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**“Visitors Always Welcome”**

by  
Tom Holbrook

Judy and I had some surprise visitors from our home state of WV. Soo and Steve, who normally come to visit in the month of April, called and said they were going to spend 3 or 4 weeks in Bonita Springs, FL and wanted to drive through The Villages and spend 5 days with us on their way. Since we love these guys we said sure.

Well, they've come and gone and while Judy and Soo did some serious shopping around town Steve and I put in some serious golfing three days in a row... Palmer, Havana and Cane Garden were the courses that challenged us and all of them did their job well... but we had fun.

Of course no trip into town would be complete without some serious chowing down at several local eateries. Great food! Soo then contributed to the food-fest by preparing some home made pork BBQ on Thursday and we invited our golfing partners for that day, and their wives, to join us for an evening of BBQ, Mac & Cheese, and a few other goodies to round out the meal. Manny, Elena and Don seemed to enjoy the vittles and fellowship and at the end of the evening there were full tummies to attest to the quality of the meal. Thanks Soo for the effort!

Judy and I are trying hard to get them to buy here and make this their permanent home but a couple of young grandsons will probably prevent that from happening for a few years to come. In the meantime we'll get by with their annual/bi-annual visits. They took off for Bonita Springs on Saturday and invited Judy and I to join them for a few days over the next couple of weeks, which we will probably do.

Several of us are getting more and more excited as the day for our departure to Italy gets closer. It will be our first trip to the country shaped like a boot and we can't wait to try some authentic Italian food to see if it's really better than the Americanized version we have come to love. Those who know have told us we'll be surprised just how different real Italian food is from the stuff we call Italian here at home. I will, of course, keep everyone up to date on what we do, where we go, what we eat and what we see so just stay tuned.

I want to close today with a couple of anecdotes about my 12 year old grandson, Joshua. We got to see him, his siblings and some cousins a couple of weeks ago during their visit to Disney World. Judy says Josh is my favorite one out of 7 grandchildren and I tell her there's a chance she might be right. For a fact I do know he's the funniest of the bunch. He can come out with some of the slickest phrases that I think are much too mature for a 12 year old, but always make me laugh. During dinner one evening at Disney a large glass of coke sitting in front of Josh was spilled and ran all over the table. Josh's dad looked like he was going to climb over the table and throttle him, mainly because most of the coke ended

up in his lap, but to his credit he took a deep breath and asked Josh, “What happened?” Without a second’s hesitation Josh gave his report, “I stuck my hand out in front of me, it struck the glass and turned it over. It was an accident... typical of all spills.”

His matter of fact attitude and glowing boyish smile made us all laugh and realize that was exactly what happened and one shouldn’t be punished for something that was an accident. Oh, if some parents could only remember that before they climb all over their kids.

Josh is the kid who, at the age of 5 asked his kindergarten class to pray that his pony would come home after running away. On the way home after school he told his mom about the prayer and she said, “Josh, you don’t have a pony.” To which Josh replied... “Duh... he ran away!”

You guys have a great week.

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