

Grand Canyon Rim-to-River-to-Rim Trip Notes May 21-29, 2010

This is not my first hike with www.TimberTours.com and won't be my last as guaranteed by my being booked on June's Columbia River Gorge out of Portland and in August to Kenai Peninsula out of Anchorage. I was last with Timber Tours in the Canadian Rockies (August 2009), before then Yosemite National Park (July 2009 for 1 of 2 trips to Yosemite), Death Valley (February 2009), and Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons (July 2008.) My goal is to get to Glacier National Park next year and I'm seeking other ideas. Maybe Big Bend National Park in Texas for March

Grand Canyon is simply not easy to get to

In December 2007 neighbor Kathy and I came through Phoenix and stopped at a couple cities to include a couple days in Sedona on our way to hike down into the Grand Canyon. One generally has to count on a full day travel to and another day from. You can see that trip report on www.LibertyLadies.weebly.com. It has all the necessary research, packing list and the benefit of my 20-questions per day if you really want to do one of these trips on your own but if you're into getting full benefit of your time, I'd strongly recommend going with a tour group. It's especially nice to have a tour guide who takes care of all details and within this report you'll see that there's even more benefit if you have an emergency.



You can see a photo show and pictures from that trip at www.photoshow.com/members/tomskoi. The pictures are considerably better from that clear sky trip and maybe more interesting because of all the snow on the ground in December.

OVER 250 PEOPLE ARE RESCUED FROM THE DEPTHS OF GRAND CANYON EACH YEAR...

Most of them look like him.

A surprising majority of victims rescued from Grand Canyon are young, healthy males between the ages of 18 and 40 attempting to hike to the river and back in one day. No matter what your age or health status, here are some tips to help you enjoy the Grand Canyon by Hiking Smart!

1. stay hydrated (drink plenty of water and electrolyte drinks)
2. eat often (carbohydrates & salty foods)
3. avoid hiking in the heat of the day (10am to 4pm)
4. rest often (sit in the shade)
5. get wet (wet your shirt, hat, & wear a wet bandanna around your neck)
6. DO NOT attempt to hike down to the river and back in one day

GRAND CANYON HIKE SMART

Weather is entirely unpredictable

In 2007 we knew it was going to be cold but we didn't know that a major storm would blow through the week before and dump feet of snow on the Canyon's rim. Had our trip been one week earlier we wouldn't have been able to descend into the Canyon. As it was, we started in 24 degree type weather, wore crampons and used trekking poles for the first 1 ½ hours down into the Canyon. We actually felt fortunate to be cold because the stories of the heat were fearful and the posters showing that "250 are rescued from the canyon each year" with a picture of a young hunk and stating that most of the rescues looked just like him -- sobering.

Thus initial weather reports for May (while I was packing) suggested heat would be this trip's challenge. Little did I expect just the opposite with a cold front blowing in, snow predicted, and temperatures as low as 24 degrees. What a coincidence. What a surprise. To compound the newly released weather report are the predicted 40-50mph winds. Here's the alert that showed up on weather.com when I landed in Phoenix. It didn't get any better and in fact the

beginning of our trip had us opening our cabin door to 24-26 degrees and a full snow cover. The wind subsided by our hike in but picked back up during the week.

WINDS: EXPECT SOUTHWEST WINDS OF 25 TO 30 MPH WITH GUSTS FROM 40 TO 50 MPH TODAY. INCREASING AGAIN ON SATURDAY TO 30 TO 40 MPH AND GUSTS FROM 45 TO 55 MPH. IMPACTS: STRONG CROSS WINDS ON AREA ROADWAYS MAY CAUSE DIFFICULT DRIVING CONDITIONS...ESPECIALLY IF YOU ARE DRIVING A HIGH PROFILE VEHICLE. LOCALIZED BLOWING DUST AND SAND ARE ALSO POSSIBLE. PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS... A WIND ADVISORY MEANS THAT SUSTAINED WINDS OF 30 TO 39 MPH...OR GUSTS FROM 40 TO 57 MPH.ARE EXPECTED. WINDS THIS STRONG CAN MAKE DRIVING DIFFICULT...ESPECIALLY FOR HIGH PROFILE VEHICLES. CONSIDER SECURING LOOSE BELONGINGS ON YOUR PROPERTY.

Or as Tom advises – don't stand too close to any canyon rim!

Flagstaff for the starting off point

I need to figure out why Timber Tours uses Flagstaff for the starting point since we then transfer to the North Rim which might be closer to Las Vegas? Flagstaff might be a nice town but I couldn't find anything of interest (unusual?) and one simply cannot fly into Flagstaff without major over-payment. When looking up tourist sites in Flagstaff one gets the impression that it's simply a jumping off point for the Grand Canyon and/or Sedona versus any reason to come to Flagstaff.

It is a lovely and diverse drive from Phoenix to Flagstaff said to change 9600 feet in elevation due to the up-and-downs and rather high passes. The terrain passes from desert to timber forests to rocky monuments and back and forth within the 140 miles.

This is the old historical Amtrak station where shuttles pick up plus a bit of the old town



Arriving by air in Phoenix requires a 3-hour shuttle to Flagstaff with a drop at the Amtrak station (above) historical and old in all ways. It sits on Old Route 66 which is some of the little bit of Route 66 still being used in the country. From there a taxi to the hotel is required. All in all, with perfect connections this was a long all-day trip from Newark. Yet I knew this ahead of time and felt that the Grand Canyon hike would be worth it. (Besides, I got a first class upgrade on both directions helping a lot.)

From the road into Flagstaff the San Francisco Peaks and especially Mount Humphreys at about 12,000 feet becomes visible early. The air was full of particulate matter due to all the wind so these are not my pictures but gives you the idea of what we saw or should have seen. The peaks were still snowbound as much because Flagstaff apparently had snow only 2 weeks ago and had a record snowfall this last winter with something like 27 feet of snow on the peak.

