

Biking Fairbanks, AK to Skagway, AK 2004

This trip was like all my other trips, no time to prepare, not even sure if I was in shape. My contract at Freightliners was supposed to end 1.5 weeks before my trip and I was planning on using that time to get ready for my trip. The day before my contract ended a manager in another group found out I was leaving and wanted me to start working for him as soon as my contract ended. I had already planned a four-to-six-week trip in Alaska; I was planning on biking from Fairbanks, Alaska to Prince Rupert, British Columbia, Canada. Then I was planning on spending time in different parts of Southeast Alaska. I really wanted to make the trip and collect unemployment when I returned; I still think I should have gone for it. But I was able to get 2 weeks off (not paid) and a raise if I stayed. I figured since I cannot afford to quit working and the job market is still not great, I had better take the job.

Day 1, Wednesday, July 21, 2004

I woke up at 3:50 AM and loaded Andrea's explorer with my gear for Alaska. It cost \$50.00 to take my bike on Alaska airlines, I asked if it cost to take folding bikes and the lady said yes. She wasn't very friendly. I've heard the reason they charge for bikes is that they are oversized and it was possible to take a folding bike on the airlines for free (it might be best not to tell them it's a bike) I boarded the plane for Alaska in my shorts and a short sleeve shirt; I didn't even have long pants or a coat in my carry on. I forgot to get maps and take the pages I needed for my trip out of the Alaska Milepost. My first flight was to Seattle and I slept for the entire flight. I also slept for most of the flight to Anchorage, Alaska. A little boy (about 8-10 years old) kept kicking the back of my seat on the flight to Anchorage, Alaska. I felt like asking his mother (she was sat next to him) to control her child, but I'm not very good about complaining. I sleep pretty well and even with all the kicking I was mostly asleep. Towards the end of my flight to Anchorage I started talking to the man in the seat next to me. He was from Calgary, Alberta, Canada and was on a business trip for an oil company. He was going to some small remote town in Alaska. I told him about my biking plans and he told me how he normally took a month off every year for great vacations. He had traveled to Thailand and Southeast Alaska on previous trips. His girlfriend wanted him to take a year off work so they could travel. She was willing to quit her job and it sounded like he liked the idea. I hope he does it!!! He told me he was 40 years old and has friends that already have health issues and felt he should do some traveling before it's too late (I agree). My next flight was to Fairbanks and two very young girls (8 to 12 years old) from North of Fairbanks sat next to me. They kept asking me funny questions. Like is Texas larger than Alaska they said it looks like it on the map. I explained to them that the scale was different on the Alaska map and the map with Texas (the lower 48 states map). They also asked if I could bend my thumb back to touch the back of my hand and the older girl showed me how to do it. I didn't want to

try; it looked like it might hurt. When I arrived at the airport in Fairbanks, I could not find a bus schedule for a shuttle to Delta Junction, Alaska. I wanted to start my bike ride from Delta Junction since I had already biked from Fairbanks to Delta Junction in 1996. Well, I couldn't find any information and asked a taxi driver how much he thought it would cost to take the Taxi to Delta Junction. He was from Korea and didn't speak great English and told me it would be cheap and he would give me a 30% discount. I asked him about how much and he said he had not been there before. I said do you think about \$40.00 and it seemed like he said yes. Either I miss understood him or his estimate was way off. I went back into the airport to get my luggage and a lady came up to me with a piece of paper with my name on it that told me about a \$15 shuttle to Delta Junction that would take 2.5 hours and left at 4:15 PM from the airport. I asked her who gave her the message and she wasn't sure. I figured the message probably came from the Delta Junction Chamber of commerce, I had tried calling and sending them e-mail before departing for Alaska and was not successful. It turns out the message came from Andrea and she had the Avis lady give me the message. I figured if I took the taxi, I would be able to start biking about four hours early and I thought it would only cost about \$40.00. I ended up taking the taxi and by the time he arrived in Delta Junction (about 100 miles away) the meter read Over \$300.00. He told me with the discount it would be \$250 and I complained about if he would have given me a realistic estimate, I would have taken the bus. He ended up charging me \$200.00. The taxi driver was 62 years old and had been living in the US for about 10 years, I do not think he meant to mislead me, he seemed nice. I would have taken the bus if I would have known the real price. However, in the long run the extra four hours was probably worth \$200.00. It gave me an extra day in Southeast Alaska. I think the big problem was the taxi driver was from Korea originally and did not speak perfect English. I bought some groceries in Delta Junction. At the Delta Junction visitor center, I was thinking about asking this lady watering plants to take my photo, but she looked too busy and not very friendly. I started biking towards Tok, Alaska and kept seeing moose. Two times I saw a cow and calf moose. I also saw a cow and buck moose together and a moose by itself. That was probably the most moose (out of six trips) I had ever seen in one day in Alaska. The only time I have seen more moose in a single day is when I went camping on Isle Royal in the middle Lake Superior. It started raining before Dot Lake, Alaska I didn't put on my rain right away and it kept raining harder until I was getting wet and I then decided to put on my rain gear. It ended out raining pretty hard and I waited until the rain slowed down to continue biking to Dot Lake. I ended up biking until about 11:00 PM. Being that far north the sun did not set until around midnight. There were a lot of mosquitoes where I camped. I ended up watching the sunset and went to sleep a little after midnight. (Daily miles 64.26 miles, average 11.5 MPH, Max speed 27.9 MPH)

Day 2, Thursday, July 22, 2004

It rained all night and since my tent only seeps a little water, I was mostly dry. I woke up around 7:00 AM and started biking. The weather cleared and it started getting a little hot. I stopped to eat at a nice rest area, the bugs weren't too bad. I took off my shoes and wrenched the water out of my socks. At the rest stop there was a sign about a musher, Slim Williams, which had taken his dog sled to the world fair in Chicago from Alaska in 1933. His trip was used to help justify a road to Alaska and he took a second trip from Alaska to Seattle in 1934 on Motorcycle. It must have been very difficult making these trips if there were no roads. The road (Alcan Highway) was not built until it was needed in 1943 to help protect Alaska during World War II. The Alcan was very rough at first and was only used for the military. It was not opened to the public until 1947. I continued biking and my feet finally dried. Then I saw a neat little pond and wanted a photo. The road was a little wet and I decided to bike through the water. It looked like it was only a couple of inches of water covering the road in front of the pond. Well, it turned out that the water was deep enough to soak my front panniers and feet. After taking the photo I tried following the road back to the highway. The road dead ended at a marsh. I was close to the road, but decided to go back the way I came and had to wade through the puddle in the road again. I wrenched the water out of my socks again, I did not have an extra pair of dry socks that fit in my biking shoes. I guess I didn't pack properly, I had a couple of thick pair of socks that I only briefly used a couple of times during my trip. I continued biking and arrived in Tok around 2:00 PM. I meet some people at the visitor center that had motorcycled from Iowa to Alaska pulling a trailer. Both he and his wife were on the same bike. I saw a lot of motorcycles on their way to Alaska it seems like it would be a great trip on a motorcycle. In the visitor center I asked about the fires in Alaska and Canada and was told that things were fine in Alaska but the lady pointed out the fires in the Yukon. She told me that I should bring plenty of water and that the very smoky parts of the rode I would need to cover my face with a wet cloth to prevent smoke ventilation problems. I bought some groceries and then continued biking south. It started lightly raining so I immediately put on my rain gear. It continued to drizzle for the rest of the day. I meet a biking from Japan at a rest stop he had biked from Vancouver, BC and was headed to Anchorage. At another rest stop I had a lady in a camper from Colorado take my photo with my camera. She and her husband were very friendly people and they bragged that it was their 5th trip to Alaska. I told them it was my 6th trip. It sounded like they had actually spent a lot more time than I had in Alaska during their 5 trips. They told me one of their favorite spots was Hyder, Alaska where in July you can watch the bears eating Salmon out of the river. They also told me about all the wildlife they had seen on the Denali Highway. I've always wanted to bike that 100-mile stretch of highway, maybe next time. After talking with the people from Colorado for about a half hour I continued biking. I saw 2 bikers going north and said hello. Normally I always stop to talk with other bikers, but for

