

NorthStarNerd.Org

Dedicated to open access sharing of knowledge - Your host: [Rich Hoeg](#)

August 29, 2014

From Glaciers to the Sea Bike Tour

Tomorrow Molly and I start our latest self-supported bike tour, *Glaciers to the Sea*. Starting tomorrow we will working our way west via our car to the Glacier National Park. In Whitefish, Montana we will park our car and then start our actual bike tour to the Pacific.

Our plan is to zig zag to the ocean via various river valleys. Ultimately we will approach the Pacific via Portland, Oregon when we will then track south to Eugene. After a short visit with my brother and sister-in-law, we will pop over the final mountains to the Oregon Coast, and then work our way up to Seattle. We will then take AMTRAK back to our car in Montana and finally drive home to northern Minnesota. Our expected bike touring distance is about 1,500 miles.

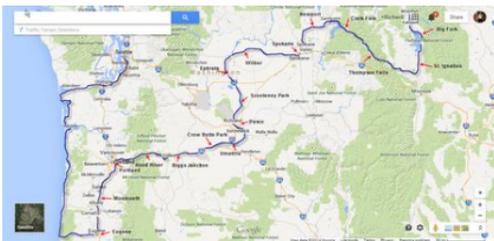
If you would like to follow our trip, please use these web sites:

- [My trip diary with photos](#) (via Crazy Guy on a Bike)
- [Molly's impressions of our trip](#) (via Superior Footprints)

In addition, you may wish to view the photos I publish via my photo blog and Flickr:

- [365 Days of Birds](#)
- [Rich's Flickr Photostream](#)

Here is our planned route, which is subject to change / detours /etc. Click upon the image to view at full size.



Posted at 03:20 PM in Northern Life | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

Giving Away your Skills!

Having retired a year ago at the relatively young age of 57 to pursue a different lifestyle, the past year has been an adjustment as I learn the new art to giving away my knowledge and skills. While employed by Honeywell for over 28 years, I was highly paid and ended my career as a senior software project manager. Now I am a bum!

My new life has its advantages. I am now able to donate my software skills to various

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my new life has its advantages. I am now able to donate my software skills to various non profit organizations without the need to make money. However, my true passion is roaming the Northwoods and capturing special moments with my camera. Yesterday I posted about some of my efforts from my current year long photography project, [365DaysOfBirds](#).

Ultimately it would be nice to earn some money to cover my photography expenses. Taking a page from my earlier software role at Honeywell when I worked with a number of Silicon Valley software start-up companies, I am using their business model. Software start-ups give away their product, but work upon moving customers up onto their paying services. Thus, I have been giving my photography work away for the last year. You will find the [NorthStar Nerd's work on Flickr](#) licensed under Creative Commons. In other words, people may use my photos, but full attribution with a link back to my web site must always be included. You can see, I am practicing what I preached for so many years.

One year into this journey, the giving away part seems to be working. My work as a photographer is getting noticed. My photos have been published in children's books, and via many national news media sites (CNN, Weather Channel, and Fox News). In addition both the National Park Service and the Smithsonian have picked up my work via my [Flickr account](#).

Earlier today I started to experience my first "viral" photograph viewing. The Northern Lights have been shining over Northern Minnesota for the past couple of nights. Even though I am a morning person, I have been out almost all night the past few days on the shores of remote northern wilderness lakes. A few hours ago, the Flickr Explore group decided to promote one of my Aurora Borealis images. In just three hours the number of views are up to 2,419 people. I will be curious what the is the final total of views and whether all these eyeballs convert to new follows, etc. Here is "said" photo taken about 3:15 am two nights ago. Click upon the image to view at full size.



Rich Hoeg (365DaysOfBirds.Com)



Posted at 03:07 PM in Economy 2.0, Northern Life | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

August 21, 2014

NorthStar Nerd Photography

Some of my longtime readers may have noticed that I have not posted much on [NorthStarNerd.org](#) this Summer. Mea Culpa! Actually I have been focusing upon my photography passion. Now that I am retired, I am able to focus upon improving my picture taking skills. One method for self-betterment is to start a 365 day project. In my case, back on January 23rd I started a year long photography project. My focus is birds. Every day I have to take at least one photo of our fine feathered friends ... even if its foggy, cloudy, rainy, windy, etc. This requirement has turned me into a better photographer. Here are just a few bird photos from this Summer. For more bird photos, and some landscapes of northern Minnesota, head over to my bird blog: [365DaysOfBirds.Com](#).

Click upon any image to view at full size / resolution.

King of the Realm: Bald Eagle Over Rainy Lake, Ontario



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Rich Hoeg (365DaysOfBirds.Com)

Palisade Head Perigrine Falcons



Rich Hoeg (365DaysOfBirds.Com)

Stormy Sunrise Lupines



Posted at 05:52 PM in Northern Life | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

June 09, 2014

Northern Lights shine for the NorthStar Nerd!

Living in northern Minnesota gives one the opportunity to see nature in ways people who live in urban and congested areas will never experience. Two nights ago the Northern Lights shined and danced in the Minnesota skies. I spent most of the night watching and photographing the display. Here is just one photo from two nights ago ... [more photos via my photography blog, LakeSuperiorWaves.Com.](#) (click upon image to view at full size)

Northern Lights Over Boulder Lake





Posted at 05:36 AM | Permalink | Comments (0)

June 07, 2014

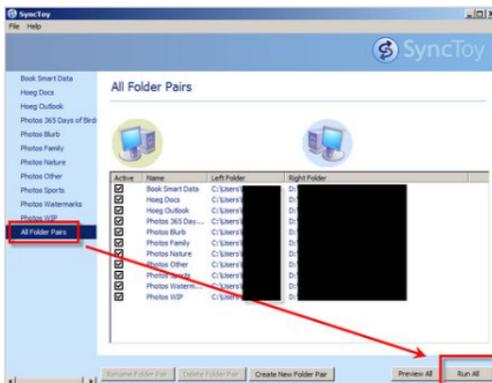
Avoiding Cloud Storage for Computer Security

While I have cloud storage accounts on DropBox and Google Drive, unlike many of you I only use these services for very specific low risk purposes. When the number of online services which have been hacked rising, and the extremely low cost of purchasing HUGE external hard drives, it does not make sense to store sensitive, important personal data and files online. In addition, these the smaller of these online services might go bankrupt. Try recovering data from the cloud from a bankrupt service.

My solution is easy:

- Use **SyncToy** from Microsoft (free semi-automated backup tool)
- Purchase a large external USB hard drive

The image shown below demonstrates how with a single click I easily back up all my important data (documents, email, photos, etc). I've blacked out my file structure for security reasons. Give this process a try!



(click upon image to view at full size)

Post Update: Make certain you read the two comments from Jim and Steve. They make some very good points about backing up your computer. Expanding upon my own post, a even better solution as Steve noted would be to have your backup in a different building. I also like Jim's comments about letting your relatives know how to access your data assuming an untimely demise of yourself! Thanks guys, great comments!



Posted at 06:29 AM | Permalink | Comments (3)