The San Francisco Peaks and in particular Mount Humphrey as seen from Flagstaff



From the Flagstaff visitor's site:

- Friendly city with a population of about 57,000
- Located at the base of the majestic San Francisco Peaks
- 140 miles north of Phoenix at intersection of Interstate 17 and Interstate 40
- 7,000 feet elevation with four-season climate
- Average days of sunshine: 288
- Annual snowfall: 84.40 inches
- Nearby attractions include the Grand Canyon, Lowell Observatory, Oak Creek Canyon, Sedona, Monument Valley, Sunset Crater, Meteor Crater, and Arizona Snow bowl.

Locals – It might be of interest that every local I met had not been to the Grand Canyon other than one of maybe ten who had only a wee bit of an overlook from the rim. We learn that only 1% of those who go to the rim ever get farther than a few feet down into the canyon. Well, maybe they are the smart ones because it's a full 5,000 feet (1 mile) elevation drop and takes from 9-11 miles to get to the bottom (depending on the route.) I heard one couple saying how grand it was to see the bottom but I knew that what they were viewing wasn't anywhere near the bottom. The Grand Canyon is a popular international destination but the locals haven't partaken!

Northern Arizona University is housed in Flagstaff but I couldn't find anything of interest by way of buildings other than this Sky dome where the shuttle made a stop. Oddly called the Walkup Sky dome, I found it was named after a former university president named Walkup. It's the third largest clear-span timber dome in the world if that connects in some way to you. It's been around since 1977 and is used for a multitude of sporting events including concerts and commencement exercises.

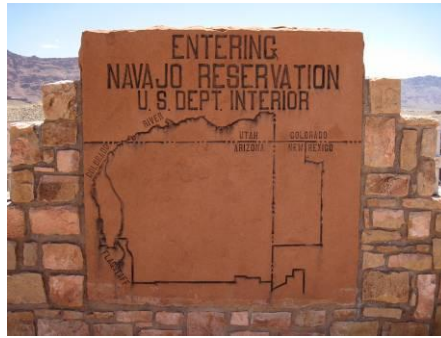


Sunday - Day 1 of the tour started from the hotel at a civilized hour of 9am and it would be the very last of the sleep-ins available. If you can call that a sleep-in. It was helpful to be on east coast body clock time. Arizona doesn't honor daylight savings time so we were three hours difference meaning that our 4am wake up calls were a more normal 7am as far as our bodies were concerned.

From www.timbertours.com: “Every now and then, a program comes together that really spikes our pulse. Rim-to-River-to-Rim, since its inception eight seasons ago, has always been that kind of experience. We truly believe that, if you're a hiker to the core, at some time in your life you need to hike the Grand Canyon from rim-to-river-to-rim.” To top it off, at our orientation we were totally spooked to learn the difficulty of the hike and the precautions we'd need to take. This is said to be the most difficult of all their hikes and over the years they've had to evacuate 7-8 people. The posters at the canyon's rim talk of 350 and 400 people a year being evacuated with a number of deaths.

See the warning letter given us before we came (at end of this report) and which letter caused three ladies to change to another tour. Little did we know that an additional one of us would have to leave the tour half way through, another would need medical evacuation, and some of us would limp out of the Canyon.

From our assembly point in Flagstaff we van shuttled towards the North Rim stopping first at the lovely town and community called Cameron and then at the Navajo Bridge to walk across the bridge, watch for condors, and learn some about that tribal reservation.



We arrived at the North Rim early enough for an extremely windy walk out to Bright Angel Point plus an easy walk along the Rim. I was reminded of my last trip to the north rim (with Backroads Biking) where sisters Margie and Linda egged me and each other into shimmying far out onto the rock points to peer over into the deep canyon. There would be no getting near the edge this time with wind gusts that were not only cold but easily up to 50mph. We could have taken in lectures on the ecological system but I chose the walk since tour leader Megan seemed plenty knowledgeable for my needs and she was willing to share.



Tour leaders – Megan was my tour guide for the Canadian Rockies and I was especially glad to see her. Kristi would be my guide for the Kenai Peninsula Alaska trip in August and I'd talked to her many times before so it was a treat to meet her. But talk about treats – both Dick and Carol (owners of Timber Tours and past leaders from two other trips) showed up for the first couple days of the trip. Dick was going to shuttle the van from the north to the south rim for our ascent and Carol decided to come with him so they were at Flagstaff, the stops on the way to the North Rim and stayed until all the hikers had safely gone far enough down the North Rim to decide they could handle it and didn't need evacuated out.

Lodgings – Wherever possible Timber gives us the historical and special lodges and this one is a treat to stay at the Grand Canyon National Park Lodge (also known as the Grand Front Lodge) hanging over the North Rim of the Canyon. Its great-rooms, sun room and dining areas are worthy of a trip not only for their view hanging over the Canyon but for their architectural significance. Their larger cabins with porches are okay and somewhat typical of national park lodges which are known for the main buildings, location and builders, not for their luxury. We had a smaller yet cabin on this trip. I was especially grateful to NOT be sharing a room it was so small. Fortunately there was a good electric heater which was needed in the freezing temperatures.



These are pictures from the web but very representative. (My pictures were hazy due to the wind and sand storms.) The picture on the left is similar to the cabin with a porch that Tom and I stayed in when we were with Backroads on a Grand Canyon, Bryce and Zion multi sport trip. The middle view is from the lodge and restaurant overlooking the canyon. The picture to the right is representative of the cabins provided for this trip.

Inside pictures and the view from the dining room



The view everywhere you look is beyond amazing. It is impossible to believe. Even more so, you look down and think you see the bottom 6,300 plus feet down but in fact you see nothing compared to what you'll see on your feet – as we did the next day.

This is the view from Bright Angel Point looking at the main lodge where the sunroom and restaurant are located.