some reason I didn't stop this time. I had already finished about ½ my water and was concerned about getting more. Then I found a small store on the road going to Northway where I was able to buy a gallon of water. The store had a sign posting it hours as closing at 9:00 PM, but I was still able to buy stuff a few minutes before 10:00 PM (it turns out that I didn't know there was my clock was off by an hour until I reached Southeast Alaska a week later). I continued biking until I had covered 100 miles for the day; I like to have at least one day that I cover 100 miles when I do my bike trips. It took a few miles before I found a place to camp. I found a road that looked like a good place to camp and when I went around a corner, I noticed cars and a cabin so I continued biking on the highway. I then found a sign for Lakeview Campground and went to check it out. I didn't want to pay for camping and when I found out the campground was free and was located on a scenic lake I decided to camp there. It was about 10:00 PM when I quit biking and I went to sleep a little after midnight (sunset). The weather had improved and it only rained slightly that night. I asked people from Switzerland to take my photo with my camera in front of the lake. (Daily miles 103.17 miles, average 9.5 MPH, Max speed 30.7 MPH, Total Trip Miles 167.43 miles)

Day 3, Friday, July 23, 2004

Around 3:00 AM I heard a lot of howling, maybe wolfs! I hung my food in a tree as a precaution for bears the previous night and woke up around 7:00 AM to the sound of a squirrel checking out my food pack. Luckily, I heard it and yelled, so it didn't get into my food. The roads in Alaska were mostly paved with small patches of dirt used to fix the permafrost damaged roads. It is tough maintaining the roads in central Alaska because the ground stays frozen under the surface forming a solid ice layer called permafrost. When the ice shifts or melts the road above it gets pot holes and cracks in the pavement. Apparently, the fact that there is pavement on top of the ground increases the melting time of the ice and causes more problems with the permafrost shifting. My first stop for the day was at Tetlin National Wildlife refuge visitor center where I had a man take my photo with my camera. I asked the lady at the visitor center about the fires in Canada and she told me she had no reports on Canada only Alaska. A man that overheard me asking about the fires told me he had just come up from Haines Junction and that the road was not smoky. He said the winds had shifted and the road was clear. My next stop was the US/Canada border where I meet 2 people on Motorcycles taking photos of the signs. The man started on his motorcycle in the Midwest and the lady started from another spot 1000 miles further. She sounded French, so my guess is that she was from Quebec. I ended up taking their photo with their camera and then I had them take my photo with my camera. The roads in the Yukon seemed a little more challenging than in Alaska. The dirt stretches sometime lasted for a few miles and there was a lot of road construction nearby. Most of the road construction was a new improved highway running parallel to the current

highway and only slightly disrupted the flow of traffic. A little distance before I reached Beaver Creek, I stopped at a rest stop and met some people that were visiting from Ontario. The lady said she lived in Beaver Creek in the 70s and was surprised how many people she still knew. They also told me about an eagle nest where they saw young eagles. They said the nest was around the corner in a single tree of an open field. It sounded like it would be easy to find, but I completely forgot to look for the nest when I went around the corner. The customs entering Canada was very easy, I was expected them to ask how much money I had. In the past every time I entered Canada walking or on bike, they required that I showed them how much money I had available. This was to prove I could survive financially and that I was not entering Canada with the intent to find work. I stopped at a store in Beaver Creek to ask about a bank to exchange money and they told me there were no banks, but they could exchange my money. I exchanged \$40.00 US in traveler checks for \$50.00 Canadian and bought a few groceries. I continued biking south and met a man biking north. He told me he had started biking in New York City and was headed to Seward, Alaska. He was biking with some other people and I asked if I had seen them. He was planning on meeting up with them in Beaver Creek and he had been biking with them since he reached the Canadian Rockies. I told him that I had not seen any other bikers since before Beaver Creek. Since his friends were ahead of him, he hurried started biking north as I pedal south. As I was biking down the road, I recalled seeing a bike at the visitor center with a single pannier and touring racks. That may have been one of the people biking with the man from New York City. If so, I would image his gear was at the Beaver Creek campground. At Koeden River Lodge I stopped to get food and bought a license plate. The lodge was really just someone's road side business. They had a poor selection of groceries, camping was available; I believe you could stay in one their rooms and they had some souvenirs. That was a business like the ones you find spread along the Alcan Highway. It seemed like you rarely had to go more than 25 miles before another one of these homestead businesses. The hours weren't always great, but you didn't have to worry about starving. The man whom owned the store kept cracking jokes. I asked if they had any bottles of water for sale larger than the ½ liter bottles and he pointed to the 5-gallon jug and told me he would sell me a couple of them (he knew I was on a bike). When I asked for a 3 musketeers, he tried to sell me three of them. The other man in the store said that the nearby government campground often has signs that said you cannot camp there in a tent because of the bears. The funny man told me if I removed the warning sign I would not need to worry about the bears. The people at the store (the 3 inhabitants of the lodge) asked me why I was biking and told me they met a man earlier whom was a retired school teacher from New York City and biking towards Alaska. I assumed it was the man I met earlier and they answered the question I had about how he could get so much time off work. The funny thing is the guy looked like he might be in his fifties, but did not look old enough to be retired. The man at the lodge also gave me a map of the

government campgrounds and told me there was one about 12 miles down the road. I didn't want to stay in a campground and started looking for a place to camp after I had completed 100 miles of biking for the day. There was a lot of land for camping but it was only accessible through grassy wet fields (no roads). At about 10:30 PM I arrived at the government camp and decided it was time to camp. When I found out it cost \$12.00/ night I thought about continuing, but decided not to chance it since I was ready to find a camping area. I did not have the correct change in Canadian currency so I paid \$6.00 Canadian and \$6.00 US. The campground, Lake Creek Campground, was not that scenic and I did not see a lake. I stayed in campsite 14 and ate all my food before going to sleep, so I would not need to worry about bears. I ended up going to sleep a little after midnight. The mosquitoes were not too bad at this campground. Only had a little bit of rain, most of the day was hot and sunny. (Daily miles 105.04 miles, average 9.2 MPH, Max speed 28.3 MPH, Total Trip Miles 272.47 miles)

