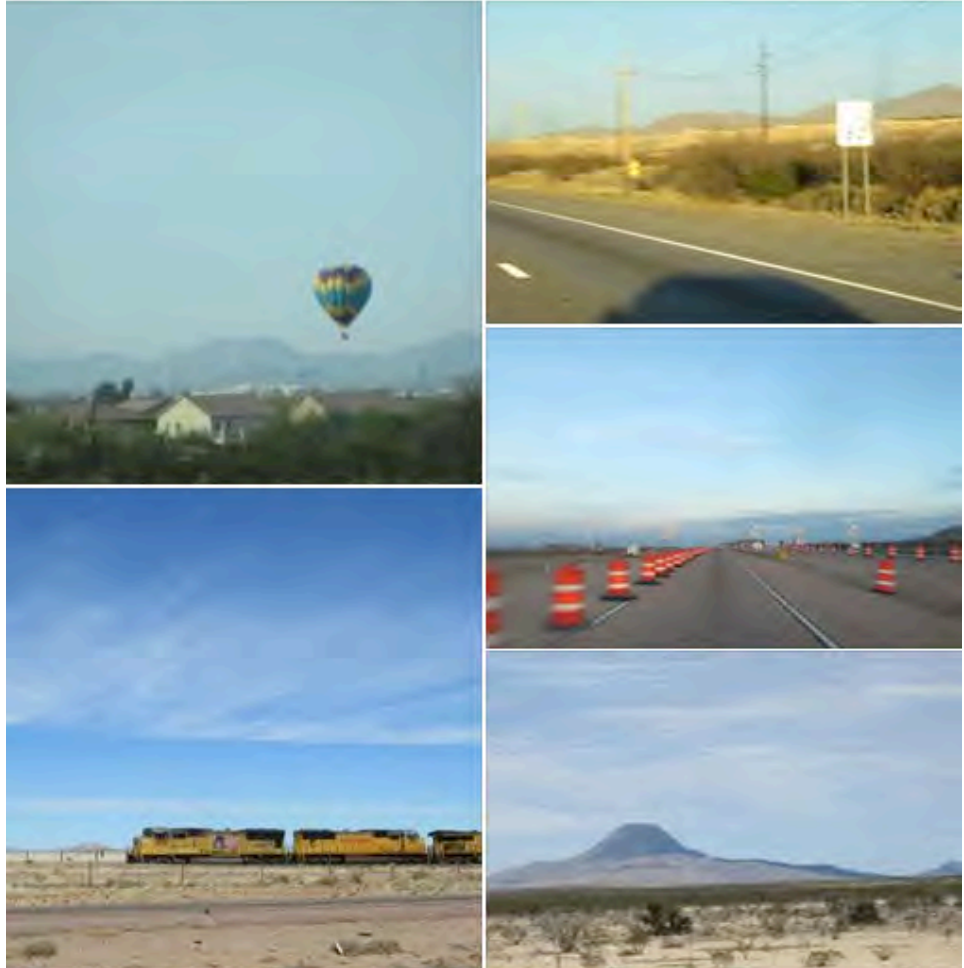


Steven Frederick Shundich



March 5 · 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 ▼

ROAD TRIP, Day 18 (Drive from Phoenix to Marfa, TX): Ways to know you are in West Texas: 1) Speed limit sign reads 80; 2) Gas station sells rattlesnake eggs; 3) "What to do in a dust storm" instructional signs; 4) Various and sundry checkpoints on I-10; 5) Dead armadillos; live jack rabbits. Yours?



Derek White, David Bryan Mcavoy and 5 others

2 Comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

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DAY 18



Steven Frederick Shundich is in Marfa, Texas.