Monday - Day 2

We began our descent into the canyon by getting up at 4am, breakfast in Dick and Carol's room (the owners of Timber Tours) and shuttling to the trail head for a start well before 6am. on snow covered trails and grateful to have trekking poles, we followed the North Kaibab Trail along Bright Angel Creek as it tumbled toward the Colorado River, passing Roaring Springs Falls which is the primary water source for both the North and South Rim villages. Some say the switchbacks are so steep that the mules asses are said to drag down the trail (smile). I would not have wanted to try the steep sloop without trekking poles to hold me up. *This is the view from our first stop just above Supai Tunnel. Note the layers of two coats and two hoods and the hesitancy to stand too close to the edge. In the second picture, that's snow on the bridge.*

Roaring Springs simply gushes out of a rock and it's impossible to imagine where all the water comes from with no snow peaks and no apparent source. A nice spur trail gave us the irresistible opportunity to visit Ribbon Falls a bit farther down the trail.



See the size of the people as relates to the canyon walls here and below.





It's a good time of the year for wild flowers



Phantom Ranch

By the time we reached Phantom Ranch it was apparent by our jelly-legs that we had descended 6,300 feet over 14 miles through five distinct life zones to the canyon floor. I think it was around 3:30pm when I 'landed' and gratefully so. Also grateful that I'd been there before (from the easier South Kaibab Trail) so I could now lie up on the bunk and recover somewhat by the 5pm dinner bell.

Phantom Ranch is a historical landmark and a challenge to obtain reservations. Bunkhouses and cabins alike contain 5 bunk beds and thus sleep 10 hikers. Bunkhouses have one toilet and one

shower whereas the cabins have one toilet and sink and keys to the bathhouse. Ideally you'd be able to reserve the bunkhouse and pay for at least half the bunks (\$42 each – pay with fake names) so as to have some privacy and a lower bunk. On my December 2007 visit we were blessed with a half empty bunkhouse since the girls stayed with their boyfriends in tents at the campgrounds.

Just to get a bed and dinner reservation at Phantom Ranch might be bragging rights but making it down and up is commemorated by the t-shirts and hats that can only be purchased at the bottom. As much as I wanted the bragging rights, I couldn't think what I'd do with another t-shirt and besides I'm supposed to be doing these trips for myself. Just as importantly is that everything has to be carried UP and by that point one is prone to consider abandoning even a tooth brush. T-shirts come 'compressed' into the size of a large deck of cards with directions to moisten to make it full size.

Dinner is at 5pm for the steak dinner or 6:30pm for the stew. Breakfast likewise is at 5am or 6:30am and there's no varying the times or choices. Diners stand outside (no matter the weather) waiting the dinner bell, march in together, and eat at picnic tables family style. Wine (from a box) and beer are amazingly available and of course I availed myself of the extra insurance to sleep well.

The accommodations come with a metal locker to store food and we were wisely warned to carefully store anything with a smell. (You could see pictures of the bunk houses on the photo show.) That night I saw a real scorpion (the smaller cream colored type of about 1 ½ inches) and in the morning there were rodent tracks on my clothing. Rodents readily eat through back packs. I missed the fox that roamed around the 8pm ranger lecture but had to shoo the deer way from the bathhouse door to cross the trail back to the bunkhouse. *That's our cabin in the 3rd picture.*



Were I to design my own ideal trip I would stay at Phantom Ranch for two nights and indulge in both some resting and local exploring along the river and walk to some of the adjoining waterfalls. There are lectures, wildlife, and certainly it's a place to just sit under a tree and read a book. It's a cathedral canyon.



Everybody loved the ponies and the mules except when we had to step in their droppings. The first photo was a mystery what these two characters out of a movie were doing in the canyon.

One of the side trips to Ribbon Falls



Tuesday - Day 3

When they said breakfast precedes daybreak it was no joke. It might be a Phantom Ranch tradition and one may as well be up as the grounds become alive by 4:30am. We were at breakfast at 5pm and on the trail by 5:45am. We crossed the Silver Bridge over the Colorado River as the sun was just beginning to rise above the canyon walls. We missed the tunnel and the black bridge that I'd come in on in 2007 from the South Kaibab Trail.



Our route was to follow the Bright Angel Trail same as I climbed out in 2007 from the river beyond the Inner Canyon to Indian Gardens. Indian Gardens is a shocker of a green and lush oasis, about half way up and usually the lunch spot even if it was only 9 or 10am.

An optional trip to Plateau Ridge

The South Rim was our destination, 10 miles up, but Plateau Ridge beckoned and our leaders who knew me reasonably well gave two of us confidence to take the optional hike of 3+ miles out to Plateau Point to an overlook of the Colorado River. Though getting there was only interesting if you enjoyed cactus flowers, the end view and rocky point overlook was well worth the trip and even so as we climbed up the rest of the day and had a view of Plateau Point and knew what its mysteries held.



By the time I was near the top of South Rim it was easy to imagine that I'd made a big mistake to add these extra miles. I limped to the top (*is that just a shadow of myself?*) but with tears in my eyes and a big full heart of emotion when I made it. The girls led me to the cafeteria where they were intent on getting ice cream but I was dreaming of a coffee and the



much needed caffeine. A big huge bratwurst sandwich came next and was wolfed down if not inhaled. Having left before 6am we were at the top well before our 3pm lodge check in time.

Lodging – My recommendation is to stay at the gorgeous and historical El Tovar not only for the architectural design by a well known woman but as much because it is in a prime location and practically hangs over the rim. It was where we stayed in 2007 but reservations are not easy to come by and the price is higher so I believe Timber Tours made a wise choice with the Maswik Lodge, an easy walk to the rim. Bright Angel might be better due to its location next door to El Tovar but I believe it's under renovation. We were treated to dinner at the well known and well run if not absolutely magnificent El Tovar. It might be one of the few national park restaurants that are excellent and well run and they didn't disappoint this time either. A walk into the lobby is worth it.



The perfect Canyon trip

Were I to design the perfect trip I'd have two nights at El Tovar, two nights at Phantom and then two more nights at El Tovar and I'd try for one of the presidential suites on the upper floor with huge deck overlooking the rim. There are lots of tourist sites along the rim and a rim walk and a trip without a hike down to Phantom could be good too.





El Tovar from the rim, their desert selections, Kristi and Janet enjoying El Tovar's porch, and the famous lamb dinner.



