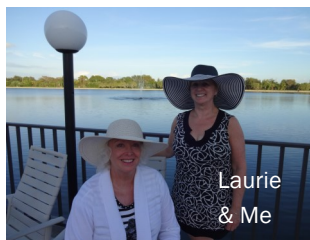


# Seasons Greetings!

## 2014 in Review

Looking back, it seems that 2014 was a year of fun, friendship and celebration ... for example:

After Christmas last year, I was lucky enough to be invited to visit a friend in Florida. Laurie is a very real estate savvy lady, and during the real estate downturn, she purchased a 2-bed 2-bath condo in a 55+ gated community near Fort Myers! Her balcony over-looks a man-made lake with palm trees, and there is a community centre with activities and a heated pool. We ate, drank martinis and shopped 'til we



Laurie & Me

dropped... and it was such a nice time! When returning home in mid-January, I was stuck in the Toronto airport overnight because it was too cold for the planes to fly!! 45° below!! There were people sleeping on the floors, benches, everywhere! The quickest way home was by train but not until the next day ... so good to be home;

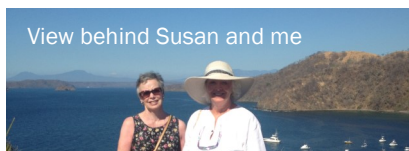


this ordeal soon became a distant memory!

In late January, I was so happy to reconnect with my childhood friend and next door neighbour, Helen. We have lived very different lives, but it still seemed “like yesterday” and we had some fond memories to share.

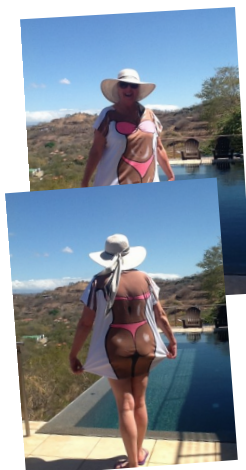


As well all know, last winter was the worst we've experienced in a long time, and I think the only way I got through it was because of another holiday I had booked for late February with my friend, Susan.



This time, it was a week in Costa Rica, visiting fellow WBNER. Denise picked us up at the airport and drove us to the most amazing house in the mountains with an infinity pool and a view to die for! We each had our own bedroom and bathroom. The first day I decided to wear my sexy 'funny' T-shirt over my bathing suit ... not a

chance I could ever look like that .. we all had a good laugh!! We ate in, and we ate out ... we visited gift shops and surrounding vistas, plus we went to the Art Gallery where Denise displays her art. Just google 'Denise Noonan Artist' for a taste of what this woman is capable of ... just amazing!



Denise and ?

Helmut celebrated his 74th birthday on February 2nd this year; here he is with my sister-in-law, Marlene, at my mother's home in Vernon. BTW, she makes the best cakes ever!



As many of you know, Helmut had some serious health issues this year. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's

disease in May - a condition he may have had for some time. Once he started on the proper medication, things improved immensely. Currently, he is doing very well and living with me in Ottawa.

In April, my dear friend Liz (of about 50 years), turned 70 and family and friends celebrated at a



Murder Mystery Dinner in the Byward Market. That's us with her son, Nick, who organized the event complete with a limo for all of us there and home again!!

In early June, my friend, Susan, turned 65 and her daughter Shannon planned a wonderful surprise party at a neighbour's home. It truly was a surprise and lots of fun!

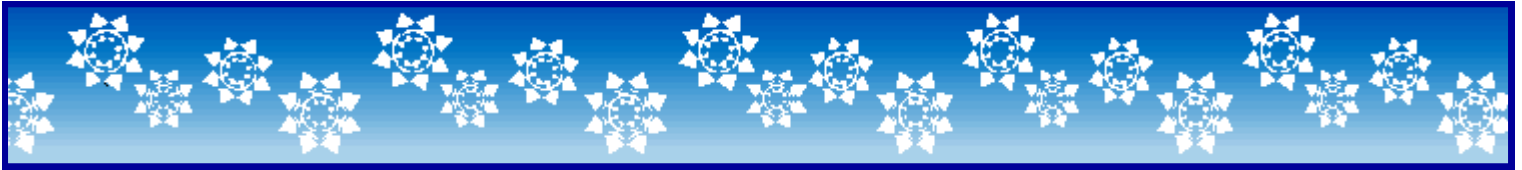


Also in June, the founding



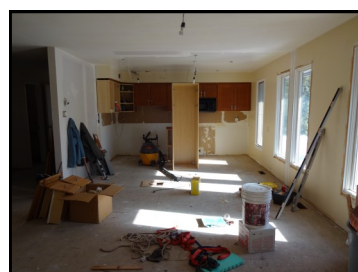
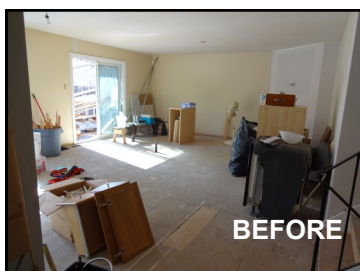
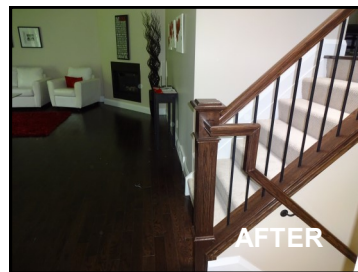
member of the WBN, Anne DaNada, visited Ottawa, and a luncheon was held in her honour. Great group of people I hadn't seen in too long!

