

Misadventures When Worries Become Reality

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I don't write many negative posts on my blog, but sometimes life can throw some really serious s**t at you. I guess it's all in how you cope. And, by the way, don't stress out!

It was one of the trips to Campbell River that I've always worried would happen ... what will we do if we get into Sayward and my old truck doesn't go no more. We had a minor break down a couple

of years ago – the front brake calipers froze, but it happened just as we were pulling into Campbell River, and only a couple of blocks from one of the mechanics we're fond of. Good timing, 'ol truck! However, not this time.

So, here's the story. Sayward Community has decided that it wants to have a seaside walk for tourists, even though hardly any tourists go down to the dock, and only a couple of residents walk that way for personal or pet exercise. This involved creating a gravel path along one side of the road down to the dock, and eliminating about half of the parking spaces for people using the dock, including a number of Hardwicke Island, Port Neville, and Jackson Bay residents, logging crews who do 7 to 10 day shifts at remote sites, and fishermen who may be out for several days at a time. So now there is a struggle to find parking.

The time before the last time we went over, I snagged the last available parking spot before we left for home ... not in the most desirable location, as there is a little stream, mostly runoff from the subdivision above the road, that runs through the space. However, I've never seen more than a couple of inches of water there, and on the day I parked, it was dry.

A few days ago, we got into Kelsey Bay, and I went up to grab the truck, only to find it sitting in a large pool of water, over six inches deep. This was a good twelve hours after our last heavy rainfall, so exactly how deep the puddle had gotten can be left to the imagination! I put on my boots and retrieved the truck, but all was not well. Starting up, I got red and yellow lights on my dash, and pretty much no brakes. #\$\$%^&*!!!

What to do? There's lots of things Sayward doesn't have – no taxis, no buses, no tow trucks, no grocery stores or hardware stores, and no cell service at the dock. I managed to ease the truck up to the main part of Sayward town, where at least we had cell service, leaving a trail of brake fluid behind me.

As it turned out, the water got high enough to reach the bottom of the truck, and caused electrolysis where the brake line passed through an aluminum block (why do they put dissimilar metals together on a truck frame?). So, the line was corroded through, and the truck was busy bleeding to death, and I had no idea when the tiny bit of braking I had was going to be reduced to none. Get ready with the emergency brake!

After talking to a friend in town, I was able to find out that Sayward did have a decent mechanic! Wow, first good piece of luck for the day. The trick was getting the truck there ... a distance of some 15 km or so, with part of the drive on the Island Highway with traffic whizzing by at 80 kph. I wasn't happy going more than 30 kph with the truck, as I didn't think I could stop it at a much greater speed than that.

The long and short of the story? Well, after finding that the only tow trucks available were out of Campbell River, I just got back in the truck and slowly crept my way over to the mechanic, stopping

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at the gas station along the way to add a bottle of brake fluid to the virtually empty reservoir, not that it helped much with all the air in the lines, but it made me feel like I was doing something useful. We bought a few snacks at the gas station as well, which turned out to be another piece of good luck, since the couple of restaurants in Sayward were closed, and we had to eek out a day and a half on munchies and a little bit of emergency food that we had stored in the *Awen*.

On an upbeat note, the mechanic was great, and we were out on the open highway the next day, with many thanks to friends who gave us lifts between the mechanic's shop and our boat, where we stayed the night. Yup, not one of our better trips. Worrying about these sorts of events never seems to help much. No matter how much you prepare and plan, they always catch you in some unexpected way. Really, it's all in how you cope!