

M. R. Hyker's Latest Adventure



03-30 to 04-02-2008 – New River Gorge Adventure: Janet and I vacationed here back in 2005. This time we traveled for the first time as MR and MRS Hyker. We expected the weather to be pretty crappy and after we passed Lewisburg, WV it looked like it was going to be the case. As we drove up Sandstone Mt we noticed that the forest along I-64 was sheathed in ice. The air was cold and raw and the wind was whipping about fiercely. We pulled into the local grocery store at Fayetteville around 3:00, took on some supplies and headed for Mill Creek cabin #8. It was way too cold for the hot tub so we settled on a nice grilled steak dinner, some wine and preparation for our upcoming hikes.

We managed to get in 3 hikes of varying lengths. The bad weather forecast was a non-issue. If it rained enough to fill a cup over 4 days it was a lot. Our first adventure was a 9 mile out-and-back on the [Glade Creek Trail](#). This has got to be one of the best little day hikes in WV. I say that because the beauty to effort ratio is so high for such a nice hike it's truly unbelievable. All except 0.2 miles was on a railroad grade with a total elevation gain of around 600 feet - pretty easy walking with too many [rapids](#), [mini-falls](#) and neat swimming holes to count. Before we started the hike we drove through the primitive campground and checked out [the view from the river access point](#).

We found [Hollowdweller's falls and huge swimming hole](#) a mere 0.6 miles into the hike. At 2.8 miles or so we passed [a curve in the creek where it severely undercut a cliff](#) and crossed it on a long Forest Service [steel and wood bridge](#). We found [more cliffs trailside](#) along the upper portion of the main trail. Our turn around point and lunch spot was at the base of [Kate's Falls](#). It's a pretty secluded spot. We accomplished the return leg of the trek at a much quicker pace. When we got back to the truck we toasted another successful hike with a glass of Black Opal Shiraz as a light mist began to fall.

We probably spent more time driving than we did hiking on the next day. First we did a 3.6 mile out-and-back at Grandview on the [Canyon Rim Trail](#). It's a pretty tame route with only a couple of short climbs. The downside of this trek is that it touches Turkey Spur Road several times on its way out to Turkey Point but the [added vistas](#) and [Rhododendron tunnels](#) are well worth this little annoyance. The views were grand to say the least. The [Grandview vista](#) offered incredible views, especially south toward Glade Creek where we hiked yesterday. The North Vista gave a head on view of the famous

[Horseshoe Bend](#). The 150 stone and wood steps at [Turkey Point](#) were not too difficult to negotiate. We took a long break at the top, enjoying a panoramic scene of [Stretcher's Neck Bend](#) with a railroad tunnel going straight through the middle of it, before heading back to the truck.

After Grandview we visited the beautiful [Sandstone Falls](#). The 0.5 mile boardwalk and [bridge](#) trek is pretty easy and can be done in sneakers. [Nice views of the falls](#) can be had with little effort. Janet and I put on our boots and did a little loop around a man-made island and then bushwhacked out to where the [main falls](#) were spraying a mist on me. The power generated by this 1500 foot wide falls is incredible.

We had a bit of mishap on the way back to the cabin on that last night. Just as we got on the New River Bridge a rear tire blew out. There is no shoulder on the bridge so I had to continue driving until we reached the other side. We replaced the ruined tire with the spare and returned to our cabin, cleaned up and headed out to the [Sedona Grille](#) for one more fine dinner.

The drive home was pleasant. We had a quick breakfast at [Tudor's Biscuit World](#) and were on the road heading east before 9:00. We did some scouting on the Blue Ridge Parkway for an upcoming backpacking trip. As I write this I am sitting in the waiting room of a Mr. Tire store as Big Red gets fitted for new tires, an oil change, brake adjustment and front end alignment.