

RVING ACROSS AMERICA

A Quest to Visit All 50 States

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Rving Across America

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Created in an RV in the United States of America

Disclaimer:

Some of the names in this book have been changed because that's the respectful thing to do when you're talking about people behind their backs. Okay FINE, there are some people whose names I just can't remember. How creepy would it be if you found out that the girl you met eight years ago in the hot tub at an RV park not only remembered your name but published it for the world to see? That's level ten stalker crazy. I'm hoping to come off as fairly normal in this book.

Some names in this book are accurate though because I have video footage of those people telling me their names.

Dang. That probably didn't help my case.

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Excerpt from Rving Across America



“He sent us a cease and desist? What does that even mean?”

“Basically it’s the precursor to suing us if we don’t stop,” Heath tried to explain.

“Suing us? I don’t understand. Don’t stop? You can’t sue someone for going to all fifty states. He didn’t invent the idea!”

David—name changed because he would probably sue me if I printed it here—was a man on a mission. A few weeks earlier, I found a message request from him in my Facebook inbox with a simple message: “Just thought I’d bring it to your attention that the concept of working 50 jobs in 50 states has already been accomplished.”

I’d rolled my eyes when I read it perfectly imagining his arrogant tone as I clicked on the link included in the message. Going to space has been done before but it doesn’t mean no one else can become an astronaut. Years ago, David worked 50 jobs in 50 states and wrote a book about it. A book with a

couple dozen reviews that was now ranked in the millions on Amazon. Not exactly a bestseller.

But the guy was adamant that we had to stop our own trip to all fifty states because he'd already done it and we were infringing on his business.

Before the cease and desist, it was emails, messages, and comments on our website, blogs, and social media spamming us with hate. Our stories on CNN and Fox & Friends took off and without even being interviewed, we were tagged in posts by Yahoo, the Daily Mail, the Bobby Bones Show, and Forbes. Our story was everywhere and almost always titled the same: 50 Jobs in 50 States.

David was pissed.

All the news stories featured new comments like "why would they even bother covering this? It's already been done before." David had at least gotten creative and made fake profiles (but not creative enough that we couldn't trace them back to his mom's email address in 15 seconds). He was an annoyance, but we weren't going to stop filming our documentary just because he posted rude comments on our Facebook page and blog. We deleted them and moved on.

The letter from his lawyers kicked it up a notch.

When you break out and try a new lifestyle, you open yourself to criticism from everyone who hears about it. I expected some negative or judgmental feedback. I didn't expect someone to hate us so much that he'd try to sue us.

"When Fox and Huffington Post live broadcasted the story, they both titled it 50 Jobs, 50 States which is the name of his book. That's what Yahoo put on their homepage too. You can't even copyright a book title, but that seems to be what's

upsetting him. Basically, in his lawyer's letter, it says we can't say 50 jobs in 50 states."

"We didn't even say that? It's not even on our website in so many words," I argued. "And as if you can tell the news what to title their articles!"

Every single interview we'd done in the past week stuck with 50 jobs in 50 states for their headline. Of course they would—it's catchy. It's easy to grasp. We had already made sure our website said "working a job in each state" to avoid copying this guy after a month of messages from him, but we couldn't control other websites.

"I know. It's not on Snagajob's website either, but apparently, this guy found the CEO's phone number and left him an angry voicemail saying the same thing. That we're infringing on his business and have to stop."

"Crap. Is Snagajob mad? They aren't going to drop us, are they?" I began to panic. They were our only consistent revenue since the beginning of the trip.

"Jon said their legal team is on it and they will send a reply to their lawyers. He didn't seem too worried, more like just annoyed."

"I'm annoyed too," I whined.

And worried.

You can't copyright actually working a job in all fifty states. What if someone moved a lot in their life and really did get jobs in each state? It was clear what this guy wanted. Stop at state 31, tuck tail, go home. Let him keep his ego intact and stop being overshadowed by our story.

