

The 2013 Annual Wallace Letter

It's hard to believe another year is coming to a close so soon. Maybe that's a good thing for me. My year has been somewhat difficult, at times and idyllic at others... a veritable rollercoaster!

March found me wailing into hospital via ambulance with what eventually was found to be a gall stone attack with infection thrown in just to spice it up! Ten days later I was ejected sans gall bladder.

October's angiogram revealed that I needed a quadruple bypass. How fortunate! This was done during my four hour "memory lapse" on Nov 19. They must have had an extra 10 minutes or so at the end because they opted for doing a fifth bypass, too. Probably to show the interns what a whiz the head surgeon was. They also decided I needed adorning with a pacemaker implant. That went in two days later under a local anesthetic which I was out cold for. Lucky me!

Those were the troughs. Now for the crests...

Barb and I went out West to visit family and friends for about three weeks of joy. I drove to Calgary, picked Barb up at the airport, and then, started our spectacular



drive through the mountains to Kaslo on Kootenay Lake where we were reunited with some of the Wallace family members. Then, on to Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast for more of the same and with dear friends, too. It was so nice the hang out with loved ones and share a lot of laughter.

Figure 1 Enjoying the Sunshine Coast

On a sadder note my youngest brother passed away this summer and we agreed to meet in Kaslo once more to spread his ashes around the place he loved. It wasn't

all gloomy though as we siblings were together again and enjoyed each other's company and generally had more good feelings.

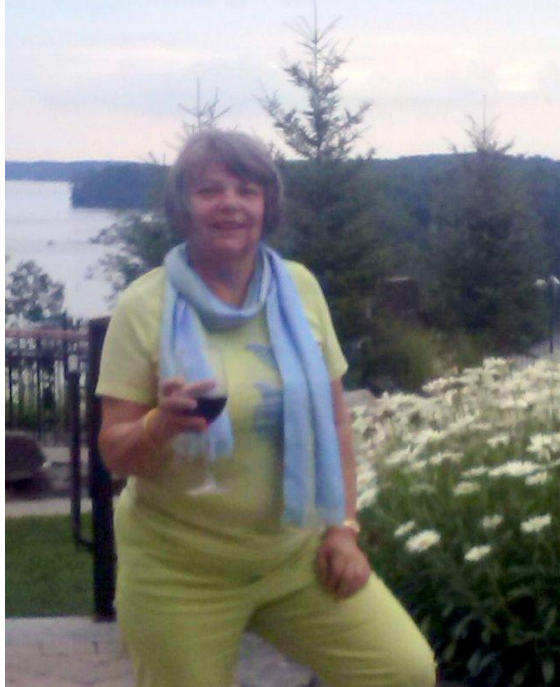


For a few years, now, I've been wanting to introduce my sons, James (that's his picture of the night sky at North Rim) and Andrew to the Southwest deserts (a bucket list item) and expose them to the sights that captured and enchanted me so long ago in hopes that they'll return with their families one day. We pulled it off this summer. I drove (naturally) and picked them up in Las Vegas whereupon we headed into Utah's Zion National Park. They did two major hikes while I read my book: the Virgin River Narrows (slot canyon) and Angel's Landing (very steep and full of grandeur). Then, on to see and hike (them, not me) spectacular Bryce Canyon. The week closed with a trip to the Grand Canyon's North Rim for a couple of days and nights peering at the heavens during the Grand Canyon Star Party with lots of big telescopes to look through!

...a good year by all accounts.

May your 2014 be awash with crests and void of troughs...

Happy Holidays! Tony



So it's my turn although my life has been very tame as opposed to Tony's

Figure 2 Me enjoying a glass of wine at a restaurant in Musoka in the summer.

I think I'm retired. I'm still on the Occasional Teacher list but don't plan on doing any teaching, so I imagine I'll get kicked off by the end of the teaching year. I withdrew my name from the Union Executive election when the president with whom I had worked with for 10 years and whose vision of union work aligned with mine was defeated. Although I was looking to leave anyway in the next year or so, this

wasn't the way I had envisioned. Oh well, life goes on.

I did work for the Board this fall, planning a professional development day for occasional teachers. This is work that I've been doing for several years, but it was a mixed blessing. I got a few days work but it was different not being in charge to make the decisions I was used to.

I worked with my friend, Pat Webber, to run the canvass at our church –this is organizing the campaign to find out how much money people are planning to donate to the church in 2014 – knowing how much money you have makes for a better way to budget. We had fun and it kept us off the streets. I've worked with Pat on several other projects over the years and it was great to get another chance



to hang out together – work a bit - visit a bit. And we did well – we surpassed our goal. Now we hope that folks will ante up with their pledged amount.

Figure 3 - Vanessa, Haydon and Ayden enjoying ice cream

Our family continues to bring us great joy. The 5 grandkids are growing. Andrew and Jenn's 3 are becoming more independent – Vanessa is in Gr. 4 and involved in everything she can work in – especially ballet and basketball. Ayden is in Gr. 1 and loves Beavers and soccer. Gregory and I attended music classes together this fall. His language has taken an amazing leap. James and Rachel's 2 are growing as well. Haydon is in full-time kindergarten –we pick him up once a week and hang out till his parents come home. Ezra is coming over to our house for a bit every week so Rachel can attend a class. He is feeling more comfortable with Granma Barb and Papa Tony these days and he loves playing at the library.

Figure 4 - And here are the 2 younger grandkids Gregory & Ezra.



We aren't making too many plans for next year. I think Tony will have to stick to Canada for awhile. We are going to Winter Carnival in Quebec City in February and maybe a wander through cottage country this summer visiting all our friends with cottages. Maybe next year, we'll plan that river cruise on the Rhine.

Hope things are good with you and yours. Enjoy what's left of 2013 and have a great 2014.

Barb