

## 2020 Camping Journal

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> June 7 (Sunday)	<b>Site:</b> H177	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
<b>#1</b>	<b>Weather:</b> steady rain	<b>Temp:</b> 10	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Finally, our first trip of the season. The covid-19 pandemic started 3 months ago and the first wave is under control so the campgrounds were reopened on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Provincial and national borders are still partially or fully closed so we will be sticking to Alberta destinations this year, at least. We missed camping and fishing on Tess' birthday for the first time in many years.



Last month I replaced the flooring in 7 from the bedroom doorway forward to the windshield. I am pleased with the results. With an extra layer up front, the engine noise is reduced too. Camper hates the vinyl plank floor because he gets no traction and can't jump up onto the couch or my recliner. We'll have to get an area rug for him. Yes, he rules our lives! I also installed a new toilet and did the usual maintenance on the mechanical bits. New blinds and shocks will have to wait until next year though because the fridge and hot water tank have decided to only work on 110 volts and the step isn't locking into position when it extends. (see below) I'm sure they will all be expensive to fix.

We got underway about noon and it rained all day, sometimes heavily. Carson Lake is higher than usual, as expected. We settled into our site, levelled, and opened the slides and awning. I opened the door and the steps extended as usual but there was a bang at the end like something broke. They no longer locked into position, so something did break I put a block of wood under them for temporary support. As mentioned, the fridge is now AC power only, so we wound up with popsicle soup, but no other food was ruined. We will be able to freeze the fish we are going to catch.



One thing about an older RV, there is always a list of things to be fixed.

It rained well into the night so we didn't fish at all today. No campfire either. There is no TV signal out here so we listened to the radio and read the evening away.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> June 8 (Monday)	<b>Site:</b> H177	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
<b>#2</b>	<b>Weather:</b> cloudy, occasional shower	<b>Temp:</b> 14	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

As forecast, the rain stopped by the time we rolled out of bed. We had 2 neighbours yesterday and now we have 3. Tess took Camper for a walk and found lots of fishers on the seawall but no fish coming in. There several class C motorhomes up top so the peninsula loop is about a third full.

Tess and Camper went fishing just as the sun came out. They came home later but without a fish. Not really surprising with the weather change.

We had an early dinner, the bbq one we usually have on the first day. Then I tried my luck fishing but had no bites in nearly 2 hours. I did have a curious squirrel visit.

Back home I lit a fire in the propane fire pit and settled down to read. There are lots of birds singing and I heard a woodpecker tapping away looking for his dinner.



The hot water heater made some odd noises when trying to run on propane. Basic troubleshooting showed no bugs or crud and the circuit board seems to work as it should. Partially blocked propane supply line? I'll get at it when we get home.

There are only 2 empty sites in this loop now. Since it is mid June, it doesn't get dark until nearly 11:00pm so people are out walking their dogs quite late. Weather is forecast to be better tomorrow. Hope the fish start to bite.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> June 9 (Tuesday)	<b>Site:</b> H177	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#3	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 16	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Tess caught a nice little rainbow and I caught a sucker today. Tess will have her trout for breakfast tomorrow morning.

While were fishing, Camper was laying on a bench. There was a bag of chips beside him but he was a good boy and left it alone. A squirrel was visiting the fishers next to us and they shoed it away. It came over to us and hopped up onto the end of Camper's bench. I think he spotted the chips and just went for it. Camper just sat there and watched him. Strange dog.

Other than that bit of excitement, it was a nice camping day: relaxing, eating, walking the dog, and visiting with the neighbours.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> June 10 (Wednesday)	<b>Site:</b> H177	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#4	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

We were all set to face the day by noon. For breakfast, Tess enjoyed her trout and I got bacon. Mmmm, bacon. We spent several hours fishing off the seawall but got skunked. A teen fishing for suckers with a pickerel rig and worms caught two suckers at the same time. Twice! First time I've seen that.

