

# Meeting Minutes

Date: November 28, 2018

By: Jean Davids, Secretary Monticello Camera Club

The meeting began shortly after 7:00 pm and was presided over by president Heather Reinhart. We had 15 members and 1 guest in attendance.

The assignment was Halloween/Night images. Thanks to the two members and one potentially new member who submitted photos. Ann Reinitz submitted photos with the intention of joining at this meeting but then was unable to attend. Everyone thought her Halloween photos were really great and spooky. The other two members submitted some great Night images. Thanks Anthony, who also could not attend, and Sanford.

The topic was Best Vacation photos. An emphasis was made for Alaska photos but other areas were included. It was asked to include tips for taking the trips and photos as well. Three/Four people submitted photos and talked about their trips. Val and Bob Somerville submitted lots of documentation and description of their trip to Alaska. I am including that information at the end of these notes. Cindy Mendel also shared images from her trip to Alaska and spoke briefly about her trip. Jean Davids briefly discussed her trip to Alaska back in the days of using film and taking 18 rolls of photos with most of those at 36 exposures. It was asked how much it might have cost to develop those rolls and most people agreed that they thought it was probably around \$12-\$16 a roll. Much more expensive to take photos in the long run back then given the developing and printing costs overall. She also shared photos and some of her experience on their (Jean & Leo) October 2015 trip to "Canyon Lands". This included the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks as well as Lake Powell and that area. Thanks to everyone for sharing their experiences and photos.

Discussion was held regarding how to deal with equipment needs for the December meeting since Jean Davids won't be able to attend. Kevin Juliot volunteered to help out. He works in the AV business so he is quite familiar with projectors and all that so he will be a great help with this and, in fact, took the equipment home with him since Jean doesn't need it before that meeting happens anyway. She will make sure everyone's photos go to Kevin for the meeting. Thank you so much Kevin for volunteering to help out.

Jean Davids presented agenda ideas for 2019 and opened it up for discussion. It was agreed that the January meeting would have an assignment of presenting your ONE favorite photo for 2018 and what makes it your favorite. The topic will be Cold Weather Photography. Sanford Smith agreed to share information he has learned through years of winter photography and from his recent attendance of the Midwest Mountaineering seminars. Jean Davids also has a video that she said she could present as well. In February or March, Chris Lommel will do a photo critique for us. We will be asked to submit photos in advance for him to review and then give critiques for us. Start thinking of photos you would like to have critiqued. Based on his response to which month works best for his schedule, we can then determine our February/March meeting assignments/topics. The following list of items was presented.

- B&W photography
- *Chris Lommel will be doing photo critique for us in February or March*
- Motion (cars, people/sports, rivers)
- Shooting in the cold - assignment could be winter or "cold" photos
- Boiling water tossed in cold
- Snowflake Photography
- Lensball Photography

- Winter sports, activities
- Holiday lights
- Clouds
- Waterfalls
- Macro/close-up Photography
- Still life photography
- Shots by window light

The meeting ended around 8:30. Thanks again to everyone for help in tearing down equipment.

December 19 (**Note: Jean Davids cannot attend this meeting due to a conflict**)

- Holiday meeting - informal & eat
- Assignment: Holiday images / Family Traditions (try out your Norman Rockwell photo skills)
- Topic: Taking photos of Holiday Lights
- Spouses/significant others are encouraged to attend. Plan on eating at the meeting. It's our way of saying Thank You to River City Extreme for allowing us meeting space.

January 16, 2019

- Assignment: Your ONE favorite photo of 2018 – doesn't have to be best but favorite and tell why
- Topic: Cold Weather Photography – video shared by Jean Davids and info shared by Sanford Smith

## **7- night Alaska Cruise- (June 10-17, 2018) Princess Emerald - Bob & Val Somerville**

RT from Seattle. (Ketchikan-Juneau- Skagway- Victoria BC) mid-June it was low 50s for temps.

If RT from Vancouver BC option- then no stop in Victoria. Ships traveling in international waters must make one other country port stop for duty free status etc.

