



Scene from the John Muir Trail

## Preface

This book is a tribute to my “best buddy” Jean Morris who for four years climbed the most frightening, treacherous, hazard-filled mountain imaginable. We found out that Jean had Lou Gehrig’s Disease (ALS) in fall, 1998. We decided we had better do some of the trips that one normally puts off until “later” — you know, retirement. In June 1999, Jean traveled extensively in Italy, France, and Germany with her oldest daughter, MaryJane. In August of that year I took her — in her wheelchair — across Sweden and Norway by plane, train, bus, boat, and car.

After the trip one of my best friends asked, “Did you have lots of deep conversations, as in ‘Tuesdays with Morrie?’” I answered, “No, we were too busy. Most every day was a new city — with a hotel to locate, restaurants to try, and parks, museums, and shops to see.”

I watched Jean make friends with everyone along the way. At times I even found myself envious of her because she could chitchat with people in a way that I couldn’t. Every time she launched into a new round of conversation — with locals and tourists alike — she began by telling them why she was in a wheelchair, and ended up by finding out their family history. I was amazed — how could she get away