As the years go by, I have come to know that money is nice, but friends are an absolute necessity in my life. Simply don't know what I would do without their love, support and understanding.



## ANOTHER RENOVATION PROJECT ...

This hi-ranch home just fell in our laps last February. It was located on a mature well-treed street in Kanata, just off Eagleson Road. The Seller needed help to clean out the house where he had cared for his ailing mother for some 12-13 years. The Seller was a nice guy, but he wasn't the best housekeeper and to make matters worse, he was 'a bit of a hoarder'. It took the better part of a month to sort through everything including papers, clothes, books and a collection of T-shirts. Once that was done, the entire house was essentially gutted, and we started over. Black porcelain tile in the front entry; Asian doors on the closet, a spiffy new powder room. Then, chocolate brown hardwood on the main level, with neutral Berber carpet in the upper and lower level bedrooms. The old chunky fireplace mantle was removed and a new gas fireplace installed. Electrical was updated throughout and wiring for a TV above the fireplace was put in place. The wall between the kitchen and the living/dining room was taken down, and the kitchen made open-concept—so popular today! The staircase was rebuilt and looked fabulous after 'Mike' finished his handy-work. New kitchen cabinets, new appliances and granite counters completed the look. New bathroom fixtures and fittings were installed ... there were 2 full baths and two half baths. All received new ceramic tile flooring as well. Then, the basement was completely cleaned, painted, storage created, baseboards added, and the laundry room updated. When spring arrived and the snow disappeared, we realized that the driveway needed replacing as did the grass in the front yard! Interlocking driveway and walkway, plus re-sodding the front yard was a huge expense, but it had to be done. All in all, it was a lot of work, and a job well done. The house sold quickly and for top dollar. My next renovation will be the main floor of my new house at 245B Echo Drive! Can't wait!



## REMEMBERING JENNIFER ...

On November 10th, I was fortunate enough to be invited to join the 'Lynch Launch' gals for a 'Remembering Jennifer' dinner at Allium on Holland Avenue. It has been over a year since we lost a dear friend and mentor, Jennifer Lynch; it was a fitting way to pay tribute to their, and my "fearless leader". On Mondays, the menu is strictly tapas. So each person ordered 3 plates of various things. The fries were/are fabulous! Each person had a little story to tell about their times with Jen and highlights were the ski weeks at Gray Rocks! It was in Hong Kong in 1987 or so - a trip organized by Betty Gittens - that Jen became good friends. I truly treasured that friendship and will miss her always.

Pauline Bogue, Shirley Greenberg,  
Jerry Grey and Me!

Ester Ritchie, Kathy Fraser,  
Wendy Booth and Linda King

# Seasons Greetings!

## 2014 in Review

### Just for family and friends .... about Helmut

Firstly, I want to say a heartfelt 'thank you' to all those who provided their help, their patience, their caring, their counsel and concern over the past many months. There are so many to whom I will be eternally grateful ... friends, neighbours and family.

I'm sure all of you have heard bits and pieces what happened to Helmut but I doubt many of you know the complete story. Or maybe you are just curious ... so, I will recount the days for you. The good news is and please remember throughout this epilogue ... he's doing fine now.

It was early summer 2013 when I noticed that Helmut was not standing up straight. He said he had a sore back and a 'bent-over' stance was more comfortable for him. In the hopes of helping him with this, I arranged for him to see a fellow Women's Business Network, colleague, Dr. Sasha, a Chiropractor located in the Byward Market. He went for a series of adjustments and massages, but this just didn't change anything, and he was so concerned about the cost (!), so he stopped. Then, I arranged for detoxification sessions with Maggi Maier, a Specialist (NaturallyYou.com). Again, this did not seem to make any difference, so he stopped. The summer came and went and Helmut seemed to very accepting of his condition, thinking it was just old age setting in, always saying he was "Fine. Fine".

In late September 2013, at my brother and sister-in-laws 50th Anniversary party, he was shuffling along, rather shaky, and leaning against posts for support. I contacted his doctor and asked for a complete physical; we both went for the appointment at the Country Roads Medical Centre in Portland. Aside from thinking Helmut might have some memory loss because he was a bit forgetful about taking medication, his doctor could find nothing wrong. I think part of the problem diagnosing Helmut's disease was the fact that he didn't shake as some do ...

In February of this year, Helmut and I celebrated our 10th Wedding Anniversary. He took me out to Mama Teresa's for a lovely dinner. Since we don't often eat out, that was a real treat. But ...that night, I noticed he was having difficulty with his fork & knife and he really had a tough time getting his coat on and off. The next day, I wrote to his doctor again! Blood tests and an X-ray were done, but nothing much came of that! It was baffling!

