

Delia Campground Makes Serious Upgrade with Online Booking System

Until 2018, the Delia Community Campground was still running on a manual system.

“It was an honour system where you came in, and you registered and dropped your money in an envelope and put it into a slot,” campground manager and Village of Delia Mayor David Sisely said. “A lot of times, people were camping and not paying .”

The Delia Community Campground offers views of the Handhills, playground equipment for families with children and a picnic shelter for larger get-togethers. Some of the nearby attractions include trout fishing, McLaren Dam and the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller Valley. There is also the Handhills Rodeo that takes place on the first weekend in June.

The site is under the care of the Delia Ag Society. Before they began using the Campground Reservations Online Booking system, there was no reliable way to collect fees and track how many visitors were coming each summer.

“We have better control over the money coming in,” David said. “We get a statement from the Campground Reservations system. It tells us exactly how much money we have taken in. Whereas before, it was just dropped in a box. And those envelopes were thrown on the desk of the treasurer.”

The campground is about 35 years old and draws in about 100 campers each summer, a number they have only been able to verify using the Campground Reservations system.

“We know in advance if we have people coming in, and that is a good thing,” he explained. “Especially this year because we have to have the sites clean and sanitized and everything else with COVID going on. To know in advance that someone is arriving on such and such a date and they are staying for three or four days is a big advantage. Before then, we’d have no idea. They’d just show up.”

David said the campground raises enough revenue to stay in business, and tracking payments online has made it run smoother.

“We have so many stalls in the campground, and we know how many we have booked for any given week or month. That is a benefit because, before the software, it was a fly-by-night. We never knew how many we were going to have in.”

Although they didn’t attract many visitors from far away during this summer while the world battled a pandemic, their first summer on the Campground Reservations System saw guests from Denmark stop by.

“They had flown across and rented a unit somewhere down east and came out here and stayed two or three days.”

The Society has appreciated how online booking has helped them move to more reliable payment methods.

“In a normal year, the Ag Society hosts a big fastball tournament here. We couldn’t have it this year, but in the past, that has helped bring in revenue to the campground. Before, they would come in, and some would pay, and some wouldn’t. Now, it’s all under control.”

He also said that the system has worked well for him but that he can get support when he needs it.

“If I have the odd problem, I’ll phone in or send an email or something and get an answer right away.”