

# 2021 Camping Journal

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, May 24	<b>Site:</b> C62	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#1	<b>Weather:</b> everything	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Finally, we are out where we are happiest – camping! The world seemed determined to delay us with Covid, overburdened reservation system, and the snow we had last week. I got quite a few service items checked off and as always, found a couple of new ones. The paint I applied over the decals has cracked in several places right where the decal cracks were. Too bad as it looks pretty good otherwise. Interior blinds, shocks, and repairing the hydraulic jack control panel are still to be done. And the fridge which won't work on propane. It never ends.

The trip up here was not entirely uneventful either. Although the computer didn't throw a code, Seven is running very poorly and well down on power. Perhaps mice chewed the spark plug wires? I'll have a look tomorrow.

We settled into our site which is about 75' long and nearly level. We can see only two other RVs through the trees. Since the long weekend is done with, it should be quiet and peaceful this week. Ahhh.

After dinner we went to the seawall to try and catch a rainbow trout or two. I didn't but Tess brought in the biggest trout we have ever caught here. It was 19½" long and just over 2lbs. Nice fish!



*Tess' Big Rainbow Trout*

Over the winter I caught the magnet fishing bug and bought a 1,200lb pull single sided ‘beginners’ magnet. I was anxious to try it out, so I spent about 45 minutes heaving it and dropping it into the water around the boat docks. The guys on the YouTube videos catch all sorts of junk but not me. I think it comes down to the fact this is a clean lake. My single sided magnet works fine straight down but not so much on a long throw then pulling it in.

I wasn’t skunked – I caught the anchor chains that hold the dock in place, a used sparkler, a few bits of fishing tackle, 26 cents (I didn’t know coins were magnetic!) and my prize, a springy rod holder thingy. By the time Tess and Camper were ready to go back to camp, I was exhausted from my efforts with the magnet. And it only weighs about 10 lbs. I am not going to be able to do much with a 3,600 lb pull double sided beast that weighs 20lb or more.

We are both tired and sore so no fire tonight. We were listening to the Oilers vs Jets 1<sup>st</sup> round playoff game on the radio. We went to bed after the second overtime period. In the morning we found out the Jets won in the 3<sup>rd</sup> OT period and swept the series 4-0. Sigh.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, May 25	<b>Site:</b> C62	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
<b>#2</b>	<b>Weather:</b> sunny breaks	<b>Temp:</b> 15	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt



*Carson-Pegasus Prov Park Site C62*

We were up at the crack of 8:30 to sunshine and singing birds. Once we got ourselves sorted it was about noon and I dropped Tess and Camper off to go fishing and I took the metal detector to the kids playground. My metal detector finally died. Not surprising as it must be 20 years old. I'll buy another next time they go on sale at Princess Auto. Since I can't go treasure hunting, I tried fishing for a while. I got one good bite but no fish so I decided to come home and check out Seven.

As I was coming into our loop there was a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel blocking the road as it navigated a tough turn to get into a campsite. The owner was having trouble so a neighbour helped out because he had experience with 5<sup>th</sup> wheels. Turns out his experience was with a setup with a sliding hitch. This truck had a short box and fixed hitch. The helper backed the truck and trailer too far and the corner of the trailer popped the pickup's back window. The owner was only a little upset, but the helper felt terrible. I'm sure they worked it out.

Troubleshooting Seven's drivability problem proved difficult, No chewed wires or other obvious signs. I checked the air filter and it was very, very dirty. A quick trip to Canadian Tire in Whitecourt for a \$25 Fram CA3914 replacement. I want to replace the spark plugs and wires too. And the bumps reminded me that I still have to replace the front shocks.



*A Friendly Chipmunk*

Tess was still fishing while all this was going on. She caught a sucker and landed a nice trout. She put the trout in the basket, she says, but it somehow managed to escape. She was very upset but there's always tomorrow. Or the next day since it is supposed to rain all day tomorrow.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, May 26	<b>Site:</b> C62	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#3	<b>Weather</b> Sun, wind, rain	<b>Temp:</b> 15	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

It didn't rain until 7:30pm so the forecast was wrong again. I was up at 9:00 and after a shower and a shave was ready for coffee and to begin preparations for the day's adventures. I spent some time getting the fishing tackle ready and by about 1:00pm we were ready to go get some trout.

