

Just another day in Fawlty Towers

By Linda Knight Seccaspina

People often doubt the drama that happens at my home, but in reality it is all true, and sometimes, it goes for the gold. The house is very old, and every single day is like a scene from the film *The Money Pit*. There doesn't seem to be a day that goes by that something doesn't pop, explode or fizzle.

It began the day before when I smelled what I thought was a gas leak or a backed up sewer line and a plumber was called in to check it out. After examining everything he opened a door and said,

"Linda, what you've got here is a dead mouse somewhere under the furnace or in the walls."

The internet told me it would take 10 days for the smell to go away and not any amount of Febreeze would help. My bedroom now smells like a bus station restroom, but- I've got a strong nose- I can deal with that.

Tonight Steve phoned me from the kitchen (it's a big house folks no one hears anything) and says,

"There's a bat in the kitchen!"

I told him to shut the doors hoping to trap the little sucker in there. Not likely. Fifteen minutes later the bat makes his way to the second floor interrupting *Top Chef*. We run downstairs

and man ourselves with Squash rackets that were expressly made for scaring bats and not to play the sport.

We attempt to find him and eventually see him curled up on the floor. Steve tries to swat him and he misses. I scream, "WTH? I ask him what his issue is not capturing the bat. Seeing he just immigrated here from California a few years ago he looks at me and says with downcast eyes,

"Well, it was my first bat!"

The bat by this time has disappeared somewhere in that room and no amount of high powered rays from the trusty flashlight can find it. We shut off the TV knowing there will be no watching "*Top Chef*" for us that night and go down to the kitchen.

Sitting around the kitchen island we notice flashlights beaming at us from the other side of the gate and waving hands. Was it a neighbour? Was it my son Perry, well renowned bat-catcher, coming to save the day? Actually, it was our brave men in blue coming to find out if everything was okay. A neighbour had seen the flashlight beams in the TV room and saw the TV shut off early, called 911, and reported something suspicious going on in our house.

So, after having a good laugh and hearing some good bat-catching tips from our friendly policemen we came back in. I told Steve we had to catch the



bat in the morning as we have no catch and release program in this house. His response?

"Okay, but I need my breakfast first as I can't catch the bat on an empty

stomach- and I definitely need my coffee!"

Stay tuned for more episodes- as the fun never stops here.

The show of support from Mozilla/Firefox to homemade donuts



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

I truly feel that the only way to get through these long, isolated and difficult days is to share and celebrate the acts of others displayed during a time when Covid/Corona would have us all feeling alone if not for these stories. Someone described the reality we are living as a scene repeated day after day in the movie, "*Groundhog Day*." Each day much like the next, we wake up and those providing essential services go through the routine as we prepare to head into work for another day much like the day before. There are however, in my case as the Director of the local Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CABMN), those things that happen, day after day that are special, rare and heart warming. Today I am sharing just two recent displays of these acts of kindness that make the day's special and unique. I hope you will take from them, as I do, the very real fact that, "we" are not alone.

A young man who like his brothers, were once apart of our youth programs and who grew up in Potton and now, as a man has his own career where he is doing quite well, recently contacted me. Greg Mierzewski works for the Mozilla/Firefox (a non-profit) company and is pictured here in front of their San Francisco office, decided that he wanted to donate to the efforts being done in his own hometown to support people in crisis during this pandemic. Mozilla/Firefox quickly offered to increase his donation and aid the communities of their employees. Greg made it possible for a sizable donation to be given to help the region with emergency needs in donating to the Volunteer Centre.

"I am proud of our company," shared Greg. "I genuinely feel the support from Mozilla/Firefox as it did not hesitate to contribute to the amount I donated," he added. "This says a lot about how much respect and support we are given as employees and how Mozilla/Firefox operates-always thinking about people/users first."

It has been a few years since Greg or his brothers have frequented our youth programs however this show of support in returning a donation to his hometown certainly speaks volumes about the kind of youth who grew up in our small rural area. Like their elders, they are community minded, giving and kind. Greg's story continues as this man is determined to do what he can.

As I sat down this morning to write about Greg, a car pulled into our yard



(this rarely happens as everyone is operating at a distance). My son was outside and was handed a bag to bring up to me. Before the bag reached the top of the stairs, I got a whiff of my childhood and memories of my sweet Mom who has been deceased for a few years now.

There, in the bag was two dozen, hot, homemade donuts gifted to my family this Easter weekend by Brenda and Jenny Royea who operate the local day care. Wow. Another show of

love and kindness that brought with it more than the treats likely intended.

I will end this article with a cup of hot coffee and a warm donut waiting. To Greg, Brenda and Jenny who were today's inspiration for my words, I send a heartfelt thank you not only for the donation and the treats but for the reminder that, "we" are "NOT" alone and each day that tumbles into the next is filled with a gem worth holding tight in our hands and hearts.