



Tom's Message Board

What I Did On My Summer Vacation

Va·ca·tion (vā-kā-shen): *from the Latin word vacare, which means "be free or empty"*. Yup! That pretty much describes my official summer respite from July 1 – 11. Free as a bird, free to rise early or sleep in (I prefer the former), free to pretty much do what I wanted when I wanted, and free to put aside the day-to-day demands and even thoughts of running my business. Ahhh! Empty? Surely empty of my typical life responsibilities, but definitely NOT empty from a value perspective.

This year was a different kind of family vacation. It was spent with my family alright, in fact *my entire family* – as many as 17 at any one time in a great big house overlooking the ocean in Rye Beach! Mom and Dad, my three sisters and their husbands and kids (not really *kids* any more), and a significant other. With the start date upon us, the pilgrimage began with folks coming in from Tampa and Jacksonville, Florida, New Hampshire and Vermont. The parking lot and yard were filled with bikes, chairs, coolers, kayaks, luggage, and enough fishing rods and tackle to host a derby! The Clampetts would have been proud!

The *fun* thing about vacationing with a large group is that there's always someone to do something with. The *important* thing about vacationing with a large group is having enough space for everyone – which we did. If I was limited to only three descriptors for the week, they'd be: beach, books, and lobsters. These east coast staples, along with not having any particular schedule or agenda to worry about, were all that was necessary. But, being a family who finds it difficult to sit still, there were plenty of activities happening at any one time. Golf, biking, walking, photography, fireworks, surfing, boogie boarding, cooking (considered work for many, but a labor of love for this family), happy hour(s), napping, shopping, and fishing. In fact, the fishing took center stage when Dad, Mike, Keith, and Christina spent an afternoon on a chartered boat and caught their limit of striped bass! This was particularly gratifying since the captain apologized before they even left the dock for what he predicted would be a lean day. These hearty and salty souls were not about to be skunked, though, as they hauled in their limit of two each, with Pepere winning the day's trophy with a 43", 40 lb. striper! Talk about a *fish story*... it'll get plenty of mileage for years to come. The next night we had enough fresh grilled bass to feed a small army, or in this case, the Waltons. Perfection.

The week of incredible sunshine, cool ocean breezes (well sort of cool) and lots of laughs ended with a fantastic "lobsta" feast at some friends' house and as Sue and I left the beach on Sat. morning, we stopped for one last lobster roll... for breakfast! So there you have it...earth shattering? Hardly. Sometimes the best things about vacation aren't the ones you plan for or anticipate...they just happen and are the things I'll smile about as I sit at my desk getting ready for another sales call or meeting. It was a perfect vacation and as close a family as we are, traveling and living together can be dicey at times. But this one worked for a whole bunch of reasons...thanks everyone!

Relax and enjoy the unanticipated,

Tom Brassard
President