

Traffic Cameras and Liquor Stores

It is now the end of Feb, and we are still living in Fort Saskatchewan Alberta. Our furnished apartment now feels like home, I am able to travel about the city without the aid of my GPS, and I am getting the feel for everyday life in Alberta. We have made many trips to Edmonton for shopping and recreation, and things are beginning to look familiar. We are also learning very quickly, that it is wise to make sure that you always smile and wave, when going through intersections with traffic lights. Most of them are armed with cameras, and they will get you.

Just before leaving to come to Fort Saskatchewan the first week in January, we had checked our mail, and were shocked to discover a letter informing my husband, that he had accumulated four hundred dollars worth of traffic tickets. He had been working here at the Fort, for most of November of last year, and had used a rental vehicle for this. It took about that much time for the rental company to pass on the cost of the tickets to my husband. He hadn't known about the traffic cameras, and with the way the speed limits were constantly fluctuating on the road going out to the job site, they had added up quickly. In his defense, I imagine that at five am in the morning the non reflective signs posting the speed, must have been nearly impossible to see. The good news was that he didn't lose any points off of his license.

We have concluded that next to petroleum and beef, the greatest source of revenue for the province of Alberta, are those traffic cameras; they are every where! Because the photos can only prove that your car was speeding, you don't lose points, or your driver's license. You are free to keep on driving and accumulating traffic tickets to your hearts content, or until you find yourself going broke to pay for them. I wonder if those traffic cameras would greatly cut down on the number of left turns against red lights, that I see being performed in Saskatoon so often. Hmmm.

An other thing that I have noticed about living in Alberta, is that instead of a Tim Hortons on every corner, there are liquor stores. Yup, on nearly every corner, or every plaza or mall, there is a liquor store. Even Costco and No Frills grocery stores own, and run liquor stores. They are open seven days a week and evenings. I don't see too many Tim Hortons out here, Second Cup, and Star Bucks seem to be more popular.

As in Saskatchewan, most condos or apartment buildings only provide parking for one vehicle, so tenants have to park their second one out on the street. Fortunately, you are allowed to park on the streets over night, even in the winter. When the snow starts to pile up and clog the streets, the city will put up signs the night before, warning people to remove their vehicles from the street so they can clear it. We sold our second vehicle; we really didn't need two.

I still don't know for sure when we will be going back to Saskatoon, but for now I'm enjoying my time here in Alberta. There are many places to go and things to see, and I am looking forward to doing more of that. Just down the highway, there is a national park with bison and elk herds, and is said to be great place for bird watching. There are also many museums and historical sites in Edmonton, and the surrounding communities to be wandered through.

Heres hoping that the spring thaw is warming your bones and getting your sap running.

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