Princess Emerald- (we were level 14 mid-ship balcony). We wanted fresh air and ability to set up tripod for whale, sunrise-set photos or scenery. It was also nice to have gate between friends next to us open to go back and forth easily. Over 3000 passengers, but never felt like it.

TV- ship channels, not regular tv channels. You are given announcements, some prior presentations from theater, daily ship options, one channel of view from Bridge above etc.

Internet-very expensive on cruise. Ports can also be tough to pick up signals. In Skagway our bus driver said people drive up to the library to get signals. We were on international \$5 / day charge if used in Canada. Picked up signal momentarily by there once so got update and \$5 billing from Verizon.

What to see- Sign up for your ship excursions before cruise. Some sell out. There are usually several options at each port. I checked to see which were handicap accessible (walker) and what level of walking was required. Bob & I did different excursions a couple of times. Excursions were booked mostly online although when I had questions and called, Princess was wonderful to work with. If you book through other vendors, they do not guarantee you will be back to your ship in time to board!

I also notified ahead of cruise that I would need wheelchair boarding and leaving ship due to the inclines and length of ramps - depending on tide levels- That was wonderful and efficient! Passengers have option of dropping off luggage before boarding time. It was then in room when we arrived later to board. The night before you leave you are assigned color coded tags with ID and disembark time and locations. Luggage is collected outside of door that evening and picked up below before exit. Efficient. Have carryon for overnight misc.

I also filled out allergy form. Head waiter took order for next day and made sure allergy free. Added a few bonus items in that week too. We signed up for early dining (5:30). Free for evening entertainment that way. Also gave us same table and waiter each night. Otherwise, you may have a wait. You do not have to be there each night. Can choose other options which are also free unless you do fine dining upgrade. I usually selected a glass of one of the night's recommended wines each night. About \$7. Your ID card is used to charge EVERYTHING on board, shops etc. credit card on file- get invoice last morning.

We also purchased case of 18 water bottles ahead of cruise. Was in room. Cheaper that way for use on excursions, between meals, etc. Beer was 5 for about \$25. Very limited options. Could be delivered any day as long as it was ordered ahead of cruise.

We booked through Costco- got many perks- bonus cruise credit for excursions or spending. Also \$30 per person upgrade dining for one night. We were assigned to the crab shack- King Crab & lots of shrimp. I could not eat it all there was so much! Wonderful meal. Then annual rewards check was nice by using Costco also.

The 2 days at sea were both dress up formal dining nights. Bob wore suit! First night was also free champagne with champagne fountain photo op. they take lots of photos and hope you buy ... \$25-30 each. On the 2nd formal night we also had arranged to have our vows renewed that afternoon

before dining. \$225.99 included Captain 10 min. vows ceremony, copy of vows, signed certificate, our flowers (white rose bouquet & Bob's rose), Champagne with 2 souvenir glasses in room later with 4 big strawberries, dipped in chocolate, box of Godiva chocolates. The next day we were able to pick out one photo to be put in free silver frame also. Great deal and lots of fun. Was in ship chapel.

We were lucky to also get invited to tour the BRIDGE- control center (you stick not wheel) after Bob talked to the captain then. We had to not tell other guests as select few given this privilege! As it was our first cruise and for special occasion I stated anniversary #48, we also got free gift cards that week (\$25 shops, \$50 spa) so that was lovely! If you have an occasion it is also noted on that date on your door.

### **Port recommendations or highlights:**

Seattle- space needle, Chihuly glass and garden tour (our friends did), fish market etc.

Ketchikan- totems tours will include seeing how they are hand carved. Mine also had native dancing and info program. Bob did rainforest one also

\*\*\* take the Tracy Arm to Juneau excursion through inner passage by glaciers. It was the best! Boat ramp was connected to our ship to load each group. We had A+ tour, as saw every option possible: We saw eagles, harbor seals, sea lions, bear, mountain goats, orca whales, humpback whales and had perfect weather. Also had small calving of glacier happen on both sides about 15 min. apart. Bought reindeer sausage for lunch. 5 hrs. Met up with ship in Juneau.