Day 4, Saturday, July 24, 2004

No mosquitoes in the morning and only a few the previous night. It drizzled a little on and off throughout the night. The rain stopped a little before I woke up. I packed up my gear and left camp around 8:00 AM. I biked south and stopped to buy supplies at a store about 15 miles north of Burwash Landing. In front of the store a very nice-looking lady (about 30 years old) asked me about my bike trip. I told her how I biked from Fairbanks and was headed to Skagway. She wanted to know what I had in my packs, how long I thought it would take and I asked her where she was from and where she was headed. She was from Fairbanks and was with a friend (another nice-looking lady, but not as friendly). They were both headed to Skagway to hike the Chinook trail. It's a 33-mile trail with camping along the way. I asked her about work in Fairbanks and she said I could probably find something. I continued south and a short distance past Donjek River a young man (about 25 to 30 years old) stopped on a dirt road and flagged me over to him. He told me he was getting tired and was wondering if I needed a ride. I told him no and we talked for about 10 minutes. He was curious why I biked and what drove me to bike so much. I told him it was my thing and I enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment I received after completed a long bike ride. He told me he was an Electrician in Anchorage and had lived in Wasilla all of his life. He told me he was going to Whitehorse. I never thought to ask him why he was going to Whitehorse; I assume it was just his thing. He continued driving towards Whitehorse and I started biking south again. Next stop was the museum in Burwash Landing, Yukon. I walked into the visitor center and looked into the museum. The lady behind the counter was giving my funny looks. I decided not to pay the \$5.00 to enter the museum; it looked like a bunch to taxidermy wildlife. I continued biking to Destruction Bay, Yukon and stopped at a store/cafe with the intent to buy groceries. I walked into the cafe side of the store and people eating in the cafe asked me about my biking. I talked with them and the people that ran the cafe pointed to the closed sign

and wanted me to leave. The cafe closed at 5:00 PM and was a few minutes after 5:00PM. I think the store was opened and the cafe was closed, however I decided to leave because there was another store down the road and the owner of the cafe didn't seem friendly. I went to the other store in Destruction Bay and bought groceries. I continued biking along Kluane Lake, the ride was very scenic. At one point I stopped and had a couple in a Subaru take my photo. The man was from Vancouver Island and the lady lived in Fairbanks. The next few days the people in Subaru passed me and honked a couple of times. My next stop was the visitor center at Goat Mountain. I ended up talking with a couple from Wisconsin and they told me the person (he was from Alaska) in the broken RV next to them saw a 1000-pound Grizzly bear at the base of Goat Mountain. Then the man from the RV came over and invited the people from Wisconsin to see the bear photos. I was thinking about asking if I could see, but wanted to get going. The man with the broken RV told me he had been waiting for a few days for parts to fix his RV. He said the parts were coming from the US Midwest and were delivered to Whitehorse, but the place that had the parts was closed until the following Monday. They also said the parts had been sent and returned the previous day. The man said once he got the parts, he would fix his own RV. The man in the RV told me about a couple of places where I could camp. I didn't stop at the places he suggested, because I wanted to complete another 100-mile day. As I was biking, I saw another biker headed north. I talked with him and he told me he was from New Zealand and had started biking in Vancouver BC. He told me he saw 2 bears next to the road after he left Haines Junction. One of them was about 15 miles South of where we were. He told me he was going to bike to Anchorage and take the ferry back to Vancouver Island. He wanted to know if he could get on the ferry and pay for one stop, then stay on the ferry until the end. I said I never heard of anyone doing that. When my bike reached 100 miles, I found a very good dirt road and biked down it. The road seemed too good for camping, but I didn't see any signs of homes. I followed the road for about ½ mile and then found a rough marked trail to camp nearby. The trail had some markers and looked like a game trail. After finding out about all the bears, I was a little worried that it might be a bear trail. I set up camp anyways and hung my food in a tree. I had quit biking around 10:00 PM and went to sleep around 11:30 PM (before sunset). There were a lot of Mosquitoes, but no rain. (Daily miles 100.8 miles, average 9.8 MPH, Max speed 26.1 MPH, Total Trip Miles 373.27 miles)

Day 5, Sunday, July 25, 2004

It was dry most of the night and then started raining a little around 6:00 AM. I ended up waking up around 7:15 AM and started biking around 8:00 AM. The ride to Haines junction was easy. I stopped at the visitor center and a very nice-looking lady from Florida asked me about my biking. She told me she came to Haines Junction for a rafting trip with a group from Florida. I went into the visitor center and asked the lady

Forest service employee if she knew the elevation of the pass between Whitehorse and Skagway. She didn't know and then told me the pass to Haines Junction was 1700 meters (5577 feet) and that Haines Junction was 800 meters (2625 feet). She told me the pass to Skagway was probably similar. When I told her I didn't realize we were at 800 meters, she then felt confused about the altitudes she gave me. I'm not real sure the pass to Haines is really 1700 meters. I needed water and stopped at a store in Haines Junction to buy supplies. I ended up leaving the store without getting water, I wasn't thinking. I continued biking to Otter falls and bought groceries. A lady was across the highway monitoring cars or something and I asked her how far I would need to travel off the main road to the falls and Lake Aishihik. She wasn't sure so I biked about 300 feet along the dirt road and saw a sign that said the falls were 30 kilometers. Since the round trip would be 60 kilometers (about 38 miles) I decided to save the falls for next time. The round trip would have probably taken about 5 hours on the dirt road. The main road was flat, in good condition and had several gradual downhill sections. There were also a few gradual up hills, but more down hills. I was going faster than on previous days, by 6:40 PM I had already biked 80 miles. This part of the Yukon was dryer with fewer mosquitos (almost none) and there weren't very many sections of dirt on the paved road. I had a tough time finding good places to stop for breaks. At one point I stopped at this old bridge. The bridge was originally built in 1904, then it was rebuilt by the US army in 1942 and then it was rebuilt again about 15 to 20 years ago by the Canadian government. The bridge was pretty rotted out and looked like it may have been rebuilt with the original wood from 1904. In a field I saw a brown object I thought it was moving, it looked like a bear. With my binoculars I could see that it was a rusty 55-gallon drum in the middle of an open field. When my bike odometer reached 100 miles for the day, I immediately found a dirt road that was blocked by a dirt pile. I decided it would be a great road to bike down to look for a camping spot. I found a nice spot to camp on a dug-up gravel pit with a view of mountains. It was a dry spot and there were no mosquitoes. I stopped biking by 9:00 PM, earliest time to stop biking yet. I ended up going to sleep by 10:30 PM. I was camped across the highway from a kennel and could hear dogs barking in the evening. (Daily miles 101.03 miles, average 10.2 MPH, Max speed 29.9 MPH, Total Trip Miles 474.3 miles)

