

Sept. 24–Seattle:

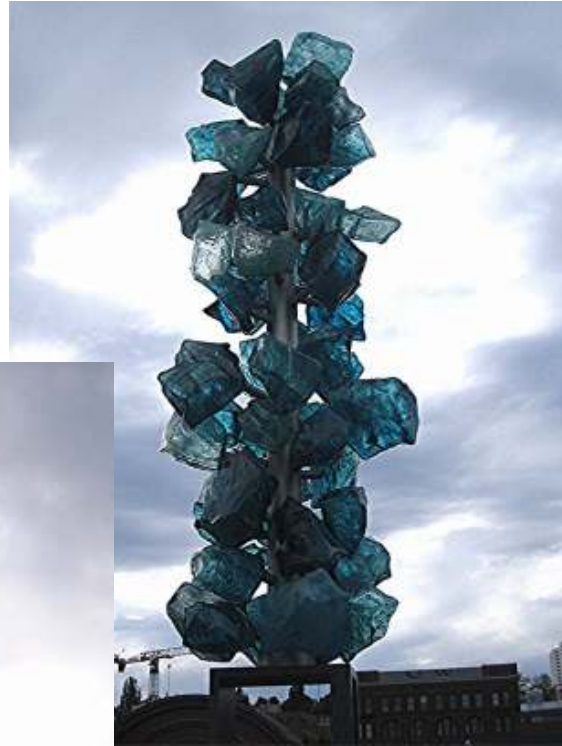
The hotel wakeup call came at 5am on September 24. We gathered our things and walked the short distance to the Knoxville airport where we checked in for our Delta flight and made our way to the gate. The plane ride to Seattle went smoothly and about 10:30am we set down gently at Sea-Tac Airport which is cleverly named by the fact that it is between **SE**attle and **TAC**oma, Washington. We caught the shuttle bus and were soon checked into our room at the Seattle Airport Marriot Hotel.

Our long-time friends, Joe and Sally, had driven up the coast from San Diego and were staying in the same hotel. It had been about 2 years since we had seen them so it was great to get together now for a few days. The sun was shining intermittently and it was comfortable outside. Rain was predicted for tomorrow so we decided to launch our sight-seeing activities without delay.

We all have been fans of Dale Chihuly and his fantastic glass sculptures ever since we saw his work in the Bellagio Hotel Lobby in Las Vegas. We recently learned that he has decorated a bridge in downtown Tacoma with his glass artwork. The Chihuly Bridge of Glass is appropriately located next to the Tacoma Museum of Glass. Joe had a handy Garmin GPS unit in his car so we put in the address of the Glass Museum and got the tourist agenda rolling. We decided not to go inside the Glass Museum but spent our time outside enjoying the glass displays. The following pictures are examples of glass sculptures called “Fluent Steps” by Martin Blank. They are located in expansive reflection pools outside the Glass Museum.



Our main focus was on the work of Dale Chihuly so we climbed a series of ramps up to the Bridge of Glass that spanned Dock Street and some railroad tracks. The dominant feature of the bridge is a display of several columns covered with a collection of what looks like large free form flower blossoms made of dark blue glass, as shown here.



In addition to these rather dark column displays were more colorful pieces. They were housed in the ceiling of a tunnel-like structure on the bridge. This arrangement was reminiscent of the glass sculptures at the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas. We pointed our camera up at the ceiling and took some pictures as shown below.



Having satisfied our urge to see the Chihuly exhibit we headed back to Seattle and the Airport Marriot Hotel.

As we entered the hotel parking lot our eyes were immediately drawn to an incredible scene taking place at a convention center across the street. There was a large collection of people milling about while dressed in playful looking animal costumes. We stopped a couple people dressed as a lynx and a wolf and asked about what was going on. They explained that an organization for professional “Mascots” was holding a convention. These people and their wonderful costumes apparently could be used by professional athletic teams or other organizations to entertain the audiences and provide some humorous public relations. Today they had just finished a full dress competition. Now they were just having fun interacting in their costumes before disbanding. We had never heard of such an organization and we all agree that you just couldn’t make this stuff up.

Below are some selected pictures of the “mascots” in full regalia.





The mascot costume show pretty well finished our first day of visiting in Seattle.

