

D'Alise Daily News

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Where are they?!?!

A place called Monument

Just as memories of the D'Alises begin to fade and drift into forgotten history, BAM!!, here comes another reminder. An update. Well, la-di-da. Where have they been until now? Why the long silence, the lack of news, the blissful peace and quiet? Well dear readers, during the time your mild concern gave way to worry, resentment, and finally indifference, the D'Alises were dealing with relocation issues.

For those who had not heard, they settled in a place called Monument (about 20 min north of Colorado Springs). Way back in May they arranged for the last of their belongings to be moved from Michigan, and they completed their relocation to Colorado. Michiganders no more; they are now . . . Coloradians? . . . Coloradonites? . . . Coloradans? . . . Coloradons? . . . ah yes . . . from Colorado. Beautiful Colorado. Mountains, all the smiling people, kids, dogs, and sunshine. I tell you; some days you just want to stay in and watch TV. But most of the time people try to enjoy the place, as evident by the horrendous traffic patterns. Something that Mr. D'Alise finds quite irritating. We'll learn more later from a first person interview with the self-appointed "Guardian of the Proper Way to Drive".

But, as we learn from various conversations with the new . . . people from Colorado, there is more to the place than a fixation with traffic patterns. And, as chance would have it, the D'Alises were able to explore a fair amount of the surrounding area because of the brave people who found the strength to come and visit them during most of July. True, some had weak stomachs and only stayed for a day or so, but others were able to endure as long as two weeks. Regardless of the length of these visits, the D'Alises took every opportunity that came their way to hop in a car and go exploring.

Well, one half of the D'Alises more so than the other half. Suffice it to say thousands of pictures were snapped, and almost as many miles driven. And snacks! The D'Alises never drive anywhere without a good supply of snacks and drinks. After all, in some places there are only two or three Dairy Queens every hundred miles or so. Food, extra clothes, camera, binoculars, tripod, walking sticks, and lots of drinks . . . and people wonder why they drive a Suburban when they don't have kids. Who's got room for kids?!?

It's time. Sit back and relax as we get into the minds of these two crazies . . . how scary does that sound?

T. Hemo Uthpiece - Freelance Reporter

Driving: a guide for people from Colorado

“**T**he pedal on the right is the **gas!** You **step** on it and the car **goes!!**” I glance nervously at Mr. D’Alise as he props his knee under the steering wheel so he can use both hands to gesticulate wildly.

“Sheesh! These people would not survive long in Michigan, I tell you.”

To my relief he sits back and grabs the steering wheel again. He seems a little calmer after the outburst, but there is still a wild, caged-animal look in his eyes. In all fairness, we are doing 60mph in a 75mph zone. I guess the thing that irritates him is the fact that you can see long stretches of open road ahead. There seems to be no reason for traffic moving as slow as it is. I try to resume my interview:

“So, Mr. D’Alise . . .”

“Call me Emilio, please.”

“. . . OK, so Emilio, to what do you attribute the congested traffic in and around Colorado Springs?”

“Well, Mr. Etohit . . .”

“Please, call me Swer.”

“OK. Well Swer, at first I thought it was the altitude, you know, thinner air, less oxygen, the dulling of the senses and all that. However, after being here for a while, I concluded people just don’t know the workings of the automobile. You see, I’m from Detroit, and I take for granted that people know how a car works. You know, a pedal to make the car go, another to make it stop, and a couple of other gizmo to let other so-called drivers know what you are doing.”

I watch the rapidly approaching back of a transport truck, and grip the seat edge as Mr. D’Alise manages to change lanes after passing a slow car cruising the left lane. To be fair, he did not cut anyone off, and no one had to hit the brakes, but it still made me nervous.

“Drivers here” Emilio continued “seem to take pride in being able to stall large sections of traffic by driving without regard for others.”

“What do you mean?” I ask.

“Well, take that sign we just passed. It said ‘Slower Traffic Keep Right’. There was even a law passed that states you have to keep to the right except to pass. Have you noticed I’ve already passed a dozen cars on the right lane? Moreover, I’m not even doing the speed limit. Drives me nuts having to pass on the right, but the lane sits empty, and is, in fact, the fast lane.”

“Why is that?” I ask intrigued.

“The charitable guess is that these drivers are illiterate. However, I fear it’s much worse. I think they like being the center of attention, even if that involves being the target of many expletives putting their ancestry in doubt. They must feel it’s their God-given right to drive anyway they want, and by golly, their want to ride the left lane doing 15 mph under the limit!”

“Isn’t that a little harsh? I meaaaAAHHH!” I grab the dash as a car, doing about 55mph, for no apparent reason slides over into the left lane directly in front of us (doing 78mph). Mr. D’Alise brakes as he sips from his coffee cup.

“Yeah, I may be overly harsh. Maybe it’s not all of the drivers. Maybe it’s just some. But, you know what? There are enough of them to make it real difficult for everyone. Take this idiot in front of me, for instance. He could have waited 5 seconds to let me pass before moving over, but now I’m stuck behind him doing 60mph unless I go around him on the right. I can’t think of any reason why he would move over other than to be a jerk. There must be some kind of satisfaction for these people in being able to disrupt other people’s lives.”

