

Dear Family & Friends,

It was a busy year again, filled with travel, family time, and many memorable moments. One significant change for us was letting go of our sailboat after more than 15 years. With how much we're traveling now, we realized we weren't using it the way we once did, and it felt like the right time to move on. It was especially nice to give it to a young man who was clearly thrilled to have it and eager to enjoy it. And after sailing in the Grenadines and the British Virgin Islands, Lake Ontario had started to feel just a little dull by comparison.

Traveling with family continues to be one of our greatest joys. We spent a lot of time with the grandkids and with Preston and Leanne, as well as Geneviève and Jonny. All told, we now spend about 4 months a year exploring, discovering new places, and revisiting old favourites.

One of the highlights was spending a full month out West with Geneviève, Jonny, and the kids. During that time, we took a week-long trip to La Casa Lakeside Resort near Kelowna, where we had a wonderful break, and spent the remainder of the month in Calgary. We also enjoyed spending time with Vivian, Jonny's mom, who took us to some beautiful spots in the Bragg Creek area, including Elbow Falls and Forget-Me-Not Pond.

In June, we traveled with Preston and the kids to Virginia, staying at the Regal Vista Resort in Massanutten, a fantastic place for kids, with no shortage of activities to keep everyone entertained. We also spent a day in Washington, visiting many of the historic sites, and the kids even had the chance to attend a WNBA game, which was a real highlight.



We also spent some special time with my sister Judy and Chris, along with our cousin Cheryl and Jeff from Maine, during a stay in Smuggler's Notch. It had been nearly 40 years since we were last there, and it was wonderful to return and reconnect in such a beautiful place.

Another gift of all this travel has been the opportunity to reconnect with family, most of whom live in the United States — people I grew up with and spent so much time with as a kid. During our working years, there simply wasn't enough time to stay closely connected, but retirement has opened that door again. It's been deeply meaningful to renew those relationships and spend time together.

We also had the joy of celebrating Diane's brother Bernard and his wife Helene's 50th wedding anniversary in August in Quebec, a wonderful milestone shared with her side of the family.

On my side of the family, Thanksgiving was celebrated in Thornbury at Gary and my sister Joni's place, bringing everyone together for a great weekend of food and laughter.

As usual, we escaped to warmer weather during February and March in Florida, and again in November — a welcome break and a nice way to recharge.

Along the way, we've also found room for a little creativity. I've been spending time with my ukulele and writing songs, something that's become a quiet pleasure for me and something Diane has kindly encouraged. It's been a gentle reminder that even now, there's still space to explore, create, and let long-held interests take on new meaning.

As we look back on the year, we're reminded how fortunate we are — for good health, for time spent together, and for the many experiences we've been able to share. Letting go of some things has made room for new adventures, and most of all, for deeper connections with the people who matter most to us.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with health, happiness, and moments worth remembering.

With love,
Diane & Len