The spring was busy with real estate in Ottawa, as usual. On Mother's Day in Vernon, my sister-in-law and I both saw him shake a bit



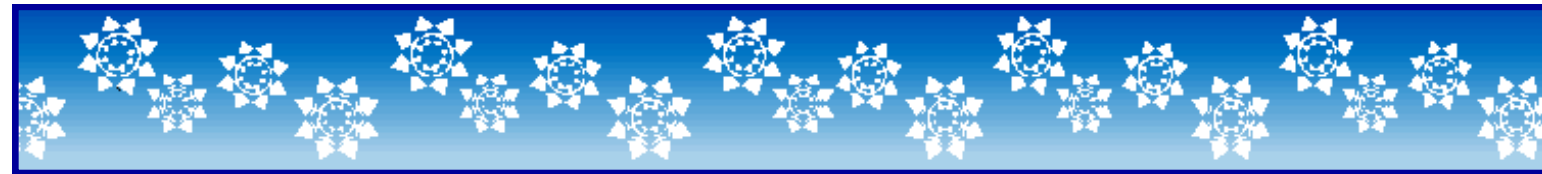
while trying to maneuver his fork. She said she thought he might have Parkinson's Disease.

At home that night, I 'googled' the Mayo Clinic's site to see if I could find symptoms - *lights went on and bells went off!!!* The site contained lots of information and even about medication and treatments. I immediately contacted his doctor with a list of the symptoms that Helmut had and suggested that he needed to be re-examined with these in mind. But instead, his GP arranged an appointment with a Psychogeriatric doctor to check for Dementia and/or Alzheimer's. He was located in Elgin near the cottage. Argh! We went to see this doctor Friday, May 31st. He confirmed my suspicions.

He reported to Helmut's doctor that he believed Helmut had Parkinson's Disease. On the following Monday morning, I called his doctor to ask if Helmut could be started on medication *immediately!* Of course, his doctor was in meetings and unavailable that day! On Tuesday, first thing, I called again and insisted that his doctor call in a prescription, and then I drove to Helmut's pharmacy in Smiths Falls to wait for the prescription to be faxed in; an hour later, I picked it up. It was a medication that had to be started gradually. So all he was supposed to take at first was 1/2 a pill 3x daily, then increase that to 1 pill 3x daily and so on until he was taking 2 pills 3x daily.

When I got to the cottage with the medication at 2:00 PM, Helmut wasn't dressed; he was sitting in his armchair in a T-shirt and underwear watching CNN. The housekeeper, Sharon, was there and she said she didn't care. I got some pants and helped him put them on. On my way, I had purchased a roast beef and some chicken thighs for Oliver and Helmut, and put them in the oven. While they cooked, I finished planting flowers in the rain barrels and in the front garden. Helmut's cousin Marga called that afternoon, and Helmut could barely get up to answer the phone. I asked him if he would like to go to the hospital, and he said "what could they do?" He returned to sit in his arm chair.

At about 4 PM, I had to go back to Ottawa for appointments. I left the cooked roast and chicken on the stove to cool and Helmut said he would put them in the fridge for me. When I left, he was wearing his 'Bruyere Help Line Panic Button' so I felt assured he could call for help, if need be. I found out later that I was wrong! He tried to use his Panic Button, *but it didn't work!* He kept hearing "line disconnected". I didn't understand why it didn't work and called the Bruyere centre for an explanation! They had none. A few days later, a neighbour (Sue Dunfield) told me that the Bell phone lines had been vandalized in the area ... at the very same time as all this happened! And of course his button doesn't work without a phone line! *Imagine!*



As some of you may know, Helmut was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in May of this year. His diagnosis was difficult because he does not have the usual 'shakes' like most do. This disease affects your sense of smell (has none), your balance (danger of falling), your stance (standing/walking slightly bent over), your motor skills (difficulty with zippers, buttons), your handwriting and your memory, among other things. It is degenerative and there is no cure, however, with medication, exercise and a healthy lifestyle, it can be managed. Some days are better than others for Helmut, but his attitude is amazing. When something is impossible or a real struggle, like getting dressed in the morning or getting his shoes on, he will 'laugh 'til he cries'! The frustration of not being able to do what he used to find easy must be enormous. He is the eternal optimist! When asked how he is, he simply says: "Fine. Fine." And for the most part, he is. This picture of him was taken on his 74th birthday last February ... and I hope to help keep him smiling for a very long time to come.

We are heading to Florida in late December and are lucky enough to be able to stay until the end of March. It is a 3-bedroom bungalow with a pool and a backyard for Oliver ... yes, he is coming with us! He's good in the car so with enough stops to walk him, he should be okay. Both Helmut and I will have our cell phones with us, so if you are near Venice, we are in North Port - not far away. Please call ... we'd love to have visitors. 613-294-8545 he saying "life is too short" could not be more true!!

The first thing I did was put my beautiful house at 247 Echo up for sale, and put an offer on a townhome in the same development ... just behind. My house sold, and we moved into 245B Echo on August 15th.

Florida beckons and we have found a lovely bungalow with a pool for the winter months. It is a 3-bedroom bungalow with a pool and a backyard for Oliver ... yes, he is coming with us! He's good in the car so with enough stops to walk him, he should be okay. Both Helmut and I will have our cell phones with us, so if you are near Sarasota or Fort Myers, we are in North Port - not far away. Please call ... we'd love to have visitors. 613-294-8545 he saying "life is too short" could not be more true!!

