

the trawler. He compared his harrowing experience to the movie, *The Perfect Storm* — only he and his son survived the ordeal.

A month later, near Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, he went through Hurricane Gordon.

"It was comparable to the northern storm off Newfoundland, but no worse," Thompson said.

The father-son team finally arrived in Venezuela and opened a small cargo business. For the next two years, he hauled cargo on his trawler to Trinidad, Grenada and St. Lucia. (His son returned to Canada after one year in Venezuela).

"I fulfilled my dream of sailing the Caribbean. I have been through it all, from the calm seas to the 60-foot swells. It was a great learning experience."

Was he ever scared of losing his life?

"It never crossed my mind at all that this is it. I just didn't feel it was the time...I never thought it would kill us. You were concerned not to the point of being afraid."

Thompson sold his trawler and returned to Belleville in the fall of 1996 to rejoin his family. He was hired by Barnes Security as a guard and bylaw enforcement officer at Belleville hospital. He was transferred a short time later to downtown Belleville and has become a familiar fixture.

He completes two to three circuits of the downtown area every weekday — wherever there are meters or parking lots with pay and display meters. He walks anywhere from 10 to 16 kilometres a day, handing out parking tickets for expired meters and illegal parking (parking in no-parking and handicapped areas, loading zones and fire hydrants).

"Bylaw enforcement to me is a healthy job because you're walking all the time, getting to meet many interesting people and it's a safe job. I'm never concerned out there."

Thompson said his 90 per cent of his job is public relations and the rest is enforcement.

"I've been called all sorts of names. My first name should be 'you' followed by a colourful string of adjectives...people have to vent and I am very tolerant of that."

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technology diploma and went to work for Wardair, repairing electronic equipment on a variety of aircraft.

He left after a year and, in 1974, decided to move east to Marmora to raise a family. He is married to Donna and they have three children.

Thompson joined Procter and Gamble in Belleville and spent the next two decades working as an electrical and instrumentation technician. He took the early retirement buyout package in 1994.

Being out of work was his ticket to embark on his life's dream adventure.

"I always wanted to sail the Caribbean so I went to Newfoundland and bought a 48-foot trawler. I took my son, Troy, and we left on our adventure."

On just his second day, off the coast of Newfoundland, Thompson ran into a severe storm with swells that submerged

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