

Ooops, they did it again! Hank & Laura Netzing and Greg & Cindy Garnett hosted and seamlessly led the best drives and venues that the out skirting towns and meandering roads that surround Madison area can provide. For three days we were dined, wined, ale-d, and awed by the sights, sounds and tastes of the hilly, curvy regions around Middleton, a very pretty, progressive town, as our anchor. Gathering at the Country Inn and Suites, after our 3:00 check in, we first drove a short way to The National Mustard Museum (yes, mustard) to be shocked by viewing thousands of different varieties of mustards from all the USA states and numerous countries. After sampling, we watched an informative film depicting folks in restaurants, festivals and households around the world loving their mustards. Of note is the fact that Canada is a major grower and processor of quality, coveted mustard seeds. Who knew? Next, we drove a bit northward to Waunakee to dine at Rex's Innkeeper; and since it was Wednesday night, many of us chose a delicious featured fish dinner.

Thursday included some of the best roads in Wisconsin plus a scared pheasant running across the road just in time to avoid getting her tail feathers singed. We motored along quite merrily until, shock, we came to a dead end of vast new construction where our road should have been (and **was** only a week earlier). So after some gazetteer scanning and putting brilliant minds together, we back-tracked a little and resumed a smooth drive in our trusty, now dusty Miatas. Destination...Culver's in Spring Green for lunch. After a good meal, we drove up to the Taliesin Visitor Center, once a restaurant, beautifully situated above the Wisconsin River with perfect viewing from the long stretch of water-facing windows, ala Frank Lloyd Wright. There our guide began housekeeping instructions, such as no touching anything in the home, Taliesin, except the rocks, and there are numerous rocks, also the gold covered seats in the living room were okay for us to rest upon during the guide talk. Okay. We got it. One more thing, stay close together...no wandering off. Okay, again. We then boarded a spiffy red shuttle bus driven by a guy who slept in the same bedroom that Wright had slept in when he was a boy. Not at the same time, of course. The bus driver merely lived in the home that once belonged to the Wrights. Still, it's a claim to fame. Approaching Taliesin, meaning Shining Brow in Welsh, we could just imagine how many dedicated apprentices and builders it took to bring Wright's concepts to life. This building was the third home on that site built exactly the same as the first two destroyed by fire. Wright's resilience and determination here is evident to anyone who views the rooms, the grounds, the spaces. It is all superb and so forward thinking...open spaces, integration with nature, attention to the tiniest detail. It turns out that this was the summer home for the Wrights who then had another residence in Arizona for winters. Luckily for us, Gov. Tommy Thompson and his wife Beryl spearheaded the movement to preserve Taliesin with the Foundation that keeps it alive for people like us locals and for visitors from other nations. What an important piece of Wisconsin history and true source of pride.

After our special tour, the group split with the majority going on another drive while we (Kobuses) chose to spend time in Spring Green browsing the shops, eating cheesecake and pie, and talking to a few locals. We meandered on our own, meeting up with the gang at the Dorf Haus, in Roxbury for delicious, authentic German food. Then a short ride back to Middleton for a good night's sleep.

Friday we were abuzz with excitement and a little fear as we enjoyed a wonderful talk and tour by the co-owner of Gentle Breeze Honey, at their honey farm. Those little worker bees, flitting all over the place, got our full attention. The farm is a well-run, quality producer of

delicious honey and by products, nothing wasted. Impressive how a small enterprise can maintain an abundance of quality products and gain an excellent reputation. We learned how difficult and complicated it is to coordinate all the steps in honey production while protecting the bees, which importantly are driven to California for the winter. Only one sting ensued, but Paula was very brave and didn't suffer any puffing up. She was a trouper. After buying some sweet stuff; we zoomed away, leaving those bees behind and headed to the Bailey's Run Vineyard and Winery for lunch and wine tasting. Such a great winery with a beautiful extended patio overlooking sloping hills and bright blue skies. For us roadster folks, the large airconditioned main tasting and dining room served as a welcoming oasis on a hot autumn afternoon. Thus, fed and refreshed we headed out to the New Glarus Brewing Company, or as we called it "Little Switzerland." The throngs of people we met there amazed us. Full parking lots, lines awaiting beer tasting, buying brews and refilling really surprised us. But the courtyard was calm and charming with two men in Swiss garb playing Alpine horns, those long wooden horns that might discourage most people from even trying to play. This was like a free trip to Europe thanks to our thoughtful hosts. Then, off to Culver's for further refreshments of another type, ice cream and non-alcoholic beverages. Finally, another beautiful drive with cows looking like still life in the woods, herons eating near the edge of the road and beautiful tree colors here and there. We concluded our gourmet feasting at Buck and Honey's in Mt. Horeb and then went back to Middleton for one last gathering in the breakfast room. Happily, we nibbled on so many delicious snacks and enjoyed nightcaps mostly complements of Laura, who celebrated a birthday over the weekend. Truly, this was a memorable and thoroughly enjoyable three days. Thank you, Henry, Laura, Cindy and Greg. You did a tremendous job!

By Patty Kobus