Juneau also had other whale watching etc. options. No one saw whales totally come out of water. Just spouts and tails.

Skagway- we did the 6 hr. RR to Yukon trip. Bus brought us to RR station. Loaded up. Our friends were invited to come with us to a special car that had a lift ramp for my walker. Easier than steps! We were on the car with captain and 2 staff. Bathroom to selves etc. nice. Easier to move around for photos. Train part was 1.5 hours then back to bus that met us up there. On to Suspension Bridge and Jewel glass & gardens tour and lunch. (salmon quiche, garden salad, tomato basil soup, rhubarb crunch dessert) yum. Fresh local ingredients. It happened to be our only rainy cool day, but still enjoyable.

Victoria BC- only in port 7-11pm. Took bus tour. Was long walk to bus after customs. No shuttle there. Bob went ahead and had bus wait for me! Our friends took castle tour they enjoyed. Bouchard Gardens was other option. I was there over 20 years ago, and the Saturday night light show was also wonderful.

If you leave from Vancouver, you will not have the Victoria stop. Vancouver has a park with totems that is lovely also.

There are also many one way or one way with land excursions etc. for options. We did land before and did not want to hassle with flying limitations on luggage etc. or take longer, since we drove out there.

We also reserved secure parking and shuttle in a nearby lot ahead of time. Worked great!

## Alaska by small RV Aug. 15- Sept 11, 2016

photos by Bob & Val Somerville

First, if driving, buy the Alaska Highway book(Milepost)! It has all the roads in it and points out points of interest, including likely wildlife by mile markers. Have a good map- not just GPS. Also, be prepared to have no cell phone coverage in many areas. We found that often cafes and motels that advertised they had it, it was down or not working, or staff had no idea of passwords.

We went up at ND to Saskatoon, Alberta, BC, Yukon Territory then Alaska. Coming home we dropped down and came back through Washington State.



8-18 Dawson Creek BC Alaska Hwy.

8-19 Sign Post Forest, Watson Lake, Yukon (1942)



By now

we have seen deer, bear, coyote, wolves, rock sheep, buffalo.

8-20 Dawson City, Yukon. Tourist town. Free ferry across Yukon River. Top of the World Highway to customs at Poker Creek Alaska.



Terrible roads into Chicken, Alaska. 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest town. 1586. Gold mining. Summer population is 23- winter is 7. Mail comes 2x a week. 2 cafes. Food local and wonderful. Has bar and general store in town also. Off the grid- no city water, sewer or electricity. Everyone has generators. Worth going to! We saw fireweed in bloom that time of year.

8-21 Next was Tok. Construction camp in 1942. Now trade and service center. Big gift shops. Sled dog capital.

Delta Junction- many wild game farms- stop at Delta meat and sausage!

North Pole, Alaska- huge gift shop. We picked up fleece jackets and souvenirs.

8-22 worked on RV... Fairbanks area. Large animal farm there. EAT at the Cookie Jar!

8-23 About an hour north is Chena Hot Springs resort and campground. We parked right in open near resort rather than in woods. Hot springs was Wonderful and reasonable. I soaked for an hour and my skin was so healthy and soft for over a month afterward. Felt great! Northern Lights that night! 1:30-3 am. Swirling all overhead also. People were screaming in the campground in various languages they were so excited! There were places before we got there we might have been able to park by a lake etc. also wildlife and old equipment and floral décor there at resort.





Chena Hot Springs



Fairbanks musk ox

Denali

Then campground close to

8-25 rain, cloudy Denali. Cars may drive 15 miles up. Only shuttles go further. They do not stop long for wildlife. window shots only.