Several of our neighbours left today. We never spoke to them so I don't know if they were in transit or just wanted to get out of the house for a couple of days. The entire campground is reservation only this year so it will be an unusual season for us.

We had showers today and the electric hot water tank was up to the task. Excellent. A quick trip to town for some odds and ends then back home for a fire. Later we watched a movie then bed.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> June 11 (Thursday)	<b>Site:</b> H177	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#5	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Today I finally caught a trout, and a big one at that. I'd say 2 lbs. Tess had to cut it in half to fit in the frying pan so she was happy. We had a nice relaxing day. After dinner at about 9:00pm the Conservation Officer came around and told us we should have left this afternoon and the next campers had called him. My bad, obviously. We apologized and promised to be out before noon. And we were gone by 11:00am.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sunday June 21	<b>Site:</b> A34	<b>Campground:</b> Long Lake Prov Park
#6	<b>Weather:</b> Mostly Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 21	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Boyle

When I tried to bring Seven home on Friday, it was stuck in the mud at the storage place, right to the axles. The owner of the storage lot paid for the tow truck. Woo Hoo!

Happy Father's Day to Mark and I. He and Isla came over to the house yesterday and spent the night. Mark cooked a great breakfast and then we got ready to go. By 12:30 Tess, Isla, Camper, and I were on the road and it was amazing to see the steady stream of RV heading home after a weekend out at the campgrounds. We arrived right at the 2:00 checkout time and the previous tenants were still in our site. We parked nearby and in a half hour or so they were gone and we settled in. This loop is nearly filled and there are kids, campfires, and laughter all around us.



The campground has not been maintained much this year; the weeds are high and the garbage is overflowing. Not good in bear & skunk country! The roads have not seen a grader in years and the rates are now \$38 per night with 15-amp power. I am disappointed in the lack of value for our camping dollar.

Today was a typical first day out. BBQ dinner but no fire tonight. Isla and I got some quality time doing crafty things and then I managed to tweak

my back (belt line muscle from side to side) and couldn't do much of anything. Tess, Camper, and Isla went for a walk before dinner while I napped. After dinner the girls went fishing for Yellow Perch.

So far, the good news is that nothing else has broken on Seven. I ordered a new gas control valve for the hot water heater but it had not arrived by the time we left. The fridge is working well on 110VAC so everything stayed cold for the 2 hours we were without power on the way here. The jacks still require a little fiddling with wires to get them to wake up properly but that's an easy no \$ fix. Two of the wood blocks I use under the jacks fit perfectly under the steps making them nice and solid.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday June 22	<b>Site:</b> A34	<b>Campground:</b> Long Lake Prov Park
<b>#7</b>	<b>Weather:</b> Mostly Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 22	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Boyle

What a busy day!

Camper was sick overnight – out of both ends. Isla slept through it all but Tess and I were up three times cleaning up the floor, carpet and most importantly, our bed. Poor Campie.

We were all up around 9:00am and after breakfast, we were ready to go to the beach. Isla and I spent 3 hours there. I visited with the Mum of Isla’s new friend, Izzy. Isla and Izzy chased minnows, collected rocks, splashed, and played together for hours. She had a great time. I sat on a lawn chair on the beach and killed 125 black flies! We left the beach about 2:30 and went home for lunch.



Next was a quick trip into Boyle, about 15 minutes north of the park. Tess somehow forgot to bring the bag with our food for the next few days! She says it was because she was distracted by Isla in the confusion of getting ready to go.

On the way back home, we stopped at the playground at the opposite end of the campground for a half hour. Of course, Isla made a new friend immediately and they had fun on the playground equipment.



After a great dinner of ground beef and rice (which Isla and I voted for), she and I went fishing. It only took her about 15 minutes to learn to use her new casting reel although we didn't catch a perch. Maybe tomorrow.

Back home we built a fire and made Smores. Isla ate one and a half and Tess ate one too, her first ever! They were both a sticky mess.

