

Sacramento

July 2024



Bob and Molly Hillery

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Thursday July 18

Our plan was to fly from Cincinnati to Sacramento via Atlanta this evening but about noon we received notice that our first flight was to be delayed, putting our connection in Atlanta in jeopardy. We considered the options and decided that the best option would be to fly early on Friday morning after staying at the airport Marriott overnight. Hence, we made a reservation for dinner at the Capital Grille and had a very nice meal before driving to the hotel.

Friday July 19

When we woke at 6:15, I received a text from Elizabeth reporting a serious computer outage that was affecting – amongst many others – Delta Air Lines and many airports were experiencing a “ground stop”. We had received no notifications from Delta, so we left for the airport hopeful but with a little trepidation. When we reached the terminal there were extremely long lines at all airline desks, although the lines at Delta were somewhat shorter and moving! We were checked in and went through Security with no additional information on any delay and the departure board still showing us leaving on time.

Just before the scheduled boarding time, the desk clerk announced that a decision on boarding would be made “shortly”. Indeed, an announcement was made that we would be boarding but no statement as to when we might leave. It turned out that we left the gate about one hour later than scheduled, which cut into our Salt Lake City layover time to about 30 minutes. Nevertheless, we were on our way!

We enjoyed a good breakfast on board and apparently made up a little time such that we felt comfortable about making our onward connection. We did, in fact, have about 40 minutes to make the change but the gate-to-gate distance couldn't have been much larger – about 3500 feet on one concourse. I “ran” on ahead, partly because I was hoping to get our seats changed but arrived at the new gate only to find a very long line. It appeared that most in line were from the incoming flight trying to get changes for their onward journey, but the bottom line was that when Molly arrived, the flight was called, and we boarded. This flight to Sacramento was a little late leaving, took less than 90 minutes, and we arrived in a very hot (100F+) Sacramento about 30 minutes behind the originally scheduled time. With what we had seen in both Cincinnati and Salt Lake City, and with the reports we have subsequently seen and read, it is quite remarkable that we were here at all!

We picked up the rental car and drove to the Fairfield Inn in Roseville and checked in around 2:30pm local time. Despite the heat (it had peaked at 107F according to the car thermometer) I went for a two-mile walk on the nearby trail. The last ½ mile was brutal and I was glad to get back in air-conditioned comfort.

Tonight, we met Christopher, Cyndi and Sammy at Casa del Lago for dinner and had a very pleasant meal before retiring around 10pm after a very hectic and interesting day!



Saturday July 20

We went to the local Starbucks about 8:30 and then returned to the hotel as we were not meeting the family again until lunchtime. I went for a much more pleasant 3.6 mile walk in the more moderate heat of the morning – mid-eighties – but it was once again forecast to top 100F today.

We met at Mod Pizza for lunch and followed this with Coldstone ice cream before returning to the hotel for the afternoon.

Tonight, we met at a restaurant called Encore!, which is essentially a Sports Bar with burger and beer – and a menu that we

could all enjoy. And, we had another couple of hours of good conversation.

Sunday July 21

We went to Starbucks for morning coffee and then I went for a very pleasant walk along the nearby trail on a relatively cool (mid-eighties) morning. Later, we met Christopher, Cyndi and Sammy at the Window Box Café for brunch. Surprisingly, the place was almost empty – just as it has been on all of our previous visits for breakfast, but those visits have been on Mondays. We spent the afternoon in the hotel before meeting once again for dinner.



Tonight, we ate at a Brazilian steakhouse where the meat is served by “wandering” waiters who slice off what you want from about 20 different cooked meat skewers. The fillet mignon and lamb were my favorites, but everyone seemed to enjoy their choices. We talked about dates for a possible next visit later in the year and their upcoming trip to Paris for the Olympic Games and then we said our farewells for this visit.

Monday July 22

We got up and checked out of the hotel before driving to a local iHop for breakfast. Then it was an easy drive to the airport and a simple return of the rental car. The lines at the check-in desks were quite long, indicating that the effects of the IT problem of last Friday were still being felt. Our flights to Salt Lake City and then to Cincinnati were listed as on-time so we were hopeful for an uneventful journey home.

This all changed in Salt Lake City. As we walked to the connecting gate, we noticed that our onward flight was now leaving 30 minutes late. Not too bad, we thought, but there were alarmingly long lines at all the help desks. In the SkyClub, we checked in to the line for assistance and, after waiting for about 45 minutes, we sat with an agent. The best she could offer (if our flight was further delayed or cancelled – which seemed increasingly likely) was the same flight on the next day – in Economy!

As it turned out – after about 3 hours of nervousness – we left on our original flight and arrived in Cincinnati about 2am. Fortunately, we were still able to get to our car (which started!) and were home by 3am. It didn’t spoil the weekend visit to our California family, but it caused a period of anxiety. Apparently, Delta was more significantly affected by the outage as their pilot tracking was part of the same system!

