

Our trip began with a short stop in London to get some repairs to the rig and on [Thursday September 27th](#). We met another couple in the parking lot who had been "Full-timing" for about a year who were also in for repairs. Unfortunately Can Am was not able to fix the switch that makes our landing gear go up and down so Mike had to hot wire it until we got to the Doubletree plant.

[Friday the 28th](#) was a warm and sunny day as we headed down the 401 towards Windsor where we dropped off some things and said our goodbyes to Matt and Charlie. We crossed the border around 3 pm and after about a 30 minute wait we were on our way to Homer Michigan for our first stop at a "Coast to Coast" campsite. The Lighthouse Campground has a few sites right



by the front gate that are perfect for those of us who want an easy place to stop for one night. Percy had a good run after supper on the tennis court. The picture is our morning view from the Suite.

On a sunny , [Saturday, the 29th](#) morning we left Homer around 11 am and took Highway 12 south to avoid the toll. This turned out to be a very good road with a minimal amount of traffic. On the way we saw dozens of trailer manufacturers as well as many horses and buggies - a familiar site for us. Next stop was another "Coast to Coast" called the Grand View near Howe Indiana. The sign at the entrance said "Take a spot on the left and someone will be around to collect later". We saw a few Mobile Suites on our way in and found a nice spot with shade trees at the back. After supper a nice lady came by to collect our membership number and we spent a pleasant evening.

We spent the morning trying to reorganize things both inside and out to make the most of our limited space. The next day we drove into La Grange and did some laundry at Doolies - nice and clean and not too busy.

[Monday morning October 1st](#) we were up early as we had an appointment in Gosham to have the Fifth wheel raised at Trailaire. Unfortunately the morning was not only very dark but also rather wet. Mike had difficulty getting the landing gear to go up but we managed to get to Gosham by 8:30 am. Dale - the owner of Trailaire gave us a wonderful reception and his technician got to work on the trailer. A few hours later we were on our way again. Hopefully the raised height on the trailer will prevent scraping the truck when we get into tight spots.

We drove back to Howe and parked in the Doubletree Parking lot. There were three other Mobile Suites there - all waiting for service. In next to no time the malfunctioning switch was fixed - a big relief to Mike. The other "campers" had much more serious problems waiting for attention. We visited with one couple who had a slide that would not go in or out. Their unit was more than one year old. They had a very good attitude about the whole thing. As Full-timers they no longer have to cut the grass or paint the house so a day getting the trailer fixed did not seem too bad in the whole scheme of things. Hopefully we can travel with the same positive feelings when things go wrong (as we know they will!).

On [Tuesday Oct 2nd](#) we picked up some parts to replace some defective pieces and then hit the road at 1030 am. We got onto an Indiana Toll Road that ended up costing us almost \$25 by the time we were finished. The extra axels that we pull and the added fuel when we travel faster sure add up. The next time we hope to be able to take our time and travel the back roads but for this trip we had promised to be in Alberta for Thanksgiving so we had to keep on truckin'.

Mid afternoon the sky started to darken and then the rain started as we traveled through Wisconsin. Our destination for the night was Christmas Village Campground. Our GPS said that we had arrived but there were no signs to confirm our whereabouts. That was just the beginning of our problems. We continued down the road a bit further passing some beautiful

homes and condos. Mike parked in a golf course parking lot while Maureen headed into a resort to ask for directions. The reception from the Desk Supervisor was very chilly. Steve was very quick to point out that this was an exclusive resort and for members only. He would not confirm that we were in the right place until he checked us out in the computer to affirm that we could indeed stay there. About 30 minutes later after about a million questions and numerous rules that we had to obey or else, he offered us a spot (not like the one that said "just pick a spot").

By the time we got out of the office it was very dark and we missed the turn into the campground. We finally found our spot and determined that it would be difficult to get into on a good day but in the dark and in the rain it was not going to happen without calamity so we chose another spot and settled in for the night. We got up early the next day and pulled out quickly so that Steve would not find out that we had disobeyed any of his rules. According to our next door neighbours the spot that we used was for "exclusive" members only. Don't worry Steve - we will not be coming back to Christmas Mountain!