We will use this time to live a healthy lifestyle and develop better habits. We will *live... laugh ... love!*

Helmut spent 3 weeks in the Smiths Falls Hospital and three more weeks recovering at the Perley Rideau Veterans Health Centre. Medication was started in the hospital and it gradually began to work; he began to get better. During the time Helmut was recovering, Oliver was in my care in Ottawa. This was difficult as I had no backyard and walking him (an 'out-of-control' country dog) morning, noon and night was extremely stressful! He dislikes male dogs and when he sees them, he bolts ... his leash goes flying, he attacks the other dog, and leaves me flailing on the ground. He would not sleep anywhere but on my bed and with my allergies... oh my! The first thing I did was put my beautiful house at 247 Echo up for sale, and put an offer on a townhome in the same development ... just behind at 245B Echo. We moved in on August 15th.

We knew he would not be able to spend another winter at the cottage on his own, so I went about making a comfortable retreat for him with me in Ottawa. It meant selling my house at 247 Echo ("for better or worse, in sickness and in health") and purchasing one just behind with a main floor bathroom and big room to accommodate Helmut's 55" TV. (Loves to watch CNN!) The house came with a backyard which we fenced in and now not only is our dog Oliver happy, so am I! It was a big adjustment but we're all settling in.

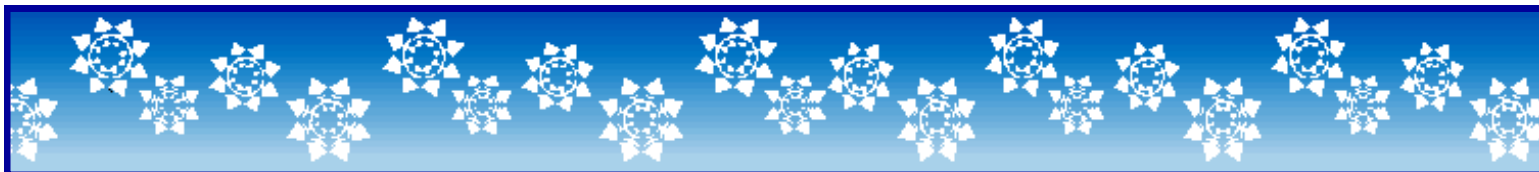
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In mid-August, he returned to the cottage with care givers checking in on him 3-4 times a day during the week, and I was there on the weekends and left prepared meals for the week. It was obvious he would not be able to stay at the cottage alone during the winter months. So I started to plan.

I then renovated the main level creating a suite for Helmut with a shower, beautiful hardwood floors and a Murphy Bed. There is also a backyard for Oliver, and a 'doggie' door through the window (which he doesn't use)! But the good news is, since moving into Ottawa in October, Helmut is doing much better. He has a personal trainer 3 times a week, and I try to make sure he takes his medication and eats nutritionally. Even though it is a degenerative disease, we will be doing everything we can to ensure he continues to improve, and we're optimistic.

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## Sometimes ... he laughs 'til he cries!

Helmut and I usually talk everyday, or every other day at least, but I could not reach him on Wednesday or Thursday. So Thursday afternoon June 5th, I decided to drive to the cottage to see what was going on. One of the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease is that you can seize up. And Helmut did. I found Helmut face down just inside the cottage door. I called 911 for an ambulance. He had been there a long time because he was delirious and talking about being attacked by a German family who wanted him to stay away from their daughter. The dog pushed out the door and he and the two cats were out of water. The ambulance came and took him to the Smiths Fall Hospital. He was still talking and talking about this German family, and he wanted me to report them to the police. Helmut was re-hydrated and started on his road to recovery. He spent 3 weeks in the Smiths Falls Hospital and three more weeks in convalescence at the Perley Rideau Veterans Health Centre in Ottawa. His Parkinson's medication was re-started in the hospital and it gradually began to work; he began to improve. It was obvious to the doctors and to me that he should not be living on his own any longer, but he insisted that he go back to the cottage! To make that happen, we arranged for a local caregiver to check on him 4 times a day to ensure he was taking his medication and make sure he was okay. If she could not reach him, she would drive over. She brought the daily paper and bought his loto tickets for him, and often brought him goodies to eat. Meanwhile, I was carrying out my plan to accommodate him properly in Ottawa when the weather turned cold.

There was a house behind ours in the same development that I knew was going to be for sale soon; it had a main floor powder and laundry room, a large room at the back with a big window and a backyard for the dog. So, I approached the owner to see if she would sell it to me. She would. I put 247 Echo up for sale and had open houses every Sunday for 6 weeks until it sold. The whole house had to be vacuumed prior to each of these open houses because while Helmut was recovering, Oliver was in my care in Ottawa. You can imagine the shedding ... and the only place he would sleep was on my bed! This wasn't the only problem. As I had no backyard, I had no choice but to walk this 'out-of-control' unpredictable 75 lb. country dog morning, noon and night! He pulls when on his leash, and he dislikes male dogs; when he sees them, he bolts ... his lease goes flying, he attacks the poor unsuspecting other dog, and leaves me flailing on the ground.

