

IMS Holiday Expo Trip 11/19 - 11/22/09

Written by: stevegarson



Trip from home, Fairfield, CA to San Jose area for annual IMS Holiday Expo in Santa Clara. Dee Dee and I (Steve Garson) left days earlier for a mini-vacation and to explore the area a bit. I used to work in Mountain View in the early to mid 1980's.

Start of travels: Nov 19, 2009

End of travels: Nov 22, 2009

Start trip from home, Fairfield, CA

 [Fairfield, California, United States](#)

Nov 19, 2009

Start trip from home, Fairfield, CA [Street/View/Map](#) Thurs. 11/19/09 at about 2 pm. Take I-80, I-680, 237, and arrive Sundowner Inn at about 3:15 pm.



Home in Fairfield, CA

Photo courtesy of google street view!

Arrive Sunnyvale 11/19/09 about 3:15pm

 [Sunnyvale, California, United States](#)

Nov 19, 2009

Left Fairfield CA at 2pm, I-80, I-680, 237, to Sundowner Inn [Street/View/Map Website](#) in Sunnyvale at about 3:15 pm. Basically unpack, settle in and take it easy.



Sundowner Inn

Aerial google shot.
Note satellites northwest of Inn just



Sundowner Inn

Closer view -aerial google shot.

across the 237
freeway.

To the Tech Museum of Innovation

 [San Jose, California, United States](#)
Nov 20, 2009

Friday was "Inside Rainy Day" so on to downtown San Jose. All the time I worked in Silicon Valley in the early to mid 80's I don't think I've ever went to downtown San Jose - I guess my business or curiosity never took me there. After all, when I was done with a day of work, I had the long commute back home in the the Richmond District of San Francisco - driving any more wasn't usually a desire.

Anyways we parked in downtown San Jose at the corner of W. San Carlos St. and S. Market St. and walked through Plaza de Cesar Chavez [Street/View/Map](#) where they were already setting up "Christmas In The Park" decorations and displays.

On into the Tech Museum of Innovation. [Street/View/Map Website](#) Tickets were \$8 each (\$2 off for AAA membership!) and included an IMAX movie. We went in for about 2-1/2 hours then went outside for a quick tour around downtown then back for the IMAX movie at 4pm. It was Space - the Shuttle. IMAX movies always impress - steep angled seating with circler overhead dome screen - you have to move your head around to see everything! Dee Dee said "It was like you were right in the movie, the way it wrapped around you. It made you kick back, relax and enjoy!"

Back "home" at the Sundowner Inn [Street/View/Map Website](#) in Sunnyvale.



[Plaza De Cesar Chavez, San Jose](#)

Workers setting up "Christmas In The Park" decorations and displays.



"Christmas In The Park" train display.

"Christmas In The Park" train display.



"Christmas In The Park" mice display.

"Christmas In The Park" mice display.



"Christmas In The Park" bear display.

"Christmas In The Park" bear display.



"Christmas In The Park" young bear cub display.



"Christmas In The Park" animal display.



Old style lamp post at Plaza De Cesar Chavez



[Steve Garson viewing San Jose Museum of Art](#)

At the north end of the oval track of Plaza De Cesar Chavez, San Jose. This is actually 2 photos merged

"Christmas In The Park" young bear cub display.



"Christmas In The Park" candy store display.

Can't wait until it "opens".

"Christmas In The Park" animal display. I think there are red foxes and a skunk or a badger (?) - all playing musical instruments.



Dorothy "Dee Dee" Donaldson-Garson at the plaza.

I took a nice shot of Dee Dee on a bench at Plaza De Cesar Chavez. Very slight sprinkles today.

Old style lamp post at Plaza De Cesar Chavez, San Jose.



Steve Garson posing.

Hey it's me standing patiently in front of Christmas display.

together in PS.