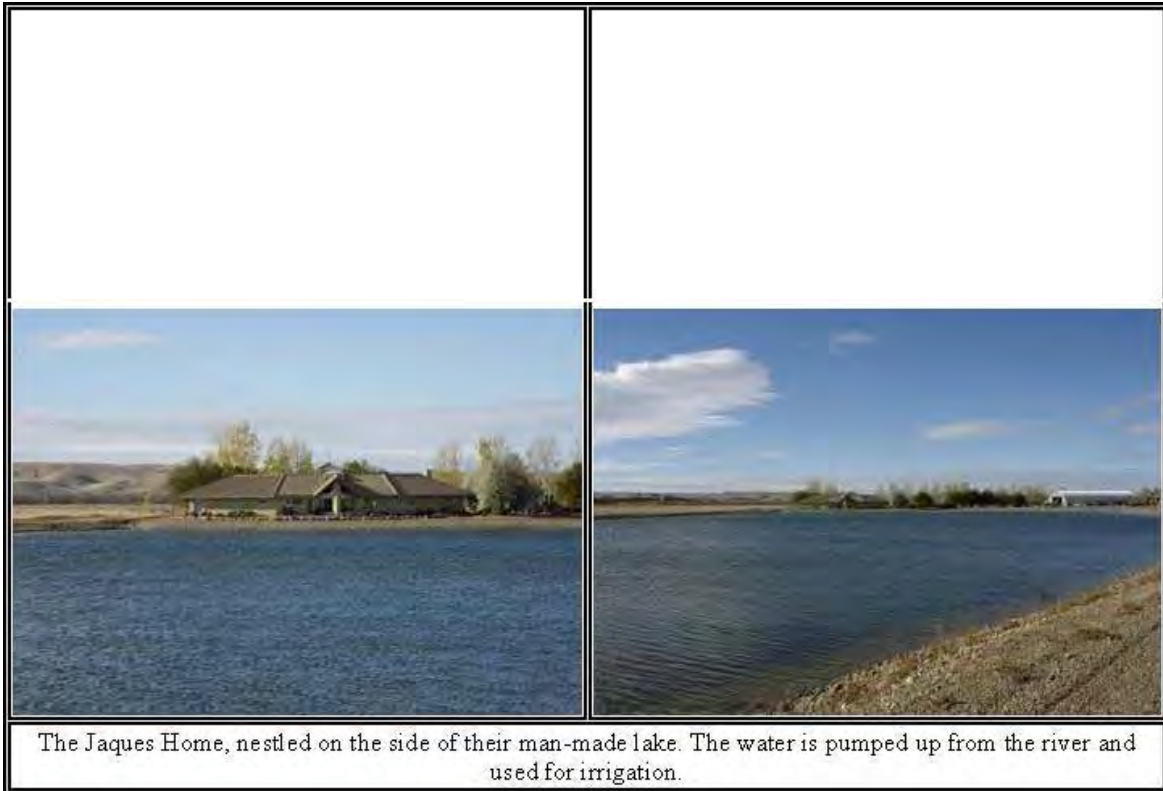
The next day, [October 3rd](#) found us on a very bumpy I94 after we passed through Minneapolis. The chucking was so bad that we felt like we would get whiplash. Unfortunately there did not seem to be any alternative roads without going out of our way, so we slowed down and kept going. After St. Cloud the road improved a bit and we were welcomed into the Sundown Campground by the very friendly owners who showed us the best way to get to our site which had a beautiful view of the lake. After we set up we took Percy for a great walk out to the Peninsula, checked our email (no extra charge) and then had a relaxing dinner.

The next morning, [Thursday October 4th](#) we headed out just before 8 am and headed for Fargo. The I94 got very bumpy again around Fergus Falls so we took Highway 75 north. This turned out to be a much better road. The Roughrider Campground in Minot was our home for the night. The owners made a big fuss over Percy and we had a pleasant evening in North Dakota.