After Isla went to bed, Tess and I stayed up to finish the fire. It was nice to have some "us" time. A doe wandered up the road just as we were coming in around 10:30pm.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday June 23	<b>Site:</b> A34	<b>Campground:</b> Long Lake Prov Park
<b>#8</b>	<b>Weather:</b> Mostly Sunny, rain shower	<b>Temp:</b> 26	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Boyle

It was a hot one today! Once we got organized this morning, Isla and I went back to the beach. She made a couple of new friends and played in the water for nearly 3 hours.

I continued my mission to kill every black fly on the beach and added 67 to my kill count for a total of 192. There were lots of kids there today, mostly in the 1 – 3-year-old range. Lots of boats pulling tubers and kneboarders too.

We came home at 3:00, not long before the thunderstorm hit. Isla and I were both tired and had naps through most of it. We ate dinner at a reasonable hour and then after watched an excellent movie Frozen II. By the end of it, Isla was pretty much asleep and Tess and I were ready for bed.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday June 24	<b>Site:</b> A34	<b>Campground:</b> Long Lake Prov Park
<b>#9</b>	<b>Weather:</b> Mostly Sunny, rain shower	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Boyle

Not quite so hot today and we had a thundershower in the afternoon but all in all, a good day. I killed another 32 flies today bringing my total to 224. Isla and I were at the beach for several hours before the rain and although she didn't find a friend today, she had fun playing in the water and on the beach. As it started to rain, we made the dash for home and naps. The sun and cold water took a lot out of Isla so after her hot shower she was dead to the world for a couple of hours.

We ate BBQ dinner after the rain stopped. Because it was chilly and damp, instead of fishing today, we decided to stay in and watch another movie – Trolls. By the time it was over around 9:00pm, it was bedtime for Isla, and Tess and I retired to read. It turned out that we let her nap too long this afternoon and she had trouble getting to sleep but it all worked out.

All in all, a nice last day here at Long Lake; back home tomorrow.

Thursday, on the way home, we saw a deer and a moose.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday July 27	<b>Site:</b> 106	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Lake Prov Park
#10	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 30	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun



It has been a month since we were out but there are good reasons for that: lots of rain making getting 7 out of the storage lot iffy (needed tow truck again) and that damn Covid virus is still with us. We are here now and stay until my birthday so I'll get my favourite pizza as my birthday dinner.

Before we left home, I spent a couple of days working on Seven. I repaired the power steps which had two broken bolts, and for good measure, I ground off the rust and repainted them. I installed the new gas valve in the hot water heater and it now works on 110v and propane.

Lastly, I checked over the fridge again and found a broken

ground wire. It works again on 110VAC but still not on propane.

The drive out was uneventful although there was a line-up to get into the park. The day use area was full and they were turning people away at the gate. Since we are registered campers, we sailed right through. We are in the top loop backing onto the paved access road to the unserviced campground loops. Lots of trees and our site is well shaded. We have 30 amp power which we need because it is hot!



I brought my painting supplies and decided to try my hand at painting over one of the small vinyl stripes on the back panel. I'm very pleased with the result and the navy blue colour looks great.

After dinner we went down to the day use area and it was a madhouse. There were a lot of people – hundreds! They were not all crowded together shoulder to shoulder but they were dense enough that we didn't feel comfortable walking along the boardwalk. We hung out near the boat launch watching the boats coming in for the night. Everyone knew what they were doing so although the 'I want that boat' factor was high, the bone-headed boater entertainment factor was low.

It was still in the mid-20s at bedtime so we didn't have a fire. The forecast for the next few days is more of the same.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday July 28	<b>Site:</b> 106	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Lake Prov Park
#11	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 29	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun



The AC kept us comfy overnight and we got up at our usual times. By about 11:00am I had decided to tackle the lower rear stripe over the rear slideout. It took an hour to clean and prep and then 5 coats of navy blue later, it looks as good as the little stripe I did yesterday on the back. It will take a while, but I will eventually do them all in navy blue, chocolate

brown, and black.