I moved from 247 Echo to 245B Echo on August 15th. As it was in its 'original' condition - built in 1985 - I started by painting the entire house. Renovations began to install a shower for Helmut on the main level and to renovate by putting in a new floor and new staircase.

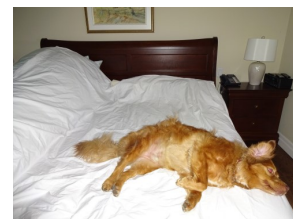
, many months after I had been telling his doctor that there was something wrong with him. Blood tests and X-rays do not detect this disease, and because he did not have the usual 'shakes', it was difficult if not impossible to know what was wrong.

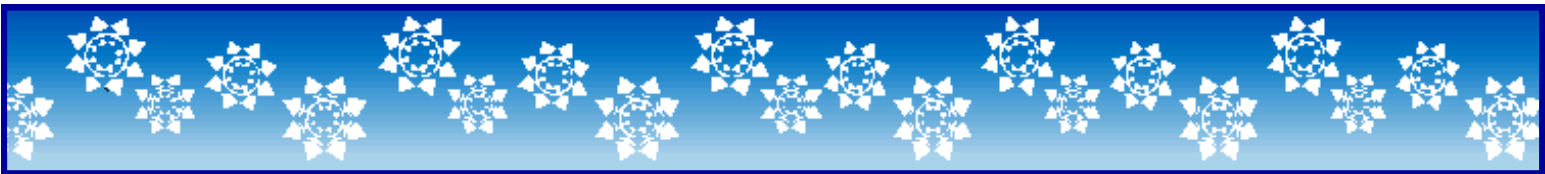
One of the symptoms of Parkinson's left untreated is that you can 'freeze' and this happened to Helmut. He was alone at the cottage and his Bruyere Help Line didn't work because of vandalized Bell lines at exactly the same time! Fortunately, I found him and got him to the Smiths Falls Hospital and his recovery began. It was 6 weeks before he returned to the cottage. We arranged for a couple, Lynn and Herman, who live nearby, to check on him 4 times a day; if they could not reach him, they would go and see what was up. We both knew that he would not be able to go through another winter there on his own, so I put a plan in place. I sold 247 Echo Drive and purchased 245B Echo Drive just behind. It is built on grade which means that we could create a main level suite with a full bath, Murphy Bed in a large room, big bright window and the least number of stairs to climb. We also needed a backyard for Oliver. On August 15th, we moved and the renovations began. By mid October, Helmut and Oliver moved in. It has been a big adjustment

He wanted to go back to the cottage! We knew that there was no way Helmut could ever be alone at the cottage again.

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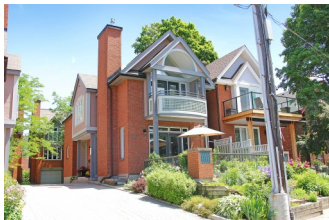
Flashback to earlier times in Germany perhaps! The ambulance took him to the Smiths Falls Hospital and they started to re-hydrate him. After leaving him in good hands, I took our dog Oliver home with me, and went back to see how he was doing the next day. For the first couple of days, he had no strength. He needed help to eat, and he could not walk. Gradually, now on medication, and getting physiotherapy, he started his road to recovery.





## Just for family and friends ... about Helmut!

As most of you know, Helmut and I have never actually 'lived' together. His preference has been to stay at the cottage and my preference was to be in Ottawa. My chosen profession is real estate and to be successful, it requires lots of time and energy. He would visit Ottawa often and I would spend what time I could in the summer at the cottage. That arrangement worked for us. We usually talked everyday, or every other day, at least. But this time, I did not hear from him and could not reach him on Wednesday or Thursday. So, Thursday afternoon, I decided to drive to the cottage to see what was going on. One of the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease is that your body can become so rigid that it just freezes. And Helmut's



did! When I arrived, everything seemed eerily quiet. No Oliver barking to greet me ... I walked nervously toward the cottage and used my key to unlock the front door (usually open in the daytime); the dog pushed his way out. There was Helmut on the floor; he could

not move. It is unknown how long he had been there but the roast and the chicken were still on the stove covered in ants! I immediately called 911 and an ambulance came within a half hour. Helmut was dehydrated and delirious. During that half-hour, Helmut did

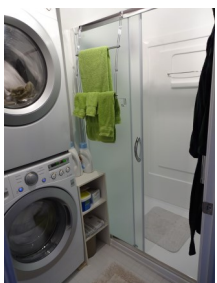


not stop talking. He explained that he had been beaten by a 'blue blood' family from Germany who did not want him (a 'commoner') to come anywhere near their daughter! Hmm! He said he had been playing golf in Kanata the day before. Hmm!

He thought he was lying on concrete but it was actually a grey/black carpet at the door. I'm not sure he knew who I was actually. I followed the ambulance to Smiths Falls Hospital with Oliver in tow.

Helmut spent 3 weeks in the Smiths Falls Hospital and three more weeks recovering at the Perley-Rideau Veterans Health Centre. Medication was started in the hospital and it gradually began to work and with physiotherapy; he began to get better.

During this time, I realized that Helmut could never live alone at the cottage again. I started to plan.

