

## Where I Went and (Some of) What I Did Last July

*by Joan Black*

You may recall that I once spent a week in Heaven just to check out the place. After all, if I am going to spend eternity there, I needed a heads-up on the accommodations and facilities.

Being a fair minded person and believing in equal opportunity, it was only right that the alternative destination be evaluated. So, July 2013 I made reservations for a long weekend in Hell figuring it just couldn't be any hotter there than it was in Denver. From past experience with the frustrations and hassles at airports, I have learned to travel light, so it took no time at all to toss a few necessities, such as Aloe Vera to combat burns and a box of Band Aids to stick on pitch fork jabs, into a bag and take off.

I tell you, the slide down that slippery slope into Hell was a whole lot easier, and actually a lot more fun, than the long hard climb up the stairway to Heaven. Puffing up those steps I was expected to help others along the way. Share my sandwiches, donate my hard earned money to those less fortunate, not dally to smoke, drink or carouse. To be honest, 'getting there' was a bummer. In contrast: the 'slide ride' was an exhilarating experience; however I'm unable to go into details, because – like the Nevada city's motto of "What happens in Vegas STAYS in Vegas" – so, "What happens on The Ride is never, ever, mentioned again." Suffice it to say I was met at the bottom by old Beelzebub himself who handed me a slice of Devil Food Cake and said "Welcome to Hades." I discovered that 'Hades' is considered more upscale than 'Hell' and is the preferred name.

I'm somewhat vague about just what might have occurred in the following 48 hours. Don't have a clue as to how I managed to arrive back in Denver – where even the 95° July weather seemed refreshing after the heat and the stink of that other place.

I'll tell you this ... I shall not spend future vacation time revisiting even if they send me tempting brochures about "Pay for 3 nights, get forever nights free." Nor do I know if, with the added years and wear and tear on the old body, I can manage to climb up that stairway to the Pearly Gates, I do feel time was not wasted making a dry run to either place as I now have some idea of what each has to offer. Can't say I'm impressed with either. Think I'll just stay here for my vacation this summer.