

Learning on the road

Seasoned traveler explores wonders around the world

World traveler Judy King is convinced that her solo trips hold little interest for anyone but herself.

We rag her ear, telling that isn't so, and she consents to highlighting them for us in a visit to Edgewood Retirement Community in North Andover, where she lives.

It's a hot August afternoon, and we sit at a table on the neat grounds behind the main office.

Purple coneflowers, black-eyed Susans and other tall-stemmed blooms grow in a sloping bed above a low stone wall and winding walkway.

Otherwise, all is manicured and green — lawn, trees and bushes.

We keep an eye on fast-moving storm clouds to the west.

King pulls magnets, museum booklets and neatly filed travel itineraries in manila folders from a backpack and places them on the table.

The backpack is from Road Scholar, a nonprofit, educational travel organization primarily for people 50 and older.

In the last seven years, King, 75, has taken 12 trips abroad and in the United States through Road Scholar.

The two are well suited. King has a keen interest in learning, in reading, in experiencing, in travel. Road Scholar provides all of the above.

She has been to Spain, Mexico and the Middle East.

A big highlight was Road Scholar's "Private Plane Around the World" program in 2019. The 21-day trip started and ended in England, with stops in Egypt, Jordan, India, Cambodia, Myanmar and Oman.

Closer to home, she has explored New York City; Philadelphia; Big Bend National Park in Texas; and civil rights history in the Deep South with stops in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.

She loves history, and the Civil Rights Movement was an extremely important



Judy King says that taking a ride on a camel with a view of the Giza pyramids in Egypt was "great fun" but "thankfully short."

time in the history of the United States.

The civil rights trip included stops in Selma, Alabama, where in 1965, thousands of people marched on behalf of Black citizens' right to vote and to protest the systematic denial of that right through bogus Jim Crow restrictions.

She also visited The Legacy Museum in Alabama's capital city, Montgomery, which tells the story of slavery in America through an immersive journey of multimedia presentations and exhibits.

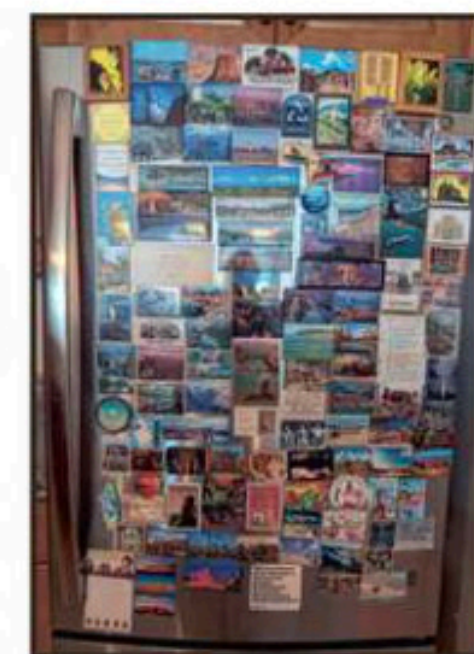
It includes a wall of jars filled with earth from known places where people have been lynched.

A total of 4,440 Black people were lynched in the U.S. between 1877 and 1950, and the museum exhibit remembers them.

This was likely the most emotional trip that King took with Road Scholar.

"Powerful," she says.