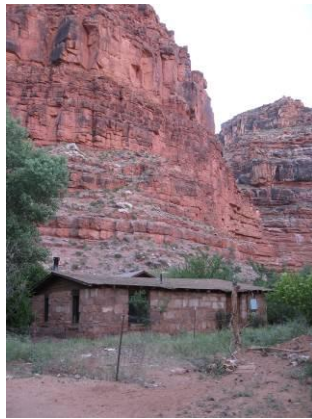
Debra the ex-Army nurse, Bill the retired brigadier general, Beverly the Hallmark graphics designer, Lindsay the retired CFO of Corning, Janet who had been to the canyon many times as a kid, and Sheila the tri-athlete also from Hallmark in K.C.

Wednesday – Day 4

We left the South Rim via van at a more respectable time after a cafeteria breakfast at Maswik Lodge. Fortunately we'd had a chance to wash our clothing as we were filthy and practically dyed red with blowing sand and clay. The sweat would run, the winds would blow and the sand would stick. The hotels pleaded with us to not wash in the sink because it would clog the drains.

This morning had us traveling via Seligman and Historical Route 66 to arrive at the trail head called Hualapai Hilltop for our descent into Supai village within the Havasupai Indian Reservations. The road into the Hilltop trail head is about 60 miles over never-never land. We probably started down the trail around 11am and arrived in Supai around 3pm having taken a very steep set of switchbacks on the upper portion until we descended into the lower canyon, full of big rocks and deep sand and filthy grit making the trek seem much longer than the promised 8-miles. A GPS claimed 10-miles. It felt like 15. I hope it was my only whining episode of the week when I ventured to say that Supai Village, tribal center of the Havasupai Nation, had better be worth it. It was. Worth it that is. I might have whined other times too.





The reputation of the Havasupai Indian is not good. The reputation of the cathedral canyons and their blue-green waters and waterfalls is better than good: It is unbelievable. It has to be seen to be believed. Is it worth the filthy and hot trek? Lots of people think it is and go there over and over again. I'm very glad I went but not so sure I'd go again maybe as much because I'm sure that I will never forget it. (Put that into context that I did the Phantom Ranch trek again.)

The story of the Havasupai Indians is interesting and quite a bit of their interesting (and sad) story can be found in an April 22, 2010 New York Times article. It is copied at the end of this report. They overwhelmingly suffer from gross obesity and as a result, diabetes. Scientists trying to help them got their knickers in a twist over collecting DNA samples without full authority.



Transportation means into Havasu Village is by horse, mule or helicopter. It is a rare local who is able to hike out. We saw long ponies on the trail often, as well as those hauling supplies.

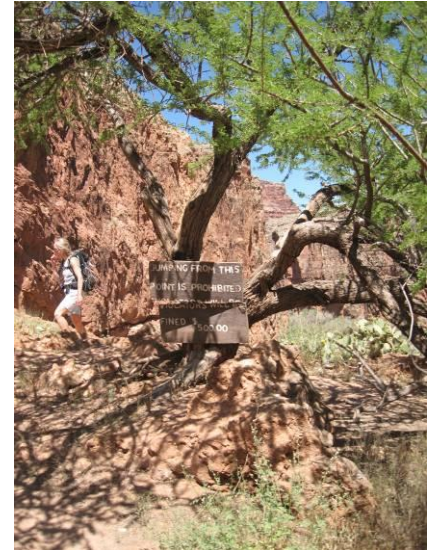


The first picture is entering the village with their sacred towers. There are many huge cottonwood trees, houses with ponies and saddles laid out in the front. The last picture is the dining area of the café in the center of town.



The Havasu tribal area is on a side canyon of the Grand Canyon. Lands owned by the tribe have been expanded from their original reservations. They believe that their magical waterfalls are what they were created from. They truly live in a God's land and I continually thought of it as a huge living cathedral and it could easily bring tears to your eyes.

There is no way into or out of the canyon except by this steep trail which requires hiking or riding a mule or a horse, or by helicopter. The wild ponies are gorgeous in themselves and they are plentiful. Oddly the wild dogs are okay too and totally friendly and seemingly well fed.



Their famous blue green waters are caused by minerals in the soil and the many waterfalls are the reason for most of the trekking into the canyon. Havasu Falls are said to be the most photographed in the world, and even after the August 2008 flood that completely re-routed them.



Accident on the trail – On the 8 or 10 mile trek down the canyon one of the gals (an ex-Army nurse) fell which created a heck of a cut (down to the bone) on her knee and lots of blood. She was a real trooper and after our guides cleaned her up and held bandages on with duct tape she continued on into the village. Her accident gave us all more of an education about the Havasupai when she got stitched up in the clinic by an American woman doctor who comes into the canyon for 3 weeks at a time to work the clinic. At some point there was also a podiatrist who filled her in on local living. He was a part time doctor called upon because of the diabetes prevalent and the related foot problems to include a fast acting gangrene seen in the Havasupai. Her knowledge swelled when she waited for hours at the helipad to be evacuated out and talked to many locals and doctors. Her stories made it all the more clear that the Havasupai are not interested in taking care of themselves. It was even more evidenced by the hours she had to wait to be evacuated since the locals have priority transport. Clearly none of them could hike out -- they took up 2-3 seats each on the helicopter.

There are a series of falls but Mooney is the biggest challenge -- though it's easy enough to see them from the top. The challenge is to see them from the bottom necessitating climbing down a rock face holding chain and hand holds, a couple ladders, and going through two old mining tunnels that are dark (*picture is with a flash*) and slippery. (Yes, I made it with a lot of talking through the descent by my kind tour guides but the descent totally trashed by otherwise strong quads.)



Despite this area being heaven, the Havasupai seem to have some kind of suicidal bent and they are a very troubled lot. They are all hugely fat, diabetes runs rampant, drugs are said to be a problem, and despite many efforts they can't seem to get educated or do anything about their problems. No one seems to care about anything as evidenced by all the loads of trash heaps and the lack of any maintenance.