Day 6, Monday, July 26, 2004

I wanted to get an early start and looked at the clock around 6:00 AM. I decided to wait until 6:30 AM to get up, but fell asleep and did not wake up until 7:30 AM. I didn't start biking until 8:20 AM, the latest morning let! The ride was easy with a few light head winds. The last time I was in Whitehorse, Yukon I visited Takhini Hot springs and it was a nice un-commercialized hot spring. Well, now it has a campground and costs to visit. I wanted to visit the hot springs again to see how much it had changed, missed the turn off on the Klondike Highway. Well, I saw a sign for

the hot springs a distance before the turn off and even saw the highway turnoff. However, I was expecting a sign at the turn off and didn't realize I was supposed to turn. As I got closer to town, I realized I missed the turn and looked at my map. That was the first time I realized I was supposed to turn on the Klondike highway. Well, I was closer to Whitehorse than the turn off and decided to continue riding into town. It was probably a good thing I missed the turn off. I went to one of the local hostels (Beez Kneez) and they did not have any room available. Then I went to the other hostel (Jeckell Guesthouse) in town and they had one available bed, so I took it. That hostel even had a 10% discount for bikers. I didn't have the correct change in Canadian and the lady that ran the hostel told me I could go to town to exchange money and then pay that evening. I biked to the local Subway to get some food, the meal was great and it was my first fast food meal since I left Portland. Then I went to the bank and exchanged some travelers checks for Canadian money. I noticed the bank charged for money exchange, but did not charge to exchange American Express traveler's check. What luck I had the correct type of traveler's checks and was not charged for exchanging money. Next stop was the local super store (President's choice – like a Fred Myers they had everything groceries, cloths, etc.). Then I went and paid for my hostel room. The man that took my money said the lady did not mark me as unpaid. When I saw her that night, I told her I paid the man and she said he told her. I took my first shower of the trip and it felt great. I biked on the bike trail near the restored sternwheeler boat, the SS Klondike. Then I biked along the water to a sign that had a map of the area and in the middle of the map was a hole near the words fish ladder. I was very close to the dam and assumed that the fish ladder was very close. I biked to the lake and along the shore. I didn't see the dam and then looked back to see it. At that point, I knew I went too far, but the lake was scenic and I decided to continue biking up the lake towards the box canyon for another 15 minutes. I came to a steep part of the road with a fork to a dead-end road. First, I biked to the end of the dead-end road and could see a box canyon that led into the lake. I had seen photos of the box canyon and thought it was only accessible by boat. When I returned to the road with the big hill, I decided to continue biking for another 15 minutes to see if I could get a better view of the box canyon. I walked my bike part of the way up the hill and then biked to a view point where I could see the box canyon named mile canyon and a bridge. I then decided to bike to the bridge. The Yukon River went through the scenic mile canyon and in 1904 there was no lake below and it was very dangerous navigating a boat through the narrow fast running canyon river. In those days there was a small town named Canyon city up river where people helped people ship their belongings and navigating the river for a fee. Now Canyon City is an archeological site that can only be reached by boat or by a hiking trail. Someday I would like to return and hike the trail to Canyon City. I biked back to the SS Klondike, across the bridge over the Yukon and up to the fish ladder. At the fish ladder I meet a long-haired local biker that told me about the fish ladder. He told me the fish had already

reached Dawson City and were just starting to reach the Whitehorse fish ladder. I told him I was confused because I thought the fish went up river. He then explained to me that even though we were only about 100 miles from the ocean that the Yukon River headed north and dumped out 2000 miles away in the Bearing Sea. When we left, he offered me a magic stick (??) which I took back to Portland. Then I biked back to town, bought some souvenirs and biked to the pioneer cemetery. I ate dinner at the Pasta Palace and then biked back to the hostel. All the people in the hostel either spoke Japanese or German. I was hoping to find English speaking travelers so I could tell them my travel story and hear their stories. They only people that spoke English were the people that ran the hostel and the man in charge told me that Whitehorse was about 2000 feet in elevation and that the highest point on Skagway pass was 3200 feet high. Since there was no one else to talk to I decided to walk back into Whitehorse to see if I could find a bar to have a beer. I couldn't find anywhere interested and walked back to the hostel. It was about 11:30 PM and I went directly to sleep. (Daily miles 57.38 miles, average 8.4 MPH, Max speed 25.9 MPH, Total Trip Miles 531.68 miles)

Day 7, Tuesday, July 27, 2004

I woke up around 6:30 AM and spent time talking to the man that ran the hostel. We mostly talked about biking and the Dempster Highway which is the road to Inuvik, North West Territories, Canada. I want to return some day and bike the Dempster Highway. The hostel owner also told me that the Yukon Territory is 1.5 times the size of California and only 30,000 people live there. He said that about 20,000 of those people live in Whitehorse. That means that 10,000 people live in an area 1.5 times the size of California. I left the hostel around 8:00 AM and biked to McDonalds for breakfast. By the time I biked out of Whitehorse it was already 8:45 AM. Gas is expensive in this part of Canada the cheapest gas goes for \$0.955 Canadian per liter (~= \$3.62 Canadian per gallon). I bought groceries and took a GPS reading at Carcross Cutoff store and then biked down Highway 2. My first big stop was Robinson Roadhouse Historic site which was built in 1906 and was the service center for the mining rush in the Wheaton Valley. There were some old buildings which you could walk through and during the gold rush days Robinson was a booming railroad stop where people could get supplies. Now it is completely abandoned and the few remaining buildings are starting to fall apart. All day I was fighting head winds and the ride was hilly with a slight overall incline. I didn't arrive in the town of Carcross until 4:00 PM. This was a little town that looked like it was out of the 19th century and this was the first place where I started noticing the tourist that were coming out of Skagway. I took some photos and asked the lady in the visitor center about roadside camping. I also asked her when the steep uphill start for the pass to Skagway. She said the road never gets steep and that I would probably not even notice it. She pointed out one spot with a hill. Well, she was wrong I noticed a lot of small uphill sections and slight downhill sections. However, she was right that it was a gradual incline and no

long uphill. She also told me several places where I could camp; the first place was too close. She also mentioned a place on Tutski Lake, another place beyond the lake and if I went past that spot that there would not be many sheltered places to camp. She told me the places she suggested camping are not marked camping areas. She told me about hostels in Skagway, but I told her I wouldn't make it there until the following day and that I would be taking the ferry home at that point. When I left Carcross the wind was finally gone. About a half hour later I Cresting a big hill and was stopped by a person doing a survey. He told me the survey would only take a few minutes, so I agreed to take the survey. It was time to rest anyways. Well, it took about 20 minutes for the survey and as an award I received a Yukon pin and was signed up for a drawing for an Alaska Cruise. The guy whom did the survey was excited because I was the first person, he had surveyed that was not in a car. He asked me questions like was I visiting someone, what was the purpose of my trip and other travel related questions. I believe he was working for the Yukon Territories tourist bureau. During the survey there was no wind and when I took off the head winds picked up again. What bad luck! Next stop was the Bove Island viewpoint and I had some people from Whidbey Island (Oak Harbor) take a photo for me. The lady was very friendly and talked a lot. Her husband was quit and let her do all the talking. She offered me a sandwich and I told her I was doing fine. Before she left in their RV she brought me over a kit-kat candy bar and I thanked her. I continued biking as I ate my kit-kat candy bar. I continued biking along the lake and came across Venus mill ruins. This looked like a big stamping mill that was located on the step hill next to the large roadside lake. Then I biked to the Yukon boarder and decided to take a photo of the colorful Welcome to Yukon sign. A man and his wife from Ohio also stopped to take a photo of the sign. I ended up taking photos for them and they took a photo for me. The funny thing is most of the day I was following very scenic large freshwater lakes and never saw a boat moving in the water. I saw boats docked at Carcross and on the Tutski Lake. When I think back, all the lakes I passed in the Yukon looked like great boating lakes with no boats. Seems strange! I found a dirt road that led to a boat ramp on Tutski Lake and it sounded like one of the camping spots the lady in Carcross described. She said there would be no markings for the road, a boat ramp and it was set up as a campground at one time. The road led to a tree with a beware of dogs sign on it and a boat ramp with some small boats and people staying in pretty permanent camp spots. It didn't look very welcoming to me so I decided to continue biking towards Skagway. I was looking for camping and saw a spot with 2 RV's parked on the side of the road and the people in the RVs waved as I biked passed them. They seemed to welcome me, but it didn't look like a good place for me to camp. I continued and found another road to the lake. This road led to a boat ramp and looked like an unfinished campground. There was a bus camped there and I believe it was the place the lady in Carcross described. It was very scenic, so I decided to quit biking early that night. It was only 9:00 PM and I normally biked till between 10:00 PM and