Tess spent 3 hours on the seawall and I joined her for an hour or so. I had one timid strike that barely rang my bell and Tess got nothing. There were few other fishers there and we didn't see any fish come in. The wind was blowing off the water and we were cold and returned to camp.

Back home it was a lazy day of reading and naps. Just after dinner it started to spit a few raindrops so we didn't have a fire, just stayed inside and watched a movie before bed.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, May 27	<b>Site:</b> C62	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#4	<b>Weather</b> Sun, wind, rain	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Another day with unsettled weather which usually means the fish won't be biting. Before fishing though, we went into town to buy more Powerbait and replacement tomato plants that the frost last week killed because Tess planted them too early.

Once back in the campground, this turned into a particularly good day. It was chilly fishing for the first hour but then the wind died down and it warmed up to 20 degrees. Then I caught a nice trout. It put up a good fight and even jumped clear of the water once. We packed it in around 5:00 with a total of 2 fish for the week. Three I suppose if you count the one Tess accidentally released back into the lake. Better than our total last year.

Back at camp we relaxed for a bit then I fired up the BBQ and made a real wood fire. The sun came out and with full bellies we enjoyed the fire until 8:00 when Tess went in for a shower. Then the pharmacy called and asked if we want our 2<sup>nd</sup> Moderna vaccine shot. Why yes, yes we do! Desperately! I set up the appointment for tomorrow afternoon.

As the fire was dying down, I saw dark clouds on the horizon and the boom of distant thunder. I got to work and put everything away before the rain started. It was a near thing as drops were falling as I closed the door. There were several very bright flashes followed almost immediately by crashing thunder. I love a good thunderstorm! There was a power bump too that caused me to lose a half paragraph of this page, but it stayed on after that.

A good end to our first trip of the season.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sunday, June 6	<b>Site:</b> 40	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#5	<b>Weather</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

Even though it is 14 years old, Seven only has about 50,000kms on it. It was running very rough, was way down on power, and gas mileage was terrible on the trip to Whitecourt. I diagnosed it as a couple of bad plugs even though the computer didn't show a code. Before this short trip I changed 7's spark plugs for the first time and a quick road test convinced me I had diagnosed the problem correctly.

After years of waiting, we finally pulled the trigger and bought new cordless day/night shades for the four windows in the front slideout. The daytime shades allow much more light through than the old ones and the nighttime shades are much darker. And no strings to fray or break. Excellent upgrade.

We brought Isla with us this trip since we are staying close to home. She slept most of the way and was ready to go as soon as we arrived. After a quick and easy check in we set up in our site in the lower, wooded loop. It is not very level front to back – the front tires are about 4" in the air! It is long though with lots of room for Seven, Toad and Mark's car.



*Wabamun Lake Prov Park Site 40*

Isla and I headed to the beach while Nana stayed home to nurse her strained knee. As soon as we hit the beach I sprayed Isla with sun screen, gave her the rules about wearing her hat so I can see her, and not going beyond the buoys and she hit the water. She quickly made several new friends and was having a great time. She stayed in the lake for over 2 hours and wasn't even shivering when it was time to go!



*Busy Beach At Wabamun*

A few minutes after we got back to camp, Mark arrived for dinner and a visit. He BBQ'd burgers, kubi, and dogs for us all. We had a nice fire and then Mark put Isla to bed and headed home. He promised to come back out on Wednesday if he can.

The tent caterpillars are back at Wabamun. They aren't yet carpeting everything as we have seen in years past but they are everywhere. I hope they don't strip the trees bare again this year.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, June 7	<b>Site:</b> 40	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#6	<b>Weather</b> sunny, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

It's always an adventure. In the middle of the night Tess' stupid alarm clock decided to go off waking us both from a sound campground sleep. Tess mentioned that she heard scuffling noises under the fridge which can only mean more mice. Sigh. One day I am going to figure out how they are getting in.

Things change. I took Isla to my semi-secret fishing spot across the road from Highvale Mine on the south shore. I have always caught lots of pike here. The place is now fenced off with a sign apologizing for the inconvenience. We continued westward along the south shore looking for access to the lake but no joy. We went through Seba Beach at the west end of the lake and drove back eastward to the town of Wabamun where we finally got to fish off the pier. I have caught here before but not today. Lots of weeds but no fish.



*Isla Masters Nana's Open-Faced Spinning Reel*

Isla's fishing rod had broken so she used Nana's open faced spinning reel. I thought she would have lots of trouble with it but by her second cast she looked like a pro. We fished for an hour with zero success so we went

to the playground so she could play on the equipment there. There were no other kids around so we left after 20 minutes.

