

The Running Board Adventure

by Tom Endy

Lynn and I had an interesting experience on the way south returning from the Yellowstone summer tour. We had left Missoula, MT early that morning and had just crossed into Idaho. We were running low on gas about 70 miles north of Idaho Falls. We stopped at a place called Spencer, ID. It consisted of one store and one gas pump. The people who own the store live in San Clemente, CA and stay in Spencer six months of the year. They own an opal mine there. The store is half jewelry store and half traveler's provisions store. They boast that they are the only jewelry store in the country that has a gas pump.

While there, I asked if there were hotel accommodations north of Idaho Falls. The lady told me Idaho Falls was it; there was nothing but more Idaho until we got to Idaho Falls. She offered to look up the phone number of the Comfort Inn there. She wrote the number on the back of their business card. I called the hotel on my cell and made a reservation. I jotted the confirmation number down on the business card and stuck it in my shirt pocket. Just before we left, we bought a bag of ice and put it in the ice chest. While doing this, Lynn put her purse on the right running board of the Vic. When we pulled out she forgot about the purse and left it on the running board. It apparently fell off as we were on the on-ramp to the I-15. The purse contained a lot of cash, credit cards, driver's license, and everything else a woman does not want to lose.

About 50 miles down the road Lynn discovered the purse missing and remembered where she had left it. Since I had the store in Spencer's phone number on the business card in my shirt pocket, we called them and asked if they would look for the purse. The lady said she would and would call us back. We sat along side the road about 20 miles north of Idaho Falls and waited for about 20 minutes with little hope of ever seeing the purse again. The lady called back and said that the local sheriff had come along shortly behind us and had found the purse on the I-15 on ramp and it was at the sheriff's station.

This meant we would have to drive 50 miles back to get it. The lady at the store said she was driving down to Idaho Falls in the morning and would be glad to bring it to the hotel for us. Lynn called the sheriff and spoke to the dispatcher and properly identified herself (date of birth, address, etc) and told them what she wanted to do. This became a paramount legal obstacle. They would

need a written release written on the hotel letterhead stationary faxed to them. When we got to the hotel, the fax machine did not work. Lynn called the dispatcher back and started to explain, when the dispatcher said that the sheriff's wife would be at the hotel in the next 5 minutes with her purse. Five minutes later the sheriff's wife showed up and delivered Lynn her purse. Everything was there nothing had been lost. What a happy ending.

Two things that we never figured out, was how did the storeowner hook up with the sheriff, did she call him, or did he call her? How did the sheriff's wife cover those 70 miles in such a short time? Since she pulled into the hotel parking lot about 10 minutes behind us she had to have been on her way while Lynn was discussing all the legal aspects with the dispatcher?

The moral to this story is: never set anything on the running board of a Model A when you are on the road.

When I was about 10 years old, I had an uncle who was in his 70's. He was an old time deer hunter and used to go into the wilds of Utah driving old Chevys to deer hunt.

One night, he placed his false teeth on the running board when he bedded down beside. The next morning he drove off without them. Somehow I can't imagine; he must have skipped breakfast. The family joke was that somewhere up in Utah, there was a deer roaming around wearing false teeth.



The Grand Tetons south of Yellowstone