

Journal Entry - May 15, 2009

Arrived in Tampa Bay

Well, we have spent time in Biloxi, Miss and Gulf Shores, Alabama before trekking down the Florida highway to boating central in Tampa Bay Florida. We arrived in the Tampa Bay area today and are at an R V park across the street from a ferry that will take us to a beach on an island that is rated as the number one rated beach in the U S for the past 5 years. We are saving that adventure until tomorrow.

Biloxi beach looked just like it did on TV right after hurricane Katrina, except the debris from the fallen houses across the street from the gulf was removed in Mississippi, unlike Galveston, Texas. A few homes have been rebuilt and the first two blocks have been replaced by a big dirt berm to help protect the blocks behind the berm. There are two new casinos on the water but they are no longer on floating docks, they are affixed by pier like structures designed to sustain themselves better in hurricanes. Gulf Shores was an area we had never even heard of but consists of miles of white sugar-like sand beaches about 30 miles long, lots of condos, beach houses and beach rentals-- some affected by the recession and marked with the infamous "short sale" affixed to the "for sale" sign in front of the properties.

Our weather has been good but we were surprised by a short thunder shower this afternoon as we were in a local grocery store, we just sat it out until we could return to our truck.

So far it's been about 89 degrees and a cool gulf breeze.

That's about it for now, so until next time, happy trails! Janice