Talkeetna- tourist town. Aurora



8-26 Did Wassila to Palmer near Anchorage then saw Beluga whales soon after. Stopped at Alaska Wildlife Conservation center at Portage. Worth seeing animals there. Earthquake there years ago caused land to drop 10 feet. Salt water killed trees then. Ate wonderful seafood platter at Captain Patties in Homer. Stayed in RV park on the spit ( water both sides) but camping was \$75 and they

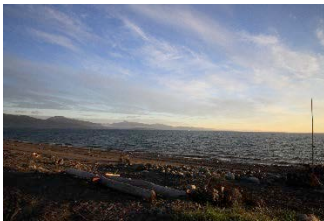
locked restrooms at night! Sign on way to Homer 235 moose killed on Kenai roads since July 1. (almost 2 months). No wonder we only saw one at Denali and none since. Homer- Halibut capital. Good but pricey.

Lots of shops and places to eat.

Homer , mountains along the way...



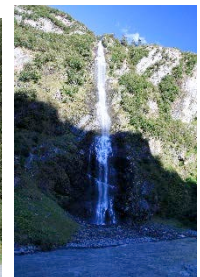
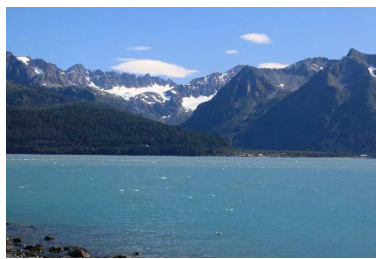
views from RV park :



8-27 Fred Meyer stores (Soldotna) have everything you need... long story....RV sewer problems again.

8-28 to Seward (14 once pieces of halibut - \$30 appetizer) cruise ship stop. busy tourist town. Glaciers went back to Anchorage- Palmer. Stayed with cousin.

8-29 horsetail falls-keystone canyon ..then bridalveil falls & Narrow Falls got out of order in transfer...



8 -30 Valdez & old Valdez , Wrangell- St Elias NP ...did Copper River mining area. Rough slow roads...

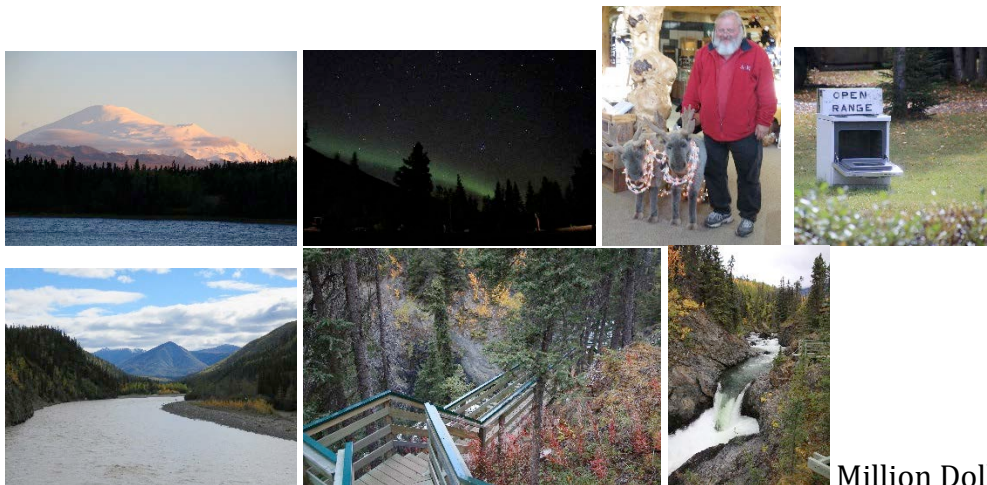


Little native gift shop off the road at Kenny Lake worth the stop. Local handicrafts. Many wildlife pelts etc. reasonable. Copper Center – old town we checked out had the best reuben ever! Food

great!



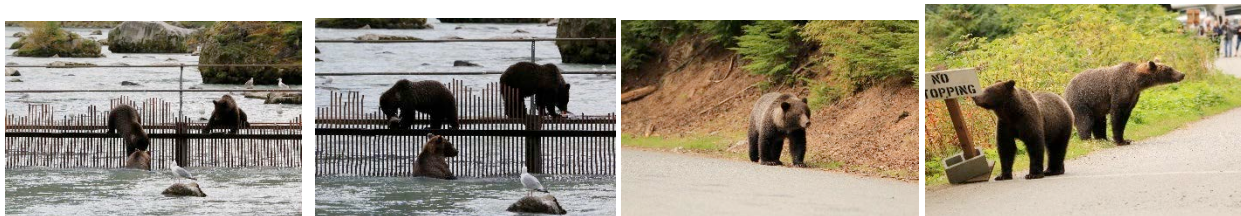
Our view at Grizzly Lake Campground that night. Plus some northern lights, loon, ducks, muskrat... Then to Tok again on 8-31 stayed at Haines junction motel in Yukon . fun place to eat out.