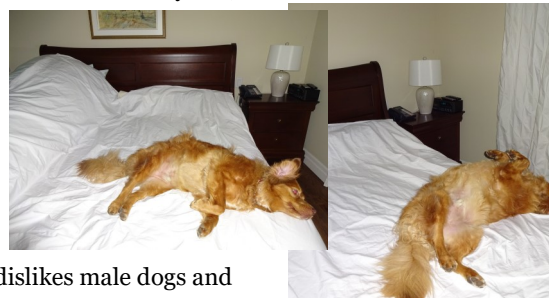


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walking him (an 'out-of-control' country dog) morning, noon and night was extremely stressful! He dislikes male dogs and when he sees them, he bolts ... his lease goes flying, he attacks the other dog, and leaves me flailing on the ground. He would not sleep anywhere but on my bed and with my allergies... geez!

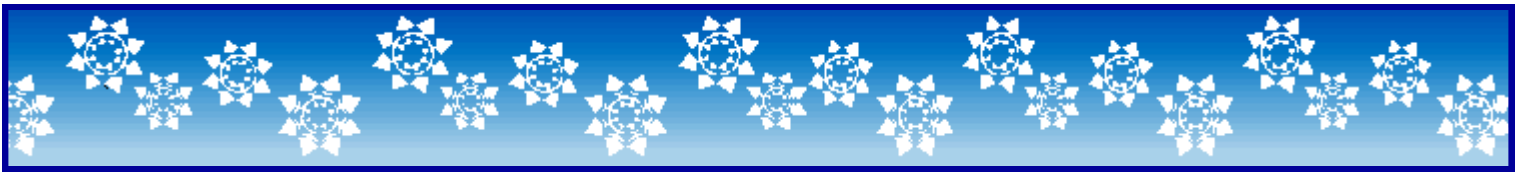


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phones with us, so if you are near Venice, we are in North Port - not far away. Please call ...





## Looking in the Crystal Ball - Winter 2014 / Spring 2015

Real estate is like most businesses. It is cyclical. In my opinion, the real estate market will see little change in 2015. January through March will be slower than past years, then the spring market and summer should be reasonably good. After that is anyone's guess. Currently, I believe it to be a 'buyer's market' ... prices are coming down in all but the most trendy of neighbourhoods. Beyond that, I really don't know.

It seems with those who are contemplating the sale of their homes want to be reassured of so many things. For example, recently I was asked to *guarantee* that a house would be sold within two months, *and* to guarantee a certain price for the house, *and* to work for a much reduced commission. What they were asking was for me to be a magician and a fortune teller and to work for nothing. This Seller made me angry and I refused the listing.

I am a highly educated and licenced professional regulated by the Real Estate Council of Ontario. I paid my dues, became a Real Estate Broker and opened my own brokerage in 2006; that means greater responsibilities and many expenses that most Realtors don't have.

The real estate industry is often misunderstood. And working on commission is exceptionally difficult because a Realtor can invest thousands of dollars (both advertising and time) and end up with absolutely nothing if a property does not sell. Listing a property is a long term commitment for both the Buyer and Seller because once the house is sold, it usually doesn't 'close' for another 30-60 or sometimes 90 days. So waiting to get paid is never easy.

There is no way that a Realtor can guarantee a sale within a specific time frame unless you are willing to go with one of the Realtors that promise to buy your house if it doesn't sell within a certain period of time. They are out there, but understandably, they will not pay market value for your house or it would not be worth it for them to offer this service.

### *How do I determine the value of my home?*

A good Realtor will provide you with neighbourhood sales and a Comparative Market Analysis. This should provide a good basis for setting the asking price. What a lot of Sellers don't realize is that a house is worth what a willing buyer will pay and a willing seller will accept. You can ask any price you want, but if you are not willing to negotiate on the price, expect your house to sit on the market for quite a while. Price sells!

*How long am I required to list it with you and do I have to pay you if it sells after the listing expires?*

A listing document is required to be a minimum 60 day contract by the Ottawa Real Estate Board. However, it can be cancelled at any time if you are unhappy with the services provided by the Realtor. There is a 'holdover' clause which simply means that if the house is shown during the listing period to some buyers but they don't make an offer until after the listing has 'expired' or has been cancelled, then the Realtor is entitled to be paid because the house was introduced to the buyers by the Realtor.



*What are the chances of selling in the next 2 months?*

Realistically, not that good. As I said, I am not a 'fortune teller' or magician and guaranteeing the house would be sold within any period of time is fool-hearty. The chances of selling in December are slim. It is possible, but not an easy task. Families tend to have too much on their plates in December to do any house shopping. And January and February are usually too cold and wintery; families like to 'hunker down' until March, April or May. If you listed your house well below market value, then it would may sell in a short period of time at any time of year. With higher priced homes, the price point limits the number of buyers and if the area is not one which is popular, this also limits your potential buyers.

*Can you guarantee how much I will get for my house?*

It would be great if a Realtor could guarantee a certain amount in your pocket at the end of the day, but making such a promise is impossible. What I can do is my very utmost to get a house sold in the shortest period of time for the highest price possible. Beyond that, there are no guarantees.

