

# Nature Notes

by Patricia Clark-Gray

## YOSEMITE AN AMAZING PLACE TO VISIT



climbed Half Dome. We stopped to look at the climbers they looked so small compared to the mountain. I would recommend the bus/tram tour for first time visitors as it is a great orientation to the park.

We then went to the Ahwahnee and had a delicious lunch in the historic dining room. If you are looking to save money and still want to have the experience eating at the Ahwahnee I recommend this option. Don't forget to make reservations as eating at the Ahwahnee is very popular. Make sure you look around the lobby and at the beautiful and valuable Native American baskets in the exhibit cases. The rock fireplaces are great locations to take a family photo as they are unique.

After lunch, we hiked to Mirror Lake and it was an easy walk. As we were resting on a rock, mule riders passed by. We discovered that it is not a good idea to walk behind the mules as they often stop and go to the bathroom on the trail. Luck-

ily, we were at a point where we walked up the road to Mirror Lake. We noticed while we were walking, several cars with accessible permits driving to the lake. So if you have older parents or friends who are in wheelchairs or have canes this would be a good place to take them. Once we got to the lake, I took the photo of the rock that produces a great reflection in the lake. I wondered how many people have taken that same photo.

Since we were tired by the end of the hike we went to the cafeteria in the Yosemite Lodge and had a nice meal. Then we retired to our rooms. The rooms are spacious and our rooms had an outside deck and a nice view.

In the morning, Addilah and I rented bikes and took a one hour ride around the valley. We had time to ride to Curry Village where Addilah bought some souvenirs. Addilah told me that the bike ride was her favorite part of her visit. She said she felt she could experience the valley better than in a car.

Then we went to the Visitor Center, as I have a tradition of collecting my stamp for my Park Passport book. I have been doing this for so long that I now have a sec-



ond book. I enjoy looking at it to see when we visited Yosemite and other National Parks. So I bought a book for Addilah and Doug so they could start this family tradition also. We watched the excellent film title "Spirit of Yosemite" in a full room of tourists and excited school children. Once the film started the children settled down. I would highly recommend seeing this film. The Visitor Center also has new exhibits that you should view. The book store

has excellent books about Yosemite that you could purchase and take home and read and learn more about Yosemite.

It was time to go home and we were sad to leave this amazing place that provides me with new and varied experiences every visit. It was especially a memorable visit as I got to share it with Addilah and her mom who had never visited a National Park before. I gave her mom a copy of the video that I

took and she shared it with her daughters and son who have never been to the U.S. either. I am sure that when they visit the US, Yosemite will be at the top of their lists.

Go the website (<http://www.nps.gov/yose/contacts.htm>) before you visit to plan your trip and be sure to get a Yosemite Guide and a park map when you enter the park.



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