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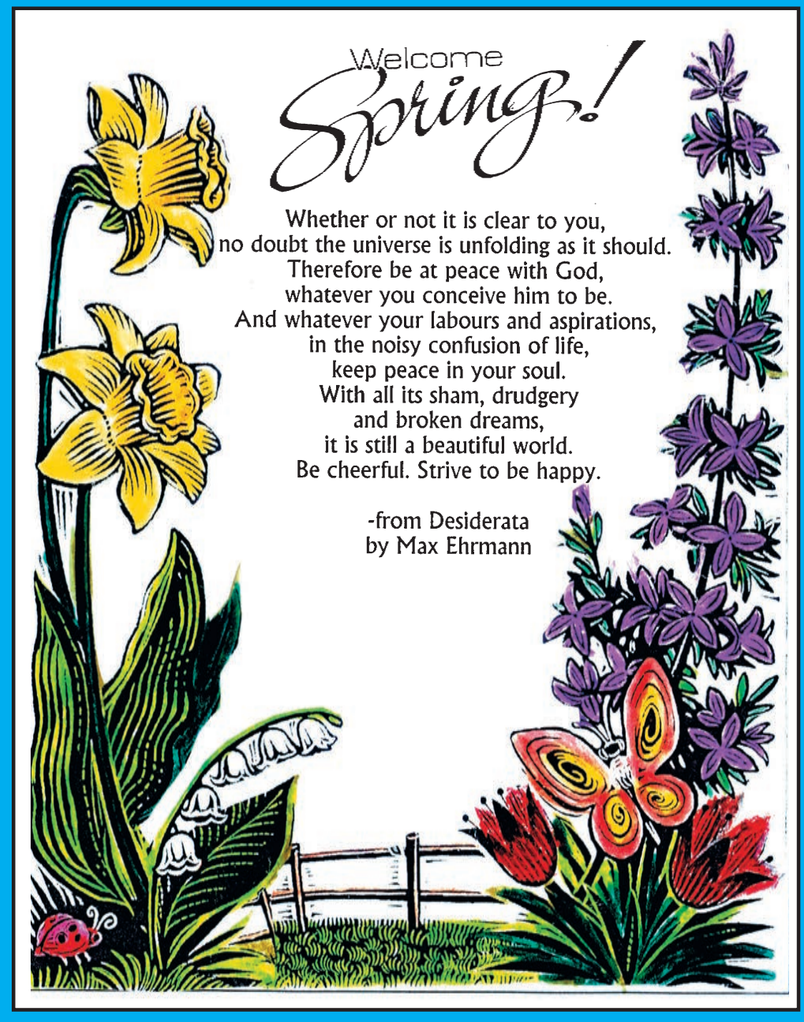

City Edition

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INDOOR GARDENING KEN BROWN

Time for spring planting

The days are longer, the sun is definitely warmer and we gardeners are rushing outside to partake of our favourite pastime. The early containers should already be filled with the smiling faces of Pansies in full bloom. Now we can start to plant the next early vegetables and a few more flowers. There is a host of cold tolerant vegetables and most of them also grow amazingly quickly even in the cool weather that they prefer.

My all-time winner in the fast growing category is Chinese Cabbage or Napa. It never ceases to amaze me how quickly it grows. Even when they are originally sown those seeds will emerge before any others and start producing their true leaves in just a matter of days. Even though they always win the start of the race they often lose at the end where they are usually beaten by the slower growing but quicker maturing Pak Choi and Kohl Rabi. Each day as I harvest a plump Pak Choi, I squeeze the larger Napa only to discover that they have not really formed a tight head yet despite the large size they have achieved.

We want a feast for the eyes as well as the body and we wonder just what flowers we might start planting this early. It's only a couple of weeks until we can be reliably frost free but we want to plant now. Covid has kept us locked in for so long that the desire / need to get outside is noticeably heightened this spring. At least our balconies are safe places where we can easily avoid close contact with others and where we are safe to leave our masks off.

Calendula's large bright orange or yellow flowers will be quite happy if planted now and they will continue to provide that colour well into the summer. If you start another batch of seeds in mid summer then they can be planted out to provide colour in the fall as other annuals succumb

Calendula will be quite happy if planted now.

to the early frosts. Snapdragons are another great cool crop and the dwarf varieties will start to bloom very early. The garden centres should have flats filled with Alyssum that is already in flower and ready to fill in the edges of our containers.

If you have a trellis system then Sweet Peas are an ideal cool weather annual. They won't give as much bloom early on but they will grow lovely vines that will soon put out those fragrant flowers. Sweet Peas are one of my favourite cut flowers. They last well in a vase and they fill the house with that sweet fragrance.

Let's escape from lockdowns to the containers filled with soil and put that soil to work supporting the growth of the early flowers and vegetables, which in turn support our gardener's soul.★

Ken Brown is a horticulturist with extensive houseplant and container gardening experience. He will gladly answer questions addressed to him c/o Hi Rise. He currently devotes his time to his website www.gardening-enjoyed.com

Toronto Botanical Gardens offers exciting online courses, torontobotanicalgarden.ca. Great articles in Spring 2021 Trellis Magazine, FREE. The outdoor gardens will remain open during Toronto's recent Stay-at-Home announcement. The Garden Shop will be offering curb-side pick up and delivery only. The building remains temporarily closed. 777 Lawrence Avenue East,

Leaside Garden Society hosts its monthly ZOOM Meeting. Tony Spencer, author, speaker, photographer, planting designer associated with The New Perennials, will discuss **Designing With Grasses,** 7:00 PM, May 13, Join them - new members welcome! E-mail leaside@gardenontario.org.

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- Stay Home.
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- Get vaccinated when possible.
- Wear a mask!
- Stay strong.
- Stay up to date with all the latest information by visiting canada.ca/coronavirus

HAPPY EID 2021!

Canada Post celebrates EID 2021, with a million Canadian Muslim. Two important Muslim holidays take place May 12 and July 9: Eid al-Fitr (end of the required fasting) and Eid al-Adha, the Hadj pilgrimage is made by Muslims to Mecca, holy Kaaba shrine. Canada Post is issuing a beautifully designed Postage Stamp, third of a series.

The Stamp, created by Context Creative, features a latticed window - the new crescent moon visible.

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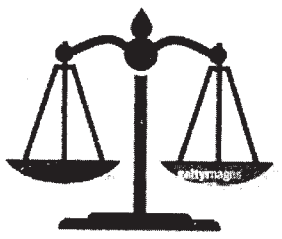
OPINION/SECURITY MATTERS

BRIAN CLARKE

Are police racist?



The media has recently been reporting on police-contact fatalities involving (typically) White officers and Black civilians. Derek Chauvin/George Floyd, Kimberly Potter/Daunte Wright being two of the more recent and well known. This has led to accusations that police are racist.

So, are (White) police officers biased against Black people? While this is a multi-faceted question that cannot be fully addressed in an article we can at least begin to address the question here.

One study, *An Empirical Analysis of Racial Differences in Police Use of Force (2016),* by tenured Harvard University professor Roland G. Fryer Jr., an African-American, concluded, "On the most extreme use of force-officer involved shootings-we find no racial differences in either the raw data or when contextual factors are taken into account." (Abstract). He does note, however, that there are large differences in how Black and Hispanic people do experience much higher uses of force: "On non-lethal uses of force, blacks and Hispanics are more than fifty percent more likely to experience some form of force in interactions with police. Adding controls that account for important context and civilian behaviour reduces, but cannot fully explain, these disparities." (Abstract).

A University of Maryland/ Michigan State University study, *Officer Characteristics and Racial Disparities in Fatal Officer-Involved Shootings (2019)*, concluded "We find no evidence of anti-Black or anti-Hispanic disparities across, shootings and White officers are not more likely to shoot minority civilians than non-White officers."

Another University of Michigan study *Is There Evidence of Racial Disparity in Police Use of Deadly Force? Analyses of Officer-Involved Fatal Shootings in 2015-2016 (2018)* by Joseph Cesario, David J. Johnson and William Terrill concluded. "When adjusting for crime, we find no systemic evidence of anti-Black disparities in fatal shootings..."

