



HAPPY NEW YEAR

... WE ARE BACK IN TEXAS



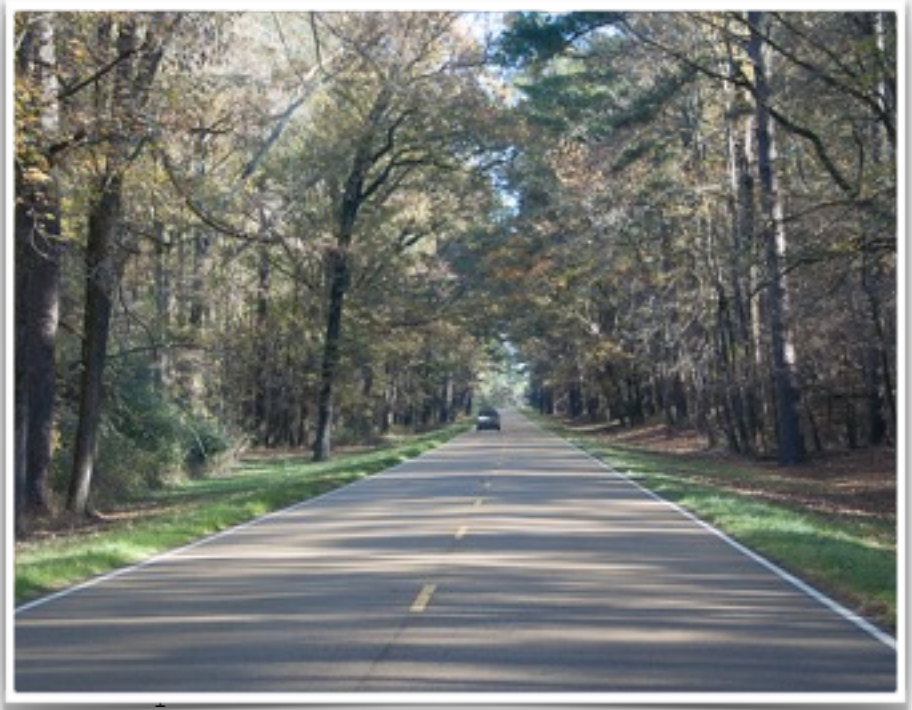
Januar 2016 Vol. 12

8 weeks since our last newsletter. Much to long, but we were so busy

Thank you so much for all the nice letters, telephone calls and WhatsUp notes. We are very happy, that you are so interested in our journey. Sorry for the long timespan between the newsletters - I often don't have the time to translate them, because english is not my native language and it takes a wile for me to find the correct words / spelling.

We are back in Texas - 40 miles south of Houston: the most beautiful State Park we ever found: the **Brazos Bend State Park**. later more.

We have to go back to 2015 - back to the Natchez Trace Parkway. After Huntsville we stayed 3 more weeks at this awesome parkway. Our goal was to drive the whole 440 miles! We did it and we loved it. If you ever have the chance - do this road! It's soon beautiful and has history at every curve.





There are no traffic lights, no trucks, no intersections - just nature! Your heart and soul relaxes totally. And by the way, you learn so much about the american history: Natives, settler, soldier, farmers,

And the best: we have fantastic autumn weather!



Windsor ruins



Everywhere we find former hostels where travelers, more than 100 years ago, stayed. They were called Kaintucks. These boatmen of the north built barges, put livestock and other farming products on board, and went down the Ohio and Mississippi River. Then they sold everything including the boat in Natchez or New Orleans. They returned back, walking the Natchez Trace. Therefore, many houses in Natchez and New Orleans are built of planks of these barges.



Even on this tower:
Noah will follow Beate.



Left and right of the parkway is so much to explore and visit. The main focus was on the study of the American Civil War (1861-1865). Many decisive battles, but also small skirmishes are off our route. To understand this country you must set itself apart with its history. Until the present time the issue north and south here in the US is currently. And especially here, at the Mississippi, American history can be found very close. Whether Shiloh, Verdun or Hürtgenwald: on these battlefields there is bewilderment and despair. Why? Why? Why?



Shiloh, Tennessee 06. und 07. April 1862



24.000 casualties

We went to Shiloh, Vicksburg, Grand Gulf und Sabine Pass.



EXPLANATORY

THE TABLET COLORS ARE

ARMY OF THE TENNESSEE BLUE	ARMY OF THE MISSISSIPPI RED	ARMY OF THE GULF YELLOW
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THE LARGE SQUARE TABLETS GIVE HISTORICAL INFORMATION OF STRENGTH OF ARMIES, MOVEMENTS OF CORPS AND DIVISIONS.

THE SQUARE TABLETS WITH ORNAMENTAL CORNERS MARK POSITIONS WHERE TROOPS WERE ENGAGED ON THE FIRST DAY, SUNDAY, APRIL 8, 1862.

