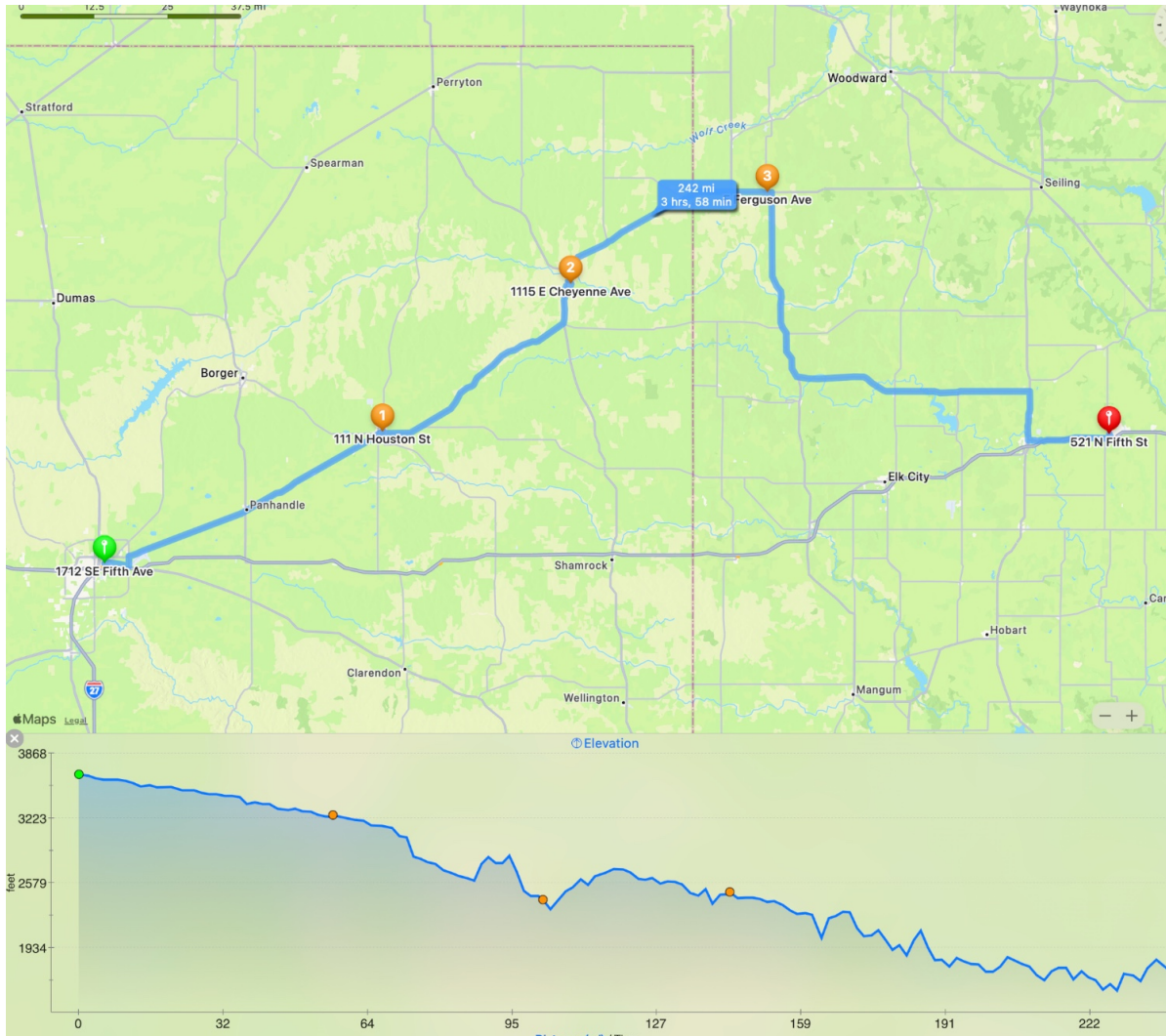


Day Six | Roger's Traveler's Notebook



Day six on the road and I have lower back pain to prove it!

But there are fresh adventures to take and new people to meet so no complaining is allowed.

Charles appeared unassuming, sitting on his scooter. He seemed to be in his late 70s and was accompanied by two Asian women around the same age. Because everyone has a story, I struck up a conversation with him.



His scooter was parked next to the waffle station in the hotel restaurant. I commented, "You've got a great parking spot." He chuckled and replied, "Just waiting for my waffle." "Well, enjoy!" I said.

He got his waffle and moved to the table next to mine. Two ladies were already seated there. He shifted from his scooter to a chair and started eating his waffle. I tried to see what was on his hat. I could see the word Vietnam and a picture of a helicopter.

Between bites of breakfast, I asked, "Were you stationed in Vietnam?"

"Yes, I was."

"Thank you for your service," I said. I told him I was in the U.S. Coast Guard and was on my way to Vietnam in 1972 at the very end of the war, but my orders were changed and I never went.

I asked him about his role in the war. He said he was in the Army and part of the medivac team. They would go in, sometimes facing enemy fire, to rescue wounded soldiers.

In the 60s, my brother did a tour of duty in Vietnam and was critically wounded. Men like Charles rescued him. I thanked him for his bravery and what he did. He said he was there for 11 months in 1969 and was happy to come back home.

