

By Robin J. Titterington

I have to say, [New Mexico](#) is absolutely gorgeous and has a landscape like I've never seen. It was really like visiting another country.

Dialysis was . . . dialysis! One thing that really surprised me, I have never seen this in the USA, they did not have automatic blood pressure cuffs and had to keep running around checking people's blood pressure. I would also have to say they were not as meticulous with cleanliness as my own center. However, they did often ask how I wanted things done so that made me comfortable. One cultural difference: here in [Atlanta](#) , the majority of consumers are Black (I am white), but in [Santa Fe](#) , I think I was the only non-Indian there! The nurse also told me they are required to have someone who speaks Spanish at all times. And she said high turnover of staff is a problem there too. But the process was the same and I didn't feel any differently.

The bad part for me was the meals. Most of our [con](#) meals are shared, but even the ones that weren't, it was hard to find anything but south western food. I could say it's not on the dialysis diet, but the truth is, I have no idea. I just don't like it! I just wanted some plain old chicken!

My energy level was a bit disappointing from past [cons](#) . One night I was in bed by 9:30 and I missed an hour of the [karaoke](#) party sound asleep. I would have slept through the night if my [roomie](#) had not come rescued me. I tried to tell myself it was the time change and the altitude . . . maybe.

The adventure began on the trip home. I flew out a day early alone, but on the return trip, my friend, Ann was with me. We were scheduled to leave [Albuquerque](#) at 3:40 p.m., have a quick stop in [Dallas](#) and arrive in [Atlanta](#) at 10:20 p.m. When we got in line with our baggage, a man marked supervisor, came up and told us to follow him. Quite honestly, I thought he was just leading us to the head of the line due to my wheelchair. Alas, he was taking us to a private office to tell us the flight was cancelled! He offered several options but I kept saying I had to go to Atlanta THAT NIGHT due to dialysis

the next morning. After a long discussion and some calls here and there, we flew to [Salt Lake City](#) (no, that's not even in the right direction!), had an hour and a half layover, and I got home to my furies at 4:15 a.m.! Well, we did get a free meal in [Albuquerque](#) and flew first class both flights so all was not lost. From what I am reading on email, just about nobody got home when they planned to, several got snowed in at Denver and poor Carol of Boston STILL doesn't have her luggage!

Excitement aside, it was a terrific [con](#) and so good to see my [ALDA](#) "family" and catch up on hugs! Now I've got to start counting the days for [Newport, Rhode Island](#) NEXT year!

HUGS Robin

Glossary

- **ALDAcon** - [Association of Late-Deafened Adults](#) convention
- **Con** - abbreviation for ALDAcon
- **Roomie** - Room mate
- **karaoke** - Japanese word for Sing-Along with the lyrics displayed on a TV screen