After dinner Isla and I took Camper for a walk around our loop. There are few campers here; it is perhaps 10% full. I thought it would be busier. We stopped off at the loop's playground which is swings only. Isla played for a while after one of the older (10 or 12) boys playing on the swings gave his up so Isla could swing. Nice of him.

Back home Isla called her parents to tell them about her day and say goodnight. It was movie night, so we got out the popcorn and got comfy then watched Godzilla vs Kong. Typical CGI monster movie, not very deep.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, June 8	<b>Site:</b> 40	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#7	<b>Weather</b> sunny, windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 15	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

Tess' sore knee is really hurting and she is practically immobile. The weather is cool and wet so outdoor activities are off the table for today, so we drove Toad back into town to buy a knee brace, pick up some more food and, since we were there, have showers at home. The knee brace seems to help.

Back at the lake and we decided it was time to try magnet fishing. We chose the docks at the boat launch as the best spot to try. We worked out a system where Isla tossed the magnet out and I retrieved it. I used muscles I haven't used in decades and after a couple of hours was very sore. Unlike fish fishing, we actually got some stuff magnet fishing. A toonie, a dime, assorted rusty fish hooks, nails, and a half dozen old fishing lures. I even caught the metal bracket that holds the docks together. The magnet was very hard to remove. I'll try not to do that again.



*Isla Tosses The Magnet*

Since we ate big late lunches in town so only had a light dinner then it was movie night. It was an action / adventure movie starring Jason Statham but Isla was asleep before the movies was over, I think because there weren't any dragons or dinosaurs.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, June 9	<b>Site:</b> 40	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#8	<b>Weather</b> sunny breaks, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

Today was visitor day. Melissa arrived around 10am. Isla was happy to see her mom. We were glad for a little quiet time when they went off on a walk together. We sat around visiting and after some snackies, Isla, Melissa and I went magnet fishing again off the docks in Moonlight Bay. Mel left around 4:00 heading home.

Just like the metal detector, the magnet attracted lots of kids who all wanted to try it. Isla was very good at showing them the proper technique. We pulled up the usual assortment of old fishing lures, hooks, a couple of lag bolts and other assorted detritus.

Isla and I got caught in the rain and had to take shelter under the roof of the closed concession stand. It was just for a few minutes as there was a lull before the next wave arrived and we made a dash for the car. Back at camp more RVers are arriving. Lots of new looking trailers this year.

Mark arrived about 6:00pm and we had ground beef and rice for dinner, everyone's favourite. They went for a bike ride but didn't get far before Isla started feeling what she calls chest pain. This is an occasional problem

perhaps caused by exertion too soon after eating a big meal. They returned to camp and as it was still too wet for a fire, and Isla feeling poorly, we decided it was movie night.

We watched Monster Hunter starring Mila Jovovich. It was a lot of fun and sets things up for a part two or maybe more. We all went to bed at 10:30 as Mark leaves early in the morning to get to work on time. It was nice to have him stay over.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, June 10	<b>Site:</b> 40	<b>Campground:</b> Wabamun Prov Park
#9	<b>Weather</b> windy, showers	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Wabamun

Not exactly first light but I was up at 7:00am to see Mark off. I was awake anyway because Camper barked at every little noise Mark made while going through his morning routine and making coffee. I love Camper dearly but sometimes I'd like to just punt him outside.

After a slow start to the day, Isla and I spent a couple of hours doing schoolwork. Science seems to be her favourite for now and her reading and writing are slowly improving. After lunch Isla and I went magnet fishing again back at the boat launch. No big finds but we did pull up a nearly new fishing lure.

The weather here is very localized. The boat launch / day use area is not much more than a km from camp and Tess said it rained and thundered steadily at camp. Where we were there was only one brief shower and a steady wind. We got back to camp about 5pm and I BBQ'd dinner. Next it was another movie night as the rain showers continued.

Back home tomorrow afternoon.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Sunday, June 20	<b>Site:</b> A5	<b>Campground:</b> Thunder Lake Prov Park
#10	<b>Weather</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Barrhead

Isla, Mark, and I left Morinville about 2:30pm and arrived at Thunder Lake less than an hour later. Isla rode with me and Mark followed in his car. She slept the whole way so I had a quiet drive. We arrived at an almost empty campground as usual for a Sunday check-in. Our site was reasonably level although it does back onto the main road which I should have noticed when I picked the site at reservation time.