On [October 5th](#) Canada welcomed us back at Portal. We handed the Canadian duty officer a list of our purchases and he waved us on with no further questions. We had lunch in a little place called Milestone Saskatchewan and arrived at the Ponderosa campground after a whole day of driving in the cold rain.

[The next five days](#) we visited, ate some wonderful food and explored the farm. The sun on the lake and the hills was beautiful to see, especially at the end of each day as the shadows got deeper.

The nights were clear and the stars were bright but the temperature dropped to zero on Monday and Tuesday night - not good for the fifth wheel plumbing. The wind from the southwest blew hard during the day making it difficult to stay outside for very long.

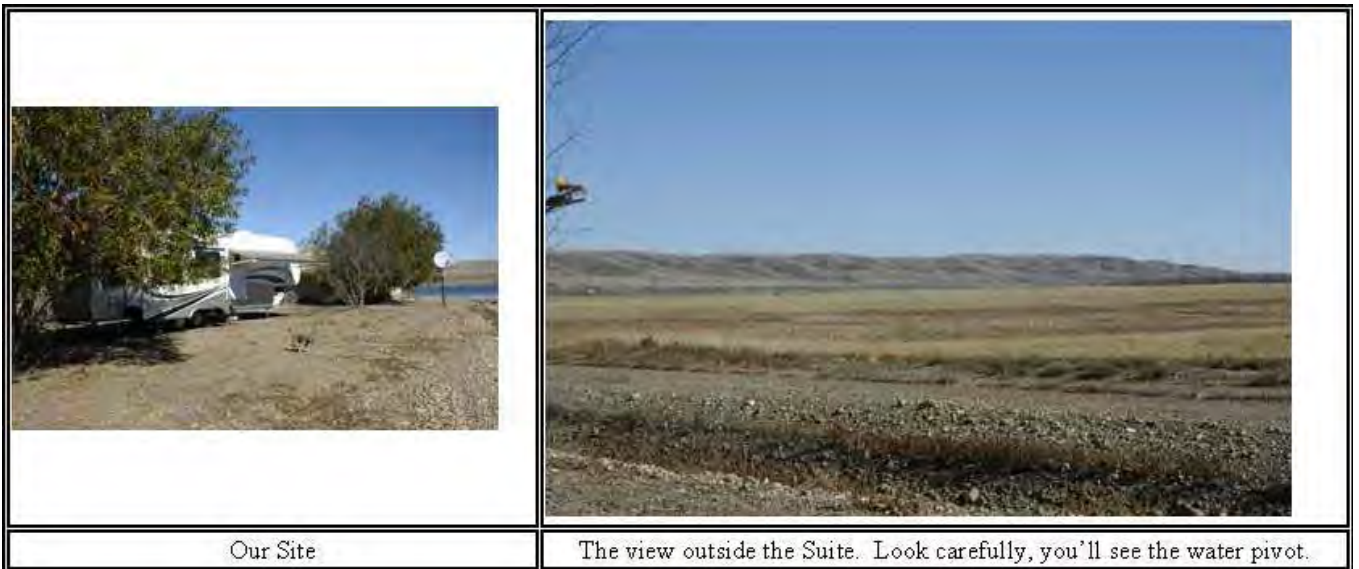


The Jaques Home, nestled on the side of their man-made lake. The water is pumped up from the river and used for irrigation.

After a trip into Oyen on Wednesday we packed up ready to move south on the 11th.

Thanks to the family in Buffalo for hosting us and giving us the opportunity to reunite with the family. We hope that the harvest will be completed soon so that you can enjoy some down time too!

At 11 am the next day, [October 6th](#) we entered Alberta. The skies were overcast and the thermometer only registered 3 Celsius. We stopped in Medicine Hat for supplies and fuel. By 3 pm we were at the farm in Buffalo and were greeted by aunts and cousins and their families. Shortly after we arrived the sun came out. We had traveled a total of 3580 kilometers to complete the first leg of our journey and celebrate Thanksgiving with family.