A U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, Statistical Brief, *Race and Ethnicity of Violent Crime Offenders and Arrestees, 2018* found that "White and Black people were arrested proportionate to their involvement in serious nonfatal violent crime overall..."

A perceived police racist incident occurred in Ferguson, Missouri, in August, 2014, that led to many nights of rioting and destruction. This incident, wherein a young, unarmed Black man, Michael Brown, was shot and killed by a White police officer, Darren Wilson, was front and centre in the media for days. In this incident it was alleged that the officer shot the suspect in the back as he ran away and that, among other allegations, before he was shot the victim had stopped and said "Hands up, don't shoot." However, two investigations found that virtually all of the claims were not supported by the evidence: "In a lengthy explanation of the Justice Departments two investigations in Ferguson - of police in general and of former officer Darren Wilson's shooting of Brown in August specifically - Holder agreed with a local grand jury that declined to indict Wilson, stressing that "the facts do not support the filing of criminal charges." (NBCNews.com), Mar 4, 2015. Eric Holder was the Attorney General of the United States under the Obama presidency and is of Barbadian

Ferguson is a prime example of media and activists propagating a false or unsubstantiated narrative that was subsequently disproved by witness testimony and forensic evidence.

Derek Chauvin and Kimberly Potter may be found guilty but everyone deserves a fair hearing in court not trial by media and the mob. All the evidence needs to be heard and examined impartially.

Be angry, yes, but be angry at the media and activists that inflame racist hysteria but bear no responsibility for pushing narratives not supported by evidence.

***The author Brian Clarke was a police officer for twenty-nine years and he will welcome questions and suggestions for future articles at* Qu35t10n54m3@hotmail.com**

CAREGIVER APPLICATION PROCESSING is being speeded up due to increased need during Covid 19. N,-Caregivers from abroad play an important role in supporting Canadian families who are unable to find the care they need for a family member in Canada. The global COVID-19 has disrupted to application processing at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Many caregivers working in Canada are waiting anxiously to be reunited with their loved ones and they need their applications to be processed for that to happen.

IRCC will finalize permanent residence applications for up to 6,000 caregivers who have completed their in-Canada work experience and their immediate family members, by December 31, 2021

These decisions will allow more caregiver work permits to be issued for those who have valid job offers. Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

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EDITORIAL

New life, new hope

As I write, the news is not good. More lockdowns, more restrictions.But life is sometimes like that, isn't it? To get what we need and want, sacrifices have to be made. And some are scary.

One of my biggest life challenges was becoming self-employed. Learning to do without a regular paycheque.

I grew up in a financially unstable environment. For instance, moving, because we couldn't pay the rent. As an adult, I was determined I would never allow myself to get into a financially unsafe position. Taking risks was not even on the radar.

Yet here I was, contemplating leaving a secure job, with benefits, for the precarious lifestyle of self-employment. I felt driven by an inner force I did not fully understand. "Do this, or the meaning of your life will never be fulfilled."

What I had to learn was that inner security did not simply depend on money. I was being challenged to give up my long held belief and step into a new kind of future. As I did, I started to discover other forms of security As long as I was doing what, in some way, I was "meant" to do, other forms of support appeared. New opportunities. People who shared knowledge. Other old insecurities started to fade away, such as my fear of public speaking. Leading to the very risky task of starting my own newspaper, the one you are reading now, in its 41st year. And the challenges continue to come.

Covid 19 is now placing many of us in a similar position, pushed into places we didn't' expect to go. Who wants supports being taken away from them, and having your life turned upside-down?

New words have come into use. Pivot. Be nimble. For some, new careers, new lives have emerged. A creative interest mow becomes a means of livelihood.

I read a newspaper article about a highly successful lawyer who somehow managed to write published novels on the side. She often wondered if she might give up her ambitious high stress career to become a full-time novelist. "Could I handle the isolation of working at home?" she wondered. Then along came Covid 19. Everything changed. She's now living the life of a work at home novelist. "Covid pushed me."

Fred's job as a manager in a large corporation defined his life. Now the company and his job have disappeared. After struggling through a deep depression he realized the only thing he valued about his job was that people looked up to him. Eventually he rediscovered an old talent for fine woodworking, which has created income. He loves it! And people still look uip to him for th quality of his work.

Others struggle with marrriage issues, living together 24 hours a day didn't work well. Mental stress, even breakdown.

Eventually, enough people will be vaccinated and we will achieve herd immunity. But we are not there yet. What will our lives look like then?

Wherever you have discovered unseen life supports, stay there and explore. For that's an indication you have possibly discovered your life's purpose .In the meantime, stay well, stay safe, and look for the new beginning that may be emerging in your life.

Valerie M. Dunn

Valerie M. Dunn,
Editor Publisher

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Stone Church, Davenport Rd. Toronto, 416-928-0101 x103.

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St. Timothy's Anglican Church,Agincourt,Scarborough 416-293-5711 x 1.

MOVIE REVIEWS

DAVID KING

NOMADLAND ★★★★
PG-13
1h 47min
Docu-drama
Profanity: Moderate
Cast: Frances McDormand, David Strathairn, Bob Weeks
Director and screenplay: Cloe Zhao
Streaming on Disney+ and Hulu

NOMADLAND was written for the screen by director Cloe Zhao, based on a book by Jessica Bruder. I watched NOMADLAND early this year and was not surprised when it won Golden Globes for Best Picture Drama and Best Director Motion Picture. (Zhao is only the second female to win the Best Director award). In 2020 it won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival and the People's Choice Award at TIFF and by the time you read this, it may have added an Oscar, having been nominated for Best Picture, Director, Lead Actress and Screenplay.

Fern (McDormand) is a childless woman who is recently widowed and has lost her home. Describing herself as "houseless" more than "homeless", she embarks on a journey criss-crossing the American West, living in her van and becoming a modern-day nomad. Her life is spent taking minimum-wage seasonal employment where she meets other "nomads" – men and women, usually in their later years, who also live in RVs and trailers while trying to "make ends meet". Fern is at the centre of the film, in every scene, making friends everywhere she goes.

While the character of Fern is fictional, almost all the other individuals she (and the film's viewers) meet on her journey are not. Their stories are compelling and heart-breaking, and through Fern's relationships with them we are given a window into a world of kindness, sharing and subsistence living.

This is a quiet film, comparable to an essay on what it means to be "invisible" in arguably one of the richest countries in the world. I felt Fern's strength, determination, loneliness and sadness, and was enriched by the people she met and their ability to make the most of their lives.

SIX MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT ★★½ PG
1h 33min
Thriller
Profanity: none
Cast: Eddie Izzard,, Judi Dench, Carla Juri,, Nigel Lindsay, Jim Broadbent,
Director: Andy Goddard
Streaming via VOD (video on demand) e.g. Google Play, iTunes, Apple TV

From 1932 to 1939, the Augusta Victoria College (AVC) was a finishing school for young German women aged 16 to 21, all daughters and god-daughters of influential and high- ranking Nazis. The schocking surprise is that AVC was in Bexhill-on-Sea, a resort town on the south-east coast of England. While this is the historical basis for SIX MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT, the movie's actual storyline is fictional.

The school is run by Miss Rocholl (Dench) and her assistant Ilse Keller (Juri). In addition to learning English and deportment, the girls are taught Nazi ideology and listen to radio broadcasts from Germany. On August 15, 1939 – 17 days before the start of WWII – an English teacher and his camera disappear; six days later Thomas Miller (Izzard) arrives as his replacement. Everyone's loyalties are suspect, including Miller's who has an English mother and a German father. The British Government wants to keep the girls in England as leverage but Miller discovers a plan is in place for them to escape. Can he alert the Secret Service in time? And who can he trust? Tensions mount as the true allegiances of the various characters are revealed.