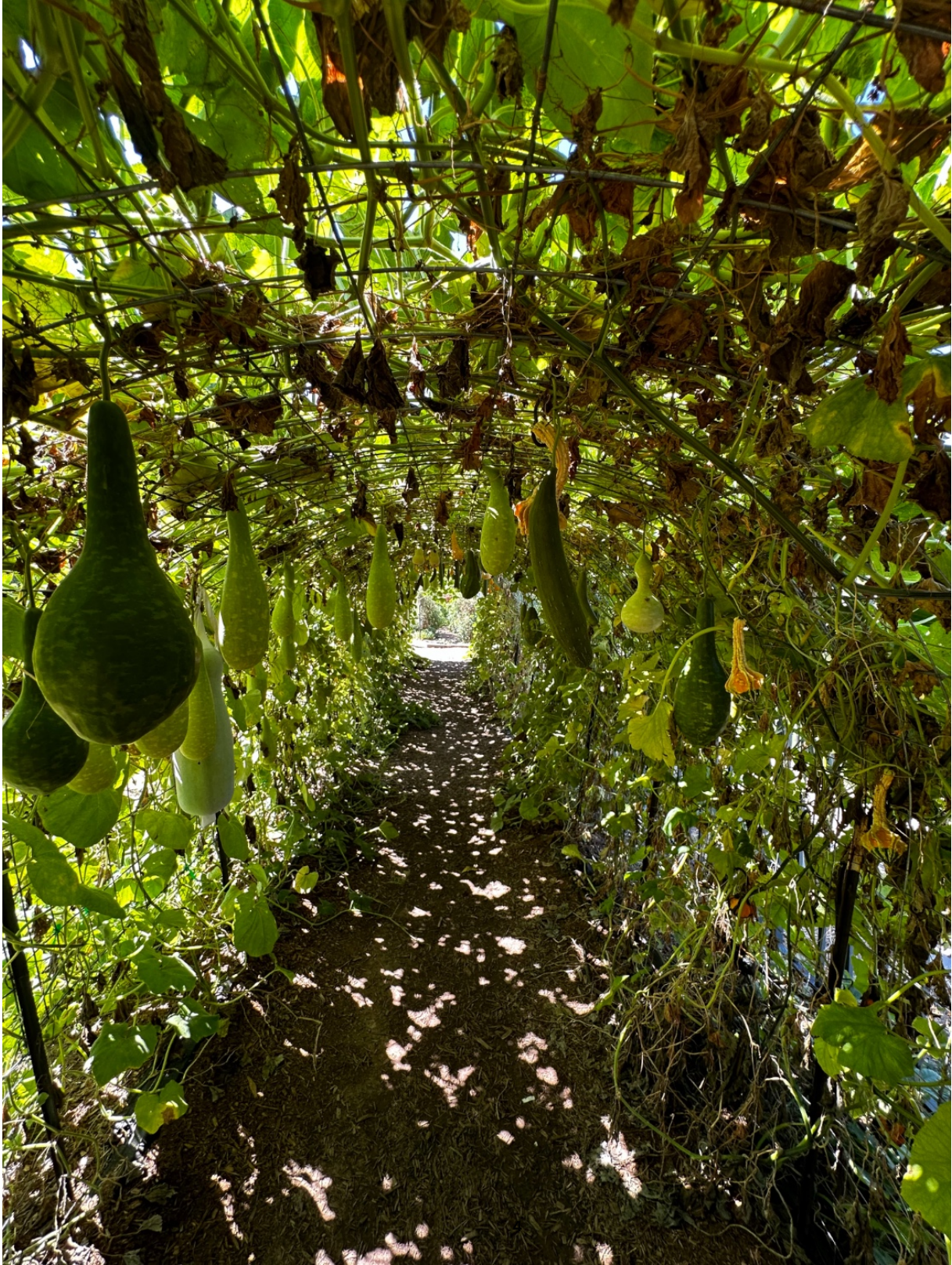
He worked for a telecommunications company in Southern California after his time in the Army. Eventually, he retired with Verizon. He met his Vietnamese wife in Westminster, California. She was one of the women traveling with him.

Charles and his wife were accompanied by her sister, who was visiting from Vietnam. I welcomed her to our country, as she is here legally. All three of them were friendly, and I believe the women were happy that Charles and I were engaging in conversation. They even took some pictures of us! They were traveling from Tennessee to California to visit friends and family. We shook hands and bid farewell as newfound friends. It was a fantastic way to start the day.

Our goal was to get to Oklahoma today, but before leaving Amarillo, Texas we discovered an outstanding botanical garden. I got a lot of ideas for my yard!



I loved this hanging gourd arbor!



It was time to get back on the road to Oklahoma. We got off the Interstate and took U.S. Highway 60 which runs north of I-40. We wanted to drive through some tiny Texas towns. The road was nearly empty of vehicles and while it took us longer to reach Weatherford, Oklahoma; it was pleasant, relaxing, and at times beautiful.



We arrived in Weatherford, OK around 5:30 PM. We joined our friends, Chuck, and Myra Frantz, for dinner at their home. Unfortunately, I didn't take any pics! We were too busy talking.

Chuck built his lovely home by himself and it is amazing. Myra is an Optometrist and has a practice in Weatherford.

Chuck prepared some outstanding ribeyes for us, along with fried okra, baked potato, and fresh fruit. All delicious. Somehow I took a photo of Chuck's barbeque. I guess that's a man thing!



Tomorrow, we will head towards our final destination, Branson, Missouri. My back will certainly enjoy the respite!