After I finished painting for the day, we went into Wabamun to see if they still have a farmers' market on Tuesday afternoons. Nope. The day use beach area was busy but by-law officers were there controlling access. There were lots of boats coming and going, fishers and kids. We didn't get out of the car – just too many bodies.

Back home, we hung around the campground, read, napped, ate – the usual. The occasional squirrel came to visit and a whole family of 4 gophers came by too. After dinner the Oilers are hosting the Flames but the exhibition game wasn't televised on any of the 5 over the air channels we can get here. We will be back home when the actual Stanley Cup playoff games begin on Friday in this delayed season.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday July 29	<b>Site:</b> 106	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Lake Prov Park
12	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 28	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

Today was a typical camping day for the three of us. I was outside having my first coffee at about 10am and had a gopher surprise me by climbing up on my foot. I jumped and he took off and didn't come back! I decided to tackle the black door handles on the curb side. ScotchBrite pad, Frog Tape, masking tape and newspaper with a rattle can semi-gloss black and they look great. Perhaps I'll tackle the latches on the street side tomorrow.

We ate, visited with neighbours, and generally relaxed all day. After dinner we had a nice fire and went in when it started to spit around 9:30. A good day.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday July 30	<b>Site:</b> 106	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Lake Prov Park
13	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 27	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

Each day is cooling off by 1 degree so it has gone from too hot to just right over the last few days. After a big breakfast and the required rest, I got back at the painting and finished off the door latches on the street side. They look great. Tess and Camper went for a long walk to the day use area and on the way back, Camper ran out of steam so Tess wound up carrying him for the last kilometre or so. He's getting old like the rest of us.

We went into Wabamun town for an ice cream cone and to watch the comings and goings along the waterfront. The ice cream was excellent but the beachfront park and boat launch were nearly empty. Quite a contrast from the previous two days. I wonder why. Since we were out and about, on the way home we decided to check out the waterfront area here in the Provincial Park.

Again, far fewer people and boats. It isn't the weather; I suspect people are getting ready for the upcoming long weekend rather than heading out here for the day. As was the case the other day, all the boaters knew what they were doing and the entertainment value was low. There are sure some nice boats though.

After a BBQ dinner of all the remaining food, Tess tidied up inside while I read outside. No fire tonight. I came in around 9:30 and we watched a little TV before bed.

Back home tomorrow with our personal batteries recharged. We will get to see Isla as she and Mark will be sleeping over for two nights while Mark and Astin move into their new place in St Albert over the weekend.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, August 17	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#14	<b>Weather:</b> mostly sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 30	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

We hit the road around 11:00am for what is probably the longest trip of the year. It was sunny and hot when we left home and we fought strong headwinds the entire time we were on Hwy 43. There was one rain squall which passed by to the south of us and by the time we pulled into the Park 4 hours later, it was again sunny and hot. No critters this trip, at least none that weren't squashed on the highway. Maybe on the way back.

We settled into our site only to find the jacks had to lift the rear tires off the ground to get us level. Since the parking brake and the transmission act on tires that aren't providing any resistance to movement, I tried again. I drove up on the blocks I use to



spread the load out below the jacks and added a couple of 2x4s under each rear jack and problem solved; we were level with tires and all 4 jacks on solid ground. We are the only campers in this 30-site loop.

Once we had camp set up, we had a snack and a beer then Tess and Camper went in and I stayed outside. We all napped for quite a while. By the time we finished dinner sometime later, it was getting dark so we went in. Tomorrow may be a lazy day too if it hits the predicted 32C.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, August 18	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#15	<b>Weather:</b> mostly sunny, storm	<b>Temp:</b> 28	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

We decided to go to Grande Prairie because it would be too hot to hang around the campsite. We turned the A/C on for Camper and went to town. Since we are in the big city, we decided to pick up a few things like a new flag for the car. Dollarama had Dare Lemon Crème cookies and Cinnamon Swirl cookies on for \$2 a box so we stocked up.