11:00 PM. I went to sleep around 10:30 PM. The camp spot was next to a lake and there were almost no mosquitoes. It was a little cooler than other places I camped and a great spot. (Daily miles 75.00 miles, average 7.8 MPH, Max speed 31.5 MPH, Total Trip Miles 606.68 miles)

Day 8, Wednesday, July 28, 2004

Throughout the night the wind blew and my tent flap made noises that sounded like animals near the tent. Nothing was there. I got out of my tent a little after 6:00 AM, packed up my gear, ate breakfast and started biking by 6:30 AM. Since I was close to the coast, I expected rain and my campsite was dry. The funny thing was that the nearby road was wet. It wasn't very windy in the morning. I was almost to Log Cabin when I saw a large black bear cross the road about 500 feet ahead of me. I went slow and was planning on getting my camera out to see if I could get a photo when I got closer. Well before I could get my camera out, I saw a cub next to the road about 50 feet away. I then reached for my camera; it was in a plastic bag. The cub ran behind a rock and was glaring at me over the rock. It would have made a great photo, but by the time I had my camera out of the plastic the cub bear had darted into the woods. I walked over to the rock and looked to see if I could see the bear in the woods, but no luck. This was the first large game that I had seen since the first day of my trip when I saw 7 moose. My next stop was Log Cabin, this is where the Chinook trail ends and there is a little railroad track next to the road. The head winds picked up a little and I slowly made my way through the scenic mountains towards Skagway. There were beautiful sub alpine lakes along the road. The road had slight rolling hills and I felt like I was on top of the world, it was a spectacular ride. By about 10:00 AM I was seeing several tour busses that were coming from Skagway. I probably saw over 100 tour busses headed north. Some of the busses were mostly empty and others were totally full. At the top of the pass to Skagway I arrived at the US border. There were a few tour buses at the border. One bus had a line of people from the bus handing their cameras to the bus driver so he would take their photos. I wanted my photo taken by the sign so I got at the end of the line. When I came to the driver holding my bike, I said I'm not part of your tour, but can you take my photo too. He laughed and took my photo. The last 15 miles to Skagway is all downhill, you go from 3200 feet in elevation to sea level. The US customs is about 5 miles from the boarder and I was worried about getting searched and harassed. Well customs was a breeze, the man asked me if I had any problems with mosquitoes and he wanted to know where I started biking. Then he sent me on my way, he never asked if I had anything to declare, had weapons or where I was headed after Skagway. As I biked down the hill, I stopped at several view point to take photos and talked to a variety of people. I meet a group of people in a van that lived in Longview, Washington. I made it all the way to Skagway without seeing any of the fires that were supposed to be throughout Alaska and the Yukon. When I arrived in Skagway there were 4 or 5 large Cruise

boats docked and the town was crawling with Tourist. In town, I had to ask where I could find the Alaska ferry terminal. I biked to the terminal and found out it was not opened until a few hours before it left dock. I then went into town and locked my bike to a bike rack. I was worried about having all my gear on my bike. I stopped at the tourist visitor center and the forest service visitor center to ask if there was a place, I should store my gear while I walked around town. Both places told me not to worry about my gear and felt it would be ok if I left it attached to my locked bike. So I went shopping, I looked in all the stores to see what looked like good deals before I bought anything. At first, I noticed a nice polo shirt at a good price and as I went to other shops, I found better deals. I ended up buying T-shirts, a Pint Brewpub glass, two fleece coats, groceries, a pint of beer and lunch. As I was wondering through town several people asked me if I was the one biking down the hill earlier that day. I saw the people from Longview a couple of times. Then I ran into the people from Ohio I met that offered me a ride and took my photo at the Yukon boarder sign. They told me it rained all night in Skagway and they thought about me during the heavy rains. I told them I found a great place to camp next to Tutski Lake and it never rained on me. I went back to the Alaska Ferry terminal and was still trying to decide where I wanted to go next. I could either spend a day in Juneau, Petersburg or Wrangell. I sort of wanted to spend a day in Petersburg, but figured that might not be a great idea since Andrea would see me getting off the boat as she was boarding the boat. Then I thought Juneau would be interesting since I worked there one summer. But it seemed like the best bet was to go to Wrangell since that was where Andrea would be and then I would have a place to store my gear as I biked around. I finally bought my boat tickets for Wrangell, Ketchikan and then Bellingham. Then I biked to the gold rush cemetery and found the graves mostly dated back to between 1895 and 1904. I also took the short hike to Reid falls. Then I biked back to town and biked across the bridge near the airport and down the Yakutania Point trail to where it was too steep for biking. Then I locked up my bike and hiked to Smugglers cove I hiked back to my bike, biked to another junction in the trail, locked my bike to a tree and hiked up another hill. I then biked back to the Alaska Ferry terminal so I would not miss the 8:00 PM boarding time. I was a little late and the boat was getting loaded yet. After about 30 minutes they announced that they were taking on extra fuel and would start loading at around 9:00 PM. Well, the boat didn't load until 10:00 PM; it must have taken a lot of extra fuel! While I was waiting for the boat, I met this couple that motorcycled from a little west of Ann Arbor, Michigan to Alaska. They had already been in Alaska for over a month. I asked if they were retired and he said no that their business was getting taken care of over the Internet with help from their son. They had to normally call home to resolve issues during their vacation. But it seems like a great job if they can be gone for a couple of months and still maintain the business. They had a business selling Motorcycles. Since the boat was running so late, I had a chance to read about the local attractions I decided to bike into town and take a photo of the

Moore house which was built in 1888. As I was sitting in the terminal, I took off my shoes and I could tell my stinking feet was not enjoyed by the people sitting near me. At about 10:00 PM I noticed that cars started driving onto the boat. I asked the man that loaded the ferry where I should wait and he told me to go ahead and get onto the boat. After getting on the boat, I went up to the solarium and put my gear onto a lawn chair. Then I walked around the boat and went to sleep around 12:30 PM. (Daily miles 50.41 miles, average 8.0 MPH, Max speed 34.6 MPH, Total Trip Miles 657.09 miles)

