



ROAD SIGNS ALONG THE WAY

by Pamela Stephens

Have you ever noticed that road signs remind you of life itself? A couple years ago, we were taking photos inside all the Arkansas Campgrounds which took about 8 months. Going down the road in our motorhome sometimes I get bored just sitting! I like multi-tasking! Sometimes I am reading, sometimes I am crocheting, but sometimes I am lost in a daydream...others, I am "observing" the signs of life!

- "Wrong Way" or "Do not enter"... are important signs when driving a 38' motorhome! You really could end up where you don't belong! A one-way road is definitely hazardous!
- "Watch for Falling Rocks!"—And what will you do if you see them falling...hey, good one..I'd give that a 7.5! Yes, these could really damage our traveling home!
- "Dangerous Curves Ahead"—they are not talking about mine! Curves are tricky in a stretch limo and most certainly in a 38' motorhome!
- "Yield Right of Way"—to whom? Oh that 53' semi truck barreling down the lane we are trying to enter! Yes, that is a good thing to do!
- "Turn Lights on Next 5 miles"—is it dark for the next 5 miles? Are there drivers ahead that are worse than the ones we've dealt with so far? Well then, what about the rest of our trip?
- "Run Away Ramp"—is this a ramp that is rebellious? Just how does a ramp run away? And why? Is this the ramp I take when I want to run away?

It put me in mind of a book I had read quite some time ago, Milo and the Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster. Perhaps you've read it too. It was a fun read with tongue in cheek humor, but it absolutely had so many real truths about life!

There were some very strange destinations! A sign along the road said "Welcome to Expectations!"—We've all been there haven't we? "Expectations -- the place you must always go to before you get to where you are going. Of course, some people never go beyond expectations!" (Yes, made that trip a few times!!)

Or, "The Doldrums" was another area along this highway! "The Doldrums are where nothing ever happens and nothing ever changes...where it's unlawful to think, think of thinking, surmise, presume, reason, meditate, or speculate. Where the daily schedule consists of: daydreaming, napping,

dawdling, delaying, lingering, loitering, putting off to tomorrows, loafing, lounging, dillydallying with almost no time left for brooding, lagging, plodding or procrastinating!" (I've seen some teenagers spend quite a bit of time in this section.)

Perhaps "Dictionopolis" would be more to your liking? "A happy kingdom advantageously located in the Foothills of Confusion; caressed by gentle breezes from the Sea of Knowledge, where the 'word market' does business and the Ministers Cabinet consists of the Duke of Definition, the Minister of Meaning, the Earl of Essence, the Count of Connotation, and the Undersecretary of Understanding. In Dictionopolis you can pick fresh if's, and's, and but's and get ripe when's and where's—juicy words for sale!" (This is a writer's heaven!)

What about a visit to the "City of Reality"? Or to the "City of Illusions?" In the latter, there are "mirages - things that aren't really there that you can see very clearly—often easier to see than things that are!" (Yes, that sounds very familiar!)

Or then there is the "Island of Conclusion"...so "how did we get here? You jumped, of course!—that's the way most people get here...every time you decide something without having a good reason, you jump to Conclusions whether you like it or not. It's such an easy trip, I've been here hundreds of times, but getting back isn't so easy." (Once you jump there is no return!)

I sense the quietness I haven't heard for awhile, and realize we have stopped for a break. My husband asks why I've been so silent and where I've been: "Oh, first the Doldrums, the City of Illusions, where I jumped to the Island of Conclusions...and all the while I've been right here the whole time!" He looked at me pretty funny, but then dismissed it...he knows me! What "signs" have you seen this week?"

Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name. I will praise you, O Lord my God with all my heart. I will glorify your name forever." Psalm 86:11-12

Reflect and Respond

- 1) Yield Right Away—do we "yield" to God's will? Do we "yield" our rights even when we are right?
- 2) Have you ignored the signs that say "Do not enter" or "Wrong Way?" How can we make a U-turn back in the right spiritual direction?
- 3) Have you ever wanted God to send down a beacon when you were confused? "Turn lights on next 5 miles!"
- 4) What "sign" would be appropriate for the path you are on right now? "Watch for slow movers"? "Dangerous intersection"? "Dead End?" "Yield Right of Way?" "Slow down for Children?"



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Pam and her husband Bob, moved to NW Arkansas four years ago from California. They have two daughters and two grandsons and love traveling and RV'ing in their motor home when they aren't in Bella Vista. They celebrated their 41st anniversary in January this year.