

I remember going on vacation as a child. We always left whenever Dad got off of work; sometimes it was in the afternoon, sometimes it would be the middle of the night, but we were on vacation! The other thing we always did was to listen to Connie Francis' song, V-A-C-A-T-I-O-N as we left our driveway. It was our fun tradition. Hearing the song today always takes me back to memories of vacations with my parents.

My parents' motto was: It's as much the getting there as the destination. We spent hours upon hours of riding in the van. We had a porta potta that fit in between the two front seats and I sat there and laid my head on my dad's shoulder as we drove, often falling asleep in the sun. I did have my very own seat with a picture window that my dad had cut out of the side for me to look out of, but I preferred to be up front with mom and dad. Seat belts weren't an issue in those days, so it was all open space for me.

The part I don't remember is the planning. My mom tells me that that was half the fun. Writing to different states to get their travel books and dreaming of places to go. We camped and we always camped in out of the way places, so reservations weren't really needed, but having a plan of where you wanted to go and stop was a fun planning process.

With the taste of spring, the few 50 degree days we have been given, I now have "the camping bug". Al looked at me in church last Sunday morning and said, "I want to go camping!" We just can't wait to spend time outside, sit around a campfire, cook all that yummy camping food, take outdoor pictures, go geocaching, visit a different part of the country, the list is endless.

The camping part is easy. It's deciding where to camp, where to vacation, when and how long. It is the time of year to put in for vacation days to make sure you get a vacation. But when? I have gotten to the point in my thinking where I just told Al to pick a week and write it down so we are sure to have some time off. We will decide. It will happen. Last year, we had time set aside, but never had the time to really discuss any plans. A week before we left, we decided to head to the Black Hills of South Dakota. Last minute, we were able to reserve a campground over the internet and pack and organize food, etc. It turned out to be an amazing vacation. We even wished we had stayed one day more. So, I know we will decide and we'll go someplace fun. Right now, it's just hard to wrap our minds around it.

I have been talking with friends and co-workers about their vacations and where they are going or have gone and might recommend. When I do this, very often, I find that a place I never even thought of gets brought to my attention and it ends up being a blast to visit.

The economy will play a role in what we decide this year I am sure. There are lots of great spots closer to home. I have a new kayak to try out this summer that I can't wait to use right here in Waverly! As I've been dreaming and searching, I see that with the economy the way it is, if you are able, there are deals to be had. We will see...

Another vacation idea that I have been hearing about is a "stay"cation. I recently read an article describing this new pastime. A "stay"cation is where you stay home or in your hometown and have a vacation. You could stay in a local hotel and act like tourists in your own town and discover possibilities you never even knew existed. Or, you could plan vacation-like activities to do in your own home. For

example, plan a menu and time for a continental breakfast, make the beds like a hotel and leave a mint on the pillow and put out do not disturb signs on the doors. You could also plan a camping trip right in your backyard with s'mores to boot! Vacationing doesn't have to mean going far away or spending a lot of money. To me, vacationing is about spending time with your family, relaxing and taking a break from daily responsibilities and stresses, and having fun making memories! Where will you go or what will you do for a vacation this year?