Day 9, Thursday, July 29, 2004

I slept like a log and woke up around 5:30 AM to see if I could see anything at the Juneau stop. The boat was too far from town and I couldn't see anything. I talked with a man that said in the old days the Ferry used to dock in town, but now the town dock was used for Cruise ships. I believe when I worked in Juneau 16 years earlier that the ferry was at its current location. I also do not recall seeing any cruise boats in Juneau at that time. In fact, I think the whole month that I stayed in Southeast Alaska 16 years ago I only saw cruise boats in Glacier Bay. That goes to show you how much things have changed, supposedly there were not very many cruise boats until about 5 years ago. Now they are all over the place in Southeast Alaska. The man told me that when the cruise boats land in Juneau that the town gets swamped with tourist, sounds like Skagway. I liked it better in the old days when there weren't very many people in Juneau. After hearing about all the people, I was sort of glad I decided not to spend a day in Juneau. I then sat down and wrote 17 post cards. Then I ran into the man that loaded me onto the Alaska Ferry and he told me he was about to retire. When I told him I was using my annual 2-week vacation of the year he told me he would not work for a company where he only got 2 weeks a year for vacation. He told me he works 12 hours a day for 2 weeks and then gets 2 weeks off. That sounds great to me! I told him I wanted his job when he retired, he didn't have much to say about that. He also told me that since he worked for the state that he got a great retirement package, full lifetime medical benefits and a pension. I noticed a nice figured rough looking lady dressed in leather. She was always sitting by herself, so I went over to ask if she was on a motorcycle. She applied yes and that she was from Quebec and did not speak perfect English. It seemed like her English was fine as long as I talked slowly. She told me that she drove her 1985 motorcycle from Quebec all the way to Anchorage and was planning on taking the ferry to Prince Rupert. Then she would figure out if she wanted to take the ferry to Vancouver Island or just start motorcycling back to Quebec. She told me that she started her trip on June 26th and only worked during the winter. Sounded like a good job, so I asked her what type of work she did. She told me she worked on keeping the roads snow free during the winter. Her job was to prep the roads before the snow. Supposedly they put a chemical on the road to prevent the snow from icing to the road. I also spent time talking with a 62-year-old retired

teacher/ principle. From the boat we saw several whale tails, spouts and backs. It was the most whales I had ever seen. I talked with the lady from Quebec a couple more times and she started clinging to me. I told her a friend of mine might be getting on the boat in Petersburg. I didn't want Andrea to ask about her, even though I had just met her. If she was hanging around me too much Andrea might wonder why. Since Andrea did not know I was on the boat I wanted to take a photo of her getting onto the boat. I tried getting a photo, but couldn't because she was behind a heavy-set man. When she got on the boat, I tried finding her before she saw me. When I found her, I asked a lady to show her a photo of me with my digital camera and ask her if she recognized the person in the photo. When Andrea saw the photo of me, she asked the lady if she had seen me. Andrea assumed that the lady had seen me somewhere and took a photo. Andrea was surprised to see me on the boat. When we arrived in Wrangell and found out where the Sourdough Lodge was located. That was the lodge Andrea had arranged to stay in while in Wrangell. Andrea called the Lodge so she could get picked up; I quickly biked to the Lodge while she waited. Well, I arrived at the lodge before the owner left to pick up Andrea. The owner asked what I wanted and I told him I was there to stay with Andrea. He told me he was about to go pick her up. I was expecting her to get there first; I guess the owner of the lodge was a little busy talking to friends. While I was waiting, I biked to Chief Shakes Tribal house. Then I unloaded my gear into Andrea's room and started biking south. Meanwhile Andrea went for a walk. I wanted to bike to the end of the pavement, but only made it to Pat's creek before it got too dark. I took a GPS reading from Pat's Creek and then biked back to town to get a GPS reading at the Ferry terminal (I forgot to get one when I arrived on the boat). While I was at the boat docks I noticed several young people, probably cannery workers. One of the kids commented on my duct taped helmet. I biked back to the Lodge and it was already 11:00 PM. Andrea was wondering what happened to me. She wanted to get something to eat; I told her she should have gone. She wanted to go to a bar to eat and I told her it was a long walk. I didn't want to eat. Finally, she agreed that we didn't need to go eat. I went to sleep immediately at around midnight. Andrea did not get to sleep until 5:00 AM. For some reason she often has a hard time getting to sleep. (Daily miles 25.51 miles, average 9.7 MPH, Max speed 26.0 MPH, Total Trip Miles 682.6 miles)

Day 10, Friday, July 30, 2004

We woke up around 5:15 AM to see if we could get onto one of the boat tours to Anan Bear Observatory to the Stikine River. (See <http://www.alaskavistas.com/Vistas/ANAN%20WEB%20PAGE/Anan%20web%20page.html>). Andrea wanted to make the trip and when she booked her room, she asked the man that owned the lodge if she should pre-book her tours. The lodge owner told her not to worry that he could book anything when she got here. Well, the man was wrong and we were not able to get a spot on the bear viewing trips. Andrea really

wanted to go on the bear viewing tour and that made her mad at the service she received from the Lodge owner. It was supposedly prime bear viewing time and she would have been able to get onto one of the tours if she would have pre-booked the trip. I probably would not have been able to go on the trip regardless since I did not realize it was a trip that required special planning. Oh well, at least it got us up early and gave me the opportunity to do some biking. I biked to the petroglyphs as Andrea walked to town. The petroglyphs were not that exciting most of them were displayed on a wooden deck and I found one on the rocks in the ocean. I then biked to the airport to see about getting a rental car. The rental place was not opened yet so I biked back to town to tell Andrea. A sign on the car rental office said it opened 1 hour before a flight landed. By the time I found Andrea it was close to an hour before the next flight landed so I biked back to the airport to see if I could get a rental car. I picked up a red Ford Escort Station Wagon. The car had dings and a damaged radio, but I forgot to point out the damage to the lady at the rental agency. I think she knew the car was a little beat. She told me the check engine light stays on and not to worry about it. She also told me I could either return the car at the rental agency or leave it at the ferry terminal. In either case I was to leave the doors unlocked and place the keys under the floor mate. I felt a little nervous about doing that and the lady's comment was the most that could happen is someone might take it for a joy ride, it's an island! Then I picked Andrea up in town and we drove around the island. We saw some great view points from loop road (6267) south of Wrangell. Then we drove to Longs Lake and took the short hike to the lake. There was a free Forest service provided boat that we used to paddle a short distance into the lake. Then we hiked back to the car and drove to an Ocean inlet. Then we drove back towards town and took the hike to rainbow falls. Next, I took Andrea to Chief Shake's tribal house and we checked it out. As we drove back to the ferry terminal Andrea noticed a suitcase in front of the Salvation Army and I needed something to put my gear into so we took the suitcase. I was a little worried about taking it because it was a donation and people were at the bar across the street. But the store looked like it had been closed for a while and there was no way to pay for the suitcase. The suitcase was in bad shape, but it helped me have room to take more stuff. Then we filled up the gas tank and drove to the ferry terminal. I unloaded my stuff and placed the key under the floor mate. Then we quickly boarded the boat and got into Andrea's room. Before getting onto the boat, we stopped at a grocery store and bought beer, wine and some snacks. I had 2 beers that night and a lousy meal on the boat. The chicken was dried up, the rice was not fully cooked and the potatoes didn't taste right. I normally never complain about food. I unpacked my stuff planning on packing it better in the morning. We thought the boat ride was for 2 nights. We went to sleep and around midnight we heard an announcement that said Ketchikan in 30 minutes. I quickly got my stuff together and we got off the boat. (Daily miles 9.49 miles, average 7.8 MPH, Max speed 25.3 MPH, Total Trip Miles 692.09 miles)

