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## New York City Trip

Jennifer and I were supposed to take her two children to New York City and Philadelphia in July. Unfortunately, when she arrived at my house, she was quite ill. Jennifer has worked for me for over seven years, and like most people, she has had brief periods of not feeling well, but she has never been incapacitated! She rested for a bit while I took the kids for a hike through my wooded neighborhood. Jennifer then felt well enough to press on to Ottawa. I had arranged a series of seminars, and the first one was in Ottawa. I was also able to meet with one of my colleagues for lunch. While I was at the Fairmont Le Château Frontenac, Jennifer went to an Ottawa ER. She was so ill, her children stayed at her parents' house in Almonte, which is 50 kilometres outside of Ottawa. Jennifer and I stayed at a hotel until she recovered enough to move on. She was prescribed antibiotics and 48 hours later she tested positive for strep throat. Luckily, she started the antibiotics before the diagnosis and she was well enough to drive back to Huntsville, and then they forged on to Ancaster. Needless to say, I cancelled my Seminars in New York and Philadelphia. Jennifer took the next week off and I was able to go to Hamilton with Theresa, my other attendant, for the last seminar. There were seven attendees. I purchased a PC Projector and I developed a PowerPoint Presentation "*Dispelling Myths about Attendant Care*". Fortunate for me, the Seminar was well received.

I was hopeful that we would return to New York and Philadelphia, and we did that on Monday, July 19, 2011. This time, Theresa drove me to Ancaster, and then, she took Jennifer's vehicle back to Huntsville, so it would be there for Jennifer to drive when we returned. Jennifer, her two kids and I ventured through New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey before entering New York City.

After crossing the Lincoln Tunnel, we arrived at our hotel at approximately 10:30 p.m. Jennifer and I thought a Suite would be an ideal set-up. This way, while she was getting me up, the kids would be within earshot in the other room; however, if you've ever been in New York, you'll know that space is at a premium! When I booked the hotel, they assured us that we would have two queen size beds, one in the bedroom, which is where I would sleep, and one in the living area, which is where Jennifer and the kids would sleep. The pullout sofa had a single bed at best! Zachary and Mackenzie (Zac and Mac) squeezed themselves onto the single bed, Jennifer slept on a reclined La-Z-Boy and I soundly slept on a comfortable queen size bed! As I'm sure you can appreciate, we left the Candlewood Inn Suites and moved over to the Millennium Times



Square Hotel as soon as possible. Jennifer and the kids stayed in one room while I stayed at the tower next door, and that was the only arrangement they had available.

I've been to New York City many times before; however, it was interesting seeing it from Zac's and Mac's perspective. Zac, Mac and I went out the first night to get some groceries. It was absolutely beautiful and a nice warm evening. We were able to pick up some basics at a variety store around the corner, and a pizza for all of us. It was beautiful all week despite Irene looming off the eastern seaboard!



We went to the Empire State Building to provide the kids with a bird's eye view of Manhattan. They thoroughly enjoyed what they saw and Jennifer's camera has a fantastic zoom lens. We were able to see downtown where Wall Street, Battery Park and Liberty Island are located. We also looked in the opposite direction towards Central Park and the Bronx. Key buildings were visible such as the Chrysler Building and the kids recognized that and other landmarks from movies such as Arthur, the Sorcerer's Apprentice, Enchanted and of course Ghostbusters!

On the second day, we went to Times Square's Toys "R" Us Store, New York City's Version of M&M World and the Disney Store for Zac and Mac. All that walking was a little much for the little ones; and therefore, as you can see, they took turns riding on the back of my wheelchair.



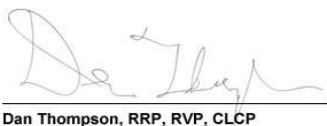
On the Wednesday, Jennifer and the kids went to Liberty Island and Ellis Island while I went to the Harmonie Group's Construction Liability Meeting. It was a good opportunity to network and meet lawyers who could use my services. We all took the bus down from Times Square to Battery Park. New York is pretty easy to get around; and therefore, I was able to independently wheel from there to the meeting at Club Quarters, which is a Private Hotel for elite clientele. I discovered that we are able to take the subway back; however, it was pretty dangerous if I was by myself. Unlike the GO Train in Ontario, there are no ramps to bridge the gap between the platform and the train. In addition, you have to quickly get on and off the train before the doors close. If not for assistance, I don't think I could've bridged the gap quickly enough before the doors closed. Despite the pending danger, it was great seeing Central Station.

We went to Central Park, and its Zoo, which the kids thoroughly enjoyed. Zac had heard a couple of songs from Billy Elliott; however, they did not know the subject matter such as Margaret Thatcher's deregulating the unions in England; and therefore, it was not as well received as some of the other attractions.

Unfortunately, our trip was cut short due to hurricane Irene! Fortunately, we left early on Saturday. They shut down the entire transit system at 12 o'clock that day and they had a mandatory evacuation for people in low-lying areas by 5:00 p.m. We were able to leave through the Lincoln Tunnel without any difficulties. We were supposed to move on to Philadelphia; however, it would have been just too rainy. On the way back, we took Highway #41 and came across the towns of Homer and Scaneateles. They were picturesque and adjacent to Scaneateles Lake; and therefore, you could see why families such as the Vanderbilts established Summer Homes along the Hudson River.

I have a trial in Toronto and a deposition in Los Angeles during the month of September; however, hopefully we'll return in October to see upstate New York and Philadelphia.

Take care until next time.



Dan Thompson, RRP, RVP, CLCP



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