

Carp Commons: A vibrant village within a village

Everyone in the city knows Carp to be easily among the most enchanting villages in the Ottawa Valley. What they might not know is that Carp Commons Retirement Village - a vibrant village in the heart of the village - provides so many services and activities that residents are happy to hardly ever leave the building.

"I never thought I'd have as many friends and do as many things as I love to do," said Faye Steele, who was the first person to move into Carp Commons when it opened five years ago.

Faye is a retired kindergarten teacher from the Kingston area. She and her husband Dick, who passed away before getting the chance to live at the full service retirement residence, moved here to be near their sons.

"They called me to say: You're going to have your first grandchild," said Faye, a talkative and energetic self-described war-baby. "Then they said, you're going to have your first two grandchildren. Twins! That's how we arrived in Carp."

A past volunteer at the local public library, Faye was the natural choice for chief librarian at Carp Commons. She laughs heartily over the job description.

"All I do is look after it a little, keep it tidy," she said. "I'm a big puzzle person. That's sort of where I live at (the residence's) library."



A few years ago, in high school, Faye was deemed the class social butterfly. She enjoys the many social activities at Carp Commons, from group or individual workouts in the gym to live music and entertainment to holiday themed meals to a book/movie club and much more.

"Last summer we had Food Truck Fridays where they take you to a different food truck in the area - Calabogie or Almonte, they don't tell you! - and

you have a picnic at the beach or park. You can even suggest a place. I said a winery and the next week we were there."

Lee Wainright is a garden club member which oversees the flora and plant life in the large gazebo area. He, too, enjoys the village-within-a-village lifestyle at Carp Commons.

"There are lots of locals here, but a lot from places like Vancouver, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Quebec," said the retired Statistics Canada employee. "We started a men's group and it has a lot of different backgrounds: teachers, scientists, federal workers. It makes for some good discussions."

Faye said, consider a stay in one of the respite suites. They also have kitchenettes and you can get a feel for the atmosphere at Carp Commons.

"That's what I'd do," she said. "I love everything about this place!"

Faye almost opted against moving in when Dick died. She thinks back on that cold and dark March evening when the doors finally opened on her new home and village.

"It just seemed so luxurious," she said. "He was a wonderful man who loved his boys. He would have loved this place. Dick was a social person, too!"



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