Day 11, Saturday, July 31, 2004

We woke up around 1:00 AM when we heard the announcement that Ketchikan was in 30 minutes. We quickly packed all our stuff. Everything was scattered we thought we had one more night on the boat. The suitcase I picked up at the Salvation Army in Wrangell did not latch shut and I had to bungee cord it shut. Before I picked up the suitcase, I had not lost anything, now I lost my rope, tape and some of my bungee cords, the suitcase does not close all the way. When we arrived in Ketchikan, we took a Sourdough taxi to the Bed & Breakfast (B & B), Jeanne Sande shoreline B & B, that Andrea had reserved. The B & B was not expecting us until the next night and they were supposed to have the door unlocked. Well, the door was locked and the lady, Jeanne Sande that owned the B & B was asleep. Well, the process of trying to get into the house woke Jeanne up (it was about 2:00 AM) and she came out and asked what we wanted. We said we had the B & B reserved for the night. She asked us when we reserve the room and Andrea told her last week. She asked her name and said she did not expect us until the next day. Well, we were all messed up, since we thought the ferry took 2 days, we reserved the room the wrong night. In fact, we looked at our Ferry Schedule and found out that we actually had an extra day in Ketchikan. Before going to sleep we looked into the Misty Fjord boat trips and I called the Alaska Cruise group to see if they had a message. Their message machine said something about leaving at 7:00 AM and that the office was open at 6:00 AM. The message was for the previous days sailing and didn't say anything about the next day's sailing. I assumed the message meant they always opened at 6:00 AM. We quickly went to sleep and I woke up again at 6:00 AM to see about arranging a Misty Fjord trip for Andrea and me. I called both (Alaska Cruise & Allen Marine Tours) companies that provided the Fjord trips and neither one answered their phone. Since I could not reach anyone, I decided to bike into town to see if I could arrange the trip. I went to the visitor center and the lady explained to me where the Alaska Cruise company was located. I tried finding the office, but had no luck. I then went back to the visitor center and told the lady I could not find the Alaska cruise office. She then had me follow her across the street and she pointed out a door in the back of a building. She told me I would need to enter that door and go upstairs to find the office. She told me that she had a tough time finding the office her first time. I found the office and no one was there, I then walked around the outside of the building and found that there was no indication from the outside that the office was in that building. I walked around and returned to the office a couple of times and it was still closed. Looking near the main pier in town I could see that a cruise ship was about to dock. I wanted to make my reservation for the Misty Fjord trip before the boat landed, so I went back to the visitor center to see if there was anywhere else to get information on the Misty Fjord boat trip. The visitor center has several booths for booking site seeing tours. These booths only open up shortly before a cruise boat arrives. One of the booths was for scenic flights to the Misty Fjord; I asked the guy if he knew anything about the boat trips. He told me he

had flights available and I said I wasn't interested. He then told me that the boats took off at the end of the pier. I quickly went to the end of the pier. The cruise boat was about to dock. I found the Allen Misty Fjord cruise boat and the person that ran the boat said he was not sure if they had any room. The owner of the boat happened to be walking by and said sure he has room. He told me they were running a special for the local people and the trip was not being offered to the cruise boat. In fact, the boat had less people on board and had a discounted rate. Normally it cost \$139.00/ person and I was able to get on the tour for \$109.00/ person. I had called Andrea before I booked the trip and she said she was also trying to book a Misty Fjord trip. She told me that she was on her way to town. I wasn't sure if she ever reached the charter people, so I told the guy to sign me up and that I might need to cancel if Andrea showed up with tickets. The Allen charter man took my information and said he would run the card when I found Andrea. I went back to the dock and found Andrea; she had not booked a trip so we quickly went back to the Allen Charter to complete our Misty Fjord booking. We had an hour before the boat took off and I bought a couple souvenir shirts. Then we boarded the boat and headed towards Misty Fjord. The weather was great and we floated through a calm channel up a secluded area with cliffs on both sides. Jeanne told us she thought the trip was nicer than Milford Sound in New Zealand. I think her comments made me expect more and it was not that nice. We did see a couple of whales. However, the whales that we saw from the Alaska Ferry were more exciting and abundant. I also saw a sea otter and some Sea Lions. When we returned to Ketchikan, I went to get my bike and Andrea went to buy some souvenirs. I put on my bike gloves and cycled to the shop where Andrea was buying gifts. Then we walked over to get a slice of Pizza. Then Andrea bought some shrimp and we went to the bar for a drink. After a beer and eating we walked to Creek Street, I noticed I didn't have my biking gloves. I had them an hour earlier, so I biked back to the Pizza and beer place to see if I could find them. I asked the people working at the Pizza place, bar and store where Andrea was shopping, no one had seen my gloves. Well, I lost them and they never showed up. Throughout my trip I kept thinking I might lose them. I've lost gloves in the past. I was just glade that I didn't lose them until the last day. Then I biked back to Creek Street to find Andrea and checked out Dolly's house from the outside. Dolly's house is an historic prostitute house in Ketchikan that represents the fact that prostitution was legal in Alaska for longer than most US states (with the exception of Nevada). When I visited Dolly's place 16 years ago the curtains were open and you could see Dolly's historic prostitute bed. Now the curtains are drawn and you must pay an entry fee to see more. Then Andrea took the bus to Saxman village and I biked there. This is a village with a large collection of totem poles. One of the poles has a figure of Abraham Lincoln on the top. In those days Lincoln was a figure the native Alaskans liked to carve. We looked around and Andrea wanted to eat in town. She took the bus back and told me where she would stop to eat. I wanted to bike, so I told her I would bike a little farther and then try to

make it to the restaurant before she headed back to our B & B. I wanted to bike until the pavement ended, well I was running out of time, so I decided to bike until I found a good turn around point. I ended up biking to Herring Cove. I noticed some large salmon in the river and thought it might be a good place to watch for bears. Since I was running out of time I biked back to Ketchikan and looked for the restaurant where Andrea was eating. When I looked in the restaurant (Annabelle's at 323 front street) for Andrea, I could hear her yelling my name. Since I can only hear in one ear, I have no sense of direction and had a tough time finding her. I finally saw her about to board the bus. We talked and agreed to meet at the B & B. Andrea told Jeanne that we paid \$109.00 for the Misty Fjord tour and Jeanne said that we got a great price on the tour. Back at the B & B Andrea gave me her left-over food (salmon, potatoes & bread). After eating Jeanne took us to watch for bears. We ended up driving to the place, Herring Cove, where I visited and thought would be ideal for bear watching. When we first arrived at Herring Cove 2 kids were on the closed board walk. This kept the bears away. The kids finally left the board walk and we saw a small bear near the stream's inlet. Then we either saw one or more larger bears. We never saw more than one bear at a time. We could not say for sure if we kept seeing the same bear or if there were several bears near the stream. There were also at least 50 bald eagles around the river inlet. We saw a bear grab a salmon out of the river and then start eating it on the shore. A bald eagle was trying to get the salmon from the bear, eventually the bear felt it ate enough and left the scraps for the bald eagle. We watched for bear(s) for about an hour. At one point a bear was on a log and dove into the river after a salmon. It didn't get the fish and tried chasing down another salmon. The bear just didn't have any luck and went back into the woods without a salmon. It was starting to get a little dark and the bear was pretty far away. I tried getting photos, but none of my photo's came out (not sure where they went, I used my 35-millimeter camera and was pretty sure I looked at the correct roll of film and saw no photos). After the great bear encounter, we drove back to Jeanne's B & B and went to sleep. (Daily miles 29.76 miles, average 9.9 MPH, Max speed 26.1 MPH, Total Trip Miles 721.85 miles)