“Well, I read there is going to be some relief. They are widening roads, and there are proposed new roads. All that must be giving you some measure of comfort?”

“Not really, Swer. We are wasting taxpayer money to fix nothing. The problem is not with the roads; the problem is with the quality of the drivers. This dim bulb on the on-ramp, for instance. He is about to merge onto 75mph traffic doing something like 45mph. I mean, I could understand it if the ramps were short, but he’s got nearly a quarter mile to get up to speed. Noooo! He’s going to merge at 45mph, make everybody brake, and then take the next few miles to slowly work his way up to about 60mph. Oh, look!! He decided the left lane is where he wants to be . . . of course, that is the slow lane, but still . . .”

I look over at Mr. D’Alise, who is now sporting the resigned look of a condemned man.

A wistful look flashes briefly across his face as we pass another sign proclaiming in large, bold lettering 75mph Speed Limit. He hits the brakes again, as a large motor home struggling up-hill moves over onto the left lane.

Perhaps the driver is hoping gravity will somehow be reduced once he changes lanes, and he will finally be able to hit 50mph going uphill with a 60 foot motor home. Then again, he may just be a d**k.

Swer V. Etohit - Traffic Reporter

Living in Monument

So, what is life in Monument really like? I personally spoke to two new Monumentionites who recently moved to the area and got their first impression of the place. Meet the D'Alises, Melisa and Emilio, who made this area their home after searching for months – months, I tell you!! – for a place to live. I could transcribe their exact words, but who wants to read all of Emilio's stupid puns and sarcastic comments? So I will summarize my conversations with the couple.

It seems they settled in Monument because they liked the quiet neighborhood, good size lot, and convenience of being located half way between Colorado Springs (also known as 'The Springs') and Denver. Actually, they never go to Denver, what with the traffic, smog, and the increasingly Liberal leanings of the place. But they do hit the southern suburbs. I'll just say one word . . . Costco. Enough said. They also liked being able to walk around a neighborhood without worrying too much about cougars, bears, and rattlesnakes (unlike some of the western areas of the Front Range).

Anyway, back to Monument and their new house. It's a cute house, just under four year old, and in move-in condition. Well, almost. They are adding a radon abatement system (the area around here is chock full of the stuff, with rumors of some of the mountain neighborhoods sporting readings in the 30s – for reference, EPA recommends reducing readings to 4 or under), probably a security system (although that's still up in the air), and potentially a backup generator. Yup, anal retentiveness in all it's glory. Ah well, whatchagonnado?

Continuing, the only complaint (yep, Emilio again) is the excessive amount of grass around the house. Seems like one of the previous owners forgot they were living in a desert area subject to ongoing drought conditions. They brought in a whole lot of sod, and condemned it to a slow death under the bright, high altitude, unrelenting sun. Oh, sure; they put in a sprinkler system, but who wants to pay \$200-\$300 per month to keep grass alive? Plus, if you do that, then you have to mow the stuff. I tell you, the whole thing makes no sense to the D'Alises. Slowly, they will be changing over to Xeriscape (<http://www.xeriscape.org/>). Meantime, they are teaching the existing grass to survive on little or no water . . . sadly much of the grass is just not learning; maybe it's like many of the drivers here: without a clue.

So what else? Oh yeah. It's generally cooler here than in The Springs, most of the time there is a nice breeze, and it's frustrating and fun to watch storms go to the South and North of here. Frustrating because they don't get the rain, but fun because they can sit and watch amazing lightning displays.

At night they can go out on their deck, look up, and see gazabazillion stars. They have to look up, because on the South and North horizons the glow from the lights of The Springs, and lights of The Denver are masking many of the stars. Still, it is great to lie down on the deck and let the eyes adjust to seeing more and more stars. You can easily see satellites crossing the Milky Way, and the Big Dipper seems to hang just within arm's reach off the deck's railing.

The readers would be correct in drawing the conclusion that, at least as far as the D'Alises are concerned, Monument is a nice place to live. So what about Bozeman? Well, dear readers, here is a direct quote from the D'Alises: "Bozeman? What's a 'Bozeman'?"

Dullan D. Boring - Field Reporter

Sights and Sounds . . .

The West! Breathtaking beauty at every turn. That's because of the high altitude: you tend to run out of oxygen (apparently, that also hampers your driving abilities, but that's another story). During recent visits by people who had forgotten what Emilio was like, the D'Alises took the opportunity to drive all over the place, and see all sorts of things. Well, not all sorts of things. Mainly mountains and valleys. Oh, and some plains as well. And it was more Mr. D'Alise who enjoyed having a captive audience while he meandered down every dirt road he happened to cross. Still, most of them were no where near as bad as Rampart Road. Luckily, the D'Alises took that trip on their own a few weeks before their visitors showed up.