March 6 · 🧑🏻 📍



ROAD TRIP, Day 18 ((Marfa, TX): Note to self — next time I drive to this little hipster town, make sure it's Wednesday thru Sunday when things are open and the water is turned on. All I wanted to see were the Donald Judd concrete blocks. Instead, I got to meet DJ Toad (#1 in Cincinnati, according to DJ Toad), of Bethel, OH, who said he just did an event at Mariemont HS, my alma mater. The world is seriously too small. Really — it is! We met at Jett's, the bar inside Hotel Paraiso. Then went to the Lost Horse Saloon, where I met fabulously gorgeous DJ Julie, who was playing "I am Superman" by The Clique (1969) — who knew REM's version was a cover? That's how cool this town of 2,000 is. Now thankfully I'm talking extensively to Mark from Austin, a rad IT professional who cruises around on a new BMW 1200 motorcycle when he's not tethered to his highly successful second wife, who is a security expert / 50+ yoga champion / former body builder. His first was a graphic designer, his high school sweetheart. And, for no reason, #2 is incredibly jealous of #1. But I digress. The next day I listened as three women at the Judd Center argued whether they should use the word "typological" in a press release (eg the study of architectural types) that targeted "every day people — like construction workers." I also met Javier, who was born and raised in nearby Alpine. He told me a story about getting lost in a canyon where an 80 year old trapper had left the carcass of a mountain lion for him to skin. He also didn't have much good to say about the new Marfa, which has been invaded by AirBnB speculators from Austin to New York. Nice little homes that used to cost \$20-30k are now \$100k. He says taxes are way up, but nobody is filling the potholes or pulling up the weeds. You can't leave your door unlocked anymore. Everyone is a stranger. The tourists are rude. The artists expect everything to be free. They've made Marfa a top destination in Texas, but the majority of locals have not benefited. An interesting cautionary tale about the price of progress. But it's worth the stop on the way to Big Bend.



DAY 18




 Paul Owers, Mike Graham and 4 others

12 Comments

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DAY 19

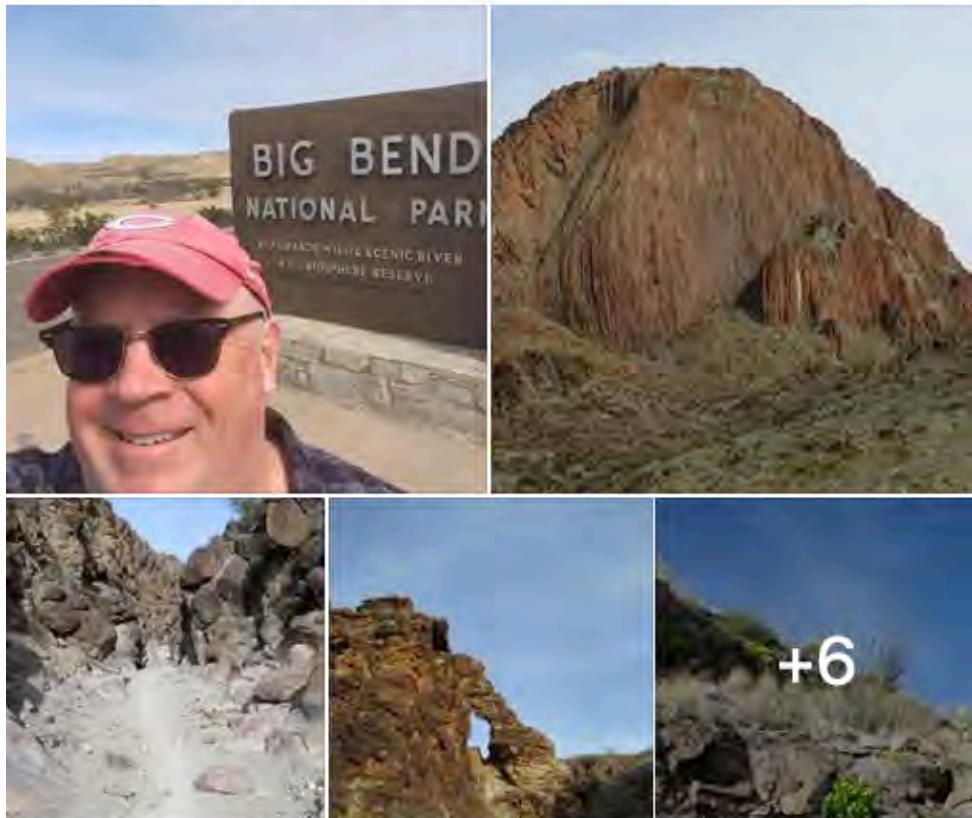


Steven Frederick Shundich is at Big Bend National Park.