Day 12, Sunday, August 1, 2004

I woke up at 6:45 AM, ate breakfast and started biking at 7:15 AM. As I was biking, I saw a bald eagle on a post, I put my bike on the side of the road and tried to line the eagle up so it looked like it was on my bike seat. I biked to Ward Lake and hiked the 1.3-mile Lake Loop trail. Then I biked to Connell Lake and the end of the pavement. Next, I biked back to the main highway and bought some food at Ward Lake store. Next stop was Totem Bright Park. Some nice ladies had me take their photo and I had them take mine. I remembered Totem Bright Park from 16 years ago, the totem pole of the halibut on top of a pole was the totem I remembered best. At the park some people that didn't speak very good English had me take their photo and I had them

take mine. We talked for a while and it turned out they were from Portland, Oregon. The man was working in Ketchikan; I'm not sure why they didn't speak good English. They must have migrated from a foreign country to Portland. Then I biked to North end of the highway and to the ocean at Settlers cove. There was a very nice trail at the end of the road, it seemed like it might be worth checking out next time. I then quickly biked back to Jeanne's B & B so I would be there by 2:00 PM. I was supposed to meet Andrea there at 2:00 PM and we were going to immediately go to the ferry. I wanted to get there so I had time to go back into the town of Ketchikan and buy a souvenir fleece lined coat with rain repellent shell. I got back a little before 2:00 PM and Andrea wasn't back yet. I then took all our luggage out of our room and put it in the front yard. Then Andrea showed up in a taxi and we loaded all the stuff in the taxi and went to the ferry terminal. I had enough time to bike into town and get my souvenir coat and 5 post cards. I then biked back to the ferry terminal and we boarded the boat. I noticed that I did not have my camelback water bag. It was the first time I owned a camel back and I really liked it. The only problem is I lost it after only having it for about 3 weeks. Once on the boat I recognized the motorcycle couple from Michigan that I met in Skagway. I also met a man that was from Rockwall, Texas and had just finished working on a Purse Seiner Salmon boat in Ketchikan. He was 39 years old and normally worked with computers. He told me the captain of the Salmon boat he worked on was a yeller and he didn't enjoy working for him. It sounded like his experience was very similar to my Purse Seine fishing experience when I was 22 years old in Kodiak, Alaska. I worked for a guy name Jay Monroe and he was a big yeller. It was his first year as a captain the guy for Rockwall was also working for a first-time captain. Andrea and I started watching the Tom Hanks movie Cast Away and I feel asleep right away. (Daily miles 43.92 miles, average 10.4 MPH, Max speed 29.6 MPH, Total Trip Miles 765.77 miles)

Day 13, Monday, August 2, 2004

We spent the entire day in the boat. At one point we saw a large school of porpoises crossing the channel. The boat announced a whale sighting, but we didn't see it. We spent time talking with the motorcyclists from Michigan and met a man that had camped in 49 states. Alaska was his 49th state and he told me he drove from New York to Seattle, took the Ferry to Ketchikan, camped for 3 nights and now had to hurry back to work in New York. I think he even had less vacation time than I had. He said the only state he had not camped in yet was Hawaii. He said he would need to save up for that trip, maybe he thought he would be able to go to Hawaii in 2 years. (Daily miles 0 miles, Total Trip Miles 765.77 miles)

Day 14, Tuesday, August 3, 2004

The ferry arrived in Bellingham, Washington around 8:00 AM (PST). We went to the train terminal to see what was required for checking onto the train. At the train

terminal this man asked if we just arrived from Alaska and when we told him yes he said he was on his way to Fairbanks, Alaska to work as a plumber. He told us he wanted to fly, but they would not let him on the plane with his tools. I asked him if he tried checking his tools as luggage and he claimed he couldn't even check them as luggage. I asked if he had pressurized tanks or something and he claimed he only had wrenches and hand tools. It seems strange that he could not check his tools as luggage; maybe he misunderstood the flying requirements. At any rate he was planning on taking the train and bus to Alaska. I then attempted to bike to Watcom Falls Park but realized I did not have enough time. I think I was close when I turned back, but I didn't want to chance missing the train. I biked back to the train station in time to load the train to Portland. Andrea and I ended up sitting across from a lady that came from Petersburg, Alaska. She had lived there for 8 years and was on a long vacation to visits her kids. She seemed friendly, but a little stern. The train stopped for about 45 minutes in Seattle where Andrea and I did a short walk. Not much time before we had to re-board the train to Portland. We arrived in Portland around 5:20 PM and Andors (Andrea's son) picked up Andrea and I loaded my gear in his vehicle. I wanted to bike 35 miles for the day before returning to my car, that way I could say I biked 800 miles on my trip. I first biked to a souvenir shop near the Montage to see if they had any totem poles. I was thinking about buying one in Alaska, but they were all too expensive. I didn't see any totem poles and then biked along the river. Near the submarine I saw Tom Feller and Don Barnes (Co-workers from Freightliner). I said hi and they wanted to know when I returned from Alaska. I told them about an hour ago and continued biking to the Sellwood Bridge. Then I biked back to the Steel Bridge, across the bridge, to the Hawthorn bridge and then back across the Willamette River again. I started biking to Andrea's place and near Vista Drive a man asked me if I saw Neil Goldschmidt. He was surprised that Neil was still in town and then he pointed him out in front of a house. I'm not sure who Neil is, but I believe he might be the government man that was in trouble for going out with a 17-year-old lady 30 years ago. As I was biking up the big hill to Andrea's place a man in a parked car commented that I made it look like an easy ride up the hill and I told him it wasn't easy! As I biked up the hill 5 people on bikes passed me, one guy commented on how the hill never seemed to end. When I returned to Andrea's place, she made me a taste toasted cheese sandwich. I asked Andrea if she had ever heard of Neil Goldschmidt and she said he was a very good politician. She had not heard the allegations against him. It was a long day; we woke up at 6:00 AM on the ferry and didn't get to sleep until after midnight. However, I did get some sleep on the train. (Daily miles 36.01 miles, average 9.1 MPH, Max speed 28 MPH, Total Trip Miles 801.78 miles)

August 4, 2004

Wednesday I returned to work after 2 weeks in Alaska/Canada and was told I needed to get ready for a trip to North Carolina. It was a long day of learning what was

required for my business trip (program the ICUx controllers). I ended up working for over 10 hours that day. After work I went to the Bergie monthly meeting and then went home to get my mail (first time home in over 2 weeks). I also quickly packed for my trip to North Carolina. My lawn looks pretty bad, but I will not be able to cut it until I return from North Carolina. The whole North Carolina trip was bad timing and I wanted to spend at least a little time home. I had plans on going to Andrea's 40th high school reunion in Aberdeen. I was also planning on participating in the bridge pedal bike ride on that Sunday. Well, I had to cancel those 2 trips, the North Carolina trip will be good for my career.