

# BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

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## THE BRIGHT SIDE ROAD TRIP



KARA GILDEA, RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Matt and Kathy Honke pose for a photo with their son Alex, 13, outside the Virginia State Capitol on Wednesday in Richmond. The visit marked the family's completion of a quest to visit all 50 state capitol buildings, which Matt and Kathy began in 2008. Alex has visited 32 state capitols.

## Nebraska family completes 50-capitol quest in Richmond

**ANNA KLEIBER**  
Lincoln Journal Star

From an accidental trip to the roof of the Wisconsin state capitol to funeral crashing at West Virginia's statehouse, the Honke family just completed their quest to visit all 50 state capitol buildings, and a 51st stop at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

For Matt and Kathy Honke, from Roca, Nebraska, visiting state capitol buildings while traveling started out as a compromise.

"We have our own little interests. I'm a big football fan, so I've done football stadiums with all these trips. She likes zoos, so we've hit a bunch of zoos in all the places that we've gone," Matt said. "Capitols are the thing that we share together."

When coming back from a trip to Hawaii, Kathy suggested they visit all 50 state capitols before the two Roca residents turn 50.

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"We've got this book that's all torn up now and old, but it's got 49 stamps or stickers in it," Matt said before the couple and their son, Alex, embarked on fulfilling their quest. "Kathy's 49, a couple of months older than me, and we'll hit our 50th this summer."

The last on the list? Virginia. Plus, the nation's capitol.

Matt said it would be "oddly emotional" to check off the last capitol in their

book, during America 250 nonetheless, which he said was a "happy coincidence."

"Once we get the last stamp, it's done, there's nothing else to do. For years we kept checking off and checking off. It's just gonna be weird to get that last one done," Matt said.

What started as a quest to visit 50 by 50, later evolved into a way to get out of town during the Fourth of July with 13-year-old Alex.

"He's on the autism spectrum and he just cannot stand fireworks. Once he was old enough to start coming along with us, we brought him with us, and we do them all over the Fourth of July," Matt said. "He's gotten to see a lot of this, and he's really appreciated it as well."

Along the way, Matt and Kathy and later Alex, have collected a number of unforgettable stories.

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## US celebrates July 4

**ANDY SULLIVAN AND MIKE SNIDER**  
Reuters / USA Today

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump said on Saturday he would deliver a speech to mark the country's 250th anniversary on the National Mall "no matter what," as summer thunderstorms threatened to delay or disrupt the event.

Authorities had ordered a crowd to evacuate the area near the Washington Monument where Trump was due to speak, but the group organizing the event, Freedom 250, said they would be readmitted and Trump would speak at 11:00 p.m. ET, one hour later than previously scheduled.

"I will be there no matter what," Trump posted on social media. "It's Saturday night, LETS HAVE SOME FUN, even if we are out late tonight."

Visitors had waited hours to get into the event, contending with stepped-up

security and temperatures that reached 102 degrees. The record-breaking heat wave forced the cancellation of several parades and other events in the area.

"It's just part of the deal I signed up for," said Glen Solander, 60, a software engineer visiting from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, as he waited at a security checkpoint on Saturday afternoon.

### White nationalists

Other visitors included the white nationalist organization Patriot Front. The group posted on social media that it arrived in the capital, and hundreds of people wearing the group's outfits traveled to the city on D.C. Metro trains. Local police said early Saturday evening they hadn't received reports of violence.

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JONATHAN ERNST, REUTERS

National Guard members hand out water Saturday to people waiting in line for the Great American State Fair on the National Mall in Washington.