Her first Road Scholar trip was a 21-day

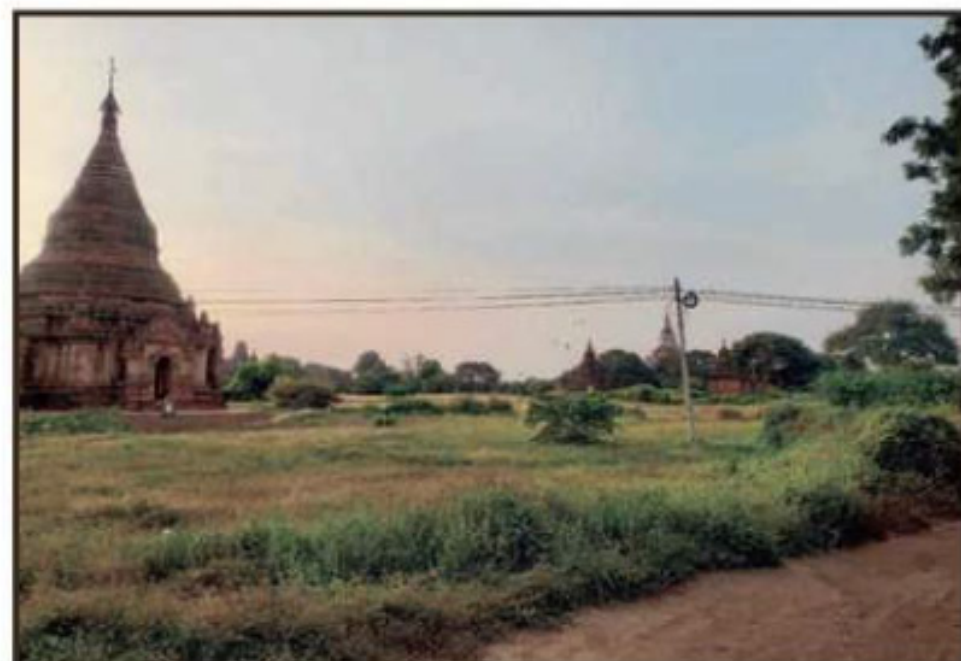
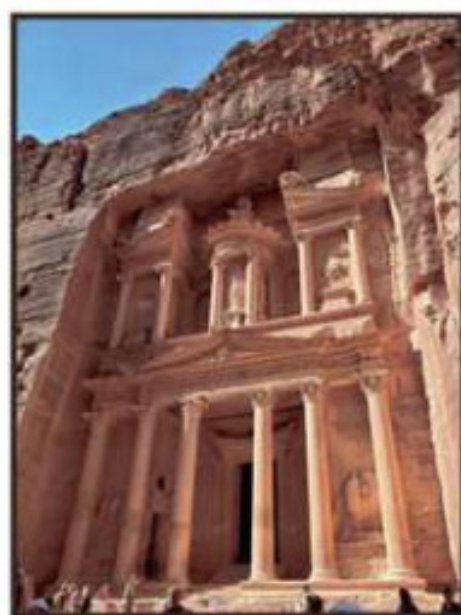


King's refrigerator is filled with magnets from the 50 countries she has visited.

By TERRY DATE

Judy King, a resident of Edgewood in North Andover, has traveled the world throughout her life and continues to do so through Road Scholar, a nonprofit that hosts learning adventures for adults.

Tim Jean photo



Judy King took part in Road Scholar's "Private Plane Around the World" program in October 2019. Stops included, clockwise from top left, Wadi Rum, aka Valley of the Moon, in Jordan; the Taj Mahal in India; the Irrawaddy River in Myanmar; Petra, a historic and archaeological city in Jordan; and the ancient city of Bagan in the Mandalay Region of Myanmar.



A visit to the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque in Muscat, Oman, was also part of the "Around the World" trip.

cruise that filled three of her bucket-list items, visits to the Panama Canal, Machu Picchu in Peru and the Galápagos Islands in Ecuador.

"Then I was sold on Road Scholar," she says.

King has been enamored of geography and travel since childhood.

"My dad would take us on driving trips, and we would always look at the license plates," she says.

Her father, William King, was a traveler. He belonged to the Travelers' Century Club, for those who have visited at least 100 of the world's countries and territories.

Judy King was born in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Her dad worked in intelligence and was assigned to the Manhattan Project, and later, he established security for the Atomic Energy Commission and worked for the Federal Aviation Administration.

The family lived in multiple places in the Midwest and then moved to Long Island, New York.

She studied sociology in college, graduating from the University of Charleston in West Virginia.

"I graduated from college, and as the typical woman in the '70s, you start your life as a clerk," King says.

It was as an administrative clerk at a factory in Wisconsin.

She had a lot of first jobs and worked her way up in telecommunications, eventually becoming a senior software engineer product manager.



Judy King took in the sunrise at Angkor Wat, a Buddhist-Hindu temple complex in Cambodia. It was "exhausting but the best time to visit," she says.



King displays tchotchkes purchased on her trips, "kept small for packing purposes," she says.

She traveled a lot for her work. It took her to 43 states and international destinations.

They included Paris, where she lived for 16 months and, on long weekends for business, traveled to six countries, including Russia.

She retired from her telecommunications career after 35 years, in 2014, and was determined to visit the seven states she had not been to during her career, Alaska and Hawaii among them.

Later, during a cruise on the Danube River in Europe, a fellow traveler told her about the Elderhostel program.

King found out that Elderhostel, which began at the University of New Hampshire in 1975, was now called Road Scholar, having rebranded in 2010.

She emailed Road Scholar, got a swift response, and her journeys soon began, in 2017.

King is a traveling woman. She has, in her lifetime, visited 50 countries, all 50 states in the U.S. and eight Canadian provinces.

Her travels continue, too, and not all of them with Road Scholar.

She has her eyes on a trip to Amsterdam, on her own. ▲