The background story is probably more interesting than the movie's scripted story which is rather predictable. However, the film is enriched by Chris Seager's cinematography – which provides a brooding and ominous background to the conflicts on screen. And the ensemble acting is a pleasure to watch: Dame Judi Dench, and Jim Broadbent can always be counted on to deliver superb performances, and Eddie Izzard (who co-wrote the screenplay) turns in a surprisingly gratifying performance.

While this movie may not win any awards, I found the historical background interesting, the characters appealing, and storyline intriguing enough to recommend spending 93 minutes to watch it.★

MOTHER'S DAY - May 9. Remember your MOTHER on Sunday, May 9 - Make her a FLOWER GARDEN (balconies or backyards), CLEAN the ENTIRE house; COOK her dinner; SERVE Mother Breakfast in Bed; and remember to say: "THANKS, MOM! I LOVE YOU!"

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ASK MICHELLE

Neighbourhood children not wearing masks

Dear Michelle:
Beautiful days are finally here and recently my 8 and 9-year-old daughters were outside playing when all the kids on the street started coming out to play as well. I had my daughters put masks on. I noticed that none of the other kids were wearing masks, and in addition to this they were not always practicing social distance and I understand that it's hard for them to remember, as they are kids. Was it overkill for me to be making my girls wear masks as they were outside anyway?
Rebecca

Dear Rebecca:
In no way is protecting your children ever "overkil." You did the right thing. Even though they were all outside, you said for yourself that they were not always practicing social distancing. This is a hard concept for some adults to remember, imagine what it is like for kids! You are setting a great example and who knows your example may pass on to other neighbourhood kids. Way to go!
Michelle

Dear Michelle:
My husband's parents are narcissists. According to him he never realized this until we started dating as teenagers. He would always tell me that my family was normal and his was not. He enjoyed spending time with our family. He explained that his mother was always right, she would never apologize, and his father was critical but would never take criticism well. I eventually did witness some of their behaviours. After we got married my husband has chosen to distance himself from his family. I often worry about him and how this may be affecting him, in addition I worry about my reputation with his family. They are most likely blaming me for his distancing, but the choices my husband has made have been his alone. Am I reading too much into this?
R. J.

Dear R.J:
You are right to be concerned about your husband. He has experienced a lot and there are emotions and feelings he needs to deal with. My advice is to speak to your husband about making an appointment with a psychologist. If that seems to be too much for him, then maybe a suggestion to talk with his doctor. As for your reputation with your in-laws, you have no control with regards to how they think of you. Quite frankly, it doesn't matter. Keep things in perspective and focus on your husband.
Michelle

Dear Michelle:
My wife is addicted to her phone. I honestly believe this is an actual addiction. She is either playing games or watching videos. It is impossible to get her attention. I have asked her many times to put her phone down, but it is usually for a few minutes then it is in her hands again. The phone feels like a third person in our relationship! What can I do?
Curtis

Dear Curtis:
The pandemic surely has led to quite a bit of dependency on technology. By no means am I making an excuse for your wife as your feelings in the matter are very important. Can you suggest to her that at a certain time each evening phones are put away? Include your phone as well so she doesn't feel badly. Also think about going out for an afternoon and suggest leaving the phone at home. Little by little this should alleviate her dependency. Good luck.

Do you have a question for Michelle? Please email her at: askmichelle3@gmail.com

DE-CLUTTERING

JEANNE MCKAY

Does your main entry say welcome?

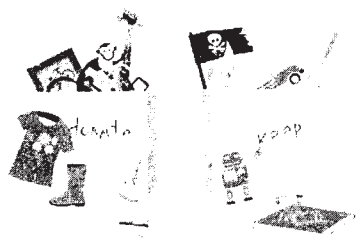
One spot in your home that never gets a break, is the entryway. As much as we might want the first step inside our home to feel welcoming, it takes effort to keep this area tidy.

The size of your entryway dictates what can be there. It is easier to keep things tidy if you have a specific space for everything that should be there.

Before you start organizing the entryway, de-clutter. Remove anything that no longer fits, is broken or torn. Ask everyone in your household to sort through their own items and decide what should stay. Everything else should be removed from the space. Don't forget to donate!

When de-cluttering, make sure to remove anything that isn't part of the activity of going in and out of the home. There may be a dish that needs to be returned or a pile of items for donation. Now is the time to put those clothes in a donation box and take that empty dish back to your friend.

Spend a little time thinking about the best way to use the space. What should be there? What is being dropped there? It seems like a no brainer that shoes and coats should be there, but even these may need to be restricted to only what is absolutely necessary for the time and season. Keys and sunglasses need a place by the door. Basketballs and outdoor toys should be stored elsewhere. Having toys cluttering the entryway can be a safety issue.



A small shelving unit with baskets or drawers works well for organizing. You can assign a basket to each person or designate one basket for gloves, one for scarves and another for mail or keys and sunglasses. If you use the library frequently, have a basket for library books. Cubbies that hang from the coat rail keep mitts and scarves off the floor and at eye level. A good shoe rack is a necessity. Keep the closet floor for shoes and boots - don't add bags and basket catchalls. It just makes it hard to put things away and hard to find them again. Make it as easy as possible to put things in their place.

Switch out seasonally. Make sure you don't have sandals taking up space in January and winter boots taking up space in July. You may need to pack seasonal items away in a storage closet.

A little time spent on the entryway will make your home more welcoming for friends and family.★

Jeanne McKay is a long-time Guildwood resident. She has a background in Office Management and Customer Service. She is now combining that experience to assist people in organizing and downsizing homes and small offices. For more information about the service please contact her by phone at 647-972-7222 or by e-mail, jeanne.kathy.downsizing@gmail.com

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LIFE'S JOURNEY

KATARINA VON KOENIG

Confessions of a writer

It's been a few months since I participated in the novel writing project called NaNoWriMo. I have still been unable to catch my breath but in the most wonderful way. NaNo started November 1, 2020 and I can remember having all sorts of doubts and fears on the starting line. Can I write 50,000 words in 30 days? Will they be good words? Have I planned enough? By the time the first day of the challenge rolled around the confidence I'd gained in the planning stage was gone. November 1st outline in hand, I struggled through the opening lines; I plugged through it and that Sunday I wrote in the morning, afternoon, and evening but sadly I only wound up with 995 words. The daily goal that NaNo set for me was 1667 my personal goal was 2000. I had missed the mark and that was where I began to get frustrated. The next few days were filled with the same frustration of not hitting my minimum word count. By November the 5th I wanted to have 10,000 words; I was at 7,575

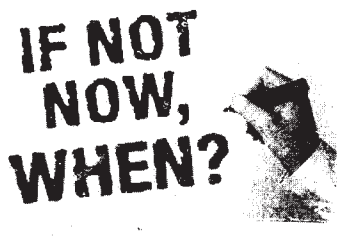
Rather then focusing on the good things: being happy with my word quality, the fact that I could not wait to get up in the morning to write my story, the fact that I was producing some of the best work I had ever written, I ignored all that and focused on the word count.

By November 10th I missed my 20,000 word goal and I was beginning to get discouraged. Then I talked with my writing buddies on the site. With their help I came to the realization that, as we often do in life, I was focusing on the minor details instead of the big picture. I loved my writing, I was writing quality work, loving my characters and the world of my novel yet I was focusing on the word count and calendar and missing the good parts.

My outlook changed when I realized this. My NaNo buddies had talked some sense into me. It's not the quantity in the end it's the product. So what if you missed your goal? So what if you didn't finish on the 30th as long as you finished you were a winner.

From that day things changed. I tracked my progress in word numbers but ignored the calendar and just wrote. November 15th I was supposed to be 30,000 words in and I was at 30,580. I had met and surpassed my goal by ignoring the calendar and focusing on being present in the moment and in my writing.

