

## Day Nine - Journey's End

It is Thursday. We wake up early to find a small herd of deer having their breakfast in the meadow. This morning's routine is different. Rather than stow our gear we pack it up. Today we will take Woodzilla back to her home and then pick up Woodsy to return to ours. We go up the road to the Robert Ferguson Observatory. We are starting to understand why Sugarloaf Ridge is different from the other state parks we know. It is a collaborative effort between the state and a number of volunteer organizations. (Sonoma Ecology Center; United Camps, Conferences and Retreats; Valley of the Moon Natural History Association; Sonoma County Trails Council and Valley of the Moon Observatory Association.) There is no one around at 9AM and the gate is closed and locked. We do a little birding then someone drives up to the gate, opens it and drives up to the observatory. We follow. "Hi" we say. "Hi" he says. He is one of the volunteers at the observatory. Our guy says he is just there to work on the plumbing but offers to give us a brief tour. This operation is another fine example



of citizen scientists. Our guy tells us one of its major missions is educational outreach. "Are you an astronomer?" we ask. "No, I am a botanist." he replies. Of course. What were we thinking? He shows us all the various telescopes and we chat about our volunteer work at Quail Hollow supporting and observing cavity-nesting birds. It is a wonderful little geek exchange. We feel lucky to get this unexpected bonus on our last morning.



All packed up. We drive away. It doesn't take long to get to Novato. We top off Woodzilla's diesel tank before delivering her home. We linger at the gas station. Are we a little reluctant to give her up? It is finally almost noon so we get on with it.

We move our gear from Woodzilla to Woodsy who now seems a bit tiny and perhaps a bit frail. It is a beautiful day as we drive down the coast to Santa Cruz after passing through the obligatory San Francisco fog. We stop for lunch that someone else makes for us and get home by mid-afternoon. We feel a little lost and disoriented in our "big" house.

We are tired but happy campers.

Thanks to Kathy and the fiddle club for the encouragement, the nice send-off, for naming this adventure and for requesting (demanding???) a travel log.



Thanks to all our friends who overwhelmingly said "Yes! Do it!" and to all of you who have followed along with us on this wonderful OMG adventure.

Back from the road ...  
Jane and Susan