March 7 · Panther Junction, TX · 🧑🏻 📍

ROAD TRIP, Day 19 (Big Bend National Park, Texas): It can be a little disconcerting to walk blindly into a desert slot canyon alone, with only two bottles of water, in the late afternoon, as the shadows grow long. And the cairns grow harder to find. And it's been over an hour and you are still heading in, not out. And you have to climb down some narrow passage between rocks about 12 feet down but you're not sure if you can climb back out. And your feet are sliding in the gravel creek bed. And you wonder if you will ever hit the end — in this case a dramatic pouroff. But then you see it. The end. And then you start to wonder if you will ever get out before dark. Without much water now. As the shadows grow. Where is that trail marker? And another 20 feet. Where is that next trail marker? And the next. And then you somehow magically arrive at your car. Upper Burro Mesa Pour Off Trail. Done. It's official. I've arrived.



👍 24

6 Comments

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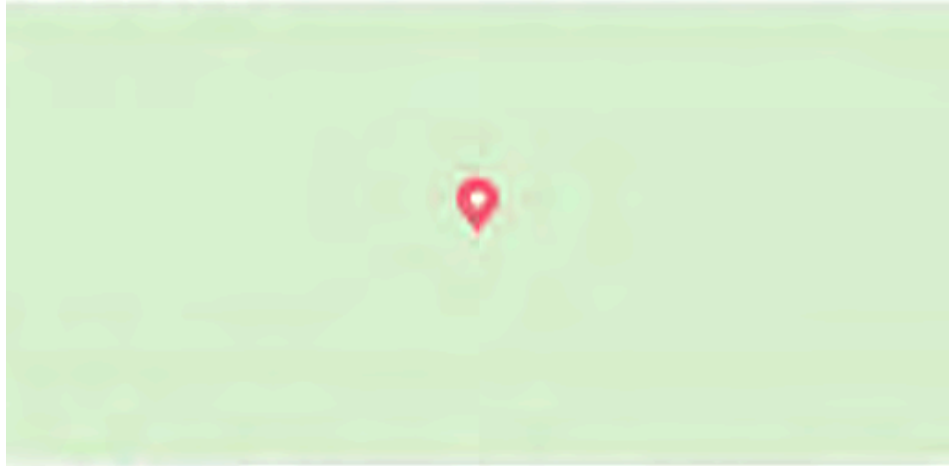
DAY 19



Steven Frederick Shundich was at Chisos Mountains Lodge - Big Bend National Park. ***

March 7 · 🧑🏻 🗓️

OFF TOPIC: On this trip, I've heard bro', dude, man, right on, righteous, far out, brother and rad — mostly in hipster Marfa but also from hippie, crystal-hugging campers on the trails. However, after a thorough investigation, I hereby declare city folk's "absolutely" (pronounced "aaab-so-LOOOT!-lee" as my most overused word for Q1 2019. An official temporary permanent ban is now in place.



Chisos Mountains Lodge - Big Bend National Park ✕

\$\$ · Hotel Resort

1 Basin Rural Station, 79834 Big Bend National Park



Elizabeth Clarke, Andrea Shundich and 6 others

6 Comments



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DAY 19



Steven Frederick Shundich is at Boquillas Canyon.



March 12 · 🧑🏻 · ▼

ROAD TRIP, Day 19 (Boquillas Canyon): When the parking lot at the head of a popular hike (e.g. Lost Mine) is full, one must improvise. So, I spent the day exploring the far eastern reaches of Big Bend, down to Boquillas, Mexico. There is a 1,300 foot high canyon with an easy trail; a pleasant Mexican village (Boquillas), if you remember to bring your passport -- which I did not; and a surly Mexican dude on horseback named Marcelino, selling overpriced trinkets. If you walk a little bit further into the canyon, where the trail starts to cling to the wall, you will find a little memorial glued to a rock. I'm tellin' you, death is everywhere in the desert!