My creativity was growing and I was following my outline and at the same time unplanned scenes for my story flew through my mind and I wrote it all. The constant support I was getting from my fellow writers was ...wonderful and I found myself wanting to give back by encouraging others when they were frustrated. By the 20th of November I hit my 40,000 word goal and by the 23rd of November I was at 50,152 words. I finished the challenge portion on November 23rd. I cannot begin to put into words the pride and accomplishment that I felt and I can honestly admit that in that moment I felt something I hadn't in a long time; childish glee. I danced, I cried I laughed and it was fantastic and you know what? My fellow writers on the site celebrated with me with notes of congratulations and more encouragement.



I had finished the challenge but the creativity didn't stop and I wasn't finished the book so I kept writing. By November 30th I had finished my book and had written well over 66,000 words. I had surpassed my goal and I felt that by taking this challenge I had become more productive in my life. I had unleashed my creativity and; trained my mind to write in the morning and I had finished my book. I had networked with other writers sharing in their frustrations and I understood that we all had common anxieties and fears and we all came together as a unit to cheer one another on through the website and it made writing a less solitary adventure.

I am grateful for the NaNoWriMo community and the writing challenge. I am glad that I was able to step outside of my shell and can attest that it was a life changing experience that I would recommend to anyone out there.

Accepting the writing challenge has given me a fresh start and in the next article we'll talk about starting a new chapter in life and what you need to do to press the reset button. Until next time dear readers, I am honoured that you've gone on this journey with me and that I was able to share my writing experience over the last few months.★

Katarina graduated from UofT with a major in political science and classics and a minor in philosophy. She continue her post graduate studies in journalism and adult learning and education and holds certification in media relations. She is passionate about writing and can be reached at: von_koenig2003@yahoo ca

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THE ART OF FINDING WORK

NICK KOSSOVAN

The world does't owe you a living!

A job search has many moving parts; your mindset is the most critical part. Tackling challenges, such as a job search, is easier if you have the right mindset.

Job search success isn't achieved through wishful thinking — how you wish things to be. Success is achieved by adapting to, better yet embracing, realities, not beating your head against walls that won't crumble down. The following are three "job search truisms" every job seeker needs to accept. Acceptance of these truisms will minimize your job search frustrations and mitigate the time it'll take to find your next job.

1. You're not owed a job, career or even to make a living.

With a sense of entitlement being so prevalent these days, I often see bitterness amongst job seekers ["I'm not getting what I deserve.", "I'm not getting what I want."]. Anger hinders a job seeker, along with increasing false pride, which becomes an insurmountable obstacle.

The easiest way to be disappointed, unhappy, frustrated, angry, or become depressed is to have an expectation you're owed. You, and only you, are responsible for your job search.

The upside of assuming no one owes you: you energetically help yourself. For many people, this is a massive mind shift! Approaching your job search with an "I'm helping myself" mindset gives you a considerable mental boost, which is to your advantage. As well, such a perspective will carry you through the roller coaster of emotions you'll be dealing with throughout your job hunt.

2. Employers own their hiring process.

You may recall my earlier column (March), *There's No Universal Hiring Methodology.* I brought up the fact, never mentioned by career experts that no two hiring managers access candidates the same way. This also applies to companies — no two companies hire the same way.

As a job seeker, you need to accept that employers own their hiring process, which is their prerogative. A sense of entitlement has made it common today for job seekers to complain about how employers hire. What a waste of energy! Complaining won't change how employers decide to hire.

Many candidates try to circumvent the employer's hiring process or skip steps. By following the employer's application instructions, as frustrating as they sometimes are, you'll set yourself apart from your competition. Being able to follow instructions is a prerequisite for any job. Thus, employers look for this "willingness to follow instructions" in candidates.

3. Today, networking is non-negotiable.

The most decisive route to job search success is to do what others are afraid to do, which is to network.

Networking is creating a fabric of personal contacts that can provide support, feedback, insight, resources, and information. In 2021, and for the foreseeable future, it's raining resumes. Ask yourself, who's more likely to be hired, a stranger the hiring manager doesn't know, or someone they're somewhat acquainted with, or a referral? Your answer should convince you of the power of networking. It's common knowledge most jobs are unadvertised. Undeniable, those who build and nurture a professional network land the plumb jobs. However, many job seekers create numerous excuses [e.g., they're an introvert, networking feels sleazy, everyone's too busy to listen to them] to avoid networking, which has proven to be the most efficient way to finding a job.

Whatever your hang-ups [READ: limiting beliefs] are about networking, get over it! As a job seeker, your primary goal is to connect with people who can assist in your job search. Nothing will get you into an organization faster than having an inside person vouching for you.

Here are a few tips to get you started networking:

1. Reconnect with old colleagues and alumni you've lost touch with.

2. Leverage social media — connect with people online [LinkedIn, Facebook].

3. Become comfortable talking to strangers.

4. Read: *Coffee Lunch Coffee: A Practical Field Guide for Master Networking, by Alana Muller*

5. Read: *Never Eat Alone: And Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time*, by Keith Ferrazzi

A job search, especially if it's being done due to an involuntary parting of the ways with your last employer, is a huge undertaking. You need to have a positive mindset to succeed. Mindset is everything!★

Nick Kossovan, a well-seasoned veteran of the corporate landscape, offers advice on searching for a job. You can send him your questions at artoffindingwork@gmail.com.

VIEWPOINT

FATIMA KHURRAM

Knowledge is power!

Recently I took a course called "Developmental psychology" and I had the chance to learn several things related to children and different stages of their psychological and social development. This made many things clear for me as I was wondering why my daughter is acting this way or why my son is not interested in doing online school. Turned out it is all a part of their development. Also, I came across a couple of effective strategies to handle situations. The purpose of relating all this is to share that having knowledge is beneficial. Learning new things or acquiring more knowledge about something that we already know is always helpful.

Learning does not have to be limited to one subject only. We can and should learn about various fields. It can be healthy lifestyle, technological skills, human psychology, home and garden, finances, relationship skills, etc. The more we learn, the more abilities we gain to face everyday challenges. Upgrading one's skills, be it professional or personal, makes a person successful in the long run.

Another advantage is that as we keep learning it keeps our brain active and in a healthy state. Learning new skills also opens more doors of opportunity for us. For instance, when I became a mom for the first time, I did not have any knowledge about child development. It often made me stressed and frustrated when my toddler gave me a hard time. I used to doubt my skills and wonder what I was doing wrong.

When I had a chance to read about child psychology and different stages children go through, I understood that neither me nor my child were at fault, it was all a growing up process. Things seemed easier for me regarding children.

Similarly, I read and watched (YouTube Videos) a lot about healthy eating and now I try to incorporate that and keep away from junk food. Learning about household management has also helped me to keep my house clean and more organized. Every time, I find a situation difficult, I look forward to learning more about it.

Nowadays, the internet is one of the largest source of information on any subject. There is no excuse to say "I don't know or how to do it". There is no shame in not knowing but there definitely is harm in not learning. Libraries also offer an unlimited amount of information and knowledge. The purpose is to learn and to continue learning. Do not limit your learning to only one specific field. Broaden your horizons and be a teacher of your own self!★

The author came to Canada from Pakistan, went to Montreal, and now lives in Thorncliffe Park. She has three children and acts as a tutor for others in the evening. She is keenly interested in community issues.

SPECIAL DAYS

MARTINE FONTAINE

Asian and South Asian heritage month

May marks Asian and South Asian month in Canada, an important time to celebrate the contributions and achievements Asian and South Asian Canadians have made for our society - enriching our culture, politics, diversity, and everyday life

Canadians of Asian heritage helped build our great country, from constructing the railroad that connected us in the early days to serving our nation in both world wars and beyond. Canada's vibrant and diverse Asian heritage has influenced our country in so many areas. These contributions are important to our past and present and will help shape Canada's future.

The world is a more integrated place, but not all this yin has its yang. Social bias, generational and culture gap, misinformation and discrimination are all symptoms of our social complexities come to bear. The more we diversify, the more we need to understand and accept each other to live together peacefully. Since the early days of this global pandemic, there has been increasing stigma and xenophobia (prejudice against people from other countries) towards Asian-presenting citizens around the world.