THE OVAL TABLETS MARK POSITIONS WHERE TROOPS WERE ENGAGED ON THE SECOND DAY, MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1862.

A PERSON READING ANY OF THESE POSITION TABLETS IS FACING THE SAME WAY AS THE TROOPS MENTIONED IN THE TABLE WERE FACING WHEN IN BATTLE.

CAMP TABLETS MARK THE FRONT CENTER OF THE 'CAMPS' WHERE THE 'COLORS' WERE WHEN THE TROOPS OF THAT CAMP WERE ON PARADE. A PERSON READING THE TABLET FACES THE FRONT OF THE CAMP.



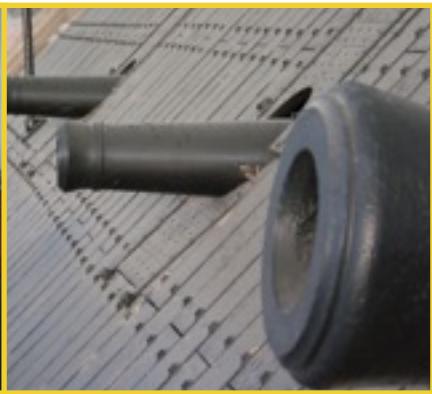


*Siege of
Vicksburg, Mississippi 16. May until 4. July
37.000 casualties*



Something completely different was our excursion to the abandoned Mississippi River Water Experimental Station near Jackson. The US Army had reproduced here the whole river in miniature detail. Every creek, every dike: anything in concrete. It was made by German POW's. Today the system is abandoned and it is slowly overgrown by vegetation. Since there were no signs prohibiting access and the gates were open totally cool and well worth seeing this historic place.





Even for an Air Force man like me it is very impressive to see the only remaining ironclad vessel from the time of the Civil War, the **USS Cairo**. She was in 1964 discovered lying in the mud and then lifted. The paddle steamer had run on a mine in 1862.



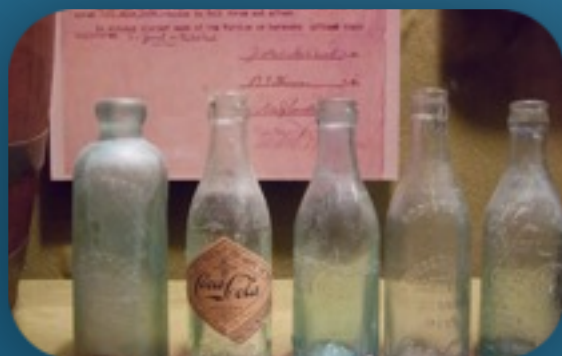


Weather in December was just like summer and also for the southern states not just ordinary this time of year Absolutely no Glühwein time!

A company in Vicksburg bottled 1894 for the first time Coca Cola in bottles. Until then only syrup was delivered to ice cream shops and refreshment stands, which was mixed and sold on the spot with mineral water. The Coca Cola company never planned to fill her drink in bottles! Well, that has changed over the years!



Syrup dispenser 1890





We stay a few more days in Vicksburg, visit again and again the mighty river, hiking in the hinterland and along our beloved Natchez Trace. We discover in the woods on time an old safe, finding a submarine which smuggled brandy during Prohibition and so much more. Every day, new impressions and discoveries!





No words necessary.



They Will Never Be Forgotten.



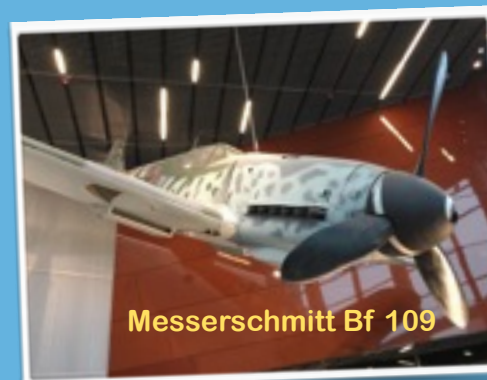
If your children sign up for a visit, mom starts to talk a bit restless and also dad changes quickly the travel plan, to make the "home" ready for the kid! Oh what I'm talking about, we are totally looking forward to see Sebastian and spend with him the Christmas holidays. He came to us to New Orleans. Besides Mom's good cuisine (every day a favorite dish of his choice), nice conversations and walks in the French Quarter the visit of the "Second World War Museum" topped the list. This more than worth seeing museum shows America's way in WW2. Very open and I think very neutral; but also very scary up close. You walk on dust, sometimes on stones, sometimes snow is falling in the Ardennes, sometimes you taste and smell salt and smoke on Iwo Jima. Highly recommended, if you have a whole day at least, because there is so much to see.



