

RANDOM REFLECTIONS: Not Over Yet!

By Kathryn Wishlow

It is hard to believe that it has now been over three years since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 an international pandemic. Like most readers, March 11, 2020 will be a date that registers strongly on the timeline of my life. A week later, my daughter and her fiancé, and their three, yes three cats had moved in with me for two good reasons.

Their first reason was to leave Toronto for a while to avoid the dangers of city living with its large population and confining elevators. At that time, another concern was that there might be a prolonged confinement in their small condo. Also, both of them could easily work from my spacious home since I had great WIFI in Bancroft.

Their second concern was for my safety. If they lived with me, they could prevent my independent self from going anywhere, or taking in any guests. It took a little while to adjust as our lives took on lots of new routines plus family safety protocols. In the end, the new plan worked out very well for all. By the end of August they had sold their Toronto property, experienced their re-planned wedding, and moved into their new Whitby townhouse.

I had actually enjoyed the five months of hectic family living with pets. When they left, suddenly the house was quiet, and I realized I would have to repurpose myself. Family get togethers were small and mostly outside. Hand sanitizers and masks were near entrances, in your car and everywhere. I knew people and friends who caught the dreaded disease, most getting terribly ill, but only a few actually died.

When the vaccines became available, some relief became evident. People still distanced themselves from you. My friends with allergies were embarrassed to cough or sneeze in public, worried people might think they were contagious. We went through seasonal waves of higher and lesser amounts of infected people. The home testing kits helped you know if you should self-isolate, and others could stay away from you. The intense fear began to subside.

Last year, I had quite a few friends and relatives contract COVID or a variant. But, with the new cautious awareness, their whole household did not catch it. We all began to relax, especially people who had the vaccines and boosters. The

government stopped reporting the numbers. Live theatre and concerts took place again. Our confidence was slowly returning.

I felt really blessed that only my son-in-law who had to travel by plane a lot last year, had suffered through the COVID illness, and fully recovered. The rest of my immediate family had managed to escape having that experience. Until last week. My daughter-in-law got very ill, and tested positive. Of course a few days later, the baby came down with it.

My son was trying hard to keep his family comfortable while they fought the headaches, pain and fever. Then he came down with it. Three for three! Just sharing this to let everyone know ... it is not over yet! It is probably wise to continue being diligent and cautious. *(Kathryn Wishlow belongs to White Pine Writers Inc., a local group of like-minded authors who encourage & support all facets of writing, editing and publishing literary efforts. Follow them on FaceBook or www.whitepinewriters.ca)*