It does not matter if they are Japanese or Vietnamese or if they were raised abroad and have never even been to China. When people are scared or upset they look for someone to blame , and "othering" is an easy gut reaction.

The stigma ranges from subversive behaviour (like avoidance of Asian restaurants) to outright public shaming, verbal abuse - random assault.

For this reason, many Asian organizations - including ours around North America have created reporting mechanisms on their websites.

Before the COVID-19 forced physical distancing requirements, Asian Heritage Month celebrations usually included public performances. Now is the time to find inspiration and expand your world view' through other means, like reading a book or watching a movie. Learn to make Thai curry from scratch and marvel at the culinary alchemy that results in one of the most delicious of the planet(in my opinion).

The Asian Heritage Society has Facebook and Instagram pages where you can find pictures and links, promoting Asian-Canadian culture. Many community groups also have websites where you can find this information. Most local performing groups have YouTube videos.

Now is the time to find inspiration and expand your world view. Let us celebrate in May the incredible diversity that is our strength.★

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OPINION

IDA FEDOR- BAAN

Mother's Day – my thanks for mother!!

Ilona and friends.

This article is a celebration of my Mother Ilona's life. It was taken early, at age 61 by, ironically, a heart attack. It was the result from the chemotherapy to save her lungs from cancer caused by smoking for 30 years

Mother quit smoking when our first (of five) beloved budgies, Pityuka, arrived. She adored budgies – and they loved her - mischievously picking apart her T-shirt collars when sitting on her shoulders; kissing her face with small beaks as they crawled around her shoulders.

Mother lovingly reminisced about her life and family in Hungary; the hardware store my grandparents owned for ten years from 1941-1951; fishing out the "pengo" currency – to buy sweets as a child from the cash register. Years later, mother participated in the unsuccessful 1956 *Hungarian Revolution* against Soviet tyranny – helping to pull down dictator Stalin's statue with hundreds of other Hungarians.

Mother and grandparents fled Hungary to a Yugoslavian refugee camp in January 1957 for six months, then living in Switzerland for three years and finally settling in Canada in 1961. Grandfather admired my mother's strength – "Never once did she complain. Only tears were shed for family left behind."

Meeting and marrying my father shortly after arriving in Canada, it was a difficult marriage for ten years during which mother lost two babies before having me. Their marriage finally ended in divorce. Mother then blossomed thanks to great Canadian doctors.

Almost deafened at age three by a bomb that exploded in the shelter occupied with grandmother, mother required regular, painful ear treatments for years - without anaesthesia. By age 61, mother required two hearing aids.

Mother's Hungarian cooking was wonderful! Gulyas (goulash), breaded pork schnitzel and potatoes, palacsinta (crepes) and countless other foods I loved and learned to make!

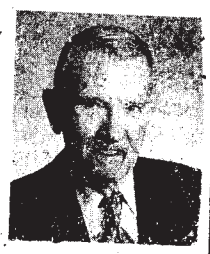
I will never forget Mother's words, said shortly before her passing: "Of all I endured, never would I have thought that I would die of lung cancer." I just hugged her closer, our budgies sitting on the cage kissing her fingers with their beaks as she rubbed their small heads with her fingers – no longer on her shoulders. The oxygen cord, attached to a machine, was plastic and could have been cut by a sharp beak.

Mother nursed me, my grandparents and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to nurse her with the same love and care. God bless you. Mother Ilona ★

The author is a Hi-Rise Community Newspaper designer and advertising representative. Ida was employed with Hi-Rise in its earlier years, from 1984-2000. She is a home-based seamstress and can be reached at 437-855-4022.

REDWAY REMARKS

ALAN REDWAY



What is the alternative?

A recent poll has revealed that 60% of Canadians are strongly or at least somewhat in favour of dropping the monarchy. Is that because of Oprah Winfrey's TV interview with Harry and Meghan? We could elect our Governor General and call the position our President but that would make no difference to what is essentially a boring ceremonial job, like that of the Queen herself. We have had a Canadian filling that role for many decades now. If it were an elected position would you want the job?

51% of those polled favoured replacing our parliamentary system of government and our appointed Governor General with a republic and an elected head of state like the United States of America. Why is this? Is it because we are daily bombarded with American news? Is it because of the recent resignation of our Governor General? Is it because of the way the future generations of the Royal family are portrayed so negatively in the Netflex program, *"The Crown"?* Surely it's not because of Donald Trump?

Canada exists today because our English and French speaking ancestors wanted something different from the USA. The French would have and many still do prefer being a separate French nation to preserve their distinct language and culture. They fought the British invaders on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 to preserve their separate identity. On Christmas Day 1775 in a blinding snow storm they fought side by side with the British to repel the American invaders and to stop them from attaining what Americans believed was their Manifest Destiny to include all of North America in their republic. Again in the War of 1812-1814 they fought side by side with the British to repel the American invaders from conquering what became our Canada.

The first English speaking settlers, the *United Empire Loyalists* (UELs) came here as refugees from The American Revolution to live under the Crown. It is because of them that we have the monarchy and our present parliamentary system of government. They fought back the Americans in 1812-1814. The threat of their huge victorious *American Union Army* at the end of their Civil War was a major factor in bringing about Canadian confederation in 1867. Fear of American annexation of western Canada led to the building of the *Canadian Pacific Railway.*

The monarchy, personaliozed by Queen Elizabeth, helps make Canada distinct from the U.S.A.

With the 1931 Statute of Westminster we became a completely independent nation but an independent nation with a Constitution, *The British North American Act* (the BNA), remaining as an Act of the British parliament. Then in 1982 Canadian government and the 10 provincial governments after many failing attempts to do so, patriated our Constitution which remains essentially the BNA including the Monarchy plus our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The trade off for unanimous agreement in 1982 was that any amendment of our Constitution requires unanimous agreement of Canada, 10 Provinces and 2 Territories. The last attempt to amend our Constitution. *The Meech Lake Accord* failed to receive that required unanimous consent.

Canada was founded as a nation different to the USA. We struggled before WWII to assert our independence from Britain and since then have struggled to preserve our independence from the USA. Do we now so much envy their form of government that we want to be exactly the same? If so why not let the USA peacefully annex us as they tried to do by force in the past. It all begs the question, "What is a Canadian?"

A short time ago a British newspaper asked its readers: "What it means to be British?" The winning answer: "Being British is about driving a German car to an Irish pub for a Belgian beer. Then travelling home, grabbing an Indian curry or a Turkish kebab on the way, to sit on Swedish furniture and watch American shows on a Japanese TV. He buys a holiday in Spain, skies in France and has a Romanian au-pair. And the most British thing of all? Is suspicion of any thing foreign."

How would you define a Canadian?

Why do we exist as a separate nation? Is it because of our 1982 *Charter Of Rights and Freedoms?* Is it because of our medicare system? Is it really just because of hockey?★

I have written a very short book on the subject of the Universal Basic Income or as some know it the Guaranteed Annual Income or the Guarantee Basic Income entitled, "A Big Idea: Eliminating Poverty in Canada". It can be obtained from Amazon, Barnes and Noble or FriesenPress.

Ian Redway is a retired lawyer, former MP for Don Valley East, former Minister of State (Housing) in the Brian Mulroney government and former Mayor of East York. He is the author of two books, Governing Toronto: Bring- ing back the city that works and East York 1924-1997: Toronto's Garden of Eden. He can be reached at: alan.redway@gmail.com

TALK OF THE TOWN

St. Lawrence Market

A Toronto tradition (since 1814)

DON COLEMAN

There are an endless number of adventures to be planned and enjoyed in Toronto. A person could keep themselves busy for a lifetime and never do the same thing twice. However, when a particular adventure becomes a tradition there must be a good reason. Growing up in our amazing city was a blessing, and on many Saturday mornings we would venture to the iconic cornucopia of all things edible, known as *St. Lawrence Market.*

Mingling amongst the colourful visuals and interesting characters, married with the smells of "food glorious food," made for an exhilarating and mouth-watering journey. Not to mention the stunning period architecture. St. Lawrence Market was named the world's best food market by *National Geographic* magazine in April 2012, which is a testament to it's enduring and desirable energy.