Next stop was the casino, no big surprise. I promptly lost \$40 and eventually Tess lost some as well. I went back out to the car after taking another pain pill for my back. I played on my tablet and may have napped. A brief but intense storm system came through with rain, lightning, thunder, and lots of wind.

We got home around 8pm to a happy dog. We also came home to 7 trees in our site blown down by the wind. The awning was still out and had a small hole poked into it from falling debris. I spent

an hour cutting up the trunks and sweeping up the hundreds of small branches. It was a better result than our first ever trip in Seven where at Wabamun a wind gust dropped a tree onto the roof, dented it, and poked a hole in the roofing material.

I finished just as it got dark, so I won't have to do it tomorrow in the heat of the day.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, August 19	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#16	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 28	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

Another beautiful day! We were up at the usual time and during breakfast we decided to put off going to Swan Lake for a cooler day.

That made today paint another stripe on Seven day. I got busy with the sandpaper and scuffed up the stripe. Since it was dark brown, this stripe had some cracks in it and I thought this would be a good test of my crack mitigation method. Not so much. I sanded the biggest crack down to the wall and feathered out the edges. After 5 coats of gloss black paint, I can still see the difference in texture. The remaining cracks that I didn't sand so deeply look better although not as good as uncracked portions. Eventually I will redo that section but I learned from my mistake.

Since I was into puttering and had the ladder out, I washed the hundreds of dead bugs off the windshield. I collect several of them per km driven, as does every other vehicle on the highway. With all that carnage you'd think that at least over the highway there would be no bugs left to be squished but reinforcements keep coming. Dumb bugs.

This is the only campground we go to regularly that includes firewood in their fee so we loaded up the car and brought some nice dry poplar back to our site. On the short trip we saw a big deer crossing the road in front of us. Since it was so hot, having a fire was for the ambiance, not the heat, and it was nice. We went it about 9:00 and after a snack, I went to bed early, tired from the day's exertions.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, August 20	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#17	<b>Weather:</b> overcast then rain	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

With cooler temps and grey skies we decided to try to catch a trout at Swan Lake. As soon as we left the Park Tess spotted a black bear foraging not far from the highway. He looked healthy with a sleek black coat. He was far enough off the road to feel safe although he kept an eye on us. Bears are always great to see.

Swan Lake Recreation area has had more improvements since our last visit. Signage, gates, toilets, boat launch are all improved. There was only one RV in the small (free) campground.



Given our recent streak of hot weather and the change to overcast average temperature weather today, it wasn't surprising that we didn't catch anything. Tess got one bite that got off and I saw a fish jump but that was it. Entertainment was provided by a couple of teenage girls daring each other into swimming off the dock. A Mom was close by; there was lots of laughing and squealing. There was only one boat out trying their luck. It started to rain around 4:00 so we came back home. Everything was dry at the Park so we decided to try our luck in Sturgeon Lake. We parked and walked to the fishing dock and on my third cast, it started to rain. Sigh.

Back home to a quiet evening.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Friday, August 21	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#18	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 25	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

Sunny skies and not a breath of wind in the morning. By noon or so we were ready to face the world. I dropped Tess and Camper off at the boat launch where they spent the afternoon fishing. I spent it sanding, taping, and painting another stripe. Or most of a stripe. It looks good.

The campground is still nearly empty – maybe 15% full. Even the boat launch parking lot only had a couple of trailers. There simply weren't many boats out fishing. Part of that may be the 1 fish limit for Walleye and zero for pike but even if you can't keep any, guys still like to fish, even with the pandemic, so I'm surprised.

