

Viva La Veta

Thursday morning we head north out of Taos into the San Luis Valley. It is a lovely calm clear day. 50 miles later we enter Colorado driving on high prairie ringed by high mountains. A few miles past the border we stop for lunch in a pull-out next to a big puddle (the Stabilization Reservoir) where a few local families fishing.

The reservoir hosts a few Eared Grebes, Rudy Ducks and Phalaropes. In the trees we spot Mountain Chickadees, Yellow-rumped Warblers and a pair of Mountain Bluebirds.

As we drive north we are soon climbing into some of the white peaks.



We are on US 160, back on "The Navajo Trail" even though we are now far off the reservation. We are heading for La Veta, a small mountain town in southern Colorado on the Cuchara River. The river is high and muddy. It is springtime in the Rockies.

The Spanish Peaks come into view as we near La Veta, a little mountain town we have heard about from our "other mother" Marjorie. She has gone there for over thirty years on her annual retreat in August.

The town has a number of charming streets. A couple of them are paved. We stop for provisions at Charlie's Market. Charlie's has a butcher counter and a functional soda fountain with five seats.

When we ask, we are told we are a little early to see some of the sights like the town museum. When we say we're in no hurry, we have all day, they explain that the town does not really open until Memorial Day.

The town had been snowed in for three





days over the last weekend by the same snowstorm that caught us on the way to Ghost Ranch.

In spite of our unseasonal arrival, we are welcomed by Marjorie's longtime friend Marilyn Hall at the 1899 Inn. She is no longer the active inn keeper but still lives in a small apartment in the back. She is in her 90s. She tells us that she came west from New England where she grew up because she liked to climb mountains. She does a little less of that these days but still has lots of friends in town; three of them were having a light lunch on the lawn outside her window.

We found a nice bit of beef at Charlie's to cook for dinner so we retire to the Circle the Wagons RV Park where we are staying for the night. It is a very tidy but kind of odd park: they have put the sewer hookup right next to the picnic table. Hmm. Needless to say, we did not use the picnic table. (Marilyn suggested, if we were ever to come back, that Lucy's is the "good" RV place in town.) We live and learn.



From the road,
Jane and Susan