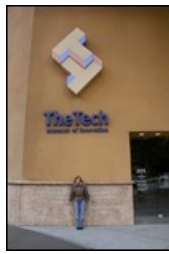
Visit to the Tech Museum

Didn't get to see the Star Trek exhibit - we heard they had a replica of the command deck to see.



Visit to the Tech Museum

Nice tiling!



Visit to the Tech Museum

Dee Dee posing in front of the museum.



Visit to the Tech Museum

Nice logo - and that's coming from a designer of logos! garsondesign.com



Visit to the Tech Museum

Exhibit robotics create a drawing after taking a photo of you.



Visit to the Tech Museum

Robotics drawing in action.



Visit to the Tech Museum

Genetics display



Visit to the Tech Museum

Dee Dee showing her dance moves. Yes she thinks she can dance and so do I!



Visit to the Tech Museum

Downstairs exhibits.



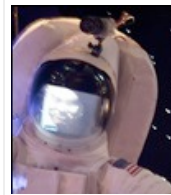
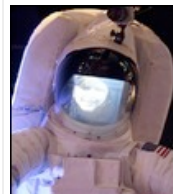
Visit to the Tech Museum



Visit to the Tech Museum

Sign reporting that 1,268,647,662 people are currently on the internet.

Bangin' spam!



Visit to the Tech Museum

Visit to the Tech Museum

Visit to the Tech Museum

Visit to the Tech Museum

Simmering down in their coffee shop.

Scene 1 Take 2

The museum again. We toured around downtown a bit then went back to the museum to see the IMAX movie.

Visit to the Tech Museum

My new toupee.

Explore Google, Apple, Stevens Creek Cnty Park

[Cupertino, California, United States](#)

Nov 21, 2009

Saturday was "Outdoor Day" because of the clear weather. We explored the areas hi-tech locations and parks. Scarfed up on Sundowner Inn complimentary breakfast and then on our way!

1 First stop was to Mountain View - the Computer History Museum [Website](#) [Street View/Map](#). Didn't go inside just wanted to spot it's location, pop a couple of photos to come back at a later date. It claims to be the largest museum in the world dedicated to just computer history - the Silicon Valley location for such a museum is a appropriate. Hours 11-5 Sat and 12-4 Wed/Thus/Fri/Sun.

2 Then onto nearby Google HQ [Wikipedia Map](#). It's a large low complex of buildings west of Moffett Airfield in a business park area north of 101 in Mountain View. We started at the Main HQ [Street View](#), visitors, entrance at the west set of building. Dee Dee and I grabbed some "ride and return" heavy duty 1 speeder bikes - the complex is too large for a quick walk! It was a Saturday so some googlers (google worker name?) were working but not too many.

Crossed [Pirmanente Creek](#) and then looked back in the parking lot and saw some of the google cars that take the street view photos. Pretty cool looking so had to snap some shots of them. Then on east along the creek, across Amphitheatre Pkwy into Shoreline Park [Street View/Map](#) and curling bike trails on up to the top of it's low hill. Nice uphill climb on the 1 speeders, tons of gophers running all around the place and across the trails. Beautiful panoramic (took 360 degree photo) view at the top of the hill. Back down via the east side - noticed it is called Vista Slope [Street Map](#). On through Charleston Park [Street View/Map](#) (these views have a bunch of fun loving Google employees waving to the cameras) the eastern building of google into the main [googleplex](#). Looks like a neat place to work. Back to the car to drop off the bikes - thanks google for the self-tour!

3 Now back on 101 east, 85 south, 280 east, N De Anza Blvd to Infinity Loop to, you guessed it, Apple Corporate HQ [Map](#). A security guard tracked us down and gave us the rules - no shooting photos in building windows - only can photograph the

front entrance. As a Mac-er I actually had to sympathize with the protection - but I don't look anything like Bill Gates?!

4 On up the hill to Stevens Creek County Park [Street View/Map](#), see the dam and then stop at Lakeshore Picnic Area [Street View/Map](#). We think we have been here before but not sure. There is a firing range at the nearby quarry so sounded like opening day of hunting season.