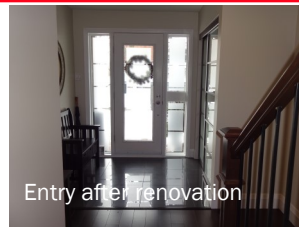
It is any Realtors job to work in the best interests of our clients, to be accountable and honest, and conduct ourselves professionally at all times. It is true that there are good and bad salespeople, just like in . or a referral to find a good one, or just call me!

## Moved again ... to 245B Echo Drive

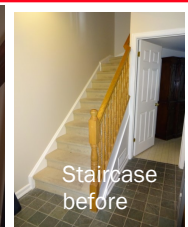


In order to accommodate Helmut with his Parkinson's Disease and our dog Oliver, my house at 247 Echo Drive had to be sold. However, we were lucky enough to be able to purchase 245B Echo, just behind where we used to be. We moved in on August 15th. The

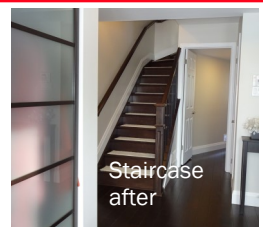
main level had to be renovated to provide Helmut with a nice suite complete with shower, Murphy Bed and a big window for Oliver's access in and out. But most importantly, Oliver now has a backyard to use! He's used to free rein at the cottage and has become an unpredictable dog; walking him was no fun!



Entry after renovation



Staircase before



Staircase after

It took 3 months but the main level renovation is done! Helmut has



a comfortable suite - Murphy Bed, his 55" TV, a double shower, a large window with access for Oliver (and steps) to the backyard. Very cozy and comfy!

*"The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."*



Helmut and I usually talk everyday, or every other day at least, but I could not reach him on Wednesday or Thursday. So Thursday afternoon June 5th, I decided to drive to the cottage to see what was going on. One of the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease is that you can seize up. And Helmut did. I found Helmut face down just inside the cottage door. I called 911 for an ambulance. He had been there a long time because he was delirious and talking about being attacked by a German family who wanted him to stay away from their daughter. The dog pushed out the door and he and the two cats were out of water. The ambulance came and took him to the Smiths Fall Hospital. He was still talking and talking about this German family, and he wanted me to report them to the police. Helmut was re-hydrated and started on his road to recovery. He spent 3 weeks in the Smiths Falls Hospital and three more weeks in convalescence at the Perley Rideau Veterans Health Centre in Ottawa. His Parkinson's medication was re-started in the hospital and it gradually began to work; he began to improve. It was obvious to the doctors and to me that he should not be living on his own any longer, but he insisted that he go back to the cottage! To make that happen, we arranged for a local caregiver to check on him 4 times a day to ensure he was taking his medication and make sure he was okay. If she could not reach him, she would drive over. She brought the daily paper and bought his loto tickets for him, and often brought him goodies to eat. Meanwhile, I was carrying out my plan to accommodate him properly in Ottawa when the weather turned cold.

There was a house behind ours in the same development that I knew was going to be for sale soon; it had a main floor powder and laundry room, a large room at the back with a big window and a backyard for the dog. So, I approached the owner to see if she would sell it to me. She would. I put 247 Echo up for sale and had open houses every Sunday for 6 weeks until it sold. The whole house had to be vacuumed prior to each of these open houses because while Helmut was recovering, Oliver was in my care in Ottawa. You can imagine the shedding ... and the only place he would sleep was on my bed! This wasn't the only problem. As I had no backyard, I had no choice but to walk this 'out-of-control' unpredictable 75 lb. country dog morning, noon and night! He pulls when on his leash, and he dislikes male dogs; when he sees them, he bolts ... his lease goes flying, he attacks the poor unsuspecting other dog, and leaves me flailing on the ground.

I moved from 247 Echo to 245B Echo on August 15th. As it was in its 'original' condition - built in 1985 - I started by painting the entire house. Renovations began to install a shower for Helmut on the main level and to renovate by putting in a new floor and new staircase.

We are heading to Florida in late December and are lucky enough to be able to stay until the end of March. It is a 3-bedroom bungalow with a pool and a backyard for Oliver ... yes, he is coming with us! He's good in the car so with enough stops to walk him, he should be okay. Both Helmut and I will have our cell phones with us, so if you are near Venice, we are in North Port - not far away. Please call ... we'd love to have visitors. 613-294-8545 he saying "life is too short" could not be more true!!

The first thing I did was put my beautiful house at 247 Echo up for sale, and put an offer on a townhome in the same development ... just behind. My house sold, and we moved into 245B Echo on August 15th.

Florida beckons and we have found a lovely bungalow with a pool for the winter months. It is a 3-bedroom bungalow with a pool and a backyard for Oliver ... yes, he is coming with us! He's good in the car so with enough stops to walk him, he should be okay. Both Helmut and I will have our cell phones with us, so if you are near Sarasota or Fort Myers, we are in North Port - not far away. Please call ... we'd love to have visitors. 613-294-8545 he saying "life is too short" could not be more true!!

