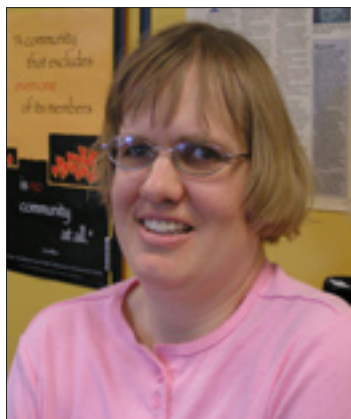


# Eastern Washington by bus; fun enrichment

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At 7:30 in the morning on Tuesday September 23 I left for Eastern Washington on a bus tour with my Mother. We took the Bainbridge ferry to Seattle then went to North Bend Washington on Highway 90 where we ate at a darling café called Tweeds. It had 20 birds all over the place and things for sale.



While waiting for our food to arrive we were looking through these really funny books written by a comedian. They had them for sale at the café. Some people with our tour bought the books.

The food was wonderful. I had a Belgian Waffle with strawberries and a cup of hot chocolate. After breakfast we headed east to Ginkgo/Wampum State Park.

Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park was quite fascinating. The petrified wood has been there for many long years.

According to the Wikipedia website at one time, 15 million years ago this region of central Washington was a lush and wet home to many plant species, which are now extinct.

A number of these trees were buried under volcanic ash, and the organic matter in the tree trunks was gradually replaced by minerals in the groundwater. The resulting petrified wood was protected for millions of years by flows of volcanic rock, basalt.

I felt some of the petrified wood there and it was smooth to the touch, from the basalt and volcanic ash.

I did not get pictures because my camera battery was dead. You will just have to visualize the beautiful wood, hard as a rock.

Next we went on to Soap Lake which is a small two-block town. Nestled beneath the basalt cliffs and rim rock slopes at the southern end of the lower Grand Coulee in Eastern Washington is a tiny inland sea known for its mineral-rich water and cream-black mud.

At the turn of the century, Soap Lake was one of

the most well known mineral spas in the country.

The rich and famous don't flock to Soap Lake. Soap Lake is and always has been a peaceful place to escape away from the crowds, the traffic and the hurry-up. That was a relaxing place to stay.

At the Soap Lake Notaras Lodge, where we stayed, different rooms had themes. Our room was called Memories which I took pictures of. Although I am not sure they turned out.

We ate at Don's restaurant. Our waitress was real nice and had a good sense of humor.

I also took a mineral bath while there. It felt so good and made my skin feel soft. I also liked the jet streams on me. It's called a whirlpool bath.

The next morning we went to breakfast at the Tumbleweed Café. Our waitress was real sweet. She was the only one working at the time. Thankfully though a good friend of hers, who had been a waitress, was there and helped her out.

The food was real good there too. I had an egg omelet and hash browns with toast and hot cocoa.

Then it was on to Dry Falls. Its name means no running water. According to the website gonorthwest.com about Dry Falls, the falls were created following the catastrophic collapse of an enormous ice-dam holding back the waters of Glacier Lake Missoula. Water covering 300 square miles of Northwest Montana, about the volume of Lake Ontario, was locked behind this glacial dam until the rising lake blew out the ice dam. The flood ran wild through the Idaho panhandle, the Spokane River Valley, much of Eastern Washington and into Oregon, flooding the area that is now the city of Portland under 400 feet of water.

Reaching the Dry Falls area, this tremendous force swept away earth and rock from a precipice actually 15 miles south of the falls near Soap lake, causing the falls to retreat to its present position, now known as Dry Falls. The falls is said to be a spectacular example of "headword erosion."

We then went on to our first tour of the Hutterites. They are a simple people who live a simple life off the land. Each person has a job to do. There are a 110 people living in the colony that we went too.

I will be writing about the Hutterites in the next DDDetails. It was a three-hour tour with lunch included.