On [Thursday morning, October 11th](#) we awoke to the sound of rain on the roof but it didn't last long so by the time we were packed up the sun was shining again. We enjoyed a cup of Latté with our hosts and hit the road at 1130 am with a temperature of 11 Celsius. We made a brief stop at the scales to weight the rig and then headed southwest towards Lethbridge.



After a quick stop for lunch at the Dinosaur Country store we arrived at 4:30 pm at the Bridgeview RV Resort in Lethbridge where we saw lots of Snowbirds ready to fly south. Maureen is in seventh heaven with 50 amp service, a waterline and sewers.

Internet was an extra \$3.00 charge but well worth the expense so that we can stay in touch with family and friends. (not like the Christmas Mountain Resort that charges \$10 to use the WI-Fi in the lobby). Bridge View also has a beautiful Laundromat which shall be tested out on Friday before exploring the area.

October 13

Mike headed into Lethbridge today to get the oil changed in the truck (that sure did take a lot of bucks!) and also got his ears lowered and traded in some Canadian coin for American dollars. The Loonie is now up to \$1.02 American; that will certainly help our budget south of the border. Mike came back poorer but he sure looked a lot better. Maureen spent the day sorting papers and doing laundry. The machines ate all of our spare Canadian change but that is OK as we won't be needing it for quite a while. The dryer even took a coin from the Windsor Casino.

October 14

Last night the thermometer went down to freezing and this morning we ran out of Propane while cooking breakfast. We think that it might be time to find a warmer place! In talking to the Snowbirds in the park we should not stay here too much longer as freezing rain can be a big problem this time of year. Most of them are leaving in the next day or so. The trees are dropping leaves (not as pretty as in Ontario but still colourful). We thought about all the things that we would be doing at home such as raking leaves and putting away the furniture on the deck. As we no longer have our own leaves or deck there is not much to do but we decided that it would be good to take advantage of the sunshine and give the truck a good cleaning. That took the better part of the afternoon and then we joined some campers across the street for happy hour (which according to Ed can last for up to 3 hours). We talked to some seasoned travelers and got some tips on places to go and things to do.

Mike cooked up our last steaks (can't take them across the border) and after dinner he worked on getting the US phone activated. After punching in about 12 dozen numbers at the pay phone he finally got it to work but could not add time to it. Hopefully tomorrow that will work when we get into the States.

October 15

Lots of geese have been seen (and heard) heading south so we have decided to follow their example! We left Bridgeview Campground around 11 am and headed south to the border. Maureen had a letter to mail to mom and had Canadian postage



so we were looking for a spot to mail it. Just south of Lethbridge we found the perfect spot. It was a little place named Warner. The Post Mistress was happy to stamp it and send it on its way.

Just before Coutts we entered a Rest Area and had lunch - sandwiches made with last night's leftover steak. We did not want to lose any of that beautiful Alberta beef to the Customs Agents. When we reached the border we had about a 45 minute wait. After looking at our passports the agent asked to pull over and go inside. We waited about 5 minutes inside while another agent checked us out on the computer and then told us to have a nice trip. No questions and no mention of possible no no's in our freezer (we had a list all made out). Not even a question about dog food. What a pleasant surprise!

Highway 15 south turned out to be a really great road. Four lanes, no tolls, relatively little traffic and not bumpy like the US roads we encountered east of here. We stopped at a rest stop but did not stay long and did not let Percy make use of the grass as signs warned us of the possibility of rattlesnakes. We pulled into Dick's RV Park around 5:30 and set up quickly on a pull-through site.



Shortly after we noticed a 2008 Ford 450 drive by very slowly and check us out. We took Percy for a walk and caught up with the truck and it's owner. The truck was practically brand new and the owner was as curious about us as we were about him as there are not many of these trucks around. He was the proud owner of a brand new Esplanade and it was on its maiden voyage. After sharing some stories we headed back and had supper and decided where to go on Tuesday. Looks like our short range destination is Bozeman Montana with a longer range plan to see Salt Lake City in Utah.