It was 5:00 in the afternoon, and a group of my friends were practically screaming the lyrics to “life is a highway” in the middle of the desert.

We had travelled all the way from Boston to Arizona to attend Nazarene Youth Conference, the once-every-four-year get-together with teens from all around North America. Having left at 2:00 EST, after nearly 12 hours of travel, it was still 11:00 PT when we landed. Our plan for the day was to take two tour busses with other teens going to the conference up to the small town of Williams, AZ, the inspiration for the fictional town of Radiator Springs in the Cars movies.

After unloading our luggage and boarding the bus, we started the 2-hour 30-minute ride towards Williams. We had made it about halfway into the ride before the bus in front of us began to pull over to the side of the road. My bus pulled into the nearest rest stop to learn that the engine on the other bus had overheated, rendering it useless for the rest of the journey. The single working bus continued and brought me and the rest of the passengers to another rest stop with a subway and air-conditioning so we could enjoy a lunch while our bus picked up the stranded passengers. Once the second bus arrived, it was already 2:30. The bus company then sent another bus to pick us up, but about 45 minutes after, we learned that it also broke down. They then sent another bus, which also broke down. At this point, we were about three hours behind schedule, and it was just the first day of the week-long trip. I have always been a schedule-oriented, so I got very nervous when I learned that we were going to be late for the rest of the day.

Thankfully, the third backup bus arrived at four thirty, allowing us passage to Williams. As we merged onto route 66, we started talking about the movie cars. I decided to take out my Bluetooth speaker, turned it on, and put “Life is a Highway” by Rascal Flatts. Everyone knew the song, and once the lyrics started, one of my friends that’s in chorus started singing. Soon after, everyone on the bus joined in, screaming the lyrics:

“LIFE IS A HIGHWAY! I’M GONNA RIDE IT ALL DAY LONG!”

When we reached our destination, we were greeted by a massive parade held by the full population followed by a party at the main restaurant complete with a wild west play and live music. Somehow, the town of Williams managed to delay the day’s proceedings for nearly five hours as we were waiting for a bus.

Apparently, life is sort of like a highway. It does lead to a destination, but it does have it’s loops, chaotic merges, and traffic jams. Now, I get less stressed about schedules, knowing that even though there may be road work and crashes, it will still lead to the destination. And I wanna ride this highway all day long.