

Bill Rea ? A moving story

There are some things in life that cause lots of stress, such as work settings, social settings and income tax.

And then there's moving.

I had to take part in moving recently, twice in the same week.

As many of you might know by now, the Caledon Citizen office has moved. No longer are we at the bottom of the only set of stairs leading down from the Queen Street sidewalk in the Bolton core. We are now installed in the Bolton Professional Building on Martha Street (just behind the PetroCan station). We're in Suite 205, if you feel like paying a social call.

Now we knew the move was in the works for some time, but the official word was a little late in coming, so we only got about a week's notice of when the move was to be complete.

Any move is filled with plenty of stress, but when it comes to moving the work place, it comes with the added reality that one must also get the regular work done too, along with collecting stuff that you had forgotten had even existed. I crawled under my old desk (Globe and Mail surplus, I've been told, from the late '70s or early '80s), and wouldn't have been too surprised had I found Jimmy Hoffa.

I am by nature a hoarder, and always have been. I keep stuff on the assumption that it might prove useful at some point down the road. It seldom does, but that explains why I always seem to have so much junk. I inherited the trait from my mother, something that drove my late father, not to mention numerous bosses of mine, up the proverbial wall over the years. That meant I had a lot to move, but I'm also proud to say that I overcame my natural instincts and threw out a great deal of debris. I think I surprised several people in my office.

In the end, I had condensed my working existence into six banker boxes and some other odds and ends. Now I have to work on unpacking them all, and making sure we get weekly newspapers out in the process. That will all come in due course, but probably not until the current calendar year is history.

The point is I had to deal with a move and came through it as well as could have been expected.

The problem was this was the first of two moves I had to address in the same week.

My wife and I sold the house we'd been living in for the last 14 years about a month ago, and we've moved into the house in which my late mother-in-law resided. We've both known for more than a year that the move was coming. We resisted, I guess, because we both know what a pain moving can be. On the other hand, we realized that action was going to have to be taken soon. Maintaining two houses is very expensive.

Of course, we were waiting for the most convenient time to get the ball rolling. The problem is there is no such thing as a convenient time to move.

There was another problem, dealing largely with the vow I made the night we moved into our previous digs. At the time, Beth and I had the advantage of a decent talent pool. Both our mothers were still alive at that point. My mom was well into her 70s and getting a little frail, but she was still able to muscle-in and boss people around (another trait that got under my old man's skin sometimes). Then we had our brothers, who were extremely helpful, if I can forget that one of them managed to drop my TV in the driveway (it still works). Beth and I were both 14 years younger and more up to the physical demands of the day.

Despite all those advantages, the day was still an ordeal.

?I am never going through this again!?' I announced to Beth that evening after helpers had departed. ?When I leave this house for the last time, I'm going to be on a stretcher.?

So picture the mood I must have been in that memorable recent Saturday, embarking on a move after coming off a move. The world is so lucky I have a sense of humour.

Now we had lined up help for the task. My brother Michael was on deck, as was Beth's brother Paul, although as a farmer, he had haying to worry about. Our nephew Jacob was there too, to pitch in. He hadn't even been thought of 14 years ago. Our niece Jenna, who's even younger than Jacob, helped out as well, along with my cousin Dale and a few others. Astonishingly enough, we're all still speaking to each other.

I even rented a truck for the day (I hate driving big vehicles). Paul had his pick-up, Michael's vehicle was big enough to carry a substantial load, and the back seat of Dale's car carried its fair share too.

That's not to say all went swimmingly. For one thing, we picked the first day of the major heat wave of recent memory. I don't think I've ever sweat that much, and I'm not a young man any more.

I'm certainly beyond the age at which one should take on the daunting task of moving twice in one week.

Although we got the bulk of the main stuff out of the old office, I was still obliged to go back down a couple of times to collect the

small stuff.

Parting company with the house was even worse.

There were a couple of maintenance items that had to be worked out. We had sold a functional house, and we had to make sure everything was in good working order (our lawyer stressed that to us). I even cut the lawn one last time.

There were also a couple of unexpected snags.

Beth and I had designated one of the bedrooms the "computer room." Not surprisingly, that's where we installed our first computer, and bought an appropriate desk on which to place it. There was a day, about 13 years ago, when I lugged the heavy box of desk components into the computer room, closed the door and told Beth to leave me alone while I put the whole thing together. I realized the mistake when it came time to move it - it wouldn't fit through the door. I eventually realized I would have to take it apart to move it. It is currently in the basement of the new house, waiting to be reassembled. The wait is likely to be long.

The hardest part of moving is parting with the old place, and the emotional baggage connected to it.

Moving out of the old office was relatively easy. But taking leave of the house was another matter.

It was our home for 14 years. Beth and I consoled each other in the house when our mothers died. We both had had lousy days at work and would sometimes stand in the living room venting at each other. It was the first house either of us owned on our own.

But life goes on