Million Dollar Falls

9-1 Then Yukon to BC to Haines, Alaska ( yes we were in and out of Canada many times!)

Loved Haines. Many bear at river feeding on salmon 4x a day. Got very close!



before

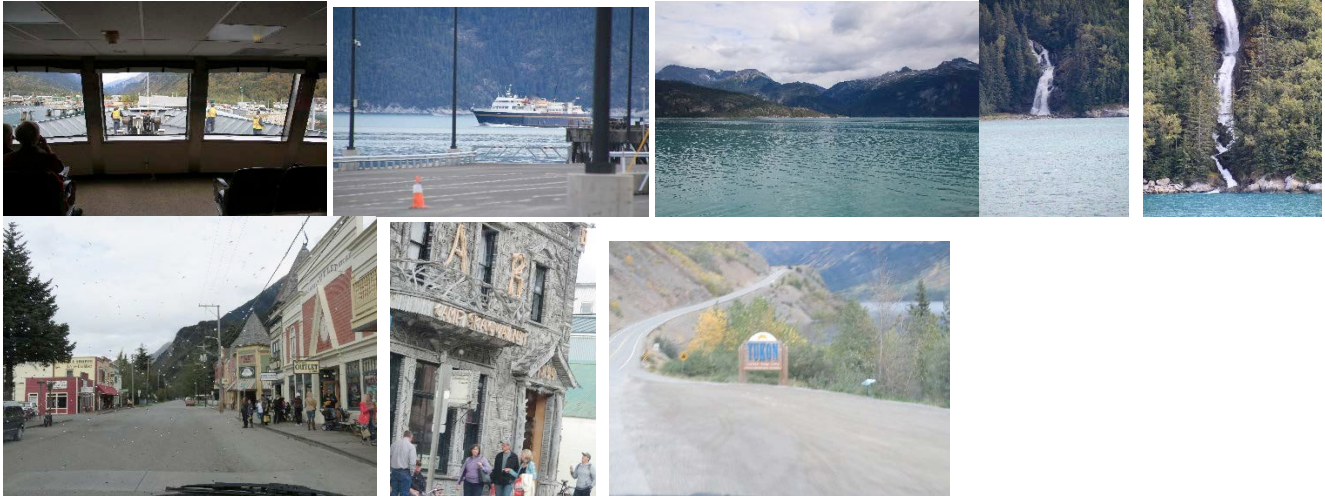
Haines for scenery at end by Val... Then Grizzlies someone spray painted green we also saw.

View from campground. Reserved ferry ( must!) for next day to Skagway





Ferry from Haines to Skagway. RV was measured and charged.



9-3 drove lots ..cut out of stopped for Jade

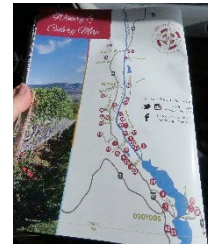
patrol car – self police area...(plywood car)



9-4



9-5 Labor Day. Lots of rural driving again in mts. To start day then. Center of BC= Vanderhoof to clinton. Lumber 9-6 Many ranches and cows. Wineries Trail (oliver BC- 46 wineries. And many produce stands)



Dropped down to Washington and headed towards home. Bob stopped for Kootenai Falls & Crystal Falls & took pic of old cars near there in Montana. If in Montana, do try huckleberry food or beverages! Sapphires are mined in Montana also.

We stopped at a whiskey distillery on the west side of Glacier before going there. Explored, camped cheap, then on to Theodore Roosevelt national park before home 9-11-16.

