

Bloom Where You're Planted

Contributed by Larry Lawless
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I've been having trouble with wireless internet connections on the road, but I think I've got it working now. So, I'll start updating y'all on the trip, if anybody is actually reading this stuff ... hello ... Bueller ... hello ... *sound of crickets chirping* ... if you are out there, please go to the contact page, click on the email address and send me a quick note. I promise I'll answer you.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch ...

Got off an hour later than I intended, but things worked out fine. I had a pleasant, uneventful drive to Lawton, Oklahoma, to the Percussive Arts Society Museum. What a great place!! If you are a drummer/percussionist anywhere close to Lawton, you've got to go see that place before they move to Indianapolis next year. I saw things in the exhibit that I have only heard about previously. The drum set exhibit is like a history of the development of the set, from Roy Knapp's vaudeville setup to Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich's Slingerland sets side by side. There are plenty of video clips of historic events in percussion history, and some inside information explained. While there, I stopped in the PAS library and found the copy of my marimba etude book (conveniently collecting dust on a bottom shelf) and signed it. Yes, I know no one will ever see it, but I know it's there (and now, so do you!).

From the museum, I met with Dr. Jim Lambert at Cameron University who very graciously allowed me some precious road practice time on his marimba. What a wonderful teacher and faithful servant he is!! He told me he followed the example of his mentor, Dr. Larry Vanlandingham, who told him to "bloom where you're planted". Jim has now completed 30 years of fine percussion teaching at Cameron. With a very welcome prayer and blessing, he sent me on my way to Amarillo.

The first mountains of the trip were just outside of Lawton, the Wichita Mountain preserve. Not huge for mountains, but they rest easy on the eyes after miles of prairie. I have plenty of pictures, but I'm going to wait until I meet up with Bart before I try to put them up here. Without him to hold my hand through the procedure, I might crash the whole internet.

I arrived safely in Amarillo, and after 3 attempts finally got into a room. Not 3 different motels, I had a reservation, but the lock was broken on the first room, the toilet was overflowing in the second one ... I'll avoid the Goldilocks reference to the 3rd one, because it was .. well, adequate at best. I got settled in just in time to realize with my hour behind schedule I hadn't eaten anything all day. There was a Ruby Tequila Mexican restaurant right across the street, so after a pleasant steak and enchilada meal, called it a day.