After some Google searching and combing through our websites, it didn't seem like we were doing anything wrong.

Reading through the cease and desist, we weren't using any of the taglines the lawyer claimed we were. We always clarified "working an hourly job in each state" and skipped using numbers at all. There was not a basis for these claims. A message from Snagajob's lawyers confirmed to us that we didn't need to be worried about any legal recourse.

But the constant barrage of hate from this guy took the wind out of our sails after floating through New York. Despite our best efforts, he was determined to tear us down.

I buried my head in my hands and took a deep breath. I closed my eyes and listened to my breath as Heath paced outside talking to the team at Snagajob to find a solution to the legal action.

For as often as travel brings you to mountain peaks, it also lays you bare. The excitement of chasing your dreams is met by a breakdown. The glory of watching the sunset on the golden fall leaves is stressed by work. The thrill of feeling like your story matters to the world is replaced by legal action telling you to shut up.

It's never boring.

Even driving across the flyover states of middle America was punctuated by stunning landmarks and the melting power of lightning.

In some ways, it's why we fall in love with travel. The unpredictability. The excitement. It's the complete opposite of life at home where I found myself recognizing other cars in traffic because we all left work at the same time each day. Isn't this what I was seeking when I told Heath we should visit all fifty states? Adventure! Challenges! Beauty!

I shook my head and looked up at the ceiling of our RV. There

were brown spots around the roof vent where rains continued to seep through a leak we still hadn't been able to fix.

I popped off the couch determined to do something to get my mind off the cease and desist letter. Fixing the roof leak was high on the list, but it looked like rain on the horizon was going to start soon.

Something else, something else... I tapped my index finger on my chin trying to figure out what could distract me.

Oh!

Our toilet keeps clogging.

I opened my laptop.

Okay, a quick Google search says to boil water and flush it down the toilet to clear out the clog. Shockingly easy.

Clearing a clogged toilet wasn't exactly the distraction I hoped for after getting pulled down by the events of the morning, but it was something I could actively solve right now.

I filled our only pot with water and lit the stove. My thoughts bounced around while I waited. Should I pour the boiling water in and then flush the toilet? Or should I hold down the foot pedal and then pour it directly down the drain?

I weighed the pros and cons. Keeping the toilet open while I poured would allow a lot of unwanted smells into the RV, so option one won out. Grabbing a potholder to hold the warm handle steady, I walked slowly to the bathroom trying not to spill. I really should've opened the toilet seat *before* picking up a heavy, boiling hot pot of water.

Leaning over with my eyes on the pot, I slowly lifted the toilet lid with one hand and poured the water into the toilet. Thank God we only have a two-quart pot because I hadn't even

considered that filling the pot all the way might've overflowed the tiny toilet bowl.

With the pot empty, I pressed the foot pedal to flush. The clogged toilet paper created a sort of suction in the pipes and the sudden rushing of water somehow forced a huge bubble of air to pop in the toilet. Hot water splashed on my legs.

Hot water. From the toilet. Just burned my legs. I shuddered and gagged instinctively at the feeling.

And then the *stench*.

The steam wafting up from the toilet clung to my face and assaulted my nose. There's a standard black tank odor all RVers have smelled. It lingers at dump stations and rides with you down the highway if you forget to add your toilet deodorant to your emptied tanks.

This was worse.

This was the smell of cooked poop.

Not even fresh cooked poop.

Cooked poop from days ago, before our hotel stay in the city, and dating back a full week to when we last dumped our tanks in Connecticut. The smell of week-old, steamy poop filled the air.

I raced out of the bathroom, closing the toilet seat and the door in a rush, gasping for fresh air.

Pardon the pun, but could this day be any crappier?

Thank You for Reading!

This story is one of the many unexpected hurdles we ran into when we tried to visit all 50 states in a year for our honeymoon.

You can read the story of the entire adventure in my new book, *RVing Across America*, available for pre-order on Amazon.

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