



# Happy Holidays



*from our home to yours.*

I am sure you are all busy with festivities of the season as we are. I always enjoy doing Christmas cards; however this year I opted for one universal newsletter. Both to save me some time and to keep you updated with what's going on with the Bowlans this past year. A year ago November we purchased a second home (57 Villa Ave, Charlottetown) to renovate and have as a rental property or to perhaps sell later on. Mark with some help from family and friends put his heart & soul, blood sweat and tears into this home! It was a dump when we purchased it, but by the time Mark was finished with it, it was magazine worthy, a truly beautiful home. This was not just some paint and a little clean up here, we're talking knocking out and putting up new walls, a new kitchen with custom made cupboards, updated bath and laundry room, stripping and finishing original wood floors... the list goes on.



57 Villa Ave



Before and after; same window

I found it hard at home, Mark worked all day at Great Hobbies, came home at supper and worked late into the night or the next day at the house... It was a long winter! I thought I was going to go crazy for a while, but it was worth it

and I love him for it. It was a smart move and he sure is ambitious. After five months, we've been well rewarded for my patience, 57 Villa Ave sold in July for a healthy profit.

Since then Mark hasn't slowed down any... He has built the boys a huge two level play fort (The Chandler, Connor and Friends SkyFort) with all the fixin's. The fort has monkey bars, ropes, slide, teeter totter, swings and a cargo net. The boys and Daddy have enjoyed building and playing!



SkyFort

We are almost finished completion of a new 200 sq foot shed in the backyard, the old tin one was on its last legs... It will be complete with lights, heat and a garage door at one end. It is 18 feet long to be able to hold a kayak (future project!).

The current project is gutting/renovating our basement. It was finished 70's style 5-1/2 years ago when we moved in, but not to our liking... time for a change. We've torn out the wood stove and installed a beautiful propane fireplace to replace it. We also built a 90 gallon aquarium (4 feet long by 2 feet high) into the wall to save space in the new family room, it looks like a flat screen TV - Way cool! We had to bring our goldfish and koi from the outside pond in for the winter. We are painting the upper part of the wall a butter yellow with the lower section being white painted wainscoting. Replacing the carpet, installing new entertainment unit, bookcases, pot lights and sconces are on the way over the next couple of weeks. We are doing all the work ourselves. I love it - so exciting!



The boys and the fish in the backyard

Mark has also been to Edmonton twice this year since the new Great Hobbies store opened last December. A trip to Chicago for their annual trade show, and a three-day fishing trip with our friend Gary into northern Ontario for muskie was quite the adventure! The new store is celebrating a successful first year in business. The guys are very excited about how well the west store is doing, it was worth all last years hard work to set it up and get it open.

Enough about him!



Mark catching a northern at Dryberry Lake, ONT

I am back to aerobics this fall and loving it. I also have a new treadmill that has been getting some rigorous use since I got it. I am giving tole painting a break this year and have taken up and am enjoying scrap booking. I took a local course through community school through to the end of November. I am really enjoying it, and I am working on books for the boys.

Our lease on our 98 Civic was up in February, so we sold it at got a new black 2002 Civic Sport with cool spoiler, aluminum rims, ground effects and all the bells and whistles. The boys weren't too happy to see the "Green" car leave.



Rhonda's 2002 Civic Sport

We had a good summer at Mark's parents cottage and running around to different beaches on the hot days, we also bought a new tent and spent our first family camping weekend in Moncton with Marks' brother Jeffrey, his wife Nancy and their two kids Taylor and Tristan. We had a ball camping out with great weather, campfires and spending a day at Magnetic Hill taking in the zoo and train ride.



Connor walking up lane at cottage



Great summer day at the beach



Best buddies



Duck feeding at the Moncton Zoo



Chandler taming a kite at the cottage



Chandler driving his radio controlled boat in the outdoor pond at Great Hobbies

Chandler is now 6-1/2 years old his birthday was in June. He graduated from kindergarten in May. He is a great reader and reads to Connor everyday. He is now in grade one French immersion, with a superb teacher. He is having a great first year of school and already sounds like a French man! Chandler played golf and baseball this summer and also took two weeks of swimming lessons. This was his second year at golf, he's getting pretty good... Grampy is so proud! Grampy is loving it as much as Chandler and got him his very own clubs and bag for his birthday. This fall Chandler is also going to Beavers, it seems you can't be a Bowlan without being a boy scout.



Chandler and cousin Tristan at Beavers



Chandler practicing golf in the front yard



Kindergarten graduation day, May



Chandler's surprise birthday plane ride



Chandler ready to steal second base!



*Chandler loves to read*

Connor is now a BIG 3-1/2 years old and is such a little man. He loves to do anything his big brother is doing. He learns a lot from Chandler, both the good and the bad. Earlier in the year, much to Mommy's dismay, Connor slept his last night in his crib and upgraded to a "big boys bed". He likes the new freedom! He and I do our best keeping busy with Chandler in school. Connor was lost for the first couple of weeks (and so was Mommy!), but we do a good job running the roads! Like Mommy, he loves to shop. We do a good job keeping ourselves busy, we go to a play-group on Tuesdays and Jelly Bean Gym on Thursdays - FUN! Connor is a great helper for Mommy. He helps with grocery shopping, laundry and baking. The conversations are endless and the time spent priceless.



*Connor is now in a Big Boys bed*



*A successful Easter egg hunt*



*Connor's third birthday, May*



*Cottage corn boil*



*Connor loves his trips to the "tractor store"*

For Halloween, the kids were dressed up as spacemen and were a big hit with the neighborhood. Their costumes had lots of lights and they lit up like a Christmas tree going door to door down the street. Thanks to Gary Stephen for digging up the costumes which he had made for his kids over 10 years ago.



*The spacemen were coming to take us away this Halloween*

The kids are excited about Christmas coming. They have sent their letters to Santa and are doing their best at staying "good little boys". The threat that Santa may be watching them doesn't seem to keep them from getting into some mischief! I am sure he'll find them regardless!



*Connor decorating the Christmas tree, 2001*



*Chandler on his crazy carpet, February*

So we have had a very busy and great 2002 and look forward to 2003, hoping to see many of you in the New Year.

May love, health and happiness bless you all...

*Rhonda*



*The End*