5 Dinner at a funky little pizza place run by a friendly staff from India - Pizza Pub [Street/View/Map](#) they are a fellow [IMS](#) barter member and we wanted to check them out. Besides regular pizza fare their specialty is, guess what? Indian style pizzas! We had a medium Chicken Tandoori and added basil and artichokes - yum with a little spice. Also had a Sierra Pale Ale and a warmed up Ice Tea (hey it even gets cold in November in California) - all while watching Brad Pitt in "Troy" on the big-screen HDTV.

6 On back to "home" at the Sundowner Inn [Street/View/Map Website](#) in Sunnyvale for packing out and the big day tomorrow at the IMS Holiday Expo.



1 Tech Museum of Innovation in Mountain View

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1 Tech Museum of Innovation in Mountain View

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1 Tech Museum of Innovation in Mountain View

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1 Tech Museum of Innovation in Mountain View

Front of building.



2 Google HQ, Mt. View

Yes, google has their own street.



2 Google HQ, Mt. View

Google signage.



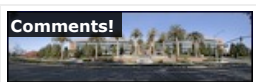
2 Google HQ, Mt. View

Front entrance for visitor and other dignitaries such as us :)



2 Google HQ, Mt. View

You are here. We hopped on the "ride and return" 1 speed bikes to tour the facilities - it's a big place!



2 Google HQ, Mt. View

Took me a couple of hours to put this pano



together of the front of the google HQ.

2 Google - Hill Ride

Mallards in Pirmanente Creek. It splits the 2 major sets of google buildings.



2 Google - Hill Ride

Rested, and now top of the hill.



2 Google - Hill Ride

A couple from India took our photo. Cool bikes - but I'd never want to take them on a century ride!

2 Google - Hill Ride

Bike trail Pirmanente Creek that leads up the "hill" - Vista Slope, Shoreline Park.



2 Google - Hill Ride

Dee Dee at the Vista Slope sign. Onto across the street into Charleston Park. See the link in the story.

2 Google - Hill Ride

Top of the hill on those 1-speeders can tire you out!



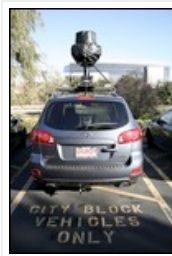
2 Google - Street View Cars

Was delighted to spot these 360 degrees photo taking cars that create all those google street level maps we all enjoy....and here are the worker bees that do it.



2 Google - Street View Cars

Google "street level map guy" sticker on the side of one of the cars.



2 Google - Street View Cars

Odd looking things aren't they.



2 Google - Street View Cars

Guess they take Saturdays off.



2 Googleplex

This is the infamous google quad.



3 Apple HQ

Worked in Mt. View in the early 80's when apple was still in it's infancy. My first Mac was a Plus around 1986 - the dinky little computer that became the start-up icon on all Apple computers. Now I want want of those new quad core iMacs.



3 Apple HQ

Ground zero.



3 Apple HQ

Me at the loop signage.



3 Apple HQ

Closed on Saturdays, sorry.



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Park entrance sign.



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Only 31 years old?!

4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Beware of Saber Toothed Tigers, OK just Cougars - but are you going to mess with them?



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Same date. My wild guess is that both of them were hit by a car?

4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Map view.



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Lakeshore Picnic Area. Please pull up a chair to read this sign - thank god they left just one last place for some more info.

4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

A strange eye-catching little monument to someone who obviously rode their bike often in the park. Anybody got something on this?



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

The dam.



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA


Actually this grungy sign was kinda cool looking. Made swimming in the reservoir look even more scary.



4 Stevens Creek County Park, Cupertino, CA

Dee Dee striking a picnic table pose.