The Market is located at Front Street East and Jarvis Street in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood

of downtown Toronto. The location is made up of two sites adjacent to one another east of Jarvis Street, St. Lawrence Market North, and St. Lawrence Market South. The days of operation are from Tuesday to Saturday. The market offers fun and interesting special events, almost kind of food and so much more, including but not limited to; Organics, Meats, Cheeses, Baked Goods, Pastries, Eggs, Sauces and Dressings, Jewelry, International Foods, Caviar, Truffles, Seafood, Specialty Foods, Fresh Produce, Gift Items. Flowers, Artisans, Food Stalls, Restaurants and the St. Lawrence Market Gallery.

The history of today's market is a bit complex and is as follows. The Market concept was first established in the early 19th century, in a designated area near King Street and New Street (later renamed Jarvis Street). The first buildings erected for the market emerged in 1814, which evolved into permanent structures in 1820. The first permanent market building was later replaced in 1831 with the first St. Lawrence Market North building. The location also served as one of only four post offices in York prior to 1834. The building was damaged after the Great Fire of Toronto of 1849, and was replaced with a new building in

1851. The market was expanded in the early 1900s, with portions of the former city hall of Toronto being integrated into a new building, opened as St. Lawrence Market South in 1902, and a new matching building was built to replace the north building in 1904, which was replaced with a new building in 1968.

In 2016, the north building was demolished to make way for a new building. The market square was used as the city hall of Toronto for most of the 19th century, occupying a temporary space at the original market space from 1834 to 1845. The St. Lawrence Market South building was used as the municipal city hall from 1845 to 1899, before moving into the newly built city hall building in 1899.

A visit to the historic St. Lawrence Market is always a good time, that usually ends up as a great meal and a good healthy walk. The neighbourhood is vibrant and the sights and sounds are inspiring. Plan a trip to the market once restrictions are lifted. It may become a new tradition for you and your loved ones, to be cherished and passed down to future generations. Eat well and stay safe out there!★

Feel free to call or email at any time days or evenings. 506-734-3004.
Music Industry Consultant, Member of CIMA, CARAS, ECMA, MNB, SOCAN

Don Coleman is a writer, songwriter, vocalist, public speaker, entertainer and humanitarian who is endorsed by Gordon Lightfoot, acknowledged by the Jeff Healey estate, President Bill Clinton, HRH Prince William and recognized by the iconic musical group known as AC/DC. Contact/Story Ideas: donvalleydon@rogers.com

LIFESTYLES

ACHIM KRULL

Micro-plastics are everywhere

Plastic, that innocuous everyday product, is becoming a major problem. Canada alone produces 15 billion plastic bags and 57 million straws a year. The world produces a million single-use water bottles every minute of every day. Most of this plastic enters the food chain. Stories abound of animals, whales, seabirds, turtles, found dead of starvation with bellies full of plastic bags and other effluent. We see animals drowned or choked to death, entangled in plastics.

So, what happens to the plastic waste? Plastics do not biodegrade in the environment. Plastics never disappear on their own. Instead, they break into smaller and smaller particles. And they are ubiquitous. We have found them in water and ice in Canada's Far North. Scientists have discovered plastic particles in the Sahara Desert and even in the deepest part of the Pacific Ocean.

Just one example: studies show that more than 8 million tons of plastic end up in the oceans. Plastic waste on land is everywhere. In Canada, the Ministry of the Environment estimates that we recycle less than 15% of plastics we use.

The worst and most insidious offenders are microplastics or plastic nanoparticles. These particles can be as small as 10 nanometres (or 0.00001 millimetres. For comparison, a human hair or a sheet of paper is 90,000 nanometers thick). They are everywhere in the environment. Fish, seabirds and other creatures living in and on the water ingest them. Birds will eat them. When predators eat the birds, they also eat the plastics. They even enter living creatures just drinking water. Researchers tested mussels and oysters. They discovered they contained nearly half a gram of microplastics for every 15-20 grams of meat. Nearly three percent of their body weight was plastic particles.

Humans inhale nanoparticles of plastic. They are small enough to float in the air. We absorb them from our drinking water. The *US Department of Agriculture* suggests that just drinking tap water, we ingest some 4,000 microparticles. Bottled water is even worse, exposing people to 90,000 particles.

The most common source of microplastics are fibres shed from our synthetic clothes, polyester, nylon and others. Particles come off in the wash. Sewage treatment systems cannot filter them out, so they end up in the rivers and lakes. Eventually they find their way into the oceans. Along the way, they enter the food chain and return to us in our seafood.

We are only now beginning to study the health impacts of microplastics on human health. We know plastics can contain lead and other toxic chemicals. A study at Simon Fraser University in BC has concluded that these particles potentially are a vector for bacteria and parasites. Scientists are still trying to determine the extent of the potential harm.

On a positive note, politicians are showing willingness to take action. P.E.I. and other jurisdictions banned plastic shopping bags last year. The federal government will now ban most single-use plastics, straws and cutlery used by the fast food industry, plastic bags and food containers, and six-pack rings by the end of this year. Food processors too are under pressure to reduce plastic packaging. We would all be happy to see the end of those irritating blister packs.

The government is also demanding manufacturers ensure that new plastic products contain recycled materials. The government will have a minimum requirement of at least 50% recycled materials by 2030.

Some companies are getting ahead of the coming deadline. Loblaws is working with suppliers to reduce the amount of plastic wrapping. *The President's Choice* brand will switch all products to recyclable or reusable packaging by 2025. And their PC Choice bottled water comes in bottles containing at least 50% recycled material.

Other companies are making similar pledges. *Walmart* promises to reduce plastic bags by 50% by 2025 and reduce plastic packaging on all products. They want to ban all PVC and Styrofoam packaging by the same date. Since government requirements are banning plastic shopping bags and other products this year, they will have to accelerate their plans. Before the pandemic, *Sobeys* planned to end all plastic shopping bag use by the end of last year. That would have meant 800 million fewer bags out there.

How well we control our plastic waste will be a serious test of how serious we are about protecting our environment. It is just one of many environmental problems facing us, but one with which we can all help.

Live green and prosper.★

©Achim Krull – 2021. I love to hear from you: livegreen@bell.net

SCAMS ALERT:

Scams old and new make the news this month. A new scam involves an email from Amazon advising you that they cannot ship your order. An old scam is the return of the bank inspector. He advises you to remove your money from your bank account because of a fraud involving bank employees.

An email purporting to be from Amazon will advise you that your order cannot be shipped. The email links you to a very real-looking fake Amazon site. There the site asks you to sign in and re-enter your credit card information, including the security number, to complete your purchase. Of course, this is not Amazon. Your details are off to someone who will max out your credit card in minutes. If you receive an email regarding an online order, do not use any links within that email. Go to the website directly. You can review your account detail, check on recent purchases and review any issues with recent purchases.

The old bank scam was very costly for an Ontario man. A "bank inspector" called, warning him they had intercepted some fraudulent transactions on his bank account. The inspector asks for help catching the bank employee responsible. In the meantime, he suggested moving money to a safe place. He advised him to withdraw money, buy gift cards, and send the card numbers and security codes to an email address he furnished. Of course, this was no bank inspector. Once the victim sent the gift card information, the money and the inspector disappeared.

Similar bank and credit card scams are making a major comeback. One recently reported to the *Better Business Bureau* advised bank customers that the bank was making major upgrades to their security systems. They advised that the bank would suspend the customer's online access until he re-entered with account information. Fortunately, the email was full of spelling and grammar errors, and the customer did not respond.

Online purchase scams continue. Many companies advertise on social media. The fraudulent ones use stock images of goods offered at great prices. The first hint of problems: they accept only credit cards. They prominently display logos for *Norton* and other online security companies to inspire confidence. They promise 30-day free returns and have many rave customer product reviews. Of course, the goods either never existed or cheap products are substituted. Your money is gone unless your credit card company can help.