*Thunder Lake Prov Park Site A-5*

Once we were set up we got busy with the business of camping. Mark and Isla played sword fights, went for bike rides and so on while I relaxed and did nothing. That's my agenda for this week – a whole lot of nothing. For Father's Day Tess bought us some very nice filet mignon steaks which I BBQ'd. Mark cooked up some excellent potatoes and made rice, so we were set. It was a great meal!



*Father's Day Dinner*

We had a nice fire for a couple of hours. Nibbler was busy cuddling on my lap and Isla made a replica campsite complete with firepit, trees, and the RV. Mark and I just chilled by the fire. It was as pleasant an evening as I can remember. Isla made it to 10:30 then went to bed. Mark and I stayed up visiting for another hour before I went to bed.

A really great Father's Day!

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, June 21	<b>Site:</b> A5	<b>Campground:</b> Thunder Lake Prov Park
#11	<b>Weather</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 23	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Barrhead

Mark decided to try sleeping on the dinette bed last night, leaving Isla on the hide-a-bed couch. Instead of too soft and lumpy, now his complaint is that his bed is too hard. Sounds a lot like Goldilocks! Part of it may be his reaction to his second Covid vaccine shot he got earlier today. We were all up and ready to eat by 9:30 which is a sensible hour, I think.

I spent a mostly quiet day around camp. Mark & Isla went for a couple of bike rides and spent several hours at the beach. They came home with a new friend, Owen, and his grandparents. We all had a fire and a nice visit. They are from the Barrhead area and were at the beach for the day. Later, Rick (Isla's other grandfather) dropped by for a visit for an hour or so on his way home from work.



*Isla and New Friend Owen*

Since we had a very late lunch, Isla and I decided to go magnet fishing at the boat launch. I had high hopes for treasure because this is a busy area. We found two used up sparklers and a bottle cap. Then I got my magnet stuck between two of the concrete slabs on the boat launch. It was wedged in there very tightly. I pulled from all directions and even waded into the water trying to get it free with no luck.

The dock was mostly detached from the shore due to a storm a couple of weeks ago. We still got out there by climbing and wading. I carried Isla so she stayed dry. I did manage to take a tumble when trying to rescue my magnet but there was nothing broken and minimal blood loss. We came home to a great spaghetti dinner prepared by Mark. He is a very good cook.

Isla wanted a movie night so we came in about 9:00, her normal bedtime. It is the longest day of the year today and sunset was still well over an hour away when we came in. She settled into her bed with her Dad and I got comfy in my chair as we watched 'Frozen 2', an animated musical. Isla knew most of the songs and it was entertaining enough for the genre.



*Isla and Poppa*

They will return home tomorrow leaving me to several days of peace and quiet, alone in the 'wilderness'.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, June 22	<b>Site:</b> A5	<b>Campground:</b> Thunder Lake Prov Park
#12	<b>Weather</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 27	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Barrhead

Another beautiful day with most everything I want when camping: warm and sunny, few bugs, good food, and cold beer. No fishing, wife or dog but that's OK once in a while. The campground loop is slowly filling up with two more units arriving today although it is still less than half full.

We kept busy with the usual activities. Mark was kind enough to go up on the roof to service the TV antenna mechanism. Isla scrambled up there with him. She is not afraid to try anything with her Daddy nearby. She even managed to coax me into playing soccer for a bit!

Mark & Isla left around 4:30pm and I was left to my own devices. I spent some time tidying up then settled in on my zero-g chair to read. I called to talk to Tess then I made a light dinner and around 9:30 picked a movie to watch. The first one was so bad I deleted it after 10 minutes. The second one was Anime with Japanese dialog so

that got deleted too. The third one was 'Boss Level' which was basically John Wick meets Groundhog Day. It was actually pretty good.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, June 23	<b>Site:</b> A5	<b>Campground:</b> Thunder Lake Prov Park
#13	<b>Weather</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 27	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Barrhead

My first day alone and I took advantage of it. After I cleaned up the fridge because the apple juice box leaked everywhere, I did pretty much nothing. I read a book and started another, I cleaned the bugs off the windshield, I went for a drive around the campground and bought a Creamsicle at the store.

I have new neighbours, a recently retired couple from Canmore. They retired, sold it all and bought their first RV, a small travel trailer, and are travelling around western Canada visiting kids and grandkids. They are heading to Victoria and may move there. Good for them.