We will use this time to live a healthy lifestyle and develop better habits. We will *live... laugh ... love!*

~~Helmut spent 3 weeks in the Smiths Falls Hospital and three more weeks recovering at the Perley Rideau Veterans Health Centre. Medication was started in the hospital and it gradually began to work; he began to get better. During the time Helmut was recovering, Oliver was in my care in Ottawa. This was difficult as I had no backyard and walking him (an 'out-of-control' country dog) morning, noon and night was extremely stressful! He dislikes male dogs and when he sees them, he bolts ... his lease goes flying, he attacks the other dog, and leaves me flailing on the ground. He would not sleep anywhere but on my bed and with my allergies... oh my! The first thing I did was put my beautiful house at 247 Echo up for sale, and put an offer on a townhome in the same development ... just behind at 245B Echo. We moved in on August 15th.~~

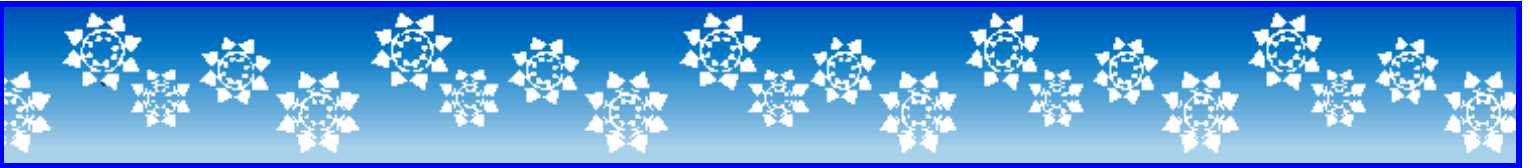
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In mid-August, he returned to the cottage with care givers checking in on him 3-4 times a day during the week, and I was there on the weekends and left prepared meals for the week. It was obvious he would not be able to stay at the cottage alone during the winter months. So I started to plan.





## Vichyssoise (Leek and Potato Soup!)

### Ingredients and process:

- 4 cups peeled and coarsely chopped potatoes
- 3 cups thinly sliced leeks (white part + 2 inches of green)
- 2 quarts chicken stock
- 1 tsp salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- Garnish: finely cut chives



In a heavy 6-quart saucepan, simmer the potatoes, leeks, chicken stock and salt partially covered for 40-50 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Force the soup through a food mill or sieve, then through a fine sieve back into the pan. Season and stir in 1 1/2 cups of heavy cream. (Do not use a blender; the mixture will be too smooth.) Chill the soup until it is very cold. Ladle the soup in a tureen or individual bowls. Serve it garnished with finely cut fresh chives. (Email me for carrot & asparagus recipes!)

This recipe is from "The Cooking of Provincial France" - a book I've had for over 40 years. I once served it as an appetizer to my family on a hot summer day at the cottage. Accustomed to hot soups, my brother, John, exclaimed upon taking his first sip: "**It's cold!**" Ha Ha! ☺

## LOCK YOUR DOORS!

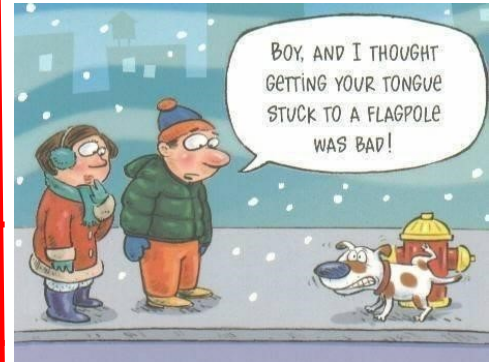
In September, I borrowed Helmut's Audi while my Lexus was in the shop getting some necessary body work done. When picking it up, Frank (a contractor friend) drove the Audi back to our house. Because the engine light came on, Frank jumped out of the car to tell me about it, and accidentally left the keys in the car. It was stolen that night! A lesson learned! Police report that since the beginning of September, more than 300 residential break-and-enters have been reported. In 8 cases, entry to the home gave the thieves access to keys, enabling them to take the vehicle. So folks, just a reminder ... be diligent and be safe. Lock your vehicle and lock your home!



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The nicest place to be is in someone's THOUGHTS!

The safest place to be is in someone's PRAYERS!

And the best place to be is in GOD'S HANDS!

*My gift to you is a poem found in the Diary of my Great Aunt Jane Mary-Church:*

*Life is sweet because of the friends we have made  
And the things which in common we share;  
We want to live on, not because of ourselves  
But because of the people who care.  
It's giving and doing for somebody else  
On that, all life's splendour depends  
And the JOY of this world,  
when you've summed it all up  
Is found in the making of friends.*

An update ... Randy continues on his own with Your Way Real Estate Inc., an MLS listing only service, and is doing well. Sheri has become a successful Realtor in her own right in the past few years, and is an invaluable contributor to Milestone's success. She surprised all of us by getting married on Saturday Dec. 6th at her husband's 40th birthday party.

Randy and Sheri want to extend their "*Best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season, and may the New Year bring all good things to you and yours.*"

Randy F. Millar,  
Broker

Sheri McCracken  
Sales Associate



**Happy Holidays** ☆

*Wishing you a wonderful Holiday Season!  
May the New Year bring much  
peace, love and JOY  
to you and yours!*

**Myra McKeen**  
Broker of Record



**milestone**  
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