



# From Nebraska to Alaska

Traveling seems to be a pretty standard item on many people's list of "things to do before I get old" or for some their "bucket list."

I wish I could say it was on mine, but I'm kind of a "home body." Normally I like to stay close to my home in Hartington, NE, and close to the people and places I am familiar with. However, I recently had an opportunity to travel that I just couldn't pass up.

My son Ryan is stationed in Ft. Richardson, Alaska. When he found out he was being stationed in a colder climate (he requested Hawaii!), he was a little bummed. So in my attempt to make him feel a little better, I promised I would come to see him some time while he was stationed there. My opportunity came when he arrived back in the states after a one year tour of duty in Afghanistan. The city of Anchorage would be holding a welcome home ceremony for the soldiers and I thought this would be a good time to visit. It was the last week of March so of course my concern was the weather. But Mother Nature apparently used up her fury in December and the weather was very cooperative.

Since my son was still on duty for the week that I was up there, I was limited to how much sightseeing I could do. But in all honesty, I was there to see Ryan and welcome him home from a long and worrisome year in a war zone. If I did nothing else but spend the week hanging out with him, I would have been just as happy.

The scenery was beautiful and the weather was actually quite nice for the end of March. But I still don't think I could get used to living there. Although many people were wearing

shorts and

short-sleeved t-shirts, I was wearing my winter coat. I guess they must be used to the weather. I wondered, though, if they are wearing short-sleeves now, what do they wear when it gets really nice in the summer months?

While there, I was hoping to spot a moose, since they are pretty common there, but no such luck. However, I did get to see a stuffed moose in the Diamond Center mall, and decided that was good enough for me. I had no idea how HUGE these animals are! I was told the moose is a bigger threat to people than the bear is.

And here's some friendly advice, it's a 3-hour time dif-

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