Lodging – It was amazing to find anything in the least bit suitable at the bottom and how they built Havasupai Lodge must be an interesting story. It would be our home for two nights. Of course we only had what we could carry in our backpacks and after coming up from Phantom Ranch we all dumped more and more of what we'd previously thought were necessities. I'd been warned that it was a hotel that one would typically drive past even if it were late at night. And that it was like an old un-kept Days Inn. That was all fairly accurate but being where it was and in the middle of this glorious and magical canyon made it all worth it.

Yet I had to move to another room since the first one's air conditioner didn't work, another person's key was stuck in the door, a continual dripping from the ceiling occurred in my second room, somebody's floor tiles were coming up, my detector hung from the ceiling by a 10" wire so surely didn't work, and all of the above was met by the 400 pound desk clerk with silence suggesting she knew it all and really didn't care. We learn that there is NO maintenance person and that even if the janitor types could fix things, they probably don't care enough to do so.

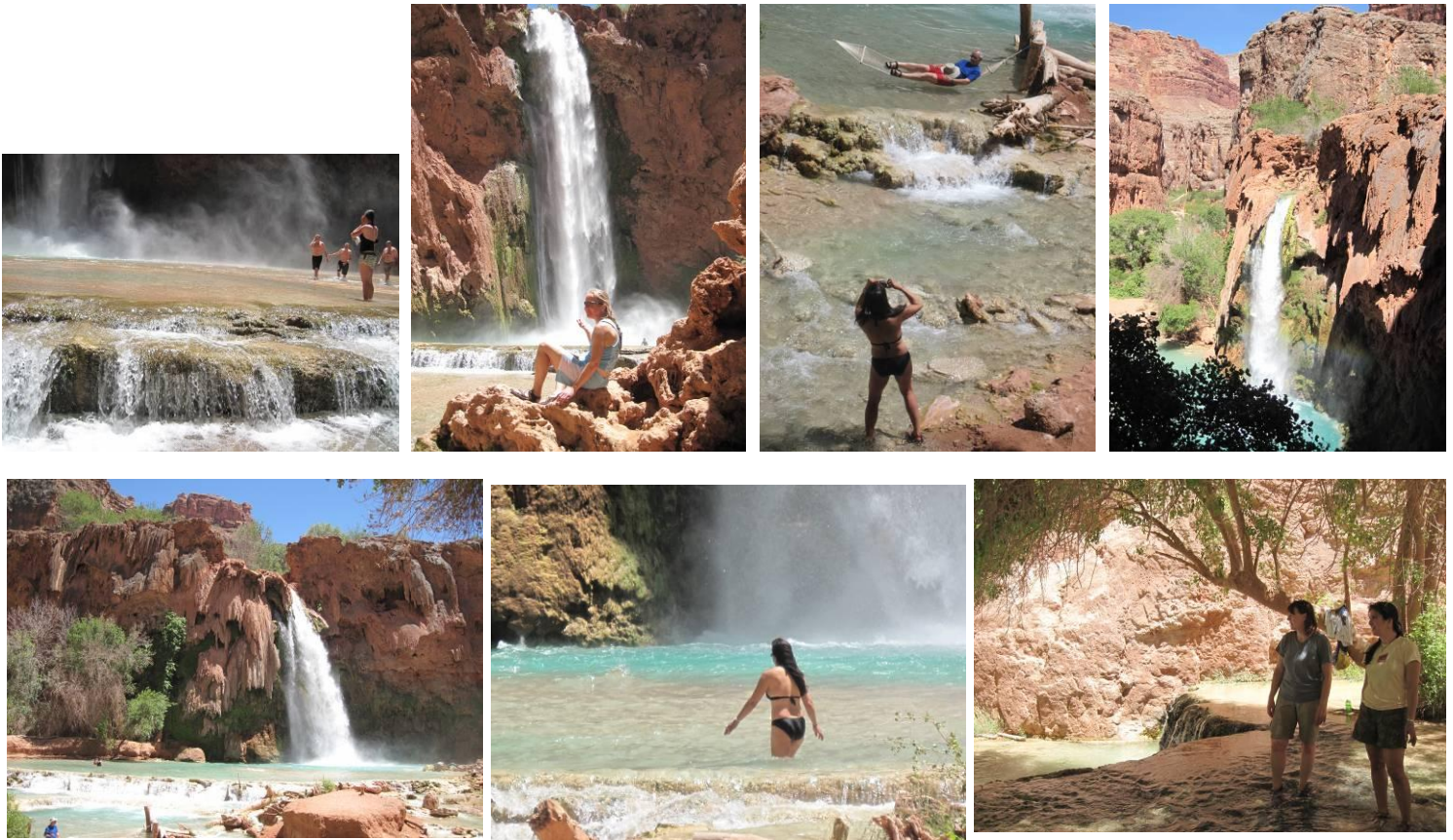
Food – was marginal. There is only one place to eat in town and it's a very low class cafeteria style. Slow, bad fast food. Picture what you might find at a circus that comes into town for just a few days, and is run by hugely fat, slow and unsmiling Indians who might open on time and might not and you've got it. Hamburgers, tacos, or burritos. After a gloriously wonderful meal at El Tovar we were grateful to have brought some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and the last morning made our own breakfast with items bought (by our tour guides) from the double-priced grocery canteen.

Thursday – Day 5

Today was like a rest day. Breakfast wasn't until 8am and we were invited to hike to the magnificent waterfalls of Havasu or just lounge around. The best option was to hike to the falls and the crystal blue-green pools and lounge around there. We chose to hike from the lodge via a trail that ran along Havasu Creek with an opportunity to visit Havasu's two newest falls, created by the 2008 flood. I think the first one is temporarily called the New Navajo Falls until the tribal elders decide the name but seeing how ambitious they are, who knows when that might happen. We first saw Havasu Falls from above, and while legs were strong we headed farther out to Mooney Falls with their spectacular drops of 100' and 196' respectively. Four of us plus the two leaders took the entire trek with the challenging descent into Mooney Falls described above. That descent into Mooney was a big 'step' and a first for me. I enjoyed climbing up the rock face. I was a bit fearful going down and I don't think I've ever even negotiated as much of a ladder let alone rock face.