I had a small fire tonight and came in about 10:00. I watched a couple of episodes of a Sci-fi TV series I downloaded and it was lights out before midnight.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, June 24	<b>Site:</b> A5	<b>Campground:</b> Thunder Lake Prov Park
#14	<b>Weather</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 26	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Barrhead

Much like yesterday, I stayed home most of the day. I did go for a drive into Barrhead because I had a craving for Dairy Queen onion rings but there was no DQ to be found. I spent the rest of the day reading and after a BBQ burger dinner, I visited with my neighbour for a bit.

I got a call from Don & Linda Allan. Like us, they are anxious to have the Covid restrictions lifted. They have also had both doses and are looking forward to the restrictions being lifted next week. I promised we would get together in July. We haven't even met their new dog who is over a year old now.

I had a nice little fire then went in about 10 to watch another couple of episodes of my recorded show. Its just like bingeing on Netflix but with a campfire. A hot shower before bed and I slept like a log.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Friday, June 25	<b>Site:</b> A5	<b>Campground:</b> Thunder Lake Prov Park
#15	<b>Weather</b> Sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 30	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Barrhead

As much as I am enjoying the alone time, I miss Tess and Camper a lot. I will stick it out another day though because it really isn't a hardship. I had calls from Tess and from Todd today. Everyone is doing well and we just chatted. Besides that, the big excitement for the day was going for a walk.

I BBQ'd the last of the filet mignons for dinner tonight. Wow, this is good steak! I didn't have a fire because it was too hot. The loop is full tonight, not a surprise as it is Friday. I got most of the outside breaking camp chores done late in the evening once it started to cool off. I'll have only a couple of items to do tomorrow before I leave.

I am looking forward to having Tess and Camper next time when we go to Cross Lake on July 5, after Canada Day.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, July 5	<b>Site:</b> 85	<b>Campground:</b> Cross Lake Prov Park
#16	<b>Weather</b> mostly cloudy	<b>Temp:</b> 20	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Westlock

I had it in my head that we were coming out here on Sunday, not Monday. I was so disappointed! It gave me an extra day to install the new front shocks. I got the curb side done quickly but could not undo the lower bolt on the street side shock so it will have to wait. Once today arrived and it was time to leave, I was more than ready.

The county road from the highway to the Provincial Park is not paved and with the dry conditions for the past couple of weeks, it was very, very dusty for the last 15 minutes of the drive. Luckily the traffic was light and only one vehicle passed us so it wasn't too bad although Toad was completely covered. Tess had to use the windshield wipers to park it. Of course, Tess says we will never come back here because of the dust. We settled into our site which is level and a good size.



*Site 85 Cross Lake Provincial Park*

The ridiculously hot weather pattern finally broke yesterday and we should see near normal temperatures for at least the next week while we are here. That means the occasional campfire and walks to explore the campground and surrounding park. In the evening we sat outside and had a late BBQ dinner which we ate inside as it was getting chilly. With the cooler temps we slept really well.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, July 6	<b>Site:</b> 85	<b>Campground:</b> Cross Lake Prov Park
#17	<b>Weather</b> mostly sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 24	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Westlock

With one new shock and one worn out one I wondered how Seven would handle. I can definitely feel the difference with the new Bilstein riding softer but with better bounce control. Once I get the second one done I'm sure I'll be happy. I think I will have to use a torch to heat the nut to break it free.

Today was nearly perfect camping weather with a light breeze to keep the bugs away. We took Camper for a long walk and explored our loop and the beach area. The blue-green algae is very thick, coating the shore. We kept Camper away from it. The rest of the day was spent hanging around camp and reading. The campground is perhaps 25% full now and very peaceful.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, July 7	<b>Site:</b> 85	<b>Campground:</b> Cross Lake Prov Park
#18	<b>Weather</b> mostly sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 30	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Westlock

Today was another warm, sunny day right at normal temperatures. Perfect. There is nothing to do here other than go for a walk, which we did. The map showed a trail to a bird viewing area so after touring around the last campground loop, we went to see the birds. There weren't any, probably because of the algae. We did see a doe and two fawns cross the path ahead of us which was the highlight of the walk.