Dubbed as a 'scenic' road by some sadistic bastard, Rampart Road consists of about 60 miles of foot-deep chuckholes scattered amongst very rough pavement resembling a giant washboard. It was easily traversed in just under five hours . . . would have been shorter, but for the occasional stops to retighten loose bolts. Mr. D'Alise relayed to me privately that this had not been one of Mrs. D'Alises favorite drives.

The whole thing would have been a complete waste if it were not for the two – yes, two – places that actually offered views of non-descript hillsides.

But the drives with the visitors were not that bad. Yes, Mr. D'Alise did exploit the guests' sightseeing desires to venture down unpaved roads, but in general they were pretty good experiences. Of note, the Gold Camp Road drive from Cripple Creek to The Springs was nice. And the three trips to the top of Pike's Peak were all very nice. Winding along the road to the Peak's summit, gradually noticing the changing landscape as one crosses the tree line (around 12,000ft),



where trees give way to flowering meadows strewn with rocks casually piled to frame far off valleys and drifting clouds. The drive offers many opportunities to stop and hike among pristine landscape only occasionally marred by evidence of other people. One hopes that those who chose to leave their garbage among the flowers and rocks will meet an untimely demise on their way down. Then again, the mountain is more forgiving than the D'Alises would be. Mr. D'Alise took a few

photographs on the way to the top (rumor has it there is no place left un-photographed anywhere along Pike's Peak Road to the summit).



park. Lakes, waterfalls, snow-capped mountains, melting mini-glaciers, it all bended into a visual treasure to be cherished (and photographed). Once above the tree line, the alpine environment is host to Elk herds that meander on the meadows and remnants of winter snow.

Then there is Rocky Mountain National Park. True, lots of inconsiderate people picked the same day as the D’Alises and their guests to go and visit the park, and true there was an ozone alert because of all the pollution from that festering place known as Denver, but none of that detracted from the beauty and majesty of the



Closer to home – well . . . at home, to be precise – the D’Alises shared with their guests the daily serenade from their neighborhood dogs. In particular everyone enjoyed the sound of very small canines yapping as loud as they could at passing clouds.

Oh, there is one little basta . . . er . . . dog that wakes up around 2:30am and yaps like crazy for a few minutes, but it’s down the street a way, so it makes for a very difficult shot. Anyway, it generally quits barking before the gun safe is even opened.

When in luck, these concerts would last for hours. Just as luckily, they end in the evenings, giving way to very quiet nights . . . apparently everyone here goes to bed early, as there is nary a light to be seen on in any surrounding house after ten o’clock. Of course, that just helps make the stargazing more enjoyable.

A more welcomed sound is that of the many hummingbirds buzzing around the D’Alises’ house. Sometimes there are as many as eight or nine jockeying for position at the feeders, and it looks like miniature dog fighting out there, what will all the aerial maneuvers, dive-bombing, and hovering. The D’Alises were pleasantly surprised by the area’s quantity and quality of viewing opportunities of these little dynamos.



Nothing beats watching a hummingbird feed or hover just a few inches away, or sometimes having them land on your finger when you hold it close to the feeder . . . well, maybe winning the lotto, but it would be a close call.

And there you have it, dear readers: the sight and sounds of Colorado. Not all, mind you. These are just a few of the many attractions available to residents here. You can also go to Pueblo, where Dairy Queen cones are especially tasty due to the oppressive heat. Or drive through Canon City on your way to see nice scenery. The D'Alise family has promised to keep us all updated as they discover other reasons validating their move to the area.

Getou T. Nsee - Investigative Reporter

A brief interview . . .

The following is a brief interview with the D'Alises, new to Colorado, about their experience in moving here, their everyday life in this new (for them) place, and their expectations as they resume normal lives after uprooting from their Michigan home. We caution the readers that the following is the unedited version of our interview, and the reader bears sole responsibility by continuing past this warning.

DDNews: Mrs. and Mr. D'Alise, can you share your experiences over the past few months as you completed your relocation from Michigan to Colorado. Was it difficult? . . . Frustrating? Can you even begin to describe what it was like to so drastically change your life?

D'Alises: It was fine.

DDNews: 'Fine'?

D'Alises: Yes, fine.

DDNews: Ookay . . . perhaps you can describe to the readers your first impressions of Colorado life, comment on the neighbors, cultural differences, and peculiarities of living in Colorado. Maybe you can put into words your feelings at having moved here after so many years of living in Michigan.

D'Alises: We like it.

DDNews: . . . you like it . . .

D'Alises: Yes, it's nice.

DDNews: Nice. I see. . . Well, can I get you to comment on your plans for the future, what you'll be doing here, what are your plans for the next few years? Maybe you can share with our readers what plan you are putting in motion to resume your life after nearly a year of turmoil and uncertainty. Perhaps back to school, or maybe jobs? New careers in things that interest you both? Maybe a new business venture?

D'Alises: Well, we'll see.

DDNews: . . . !?!?!?

D'Alises: . . . ?????

DDNews: **Well there you have it!!** Straight from the horse's mouth . . .

D'Alises: They do have a lot of horses around here .

DDNews: Yes, thank you for your time.

Enoughf Ornow - Human Interest