We had a nice fire in the late afternoon and went in about 9:00 and watched some TV on the one station we can get here. The 11:00 news is almost all covid-19 and politics (a new conservative party leader, and the gong show in US) so I went to bed before it was over. The rain started about then and it really came down. There were even a couple of lightning flashes but no wind to speak of.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Saturday, August 22	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#19	<b>Weather:</b> partly sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

I woke up half expecting to see evidence of flooding overnight but everything looked normal. It quickly warmed up under sunny skies and I got back to work on my stripe project. We spent the day doing camping things with a fire, naps, and after dinner, fishing. The campground is less than half full.

The only keepers in the lake are Walleyes 45-50 cm so we were fishing for jacks, but no luck. A fellow fisher was using minnows on a pickerel rig and caught 3 nice Walleyes in a half hour, two of which were keepers. Tomorrow we are driving into Valleyview to buy some minnows!

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sunday, August 23	<b>Site:</b> A54	<b>Campground:</b> Youngs Point Prov Park
#20	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

Our last day here at Young's Point. Too bad it is so far from home because we like it here. Another typical camping day with a long walk, a firewood run, a fire, BBQ dinner, and so on.

After, I prepared outside stuff for departure tomorrow. We went in when it got dark then watched a movie, the news, then went to bed.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, August 24	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#21	<b>Weather:</b> rain	<b>Temp:</b> 15	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

Moving day today. I didn't bother to hook up the car as Tess was willing to drive it to the new campground, about 20 kms away. I stopped at the dump station to take care of things there and we were soon on our way.



We are now on the other side of Sturgeon Lake, closer to Valleyview. This is one of only a handful of Parks where first come, first serve rules apply. We thought there would be a few empty spaces as we checked it out last Tuesday. Turns out there was only one rig here so we had our pick. We settled into site A14; large, level and with a view of the lake across the road.

Once the rain stopped, I went to the wood pile and loaded up the car with what should be enough reasonably dry wood to last a couple of days. Tess wanted some alone time so she took a tub of minnows and walked to the lake to catch a Walleye. No fish but maybe tomorrow.

Everything is still soggy outside so no fire tonight. We watched a movie and turned in early. Forecast is for sunshine and 20 for the rest of the week.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, August 25	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#22	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview



The weather forecast was right, we woke up to a beautiful sunny sky although it got down to single digits overnight and the furnace came on regularly. I did some more work on my stripe project. I'm hoping to reach the halfway point this year.

While I was doing that Tess took her container of minnows and went fishing again. I joined her later and in a bit, she decided that a couple of hours of catching nothing was enough and went home to start the fire.

A few minutes after she and Camper left, I caught two skinny pike. I measured the bigger one at 22" long but he was skinny. I wouldn't have kept either fish even the pike limit wasn't zero. They are still fun to catch.

After dinner beside the fire, Camper and I had a nap. I woke up because I was cold – it was 10 C and time to go in. We watched a movie then listened to the 11:00 news. Listened because here the TV can only get sound, no picture.

The good news is that the world is still out there. The bad news is that it hasn't changed.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, August 26	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#23	<b>Weather:</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview



It got down to single digits again last night and the furnace made itself useful. It is nearly September, after all, and the first frost is probably only a few weeks away. No more stripe project today. I did go on a firewood run although I only got enough for one evening's fire as all the bending is very hard on my back. My hip feels better today so I did take Camper for a walk.

I decided to try fishing mid-afternoon. It was windy and cool but I got to sit in the sun and watch people play with their boats so it was good. I had several bites and brought in one skinny little pike who put on a good show, even jumping out of the water. He went back into the lake. I re-baited with fresh minnows and tossed my line out and soon the rod bent over and the fight was on!

Walleye bite the bait more gently than pike and fight with a steady pull rather than flailing around and jumping. This one pulled the line steadily towards the reed bed but I out-muscled him and he wound up in my net. I measured him carefully and he was 46cm, nicely in the keeper range. Woo hoo!

