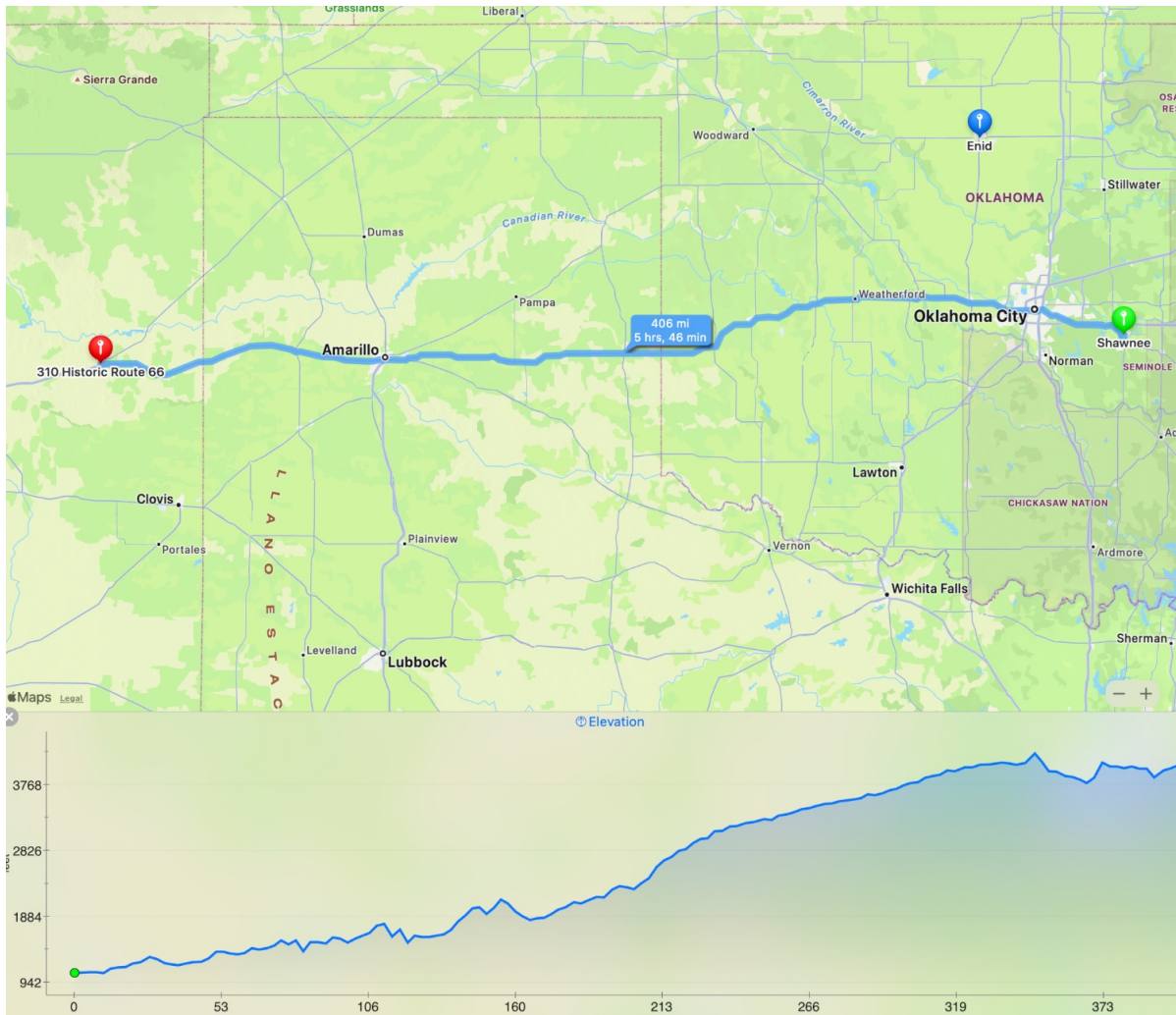


Day Thirteen | Roger's Travelers Notebook



We have been on the road for thirteen days and we haven't encountered any unfriendly people. Americans often receive negative stereotypes, but they are actually very approachable and interested in one another. It's incredibly easy to start a conversation with a fellow American.

This morning, I was in the hotel lobby enjoying a cup of coffee. It's my routine when I'm traveling. I like to get up, put on my shorts and t-shirt, and go out. This gives Carol time to have her own Bible study and pray. I don't mind being alone, but I also need to be around people. I make sure to smile or nod at people as they walk by, instead of burying my head in my Bible or computer.

I was approachable when a man walked up to me. He said, "Excuse me, I haven't worn a suit in years..." He had an untied necktie around his neck. I finished his sentence, "You want me to tie your tie for you?" We both laughed. He said, "If you wouldn't mind." I stood up and told him I understood. I said I would be happy to tie it for him.



I found the best way to tie it was by putting it around my neck and then slipping it off. I advised him to not untie it once it's tied, but simply take it off and hang it in the closet for the next event.

In my 20s, I learned to tie a great knot. It happened at a radio station where I was recording a commercial for the bookstore I managed. The DJ noticed my poorly tied tie and told me I needed to know how to tie a better knot. He showed me how to do it, and I have never forgotten the technique.

I didn't teach the man in the hotel how to tie a tie because they were in a hurry for their event. But he now had a great knot, if I say so myself! His teenage son also had a tie on. I asked him who tied it for him. He showed me it was a clip-on tie. It's a good option for those who don't know how to tie a tie.

We left eastern Oklahoma, back on the road!

How far should we drive today?



We made our first stop at the Costco in Oklahoma City. We wanted to grab some snacks for the road, like pecans and beef jerky. Compared to the Costco in Fresno, this one was smaller. It had about six or seven regular checkouts and several self checkouts. Surprisingly, it wasn't crowded at all, which made it enjoyable to explore.



Carol drove while I navigated. As we left Oklahoma City, I received a text from my friend Chuck in Weatherford, Oklahoma. He offered to grill burgers for us to take on our trip and eat at our hotel that evening. The meat was from his own cattle. Excited by the offer, we decided to stop and see him.

When we arrived, Chuck already had the burgers on the grill. We had visited his house the week before and his beautiful dog, Hershey, was delighted to see us. I can't remember the breed, but she's a hunting dog. As we waited for the burgers to cook, Hershey climbed onto our laps while we sat on the couch. Chuck commented, "She's big, but she thinks she's a lap dog." We enjoyed petting her.

The burgers looked great. Chuck packed them up for us. He also gave us four ripe and sweet peaches. We took them with us. It was very nice. Later in the evening, we enjoyed them in our room and we have a few peaches for later on down the road.

We made a stop just outside of Amarillo at a huge cross. We had seen it 20 years ago, but this time they had added some incredibly realistic stations of the cross and a depiction of the Last Supper. It was definitely worth the fifteen-minute stop.



We considered staying overnight in Amarillo, Texas, but decided we would drive another

hundred miles to Tucumcari.



The population of this little town is around 5,000, but there are major hotels along the highway.

Tucumcari gets its name from the nearby Tucumcari Mountain. The name is believed to have originated from the Comanche Indians. Initially, the town was called “Six Shooter Siding” because of the frequent gunfights during the wild west era. Those were the good old days!

We need gas, but we will get it in the morning.

Tomorrow? Who knows, but we will keep pressing onward. California or bust!