Surrounded by water



Friday – Day 6

Our final evening's meal in Havasupai was the worst ever but I don't think any of us minded. We had breakfast in the guide's room so we could be gone by 6am while the weather was cool and before the high 80s temperatures developed. We hiked up in a surprising four hours which the tour guides called a "blistering pace" as much because it was horribly windy and hot and we just wanted to get it over with. The wind gusts would cause us to stand still with both feet firmly planted on the ground. One time my Tilley's hat blew off despite being strapped under my chin and one of the gutty hikers climbed down the cliff to get it (which was not my idea – I'd have left it.) Once up to the top we had about a 2-hour wait for our injured hiker to arrive by helicopter.

On the way back to Flagstaff via van we stopped in Seligman, home of the Historic Route 66 series of restaurants and rest stops. We'd only driven through on the way to Havasupai. This time we had a real restaurant stop and again I wolfed down my food like I was inhaling it. On after-thought, it wasn't so good, but it was great then, having endured the Havasupai cafeteria food for 2-days prior.

We were a wee bit delayed at the top due to the helicopter arrival of our injured hiker but it all worked out just fine and the van dropped me at the Flagstaff Amtrak station for my 6pm shuttle back to Phoenix airport area where I arrived a bit after 9pm and stayed at an airport hotel for a morning flight.

It was at the Amtrak station that I decided my legs were doing pretty good when I felt well enough to stretch my filthy feet covered in red sandy clay up into the ladies room washbasin. I needed to get cleaned up respectfully enough to be allowed on the shuttle.

A trip worth remembering!

Itinerary

Fri May 21

12:15pm Depart Newark via CO#1435
2:35pm Arrive Phoenix

5:00pm Shuttle to Flagstaff www.arizonashuttle.com Tele: 877 226 8060 prepaid

8:20pm AR Flagstaff at Amtrak station, 1 E. Rt 66 86001 - taxi to hotel 10-15 minutes \$10-\$15
Apex Taxi 928 779-0000 (shuttle driver has dropped passengers in past for a tip)
Or A Friendly Cab in Flagstaff at 928 774 4444 – www.afriendlycab.com

Alternate shuttles depart Phoenix airport at 3, 5, 7 and 9:30pm arriving Flagstaff's Amtrak 6:20pm, 8:10pm, 10:10pm and 12:40am

Hotel La Quinta Inn & Suites - 2 nights
2015 South Beulah Boulevard, Flagstaff, AZ 86001 Tele: 928 556 8666

Sun May23 – Day 1

9:00am Meet at La Quinta Inn in the lobby

Begin tour with www.timbertours.com - Summary: Every now and then, a program comes together that really spikes our pulse. Rim-to-River-to-Rim, since its inception eight seasons ago, has always been that kind of experience. We truly believe that, if you're a hiker to the core, at some time in your life you need to hike the Grand Canyon from rim-to-river-to-rim.

Daily itinerary:

Day 1	Group assembles mid-afternoon, North Rim, Grand Canyon National Park (van shuttle from Flagstaff to North Rim); orientation dinner; overnight lodging at Grand Canyon National Park Lodge aka The Grand Front Lodge	
Day 2	Hike to Phantom Ranch (base of the Grand Canyon) - North Kaibab Trail: 14 miles, 6300-foot descent; overnight lodging at Phantom Ranch	14 miles
Day 3	Hike to the South Rim - Bright Angel Trail: (10 miles); overnight lodging at Maswik Lodge	10 miles
Day 4	Van Shuttle to Hualapai Hilltop / Havasupai Trailhead: hike into Havasu Canyon / Supai Village (8 miles, 1700-foot descent); overnight lodging at Havasupai Lodge	8 miles
Day 5	Hike to the falls of Havasu Canyon (Navajo, Havasu, Mooney Falls) (6 miles round trip); overnight lodging at Havasupai Lodge	6 miles
Day 6	Hike out of Havasu Canyon to Hualapai Hilltop; (8 miles); van shuttle return to Flagstaff; program concludes late afternoon	8 miles

Total Hiking Mileage - 46 miles

Rim-to-River-to-Rim will assemble in Flagstaff early morning of Day 1 and we'll shuttle to the North Rim, arriving early enough for a leisurely walk along the Rim.

Hotel Grand Canyon National Park Lodge which is the same as
Grand Front Lodge, North Rim Grand Canyon, Tele: 928 638 2611

Mon May 24 – Day 2

We begin our descent into the canyon the next morning, following Bright Angel Creek as it tumbles toward the Colorado. Along the way, we'll pass Roaring Springs, the primary water source for both the North and South Rim villages. A short spur trail offers the irresistible opportunity to visit Ribbon Falls. By the time we reach Phantom Ranch, our destination for the evening, we will have descended almost 6,300 feet over 14 miles through five distinct life zones to the canyon floor.

Hotel Phantom Ranch on Grand Canyon Floor, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023
Tele 928 638 2631 (main switchboard for emergencies only – only one payphone)

Tue May 25 – Day 3

Breakfast precedes daybreak — a Phantom Ranch tradition — and we'll be crossing over the Colorado as the sun begins to rise above the canyon walls. We'll follow the Bright Angel Trail as it climbs from the river beyond the Inner Canyon to Indian Gardens, and onward and upward to the South Rim (10 miles). We'll spend the evening at the Maswik Lodge on the Rim and celebrate over dinner at magnificent El Tovar.

Hotel Maswik Lodge (south rim), Grand Canyon, AZ 86023
Tele: 928 638 2631 (main switchboard then ask for Maswik Lodge)

Wed May 26 – Day 4

We'll leave the South Rim early morning of Day 4 (but, we promise, not as early as our departure from Phantom Ranch the previous morning) and head to the Hualapai Hilltop, trailhead for our hike to Supai. An 8-mile trek into Havasu leads to Supai Village, tribal center of the Havasupai Nation.

