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Resident of the Month: A Bit on Brent

Written by: Brent Connelly

Life is very good when you are fortunate enough to live in an Orchard View townhouse, where you don't have to mow your grass anymore and are much too relaxed to smoke it anyway— Brent Connelly (RPF ret'd) an OVM townhouse tenant with wife, Heather

*I realize that this little blurb may appear to be too much about me, but since “the animal hasn't been born yet,” who knows where we are going to end up? So if the reader is willing to “live on the edge” for the next couple of pages, I'd like to share some musings about the publication of the “resident of the month” feature that appears in the Orchard View by the Mississippi newsletter, *The Monthly Review*.*

But for now, we'll just blame the interruption to our normally comfortable way of life on COVID-19, the venomous, vicious, and vile virus that has been turning our world upside down since early last March. For the protection of its residents and staff, OVM management took very quick action in locking down the main lodge, while initiating their own emergency measures, making it awkward for me to conduct one-on-one interviews with the “resident of the month.”

After Michael Morin, OVM's Recreation Director, informed me I wouldn't be able to conduct in-person interviews with the residents for an indefinite period of time, she asked me what I wanted to do: either carry on or suspend the practice. My immediate response was to carry on, thinking that the power of email and Facetime technology would be adequate to replace the one-on-one interviews. However, what I didn't think about at the time was that a large number of residents don't have access to the technology. I also didn't realize how different these space-age methods of storytelling would be from the many after-supper bunkhouse yarn-sharing sessions I participated in while working in bush camps over the years.

Therefore, I, for one, feel that the normal profile process should be deferred until the restrictions have been lifted and that scary little virus has met its match and has been taken for a short walk off an even shorter pier into the Yangtze River. For this reason, I am interviewing myself for this edition.

*My introduction to the “resident of the month” concept began early in fall 2019, when Michael asked me if I would be interested in putting my “one hunt-and-peck finger to work” by volunteering to write a *brief* profile about recently arrived OVM residents to introduce them to members of their new family. Townhouse tenants would be left for *another time* after the concept had become more firmly established and familiar to all. . . (Late-breaking news: thanks to COVID 19 that *another time* has now arrived, probably for the August edition.)*

There are times when I remind myself of a very verbose old lad from BC (“Backa” Clayton), who could talk the wheels off a wagon. One time, a stranger who was just passing through—and in a hurry—asked the old lad for the “time of day.” Two hours later, the puzzled-looking stranger left, scratching his head, and carrying a potato bag full of loose parts and a full set of plans to build his own clock.



I was going to have to work on my brevity skills, among other things, or else I could be *un-volunteered* as quickly as you could shout “Ron Robertson.” So the first thing I did was consult my literary team—namely, my very wise wife of fifty-two years, Heather, and our youngest daughter, Nancy Syrett, who is a full-time professional editor working out of her home near Kingston, Ontario. It didn’t take us long to decide that I should “go for it,” with the caveat that Nancy would, as usual, work her magic by editing and proofing the manuscript before it was sent off to the printer. Michael chipped in with another half page of space for a total of around one thousand words, and so, Houston, we now have blast-off.

I can recall thinking at the time that this would be a whole lot of fun, and over the past eight months, it has been just that. The added bonus for me is that it has been a wonderful learning experience. For one thing, I learned about Chester Fisher of Fisher Gauge of Peterborough (grandfather of former NHL star Mike Fisher) and his amazing generosity toward various third world humanitarian projects. I was also moved by the heart-wrenching story told by one of our own about his life as a five-year-old boy in a northern Scotland orphanage. The following is a list of residents I have profiled since November 2019, and I now consider them to be among my Orchard View friends: Norman Fraser, Ken Peskett, Jean Stewart, Robert (Mac) McPherson, Faye Dowdall, Jane von Boetticher, Ron Harley, and Helga Henning. Michael has a list of possible participants for the August 2020 (and subsequent) editions.

Readers may or may not know that I have previously written and had published four books, which include many stories, yarns, and tales, with some of them being slightly “off the wall.” I describe these ones as true stories, albeit a “tad tall.” These books are about “loggers and the like” and include many of the characters—bulldozer operators, truck drivers, camp cooks and bull cooks, and timber cruisers—I worked with during a very fulfilling forty-year career as a forester and operations manager in Algoma’s Lake Superior Provincial Park (ten years) and in Algonquin Provincial Park (thirty years).