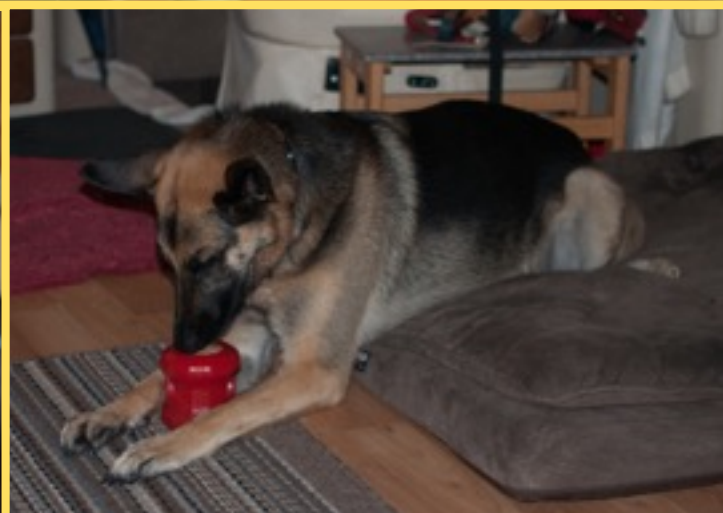
Boeing Flying Fortress B-17E



ENIGMA

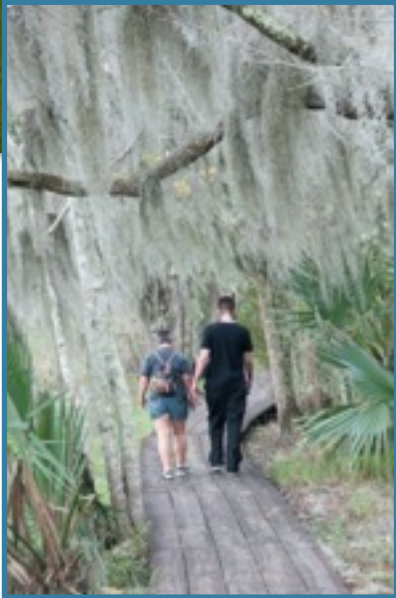
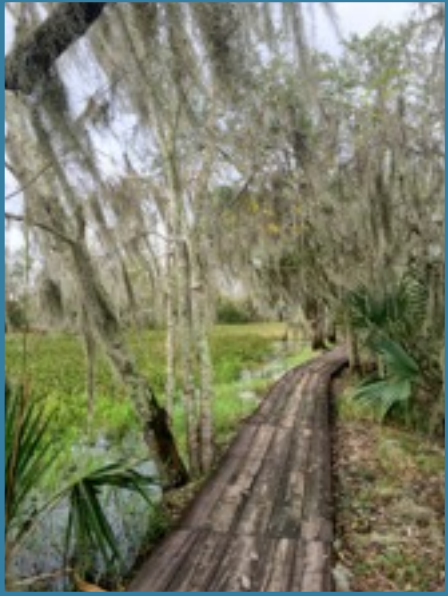


Messerschmitt Bf 109



Christmas Eve at 85 ° C and almost 97% Humidity. that is a No-No for Germans! Nevertheless, we had a wonderful evening, with live broadcasts per Skype to Anna & Johannes in Germany. So we were all together and Beate and I totally happy! Frohe Weihnachten.

It's our third time in New Orleans and once again: it rains non-stop! Will we ever see this city dry? But we are not made out go sugar. The city, which still looks very bad in many areas even 10 years after Hurricane Katrina, still retain their charm in some areas. We take nearly three weeks time to see the city and the Mississippi Delta. Here are some impressions.





Old Louisiana Cafe
Bayou Swamp
GATOR BURGER
Dressed & Pepper Jack Cheese
w/ Mayo & Tole Sauce... **\$11.95**



Yes and then we got lovely visitors from El Paso. The Pickert family was on the return trip from Florida and stopped for a day in New Orleans. They brought not only their sons but we also ordered a couple of German goods. The New Year could begin!



So, now already 18 pages are filled. I think I close for today and reports on the already mentioned Brazos Bend State Park, with its alligators and our stay at the beautiful Gulf Coast in a separate newsletter next week. Until then

LOST AND FOUND

WAS SONST UNS SO BESCHÄFTIGTE

Customer Service: Here two sales persons at a DIY chain cuddle our Noah, who enjoys that.



My first "soft shell crab" This crab can be eaten completely including the body and scissors. Together with sharp Gamba soup, freshly caught crawfish, shrimp and catfish fillets. Louisiana cousin at it's best! Yummy - yummy

Invitations to the Super Bowl party and Mardi Gras ==>
Corpus Christi we are coming !!!

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So, that would be it for today. We are now 180 days on the road!

Until next time all the best

Your 3 Gefeko's