Back at camp I was sitting on my chair reading when a squirrel came to visit. He climbed right up to my lap looking for a handout. When I didn't give him anything, he turned around and left. We had planned on a fire tonight but the last thing we need is a hot fire, so we didn't. We had a movie night in with the air conditioning running.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, July 8	<b>Site:</b> 85	<b>Campground:</b> Cross Lake Prov Park
#19	<b>Weather</b> sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 31	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Westlock

Another too-hot day in a dusty campground with nothing to do. Tess' knee and my hip are too sore to go on long walks, even in the shade, the beach is effectively closed because of the algae and the horse flies are hungry making it dangerous to go outside. So, we decided to go home today instead of Saturday. We'll just write off two nights camping fees.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Monday, Sept 13	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#19	<b>Weather</b> Windy, mostly sunny	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Since we bugged out early from Cross Lake without staying there for nights #19 and #20, tonight is still #19 this year. Too bad we didn't qualify for a refund of unused nights because I could have used the money for the fridge repair. The new board and igniter, installed, came to \$745.50. Ouch!

We packed up and were ready to leave home when the entire 12-volt system failed. No interior lights, no fridge, no water pump. It took about 10 minutes of troubleshooting to diagnose a failed converter. It stopped putting out 12 volts including to the house batteries. OK, easy enough to swap out. I found one yesterday at Woody's in St Albert and even after asking for and getting the sale price, it was still \$550! Ouch again.

Monday, we hit the road and arrived at Carson-Pegasus after fighting a strong headwind the entire trip. We settle in, levelled, and put the slides out. Or rather, I put the bedroom slide out. The living room slide was dead. Power to the switch over the door but not to the motor. I dug out the manual and found out how to extend it manually. Hope it isn't raining when I have to lie on my back on the ground under the slideout to crank it back in!



*Carson-Pegasus Prov Park Site H178*

I managed to forget my Zero-G camping chair so that means no naps out in the sun for me. One last thing, the BBQ propane tank was empty. Good thing I brought a spare. On the bright side, the fridge is working fine.

There are half a dozen units here, all old farts like us so it will be peaceful and quiet. The neighbours told me the fishing is slow but steady with a few fish coming in. We had our usual BBQ burgers and dogs for dinner then Tess went fishing leaving Camper and I to fend for ourselves for a couple of hours. Tess got skunked but enjoyed her alone time. We watched a movie then went to bed.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, Sept 14	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#20	<b>Weather</b> Mostly sunny, rain after dark	<b>Temp:</b> 18	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

It took us a while to get mobile this morning, but we are retired and out camping so its not like we have a schedule! We eventually got our act together and went fishing on the seawall. There were a few boats out trolling and one or two other fishers well along the seawall, so it felt like we had the whole lake to ourselves. The loons and ducks have gone south but the grebes and osprey are still around. The leaves are starting to turn colour and it is getting near freezing at night so the furnace comes on from time to time.

When we returned from fishing with our three nice rainbows, the lights were all but dead meaning the batteries are dead and the brand-new converter isn't doing its job. I crawled on the floor and removed the access panel under the fridge and found the problem. The ground wire from the converter to the 12-volt system had come off. I guess the combination of stranded wire, rough roads, and a little tension on the wire had managed to work it loose and it popped out of the converter. I re-connected it and we immediately had full power again. Even so, it looks like the house batteries are done so I will replace them in the Spring when Costco gets their annual supply. I bought these in April, 2016 and got 6 camping seasons out of them. I might have managed another year or two if they hadn't been completely discharged twice this month. Still, 6 years of service is not too bad for the \$235 I paid for them.

After a great dinner of roast beef, mashed potatoes, and such we went to the Whitecourt casino. I lost my modest budget and Tess broke even. Pretty normal for us. We came home around 10pm to a happy dog then watched a movie before bed. On the way home it started to rain which kept up most of the night so we slept well.



*Our First 3 Rainbows*

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Wednesday, Sept 15	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#21	<b>Weather</b> Sunny, windy, rain	<b>Temp:</b> 13	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

We woke up to sunny skies and light winds. The ground is starting to get covered by colourful fallen leaves and the squirrels are noisily preparing for winter. This is our favourite time of year to camp. After the usual morning routine, we headed into Whitecourt for some supplies. After brief stops at Canadian Tire for fuel stabilizer and Wal-Mart for odds and ends, we went to No Frills Grocery where Tess found some bargains and bought a couple of bags of groceries.

On the way home I dropped her off at the casino. Camper and I went home to put away the new supplies and I spent several hours working on family tree data cleanup. It rained much of the afternoon so it was a good day to stay inside. I nuked dinner and watched the first half of a movie before Tess texted for me to come get her. She won a few hundred \$ - she always seems to do better when I am not there.

