

PAY IT FORWARD, THE ESCAPEES WAY

I retired in 1990 and had read everything I could find about the northwest US and Canada. I knew the first adventure for my wife, Laney, and me would be a trip to Alaska. Two hours after our daughter graduated from college, we headed northwest in our 27-ft Hi-Lo trailer.

On the way to Inuvik, NWT, we found a couple on the Dempster Highway had run out of gas 50 miles from the nearest fuel station. We put our spare fuel into their tank. They generously offered to pay us, but we declined. It was our pleasure to help them out.

After the Hi-Lo, we graduated to a Travel Supreme 5th-wheel pulled by a Freightliner FL-50. As campground hosts for Yellowstone National Park, at Mammoth Hot Springs, we worked two days and had four days off, which was plenty of time to explore the park on our own. While going up the hill from the headquarters toward Norris Junction, a pickup truck waved us down in a curve. The driver said his truck had lost his brakes, and he couldn't get his fifth-wheel to the campground at Mammoth and asked if I would take his trailer down the hill. After we helped him park, he asked how much he owed us. I told him to simply pass it on the next time he could help someone.

While camping at Raccoon Valley, in Knoxville, Tennessee, I met a man that had a lot at Hondo, TX. We were both at Raccoon Valley for several months and became good friends. He became ill and so weak he could not drive, and his wife could not drive their 5th-wheel, so I told them I would drive it to his lot in

Hondo while Laney followed in our truck. It took three days to get to Hondo and two days to get back to Knoxville, but I think it gave Laney and me as much pleasure to do this good deed as it did our friends.

On highway US 50 (the loneliest road in America), the towns are 50 or more miles apart, and it was snowing with the wind blowing as it does in Nevada. We came across a pickup with a cattle trailer parked on the muddy shoulder many miles from nowhere. Two men, not dressed for the weather, said they had been there since morning and it was now 3:00 p.m. They had changed the fuel pump, but the truck was on such an angle that the standpipe in the fuel tank was not picking up the fuel. Their hands were so cold they could not take the fuel cap off the tank. I poured some gas from my generator supply in a glass and put the rest in the truck tank. Next I took the air filter off the carburetor and told the driver to crank the engine while I poured. When the engine started and continued to run, I knew my job was done. They offered to pay for the gas, but, as usual, my instructions were to pass it on.

It is my belief that the most pleasure goes to the person who provides help, rather than the recipient. Always pay it forward—it's the Escapees way.

Loyce Finch #51290



As we celebrate four decades of serving RVers, we want to observe and uphold the spirit of our founders, Joe and Kay Peterson, and the feelings of community fostered through caring and sharing. To do this, we have created the Peterson Spirit Award, a prestigious honor to be granted to Escapees members who demonstrate our core value by going over and above the expectations of others in order to support fellow RVers in need.

NOMINATE SOMEONE!

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