Back to the Inn

 [Sunnyvale, California, United States](#)
Nov 21, 2009

This is where we stayed at, the Sundowner Inn [Street/View/Map Website](#) in Sunnyvale. Nice place even though a little rough around the edges. Our comforter was basically 2 sheets sewn together with all the stuffing gathered up on one end. We really didn't notice in the dark until we were getting real cold. Maid service got us a new one the next day and some blankets.

Our unit #120 had a large main room with a sofa, coffee table, TV and a work table with a high-band ethernet / internet connection, nice! Bathroom had a nice big jacuzzi that we put some miles on.

They had complimentary breakfast in the mornings from 6 - 9 am weekdays and 7 - 10 weekends. Eggs, sausages, cereals, french toast and English muffins. Plenty of fruits and drinks. We loaded up on provisions for our day trips and snacks.

First night we celebrated with good wine that was so-o-o good Dee Dee was hootin' and hollerin' in the jacuzzi. Now that's a happy camper. It took me about a day or 2 to get out of comatose stage from the compacted work week and travel prepping.

Then I starting using the gym - what a treat. Ah, to have such a gym in one's home - no more "need to lose weight" excuses would be needed :)

Rooms were quiet until you got outside. This Inn is nestled right in the angle of 237 meets 101 - so freeway noises are to be expected. Was nice to get an extra night from IMS so are trip felt less rushed. Nelisa took care of the animals at home so things were mostly worry free. Need more and longer vacations like these.



1 Sundowner Inn -Room

Ok, one doesn't usually take a lot of photos of their lodging room - so that's why I did. This is life and one's abode away from home - so it serves a certain amount of importance that you'll want to enjoy it - which we did.



1 Sundowner Inn -Room

Had a little kitchenette - fridge and microwave.



1 Sundowner Inn -Room

A fireplace! Well not really - just a faux fireplace with simulated logs and fire. Had a electric wire heater and blower - it did provide some added ambiance even though the real thing would have been nicer.



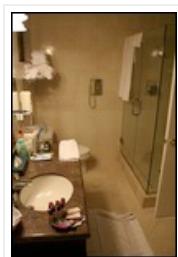
1 Sundowner Inn -Room

Hey, that's the photographers reflection in the glass!



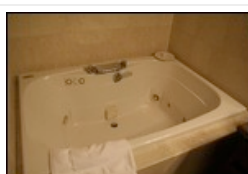
1 Sundowner Inn -Room

Nice bathroom.



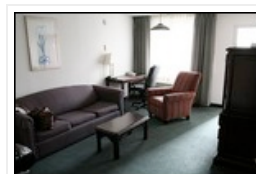
1 Sundowner Inn -Room

Another shot of the bathroom. Interior shots like these aren't simple - tight space, natural light is always better than a flash. Too lazy to grab the tripod out of the Jeep.



1 Sundowner Inn -Room

Let's get this puppy cranked up.



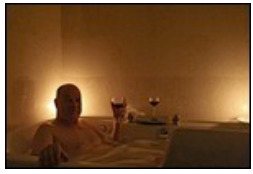
1 Sundowner Inn -Room

This shot actually came out kinda nice.



1 Sundowner Inn -Room

And the momma bear said...



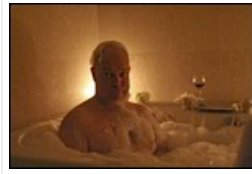
2 Sundowner Inn - Room - Jacuzzi

Weak attempt at looking suave and sophisticated. Hey, who cares, I'm in a jacuzzi!



2 Sundowner Inn - Room - Jacuzzi

My better half joins me. Due to my irregular sleep patterns - I went to sleep early - tired from our jaunts all over Silicon Valley, this was Sunday morning at 3 am. Dee Dee is such a trooper with my weird hours.



2 Sundowner Inn - Room - Jacuzzi

If this photo of me ever gets out on the internet ...I'm going to hide in a cave until it's forgotten!



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Ok, it's bench press time - gonna work off that inner tube!



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Dear, take the shot, I can only hold this so long.



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Rowing machine and 2 wacky gymsters.



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Serious business.