Some malicious websites pretend to be the *Public Health Agency*. They offer health advice and then link people to sites which sell masks, home corona virus tests and even fake vaccines. They are trying to obtain your credit card information.

Some suggestions for this month: never respond to an email, text or phone call warning of an issue with your credit card, bank account or a purchase. Go directly to the company involved for clarification. You cannot buy covid-19 vaccines online. For other covid supplies, go to a trusted company, online or in store. Finally, no matter how great an advertised product or service is on social media, check it out from a trusted and known supplier. Avoid buying directly from a link on social media. Too many of those offers are fraudulent

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CRAFT OF

MARY DOWNEY

Blossoming trees

Take a piece of rectangular white paper with the tall side up. Draw a tree trunk and branches with a brown marker or pencil crayon. Make the colour vibrant. Take tissue paper – pink, white, green- and cut into small pieces. Crumple each into a ball. Glue them on the tree. Make sure you can still see the branches. Draw and colour lots of birds on the trees, flowers and grass on the ground, clouds and sun in the sky. This is a spring picture.

Instead of a tree you may want to make a large flower. Draw a tall green stem and green leaves. Outline the shape of petals – round or spiky (as in a sunflower). Then use small pieces of tissue paper (yellow and brown for a sunflower),(pink and red or white for a rose) or any colour of your choice. Crumple each up and glue on the petals of the flower.

Put some clouds in the sky, grass on the ground, birds and rabbits, mountains and trees in the background – whatever you like.★

The author, a Mississauga resident, has three adult children. She is an experienced tutor and youth group leader. Questions may be addressed to her c/o Hi-Rise

PARENTING

MARY DOWNEY

Children and ability

Each child has different abilities. Some children have parents with time and finances to help a child develop their abilities. Some children do not want to have all the lessons their parents arrange. Others thrive on them.

Some children find something they love doing and pursue it every day. The child who starts piano at a young age and practises an hour or more daily certainly develops in this area.

I know a young boy of eleven who loves soccer and plays after school four times a week. He develops his ability and loves it. One side effect is that he excels at cross country at school. He has the stamina.

But sometimes our children lack the abilities we want them to have. I think of a girl of twelve who when asked about a subject she had learnt several years in a row could remember nothing. I experienced this with her and grew frustrated. But later that day she helped make cheese biscuits – she loves to cook. We took some to the neighbours. She was so happy to bring them, so positive and cheery. She lifted them up. They all had smiles as she spoke with them. So I saw clearly what her abilities were. I learnt a lesson. I was grateful to learn.

As parents we can try to develop the interests we see our children have – drawing, cooking, music, sports, getting a part-time job. We can help find good teachers and mentors. We can drive our children as needed, and help with practising at home.

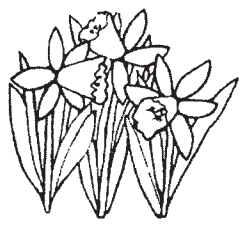
Sometimes children need encouraging to try an activity. They may be shy or feel inadequate. We can encourage them to try it out for just a year.

Some children never learn to swim, or skate, or ride a bike. Later on in life they may regret this. Still, it's important to appreciate our children for who they are, and encourage whenever we see interest. They need and appreciate our support – even if they do not say so.

They will grow up to be different from us, with their own path in life. It's important through all their endeavours that they are kind, honest, and try their best. These are lessons we can encourage. They will bring self-approval and happiness to all.★

The author, a Mississauga resident, has three adult children. She is an experienced tutor and youth group leader. Questions may be addressed to her c/o Hi-Rise.

Monday, May 24, is Victoria Day. At this time, remember Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Royal family as they currently mourn the loss of Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, who died on April 9th, 2021. Readers can view the digital "Book of Condolences". Although no longer accepting posts, however, it remains open for public viewing. Visit www.royal.uk to read condolence messages.



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WANDERLUST

Road trips now and then

CHARLES SCHWARTZ AND SUZANNE HARRIS

by Charles Schwartz

The memories of being on the road in the 1950s are still fresh in my mind, affording a comparison to hitting the road, today.

US Interstates were works-in-progress from 1956 through 1992. Beyond the Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Ohio Turnpikes, opening in 1940, 1949 and 1955, respectively, and southern, California freeways in the 1950's, most US highways were two-lane affairs, passing through cities, often with queues of slow-moving traffic, and when passing through non-urban areas, pressure mounted to pass (over take) - or not - in the opposing lane of traffic while oncoming drivers made similar life-and-death decisions about YOU! Today, limited-access highways' passing lanes and circumferential by-passes relieve us of that worry, and when absent construction or collisions are quite dependable.

Folded, free-of-charge, gasoline, company, road maps could be gotten when filling up and were essential for navigation. The AAA offered its members free, customized, route-planning in the form of a series of narrow, sequential, loose-leaf folio maps, called *TripTiks*. TripTik routes were marker-highlighted. If you planned to explore beyond the planned route, you would need a gas-station map with broader coverage to return to your route.

Today, we reserve/call ahead using cell phones, finding accommodations, food and other services using internet tools, even from the road, but cellphones were not in wide use until the 90s, and smart phones with their interactive search capability, text and e-mail until 2007. Without a pocket-full of change, making a long-distance, roadside call to reserve a room - if you could even locate a pay phone, en route - was difficult.

We did not know much about hotel/motel chains, back then, and took our chances every night to find "a vacancy", en passant. We were out of luck sometimes, once sleeping in our VW Beetle alongside the Pacific, bags outside the car all night, serenaded by sea lions!

Air conditioning was a luxury feature and not ubiquitous; we did not have it and would often swelter; our picnic cooler providing some relief.

Driving through rural areas was bereft of entertainment and news because, absent satellite radio, AM radio broadcast signals were not consistent, limited by terrain and other features, much in the way spotty cellphone signals bedevil us, today; consequently, silence interspersed with static was a constant companion.

Car CD players are a fairly recent amenity. Without radio music, we would watch the scenery, read and create our own, singing such highway favorites as "Ninety-nine Bottles of Beer on the Wall" or play road games such as "License Plate Bingo."

Having sufficient money often meant carrying cash. Diners Club International was the first credit card debuting in 1950. ATMs could not help because ATMs arrived in 1967 - ATM networks later. Traveller's checks have been around since the late 19th century but were preferred when travelling abroad.

Some things haven't changed: flat tires and the kids asking, *"Are we there, yet?"* Back then, we did not worry, much - perhaps naively - about break-ins, impairment, road-rage, or theft. Still, I long for yesterday.★

Suzanne Harris lives in the west of England and is a writer and traveller. Charles Schwartz is a native New Yorker, geographer and an avid traveller who has visited all seven continents.

www.hi-risenews.com

MONEY

SONNY GOLDSTEIN

Will this pandemic ever end?

By the time you are reading this column, we will be more than three weeks into the latest lockdown or shutdown or whatever our Premier is calling this latest disruption, not only to our lives but to the livelihoods of so many small businesses including restaurants that are struggling to survive and are being bounced around like a pogo stick.

I understand the need to do everything we can to control the spread of the virus and its many variants, but it is the huge numbers of ignorant people that continue to congregate, ignore the safety protocols about masks and distancing and unknowingly spread the virus.

Please do whatever you can to support small businesses. Ordering take-out food by pick up or delivery will help restaurants, many spent a lot of money gearing up for patio dining and are now unable to do so. Other small local businesses selling items you may need will be happy to accept telephone orders for curbside pickup. It may not be quite as cheap or convenient as ordering from Amazon or E-Bay, but it will help those local shops stay afloat until we can go back to indoor shopping

. If you are wondering why I am giving this advice in a column about managing your money, it is because what I am about to say about the future of our economy and therefore about our investments, will be affected by the survival of many of those smaller businesses that we all need to be a part of the recovery and not victims of the shutdowns.