Hotel Havasupai Lodge - 2 nights - with pack only
Supai, AZ 86435 Tele: 928 448 2111

Thu May 27 – Day 5

The magnificent waterfalls of Havasu provide the adventure for Day 5. We'll hike from the lodge along Havasu Creek, with an opportunity to visit Havasu's two newest falls, created by the 2008 flood. We'll continue to Havasu and Mooney, with their spectacular drops of 100' and 196' respectively, as the creek plunges toward the Colorado (6 miles).

Fri May 28 – Day 6

Following a final evening at the Havasupai Lodge, we'll hike from the canyon and return to Flagstaff.

Pm End of tour by 4-5pm with van dropping at Flagstaff Airport

6:00pm Shuttle from Amtrak station to Phoenix arriving at 9:10pm

Note: shuttles at 3 and 6pm (latest) arriving at 6:10pm and 9:10pm at Phoenix airport – shuttle to hotel

Hotel Fairfield Inn at Phoenix Airport
4702 E. University Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85034 Tele: 480 829 0700
Conf#86641817 with free shuttle from airport to hotel

Sat May 29

10:55am Depart Phoenix via Continental #1434 (snack)

6:42pm Arrive EWR

Sobering?

Hi Diana - Don't be insulted! Everybody gets
this letter - you would not believe what we've
dealt with the last
few years - good
war stories - I'll
tell you Carol



Thank you for your interest in our Grand Canyon hiking program. We'd like to offer a few comments for your serious consideration as input in your decision as to whether or not this is truly a program for you. During the course of the many, many years that we have been leading hikes into the Grand Canyon as a part of our program, we have found that an alarming number of participants have underestimated the level of physical challenge inherent in this hike. Although we will be hiking in the Park, make no mistake, **this is no walk in the park.**

To be absolutely blunt --this is a significant athletic undertaking appropriate for those who are physically active in their everyday lives and not for anyone who has the slightest doubt about their ability to hike what, after all, is the **GRAND** Canyon. The hike down, if you are considering the South Rim-based trip, is 7.5 miles with a descent of almost 4800 feet. Obviously, the hike **UP** involves reclaiming those same 4800 feet in about 10 miles. If you are contemplating a Rim-to-Rim hike, the situation is even more serious; the hike from the North Rim is 14 miles with a descent of almost 6000-feet. Downhill, yes, but, believe it or not, far more punishing than the hike up the next morning. The cumulative impact of the downhill and increasing heat cannot be overemphasized. The hike out is the same on both trips---10 miles with the 4800-foot ascent. It is not uncommon, particularly for our May and early-September programs, to experience temperatures in excess of 100-degrees on the Canyon floor.

Do not even think of the Grand Canyon as one of those opportunities to "see" if you can do it. Do not undertake the trip to "get" in shape. You **must** be in the appropriate condition to undertake what can be a life-threatening situation if you are not physically prepared. Once we have launched into our descent into the canyon, know that there is no bail out. People come with the mistaken notion that if things go a little sour somehow either a guide or a ranger or a mule will get them out. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The National Park Service will not evacuate you unless you are in a truly life-threatening condition.

If we sound a little strident it is because in over 16 years leading tours into the Canyon you can imagine what we have seen and why we are so adamant about trying to let prospective guests know precisely what is involved before they ruin what should have been their vacation as well as affecting everyone else in the group. We really encourage you to call us to discuss the trip if you are still interested (1-800-417-2453). On one note let us reassure you ---age absolutely has nothing to do with this-- most of our guests are between 40 and 70. Our fit hikers are usually more fit than much younger "weekend" athletes.

Now, if we haven't totally sent you running (a good thing!) give us a call, for despite the bleak picture we paint, make no mistake, hiking the Grand Canyon truly is an incredible experience. All of our comments are intended to ensure that you fully enjoy this adventure of a lifetime. Because if you love to hike and consider yourself to be a hiker, at some point in your life, you have to hike the Grand Canyon.

Carol and Dick Gottseger
Carol & Dick

7975 East Harvard Avenue #J Denver CO 80231 tel 303-368-4418 fax 303-368-1651

Indian Tribe Wins Fight to Limit Research of Its DNA

By **AMY HARMON**

SUPAI, Ariz. — Seven years ago, the [Havasupai Indians](#), who live amid the turquoise waterfalls and red cliffs miles deep in the Grand Canyon, issued a “banishment order” to keep [Arizona State University](#) employees from setting foot on their reservation — an ancient punishment for what they regarded as a genetic-era betrayal.

Members of the tiny, isolated tribe had given DNA samples to university researchers starting in 1990, in the hope that they might provide genetic clues to the tribe’s devastating rate of diabetes. But they learned that their blood samples had been used to study many other things, including mental illness and theories of the tribe’s geographical origins that contradict their traditional stories. The geneticist responsible for the research has said that she had obtained permission for wider-ranging genetic studies.

Acknowledging a desire to “remedy the wrong that was done,” the university’s Board of Regents on Tuesday agreed to pay \$700,000 to 41 of the tribe’s members, return the blood samples and provide other forms of assistance to the impoverished Havasupai — a settlement that legal experts said was significant because it implied that the rights of research subjects can be violated when they are not fully informed about how their DNA might be used. The case raised the question of whether scientists had taken advantage of a vulnerable population, and it created an image problem for a university eager to cast itself as a center for American Indian studies. But genetics experts and civil rights advocates say it may also fuel a growing debate over researchers’ responsibility to communicate the range of personal information that can be gleaned from DNA at a time when it is being collected on an ever-greater scale for research and routine medical care.

“I’m not against scientific research,” said Carletta Tilousi, 39, a member of the Havasupai tribal council. “I just want it to be done right. They used our blood for all these studies, people got degrees and grants, and they never asked our permission.” Researchers and institutions that receive federal funds are required to receive “informed consent” from subjects, ensuring that they understand the risks and benefits before they participate. But such protections were designed primarily for research that carried physical risks, like experimental drug trials or surgery. When it comes to mining DNA, the rules — and the risks — are murkier. Is it necessary, for instance, to ask someone who has donated DNA for research on heart disease if that DNA can be used for Alzheimer’s or addiction research? Many scientists say no, arguing that the potential benefit from unencumbered biomedical research trumps the value of individual control. “Everyone wants to be open and transparent,” said Dr. David Karp, an associate professor of internal medicine at the [University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center](#) in Dallas, who has studied informed consent for DNA research. “The question is, how far do you have to go? Do you have to create some massive database of people’s wishes for their DNA specimens?”

