

Our Family Camping

Introduction – From Grandma and Grandpa Lentz

We both loved the outdoors. We experienced it in many different ways.

Before getting married, each of us had plenty of stories to tell about our outdoor adventures. We liked camping, hiking, snow skiing, water skiing, outdoor music festivals and events. We brought this spirit into our married life. We sought to share with our children the love of being in the outdoors.

We're putting together this collection of photos and memories of our family camping adventures primarily for you, our grandchildren. It appears so far that your parents, (Chelsea and Ernie, and Jillian and Kevin) are continuing this great tradition of family camping. And it is wonderful how Shawn has become a constant companion as a very special "Uncle Shawn" for you.

We hope you will enjoy these photos, and will enjoy the many stories that come from looking at them together. You may have fun learning about how similar your experiences are to those of your parents ... when they were your age.

As best as we can remember, our first family camping trip for which we have a few photos, was in 1984, in the Crystal Basin Recreation Area, up Highway 50 from Sacramento. The photos and stories that follow are just some of the many camping experience our family enjoyed together.

For many years we did just tent camping. Then we bought a tent-trailer and enjoyed camping with it for many more years. Through Indian Guides, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts your mom, your dad, and Uncle Shawn also got to enjoy the outdoors with their friends.

Throughout the years we also had some really interesting day trips into the outdoors, encounters with nature, that we want to share with you. And when Shawn, Chelsea and Kevin got older, they went on a few backpacking trips with Grandpa.

This is what we want to share with you in this collection of photos and memoirs.

Grandma's First Backpacking Trip

During their courtship, Grandma and Grandpa decided to go backpacking one weekend, during the springtime. They went into Mineral King, located in the southern part of Sequoia National Park. Mineral King lies at the headwaters of the East Fork of the Kaweah River. They were interested in Mineral King because at that time, the Disney Corporation was proposing to build a major ski resort in Mineral King. The Sierra Club opposed it. The Fresno Ski Club (including Grandma and Grandpa) supported it. But it never came to be.

To get there, they drove south from Fresno (where they were both living at the time) to Visalia, then east onto Highway 198 past Three Rivers and into the Sierra Mountains. The photo below is a “selfie” taken at their campsite. They stayed there one night. There was still snow on the ground from winter.



Right From the Start

Someday you will enjoy the fact that your grandma and grandpa spent their honeymoon in the Rocky Mountains of Montana and Wyoming, at a place called Beartooth Ranch. The closest town was a place called Nye. (A road sign there read “Entering and Leaving Nye, Montana.”) We stayed at a “dude ranch” where all the hard work was done for us. We went on a fishing expedition on horseback into the Sawtooth Mountain Range. It was late August.



Grandma and Grandpa ready for the trail ride.



Our honeymoon accommodations at “Base Camp.” We shared the tent along with four other “dudes.” One night we were surprised to get about a foot of snow. During our stay, a bear had been coming around at night. Our packer had a bear license so he shot and cleaned it. One night we all ate bear meat with our stew.

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