

Dear Family and Friends:

The letter "B" is the theme for this year's newsletter. B for the Big move; B for Brian and Bob's Big Birthdays; and B for the Blue Jays. The photos below reflect this theme. Last year we told you of our plans to move from our home of 47 years to a nearby retirement apt. complex called *Crystal View Lodge*. This was a really Big deal, especially the downsizing. The photos on this page show the before and after, with our actual move occurring last February 19th. Here was 24 Higgins not long before it was sold:



Next we show a partial view of *Crystal View Lodge* (CVL) – the corner facing east, south and west and showing our apartment. Brian's has his own one-BR apt. on the other side of the building looking over the circular entrance way. The area marked is our two-BR spot with windows and spaces facing the three directions which gives us lots of light and has various facing window sills for Joan's plants. Her orchid collection was still at 24 Higgins but unseen in the above photo.

Different directions and lower humidity means lots of experimentation about growing indoor things. Outdoors you will see that we have a very long patio (blue box) at ground level and some grass and bushes I can weed and trim if the old urge arises. Our garage is in another part of the CVL "campus". The building is unique among Ottawa retirement spots, being planned and built in the late nineties when suburban land was much less expensive. Therefore it has 12 garages, five detached cottages, about 100 apartments on just three floors, and lots of parking. Impossible to find now.



Keeping on with the "B" theme, we see grand daughter Gemma on her Big 21st birthday in September, and Brian receiving a Blue Jays shirt on his 55th.

Earlier in October, Bob had his 85th, also Big.



We cannot forget our other two grandchildren. Nicola (23), is seen out shopping and is continuing with her masters program in Translational Medicine at Queen's. Ben (then 18, now 19), is a sophomore at Western, studying business and seen on moving into his first rental house shared with student friends.

Life is really different in CVL with all meals and services provided at scheduled times. Brian is still working some days and has embarked on an ambitious weight loss program aided by one of the new wonder drugs. So far so good as he has knocked off a couple of clothing sizes. We continue to enjoy live and streamed classical music, but have, sadly, left the NAC because of its late evening concerts and night driving. We still enjoy some live music at churches in the summer. Here at the lodge, additional bridge playing has drawn us in but Joan remains with her on-line competitive games and I get in a few games like that too.

As anyone who lives in an apartment or condo building knows, it is not long before in-house politics arises and this often starts innocently and socially. From friends, we know to tread carefully and not rock the boat and to choose carefully when volunteering on boards or committees. Already I have given two presentations on weather. There is a strong turnover of new people arriving and they all have their stories. Because CVL is so close to our old neighbourhood, some connections with people we know are inevitable.

Here is a partial family photo taken on Brian's birthday showing him celebrating with other family members, Brian, Cynthia, Joan, Bob and Peter.



Time now to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and good health in 2026. We wish the very same for our paper mail folks, who should receive this in time as postal service is resumed.

with love,
Joan, Bob and Brian

ps. Our new address is: 118-6 Meridian Place, Nepean ON, K2G 6L9 (use 103-6 for Brian).