👍 Steve Sauter, Nancy Allinger Comerford and 3 others

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DAY 19



Steven Frederick Shundich is at Boquillas Hot Springs at Big Bend National Park.



March 12 · Boquillas Crossing, TX · 🧑🏻‍🦲 ▼

ROAD TRIP, Day 19 (Big Bend, Hot Springs): It's hard to imagine there was a woman who ran a general store here from 1942-52, but that's just what Maggy Smith did at Hot Springs, near Boquillas. There are ancient petroglyphs and pictographs here. And if you look closely -- you may be lucky enough to spot up to a dozen members of the UM Michigan Backpacking Club. It's actually not that hard, as they are really, really loud and always travel in large herds.



👍 Nancy Allinger Comerford, Brad Quiambao and 2 others

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DAY 20



Steven Frederick Shundich is at Big Bend National Park.



March 12 · Panther Junction, TX · 🧑🏻 📍

ROAD TRIP, OFF TOPIC -- ANIMALS & FLOWERS (Big Bend National Park): OK, that first one actually is an extremely rare sighting of a gigantic Roadrunner (El Roadrunner Gigante) outside El Paso, Texas, just off I-10. Alas, it's an enormous metal statue. But I did see a lot of roadrunners. And several turtles. And some wild pigs. And a strange lizard of some sort -- not your normal little gecko. And some really weird beetles (see photo). And a wasp nest inside a cactus. But I did not see any black bear (there are supposedly around 30 in Big Bend) and no mountain lions (sightings extremely rare). And not one rattlesnake, tarantula or scorpion -- despite signage indicating they were literally everywhere! But it was the plant life that was the most captivating. When I got out of the car to see Tuff Canyon, I was floored by the aroma from the bluebonnets. Like a billion bottles of Channel 5 wafting through the air. Overpowering. I'm sure some day they will make an internet that you can smell, instead of one that just stinks.



Andrea Shundich, Derek White and 9 others

1 Comment



Like



Comment



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DAY 21



Steven Frederick Shundich

March 12 · 👤 ▼



ROAD TRIP, OFF TOPIC -- THE WALL. Well, at Santa Elena Canyon, nature built a barrier that's eight miles long and 1,500 feet high. So that part doesn't need to be included in the 2019 budget. But the string of wire at Boquillas Hot Springs needs to be fortified with at least one more string of wire. And the Rio Grande needs to be more than 1 foot deep. I estimate this will cost taxpayers 157 gazillion dollars (around 57 bitcoin, adjusting for future stagflation). I mean, if Marcelino can ride his horse over to the USA tourist parking lot at Boquillas Canyon whenever he wants to sell trinkets, shouldn't we at least be collecting sales tax?



🤔 Derek White, Marcos Luiz Del Carlo and 10 others

5 Comments

👍 Like

💬 Comment

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DAY 24



Steven Frederick Shundich is in Chicago, Illinois.

March 11 · 🧑🏻 🗓️



ROAD TRIP, Day 24 (Chicago): FIN. But Steve, what happened to Days 20-23? Poor connectivity at Chisos Mountains Lodge -- and no TVs -- which are huge blessings when you are in a spectacular National Park. I am back and in full recovery mode from driving 24 of the last 36 hours. That's 10 from the Rio Grande to Jeff and Michelle Weech's house. Then 14 from Dallas to my door. Thank God for Marty and The Cowboy on Reds Radio WLW 700 for those last 2.5 hours in the wind and rain from Springfield, IL. I will post Top 5 pics from a few hikes in Big Bend, highlights from the drive home and some final thoughts / lessons learned. For example, those are white caps on Lake Eufala, at 159 square miles the second largest lake (reservoir, really) in Oklahoma. The winds along Route 69 were raging the entire trip home, tossing the minivan to and fro. A quick search on "Lake Eufala" today reveals this as the top news: <https://kfor.com/.../sheriff-body-washes-ashore-at-lake-eufa.../>. It wasn't me, I swear. More tomorrow :)