And now to conclude, I’d like to send out “a bouquet of *Impatiens wallerianas*” to Michael, Heather, and Nancy for being very patient with me and my ‘wild, windy, and wordy ways.’

Good for you, ladies! You have harnessed the wind . . . for now, that is!

Keep on



We had a wonderful time in MEXICO! Homemade guacamole, nachos and of course margaritas! Wish we could have stayed longer! Next stop China then off to Thailand!



The ladies have decided to take measures into their own hands and do something with their bangs! Soon they will be in a rock band I'm sure of it!



Working on our biker legs... Takes practice these days, it isn't like hopping on a real bike anymore!





Summer in a pandemic isn't so bad, outside entertainment, lots of dogs to love and even a pet pig! Yup, Kevin Bacon, stopped in for a drink and snack...



Employee of the Month - Dawn Kayia

Congratulations to Dawn on being our July employee of the month! Dawn is a part of our nursing staff and we couldn't imagine not having her on the team. Dawn is honest, hard working, resident-focused and above all a great coworker and friend to the residents! Dawn is very down to earth and kind making the residents very at ease and at home. Thank you, Dawn, for everything you do and will continue to do for your OVM family.

Testimonial - Debbie Sicoli

From popping in, taking a tour, signing up, moving mom and dad in ... it's felt like home. Breath-taking residence with lots to do and see. The staff are warm, friendly, knowledgeable and very accommodating. Couldn't think of a better, safer place for my parents to call home. Thank you everyday, everyone, for all you do!

Ollie, Allan, Renato & Deb xx

Laugh out Loud at Orchard View - Quarantine Fun

When parents start to crack during lockdown



"All About Me"

Looking back, what kind of a child were you?
Shy and quiet or wild and independent?

As we celebrate our Nation this Canada Day,
how would you normally celebrate?

Open Activities

- ~ Outdoor Patios - Gardens (should you have one)
- ~ Bistro ~ Puzzle Tables
- ~ Wellness Centre Bike and Walking Bars
- ~ NEW! Weekly Scavenger Hunt throughout the building
- ~ Joe on the Piano

- ~ Massage Chairs (Wellness Centre)
- ~ Docking Station for phone calls or Video Calls on the computer
- ~ Library ~ Tuck Shop
- ~ Church Services / Rosary Prayer
- ~ Open Art with Audrey

Musical Entertainment

With the recent COVID -19 we will not be having any outside entertainment at this time.

Joe will be playing twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays



Door to Door Activities

Michael and the Recreation Team are providing fun and mind thinking activities, right to the residents' doors. We have; Wheel of Fortune games, crossword puzzles, trivia, individual Memory Fitness worksheets and more. If anyone in the community has riddles, jokes etc that they wish to share with us please email to Michael at ovmrecreation@ovlc.com



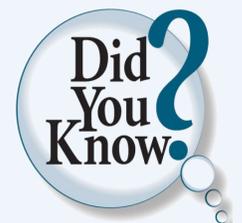
COVID-19 UPDATE from OVM

As things start to change in the community, patios, stores, social gatherings become a new-found privilege. OVM as a Retirement Residence, is still governed under Public Health guidelines and RHRA. We thank you all for your support and understanding through these times. It's not easy for anyone including all us staff. We encourage family members to call, come for window visits and bring their favourite seasonal delight. Strawberries are coming! We are doing absolutely everything to ensure your loved ones are safe and happy! We will get through this... Together!

JoJo's Did You Know?

Theodore Roosevelt said "there is not a man who does not at times, need a helping hand to be stretched out to him and thus shame upon him who did not stretch out the helping hand to his brother."

Barb Bush said "Some people give time, some money, some their skills, and some literally give their life's blood, but everyone has something to give."



CANADA DAY

**PARADE AT OVM
11:00AM JULY 1ST**

Get your cars, horses, trailers and more ready!

We know that Canada won't be the same as years gone by, but let's try! OVM is encouraging family and community members to turn the streets red in celebration of our country! We will have a parade through our street between the Retirement Residence and our Town Homes. We ask all participants to line up heading down Paterson Street towards Robert Hill Street - facing north. When you arrive please finalize your decorations. All we ask is that you respect social distancing, do not get out of your cars once on the property and make as much noise and good cheer as possible! RSVP with Michael at 613-963-5000 or