



## Tom's Message Board

### Getting What You Wish For

This summer, after years of dreaming (and becoming empty-nesters), Sue and I have moved to our new home, a townhouse on a grassy slope right on Shelburne Bay. While we weren't planning on downsizing quite yet, the opportunity presented itself and we jumped! No more lawns to mow or snow to shovel and what privacy we'd lose, we'd gain in enjoying the beauty of the lake and the sunsets off our deck every day. Ahhhhhh!

Little did we know we'd be playing the lake card quite so soon! Did I mention that we purchased a 27 year old unit with the original interior and needed to be gutted? We knew going into this move that it might be a challenge...and it has been! We weren't able to sell our home, but were able to lease it to a great family who had to move in before school started. We had nearly two months for construction to proceed before moving in to our new home – which we knew wouldn't be completed, but with enough in place to ride it out. Everything was falling wonderfully into place!

Things were off to a rousing start. We were told it would take 3 months to renovate. "No problem" we said, considering it was summer and the livin' is easy. Well, 2 months passed and there were still 3 months of work left to do! We moved in as planned and a month later, we're living in a partially completed bedroom and bathroom, and the only semblance of a kitchen is several small appliances! The rest of our new home is awash in sheetrock dust, sawdust, exposed studs, cement foundation floors, and dead wires and electrical boxes dangling here and there. Think of it as a campsite, but with a roof and doors. BUT... one look at the lake and all is forgotten. Sort of.

Little things have taken on a new level of appreciation. For 2 weeks the only water we had came from the tub. Finally, the faucet for the sink in our bathroom arrived and low-and-behold, we now had running water and could stand up! We were elated! With only a gas grill and small appliances, we've managed to cook our usual menu and because we have no dining room we've dined by candlelight on the deck as the sun sets. With summer slowly fading though, the charm of eating on the deck is also fading a bit...but we recall our dream. When it was sweltering hot and the mercury hovered in the 90's, as did our second floor bedroom with no windows available to open, and only the ceiling fan above our bed to push back the intense heat, we again reminded ourselves that, hot as it was, how lucky were we to be on the lake?

As we labor through the slow-moving construction and the inconveniences, we continue to be grateful for what we have... for reaching our goal, for the little conveniences in life that we take for granted, for the friends and relatives who have hosted us for dinner and for our beleaguered yet talented builder and his assistant. It's all relative isn't it? The vision was to open the front door to our new home and settle right in. The reality has been quite different. But through it all we're living an adventure that will provide stories for years to come. AND most of all, we're finding out what we're made of while gaining an often forgotten appreciation of what living without can mean – and we'll never experience even the half of it compared to families who are truly dealing with life's turmoil and loss. So while we wished for the "vision", the "reality" has been an added bonus... that's life 😊

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