I finished my movie when we got home. My left leg started jumping around energetically all on it own so I took a pill that the doctor had prescribed. A half hour later it was still jumping, but not as badly, so I took another since the bottle says take one or two. The second one did the trick. I bit down on a Kraft caramel with a bad tooth and had to take a Motrin for the pain. After a bit the pain settled down and I was more than ready for bed! I slept almost 12 hours and felt great!

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Thursday, Sept 16	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#22	<b>Weather</b> Sunny, windy, rain	<b>Temp:</b> 10	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Camper and I were up at the crack of noon to see sunny skies but with dark clouds on the horizon. Tess and Camper went fishing in the early afternoon while I was typing up this log. I spent some time on my family tree data cleanup project then went treasure hunting at the playground. My new metal detector is very sensitive and makes an interesting variety of noises. I think I have it figured out now. I found a little monster truck, a screw, a washer, several bottle caps and pull tabs and assorted bits of metal like foil. I left the little truck behind for the next kid to find and trashed everything else. Even if I didn't find that ever elusive diamond ring, it is good to get sharp things out of the kids' play area.

While I was busy with that, Tess caught another trout. That's two each so far this trip. She ate it for dinner so we can still catch and keep another 7 fish if we get on a hot streak. That seems doubtful though as the Fisheries people dumped some 30,000 fingerlings into the lake today. On top of the two other loads they have already dumped in this month. Big fish eat little fish instead of the PowerBait we offer them. We'll see how it goes.

It got cold and windy in the afternoon so around 5:30 we decided to stop fishing and warm up inside. Tess ate one of her fish and I had a big bowl of chili. That's a great meal to warm up with! We watched a movie "Pig" starring Nicholas Cage and despite the good reviews, found it slow and boring. Next Up was "Cruella". I didn't have high hopes but it turned out to be entertaining. We went to bed about 11:30.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Friday, Sept 17	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#23	<b>Weather</b> Cloudy, windy	<b>Temp:</b> 8	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

There's a pattern to the daytime high temperatures. If it continues, we'll be lucky to get above freezing by Sunday. The fish don't care so hopefully we will catch a few more before we go.

Tess spent the entire afternoon fishing and I joined her for a couple of hours. She had two fish in close to the net but they both managed to get off at the last moment so no more fish were added to the freezer. There's always tomorrow.

Every day more trees start to turn colour as the weather cools and the nights get longer. I saw a little downy woodpecker and lots of fat squirrels scurrying about. There is still one pair of loons on the lake and I'm sure they are gorging themselves on all those fingerlings the Fisheries people dumped in the lake earlier this week.

More campers arrived yesterday so the peninsula is almost full now. There are 3 Class As, a Class C, 2 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailers and perhaps 10 bumper pull trailers. The park operator and the RCMP make occasional patrols but this is a quiet crowd so they don't have anything to do.

We had our last BBQ of the season for dinner then watched a couple of movies: "Cruella" which was pretty good and definitely not a kids movie, and "Don't Breathe 2" an OK suspense flick with a bit of slasher/horror thrown in.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date:</b> Saturday, Sept 18	<b>Site:</b> H178	<b>Campground:</b> Carson-Pegasus Prov Park
#24	<b>Weather</b> Cloudy, windy	<b>Temp:</b> 8	<b>Nearby Town:</b> Whitecourt

Our last night here and our last night out for the season, I think. I spent the afternoon at the seawall and caught exactly nothing. I did have a couple of hours of peace and quiet to read so the afternoon wasn't wasted. I got back about 4:00 and Tess had already started on her inside chores. I packed up everything outside, not because I am anxious to leave, but because I'd rather do it when it is not raining.

So, what to do when the fish won't bite and it is too cold and windy to sit by the fire? Why, go to the casino for dinner, of course! So away we went. I had fish & chips which weren't very good, but the beer was. There was an Edmonton vs Winnipeg football game on TV but the Elks put on a poor show and I didn't watch it all.

As usual, I lost and Tess won. At least we are a balanced team. We got home late, about 11:30 so just went to bed. Back on the road tomorrow.

The next morning it was damp but not actually raining so manually cranking the slide in wasn't too bad.

We were out 24 nights in 2021 which is below average but we will make up for it next year when we go to Yellowknife!