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Are we having fun yet?!



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Row, row, row your boat...



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

Steve likes this shot.



3 Sundowner Inn - Gym

...and this one too!



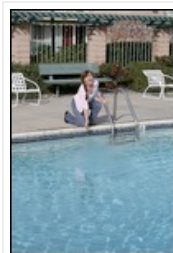
4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Dee Dee leaving the gym and onto the pool. Note satellite dishes to the upper right of photo, a strange sight! They



4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Dee Dee working up some mischief.



4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Gonna get you wet - nice photo of Dee Dee. Pool was actually



4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Learning to relax - we both desperately need tutoring.

are located northwest of the Inn just across the 237 freeway.

unheated - see what a recession can do for those added services : (Keep in mind - this was toward the end of November - so highs were in the lower 60's and nights in the mid to high 30's.



4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Step 1, face the sun, recline and close eyes.



4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Step 2, keep eyes closed and lay there for more than 4 minutes.



4 Sundowner Inn - Poolside

Step 3, once you get the hang of it your mind reverses and doesn't want to get you up. Thanks tutor!



5 Sundowner Inn - Farewell!

Dee Dee in the bathroom - photo taken through the front door.



5 Sundowner Inn - Farewell!

The charming couple - actually we are legally required to take these photos as evidence that we DID take a real vacation.



5 Sundowner Inn - Farewell!

"So happy together..."
Ok, onto shopping land at the IMS Holiday Expo.

To IMS Holiday Expo at Santa Clara Conv. Cntr.

 [Santa Clara, California, United States](#)

Nov 22, 2009

Finished packing, got some exercise at their gym (took photos) and left our "home" at the Sundowner Inn [Street/View/Map Website](#) in Sunnyvale.

Onto the IMS Holiday Expo at the Santa Clara Convention Center [Street/View/Map](#). First time going to this show, always have gone to the Santa Rosa show - wanted to experience the south bay. SCCC is big and beautiful.

In the late 80s - early 90's, I had spent a lot of time here when I was Art Director at Austin Knight Advertising in Sausalito. They would set me up overnight at the then called Clarion (now Hyatt - there is also a Hilton nearby) where you were always welcomed with a big fat yummy "Miss Field's" chocolate chip cookie on your pillow. I would setup new booths for clients the next morning at the SCCC recruitment shows.

Lots of goodies at the IMS show, Dee Dee had a ball, I spotted a artsy shawl that she ended up buying while a New York Times photographer out of their San Francisco branch shot photos of her for an article about barter shows. Got out of there at 4 pm with our bounty jammed into the Jeep and then headed on to Milpitas for some dinner before heading home to

Fairfield.



IMS Holiday Show

Dee Dee is in shopping heaven - note massive smile.



IMS Holiday Show

I'll take one of these and one of these and...

Dinner at Mountain Mike's Pizza

 [Milpitas, California, United States](#)
Nov 22, 2009

Dinner on IMS scrip at **Mountain Mike's Pizza** in downtown Milpitas [Street/View/Map Website](#).

Had a small "Sizzling Bacon Classic" pizza and a half pitcher of Hefeweizen.

Excellent pizza with ham, bacon, 'shrooms, olives, green onions and a delicious creamy garlic white "cheesy"sauce.

I was really beat after the IMS show (also planning the trip, escaping work and being a bit under the weather), Dee Dee drove us the long stretch back home to Fairfield.

End trip back home in Fairfield, CA

 [Fairfield, California, United States](#)
Nov 22, 2009

Arrived home around 7:30pm Fairfield, CA [Street/View/Map](#). Cali, our calico, is happy to see us home.



Back Home in Fairfield, CA

The Monday after our trip I worked to the early morning catching up on work. When I came upstairs to bed I caught Dee Dee with her, now "favorite", shawl alias Linus blanket, I got her from the IMS Holiday Expo.

Too cute. Sorry the photo is blurry - early morning, low light, hand held :)