Tess cooked part of him and made soup with the rest. She told me it was very tasty and I have to go catch another tomorrow. No, I didn't get to eat any of this one.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, August 27	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#24	<b>Weather:</b> sunny, windy	<b>Temp:</b> 21	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

The campground has been slowly filling up. When we arrived here there was only one other unit; now there are about 10. If the weather holds, it may fill up over the weekend. We like both the peace and quiet of being alone but also love to see happy kids playing. Everyone seems to have a dog or two so Camper has lots of smells to keep him happy.

We spent the afternoon fishing and both caught pike and walleye but no keepers. I spent some time on the beach with my metal detector and came up with a half a bungee cord, two pop cans and a quarter. Not much for what is a busy beach on the weekends; perhaps someone else swept it before me. I'll try the campground playground next.

We did the usual in the evening: fire until 9:00, movie, watch the news then bed. It's a nice routine.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Friday, August 28	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#25	<b>Weather:</b> mostly sunny, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

We needed more minnows for fishing so we used that as an excuse to go to Valleyview, about 20 kms away. I have finished the current level on my tablet game so I need a Wi-Fi signal to download a new one.

I went fishing with a neighbour and we sat on the dock for a couple of hours without catching anything except weeds. I did have a pike interested in my lure and although he followed it right up to the dock, he didn't bite. That's fishing.

No fire tonight because of rain showers. We stayed in and watched a couple of movies.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Saturday, August 29	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#26	<b>Weather:</b> some sun, windy, rain	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

It was cold again overnight but we got up to sunny skies and wind. The wind keeps the bugs away but makes a jacket necessary.

I spent all afternoon fishing at the dock wearing a jacket and was chilly enough to wish I had a warm hoodie. The fishing was good though. I caught 3 pike and 2 walleyes. Neither of the walleye were keepers so they went back into the lake as did the pike. In previous years I would have kept one of the pike as it was big and meaty. Tess and Camper walked down to the dock and she caught a nice pike on her first cast. It was too cold to continue so we came home.

A nice fire warmed us up until it started to rain. Camper and I came in then while Tess dug out her umbrella and stayed by the fire for another half hour. After dinner it was shower time and then we settled in for a movie before bed.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sunday, August 30	<b>Site:</b> A14	<b>Campground:</b> Williamson Prov Park
#27	<b>Weather:</b> some sun, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 15	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Valleyview

Another sunny morning. The campground is still only 15% full and most people packed up and pulled out today. Tess ate one of our Walleyes so I went down to the dock to try and catch a replacement. I was there for several hours and the wind was still blowing hard enough to take the fun out of it all. I had two sweaters on and lots of minnows so I stuck with it.

I had several bites and a couple of pike hooked. There were a few boats coming and going which I always enjoy watching. Tess came down and we moved to the left dock. Eventually I hooked a nice keeper walleye while Tess had fun with a few pike. Since we leave tomorrow, this was our last chance to replenish our limited stock of walleye.

We lit a fire in the late afternoon then after dinner watched another downloaded movie. Or tried to; it was in Italian! Oh well.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, August 31	<b>Site:</b> B35	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#28	<b>Weather:</b> partly cloudy, windy	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

After dumping tanks and refilling water at Williamson, we made the two-hour drive to Carson-Pegasus Provincial Park. Just before Valleyview we had a big scare.

Some old guy in a crew cab dually pickup entered the divided highway from our right, intending to turn left. He pulled out a couple of hundred metres in front of us but instead of moving up to the median space, he stopped blocking both lanes of our side of the highway. We were going 100kph! I hit the brakes and the horn and steered to the right to pass behind him as there was no way I could stop before T-boning him and killing him. Wouldn't be good for us either.



I passed about a metre behind his truck at about 60 kph just as he realized what he had done; his eyes were very large as he stared at me and stomped his gas pedal. He was still in drive so shot ahead just as Toad passed behind him. He'll never come closer to dying until his last day.