The Havasupai settlement appears to be the first payment to individuals who said their DNA was misused, several legal experts said, and came after the university spent \$1.7 million fighting lawsuits by tribe members. Even as the Havasupai prepared to reclaim the 151 remaining blood samples from a university freezer this week, Therese Markow, the geneticist, defended her actions as ethical. Those judging her otherwise, she suggested, failed to understand the fundamental nature of genetic research, where progress often occurs from studies that do not appear to bear directly on a particular disease.

“I was doing good science,” Dr. Markow, now a professor at the [University of California, San Diego](#), said in a telephone interview.

Edmond Tilousi, 56, a cousin of Carletta Tilousi and the tribe’s vice chairman, can climb the eight miles from his village on the floor of the western Grand Canyon to the rim in three hours, when he is in a rush. Horse or helicopter are the other ways out, and Mr. Tilousi is

increasingly rare among the tribe's members in his ability to make the hike. Beginning in the 1960s, an extraordinarily high incidence of Type 2 diabetes led to amputations, even among the younger members, and forced many to leave the canyon for dialysis.

In late 1989, Mr. Tilousi's uncle Rex Tilousi approached John Martin, an Arizona State University anthropologist who had gained the tribe's trust, to ask if he knew a doctor who could help. "I asked him, 'How can we prevent this from spreading?'" the elder Mr. Tilousi recalled. Professor Martin approached Dr. Markow. A link had recently been reported between a genetic variant and the high rate of diabetes among Pima Indians. If a similar link was found among the Havasupai, it might point to an important risk factor. The two professors received money from the university to study diabetes in the tribe. Dr. Markow was interested in schizophrenia research as well, and in the summer of 1990, with a grant from the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression, she and her graduate students began collecting blood samples in Supai. Women here remember being happy to see her in those days, an athletic figure who talked to them about how to be more healthy. Working out of the health clinic in the center of the village, Dr. Markow recruited tribe members to ask others to give blood. To the Havasupai, blood has deep spiritual meaning.

"I went and told people, if they have their blood taken, it would help them," said Floranda Uqualla, 46, whose parents and grandparents suffered from diabetes. "And we might get a cure so that our people won't have to leave our canyon." Roughly 100 tribe members who gave blood from 1990 to 1994 signed a broad consent that said the research was to "study the causes of behavioral/medical disorders."

The consent form was purposely simple, Dr. Markow said, given that English was a second language for many Havasupai, and few of the tribe's 650 members had graduated from high school. They were always given the opportunity to ask questions, she said, and students were also instructed to explain the project and get written and verbal consent from donors.

Dr. Markow examined several genes that were thought to have medical relevance, including for schizophrenia, metabolic disorders and alcoholism, she said, but found little to pursue. The Havasupai did not, it turned out, share the gene variant linked to diabetes in the Pima. But a few years later, a graduate student using new technology came up with a way to discern variations in the Havasupai DNA, which was stored in a university freezer, and he wrote a dissertation based on his research. Carletta Tilousi, one of the few Havasupai to attend college, stopped by Professor Martin's office one day in 2003, and he invited her to the student's doctoral presentation. Ms. Tilousi understood little of the technical aspect, but what she heard bore no resemblance to the diabetes research she had pictured when she had given her own blood sample years earlier.

"Did you have permission," she asked during the question period, "to use Havasupai blood for your research?" The presentation was halted. Dr. Markow and the other members of the doctoral committee asked the student to redact that chapter from his dissertation. But months later, tribe members learned more about the research when a university investigation discovered two dozen published articles based on the blood samples that Dr. Markow had collected. One reported a high degree of inbreeding, a measure that can correspond with a higher susceptibility to disease. Ms. Tilousi found that offensive. "We say if you do that, a close relative of yours will die," she said. Another article, suggesting that the tribe's ancestors had crossed the frozen Bering Sea to arrive in North America, flew in the face of the tribe's traditional stories that it had originated in the canyon and was assigned to be its guardian. Listening to the investigators, Ms. Tilousi felt a surge of anger, she recalled. But in Supai, the initial reaction was more of hurt. Though some Havasupai knew already that their ancestors most likely came from Asia, "when people tell us, 'No, this is not where you are from,' and your own blood says so — it is confusing to us," Rex Tilousi said. "It hurts the elders who have been telling these stories to our grandchildren."

Others questioned whether they could have unwittingly contributed to research that could threaten the tribe's rights to its land. "Our coming from the canyon, that is the basis of our sovereign rights," said Edmond Tilousi, the tribe's vice chairman. Many members are still suffering from diabetes and say they were never told if researchers had learned anything that could help them. The classes on

nutrition that Dr. Markow had sponsored with grant money have since petered out. Ms. Uqualla, who had recruited blood donors, said she felt shamed by the news that it had been used for research that could potentially damage the tribe. "I let my people down," she said.

The money from the settlement will be divided among the 41 tribe members. Ms. Uqualla, for one, hopes to buy a horse trailer. But Stephen F. Hanlon, a lawyer who has represented the tribe members without charge, said the resources the university agreed to provide, including scholarships and assistance in obtaining federal funds for projects like a new health clinic, had the potential to transform the tribal village at the bottom of one of the world's most famous natural wonders.

On Tuesday, Ms. Tilousi cried as a university official unlocked the freezer in the nondescript storage room in the Tempe campus where the blood samples had long been stored. Wearing protective glasses, gloves and a lab coat, she and a delegation of tribal members sang in Havasupai as they saw the blood that had been taken from them and from their relatives, now dead.

On the box inside the freezer was scrawled the name, "Markow."