Happily, the rest of the trip was uneventful. We settled into our site and got set up. The booth was closed with a sign telling campers to check in at the store. I took Camper for a walk to register and was chatting with the girl there.

The lake has been stocked with 110,000 rainbow trout this year and they expect a 50% survival rate after the effects of the pelicans, loons, osprey, the shock of being dumped into a new environment, and, of course, all us fishers. Not many fish have been caught all year but I think we will change that!

On the way back from the store, I met the neighbour from across the road. Lawney & Sue Babin have a very clean 1997 Fleetwood Southwind 31' Class A which they bought this year. They are new to the RV lifestyle and decided to jump into the deep end with their first rig. We had a long chat over a few beers after dinner and I gave him some suggestions and pointers. I also pointed him to my web site and showed him my journal and maintenance spreadsheet. Very nice couple, I think they'll be successful RVers.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, September 1	<b>Site:</b> B35	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#29	<b>Weather:</b> partly cloudy, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 17	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

The first order of business was a trip to town. I needed some fishing stuff and Tess needed a few things for the kitchen.

We stopped in at the casino to check the menu and to confirm club members still get a discount on gasoline prices. We get 7¢ per litre which will save us \$7 when we put a \$100 splash of gas in to make it home.

Once back to the campground, we headed for the seawall. We were the only ones there because of the wind and cool temperature. Within a few minutes the wind died and the afternoon turned pleasant. Calm winds turned out to not be an omen of good fortune as we caught no trout. Tess did catch two sucker fish but as always, we just threw them back.

Home for showers then dinner. Rain showers started in the early evening so no fire tonight. We just stayed in and watched a movie, the 11:00 news and off to bed.



<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, September 2	<b>Site:</b> B35	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#30	<b>Weather:</b> partly cloudy, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 16	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Another cool, windy and showery day. Before committing to packing our stuff down to the seawall, Tess walked down to chat with the fishers there. They were all miserable and cold and not a single fish had come in all day. Not happy news.

So, we decided to go for wings and beer at the casino. After I lost my \$40 budget in a half hour, I nursed a beer or two and watched a Blue Jays baseball game while munching on salt & pepper wings. Tess played and at the end of a few hours was about even. The back corner of this First Nations owned casino still allows smoking but the smell doesn't travel to the rest of the floor. There are only a few smokers, most having quit or died off. With the Covid pandemic over half the slots are turned off, there are plexi dividers and the tables are closed.

On the way home at dusk we saw a young moose on the shoulder of the road a couple of hundred metres ahead. As soon as he saw the car he took off into the bush. Good moose.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, September 3	<b>Site:</b> B35	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#31	<b>Weather:</b> partly cloudy, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 16	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Another day of poor weather and no fish. We gave it a good try for a couple of hours and of all the people on the seawall, I saw only Tess even get a bite. She probably had a sucker and a trout take her bait but neither fish got hooked. Back home, wearing two sweaters, I sat by the firepit with a beer, reading.

Tess needed something at the pharmacy in Whitecourt so that killed an hour until dinner time. Another movie before bed. Not our best quality day.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Friday, September 4	<b>Site:</b> B35	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#32	<b>Weather:</b> partly cloudy, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 16	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Another cold night, we woke to gray skies and a still empty campground. That will change today as this is the Labour Day long weekend so the place should fill up. We checked the fishers and nothing has changed – no fish. As it our last full day of the trip, we have lots to do anyway.

Back home we packed everything up, emptied the cupboards and drawers of any liquids, and I even scrubbed the shower. We were pretty much ready to go home and put 7 to sleep for the winter (all the Park campgrounds close on Tuesday) by 5:00. We went to the casino for dinner, to get a 7 cents off coupon for gas and to make our contribution to Alberta charities. We got home around 9:30 being the poor old farts that we are.

We watched the 11:00 news then went to bed. Back home tomorrow after a 32 night season, the lowest number since 2014.