So, what does the future of our economy look like for the short, medium and long terms and what should we be doing with our investments and any money still sitting on the sidelines that you may have been fearful to invest in the recent past? Everyone whose opinion I respect when it comes to looking at the future is saying that there is a huge pent-up demand for all kinds of goods and services that we have been denied for the last fourteen months.

Travel and vacations are the most obvious, but almost everything else we normally spend our money on has also suffered and human nature, being what it is, will see us going out and buying in abundance. That will restore the profitability of the major players whose companies are listed on exchanges and so drive the shares of those companies up even higher past the records they hit on the 9th of April when I wrote this column. Since interest rates and inflation are expected to remain low for the next two or three years (the medium term), that pattern will likely extend for at least that duration. As for the long term, I can only reiterate what many analysts have already expounded that we are in the middle of a secular bull market. That is a period of time when the economy and related equity markets expand or grow, and in the past those secular bull markets have lasted about 20 years. This one started in 2009 and while history does not always repeat itself, it does often rhyme, so we can expect this secular bull market to last until 2019, another eight years. In my opinion, that will be about when the equity markets double from their present record highs and I for one want to be along for that ride. It will likely be a bumpy ride, but as Warren Buffet once asked at one of his company's annual meetings that I was privileged to attend, "Do you want a smooth 5% or a bumpy 10%?" 15,000 shareholders attending that meeting in a hocky rink in Omaha, Nebraska shouted back, "A bumpy 10%!" Today the smooth ride will yield less than 2 % and I ask, "Do you want a smooth 2% or a bumpy 9%?" At 9% your investments will double in eight years. You can surely guess that my answer will be the same one I shouted out in Omaha.★

Sonny Goldstein, a Certified Financial Planner, is the President of Goldstein Financial Consultants and "Creative Ideas in Financial Planning" For more information, any questions, or a free consultation, call (416) 221-0060, or in writing at #1850-5160 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M2N 6L9

REAL ESTATE

MEHBOOB SHERIFF

Capital Gains Tax on Principal Residence?

Parkinson's Law #1 states "Work expands to fit time Available....."

With due apologies to Parkinson, if we just modify two words above – it would fit all levels of our Government!

"Expenses expand to fit available" *Money*

Yes, Governments are always on the lookout for more ways to increase their money intake. Unfortunately, that comes from our pockets. Instead of trying to curtail expenses they go about trying to tax us more – one way or another.

Remember, Income tax was only a temporary measure? The City of Toronto is now grabbing money at an equal rate as their Provincial counterparts by form of Land Transfer Tax. Yes, for a purchase of a home of $1,000,000 in Toronto – a buyer would pay $16,475 to the Provincial Government **AND** an equal amount ($16,475) to the City of Toronto! Total Land Transfer Tax of $32,950! My question is very simple – did the City of Toronto do any more work than the City of Markham (just north of Steeles Avenue) to justify this?

No, this is not a political article, but I thought it necessary because now "OUR" governments are once again looking for more sources of revenue. The main reason they are flouting now is that Real Estate prices are sky rocketing and homes are becoming unaffordable and they must do something to stop that. Of course, they don't mention that this would give them more money to spend. Remember, we are already taxed on capital gains for all real estate that is not our principal residence. And as we are filing our tax returns – we have to select our principal residence. Only one PRINCIPAL residence is allowed.

Homeownership is the cornerstone of retirement planning for many people. Imagine a first-time buyer who has been working in these challenging times to save a down payment for years and finally becomes a homeowner. This tax would change the rules midway. The homeowner would get dinged when he buys (land transfer tax) while he owns (property tax) and when he sells (if this absurd proposal of taxing Principal Residence is materialized) ; Toronto Regional Real Estate Board (TRREB), Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) and Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) are among the other stakeholders who are actively monitoring the evolving situation. Of course, proponents quote USA as an example where capitals gains on Principal residence upwards of $500,000 (for a couple) or $250,000 (sole owner) are taxable. They ignore the fact that in USA interest on mortgages are tax deductible.

There are other solutions to make housing affordable – the prime one is to ensure an adequate supply of homes for sale. And this can be achieved by making more serviceable land available for developers and builders. What is important at this stage is to make this proposal a non-starter! Nip it in the bud by letting your elected representatives at all levels know that taxing gains Principal Residence is not acceptable. PERIOD!★

The author Mehboob Sheriff is a Registered Real Estate Broker with Homelife/Vision Realty Inc., Brokerage. He has owned two Century 21 offices and has been General Manager and part owner of a Re/Max Franchise office. He has over 45 years of experience in Real Estate and Mortgages and can be reached at 647-703-6786 or sheriff@trebnet.com.

TENANTS

BHAVIN BILIMORIA AND ZACHARY MORGENSTERN

Amendments to apartment buildings bylaw

requires landlords to get and give more essential information to tenants

Are you a tenant in an apartment building with three or more stories and ten or more units? If so, you should look to the City's *RentSafe TO* Program to ensure that your landlord is providing proper maintenance for your building, in accordance with the Apartment Buildings bylaw.

On April 1, 2021, a number of new amendments to the Apartment Buildings bylaw went into effect. One of these amendments pertains to proper waste management. Doing your part towards recycling and organic trash disposal can be a challenge. If you do not work in waste management yourself, it can be confusing what exactly goes in what bin. As of April 1st however, landlords are now required to post instructions about waste management on their tenant notification boards, with stickers identifying exactly where specific bins are located.

Another requirement is that landlords must now provide the City with an active email address. Moving forward, the City has indicated they will be providing all written communication and notices related to properties via email. In theory, this will mean landlords are kept better up to date with changes to and their violations of the City's RentSafe TO Program, which should translate to better upkeep in your building.

Finally, landlords are now required to develop what is known as a capital plan. This is a document which details what capital elements the landlord expects to replace or update in the next five years. Capital elements include, but are not limited to, your building's roof, elevators, façade, windows, mechanical systems (heat, air conditioning, etc.), underground garage, interior flooring, interior wall finishes (plaster, drywall, stucco, etc.), balcony guards, and guardrails.

Under the new amendments, tenants can request a copy of the landlord's capital plan, and the landlord must provide it to them within 60 days. These capital plans can provide important information for tenants concerned about future rent increases in their building. Landlords can apply to the *Landlord and Tenant Board* for an above guideline increase (i.e. a rent increase above the provincially mandated rent control guideline) based on capital expenditures. By asking for their landlord's capital plans, tenants can anticipate these applications, and utilize the information in the capital plan to potentially challenge the application at the Landlord and Tenant Board.★

If you have any questions about this or any other landlord and tenant matter, contact your local community legal clinic or the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations.

By Bhavin Bilimoria, Staff Lawyer, and Zachary Morgenstern, Student-at-Law, Don Valley Community Legal Services Formerly Flemingdon Community Legal Services) Unit #1, 1 Leaside Park Drive Toronto, ON M4H 1R1
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CONDOS

MARILYN LINCOLN

Who organizes a condo committee the owners or the board?

Q. Some of us owners think a condo committee would be an asset to our community. We would like to organize one and have volunteers join us. What is the normal procedure for setting up such a committee and what kind of powers does such a committee have? Your advice is most valuable and appreciated.

A. It is the decision of the board whether or not they choose to appoint a condo committee. Bylaws of the corporation usually specify that committees must be created by a resolution of the board. Owners cannot have independent decision-making power and cannot legally challenge the authority of the board to make decisions in this matter.

Committee members do not have to be directors. However, the committee members must be appointed by the board and their activities must be supervised. The duties and obligations of such a committee must be clearly defined.

Committees can be very effective if they are organized properly. You would require a name for the committee, responsibilities, including meeting procedures, minutes of the meetings, regular reports and recommendations to the board etc. Committees can be very helpful in organizing the annual barbecue, golfing tournament, monthly socials such as pot luck dinner, bingo, activities for children etc.

Committees need not be too large. Three to five owners would be quite sufficient. Encouragement and support from the board is a must. The board must respect and give fair consideration to the committee's recommendations. At the same time committee members must never use this committee as a tool to challenge the board, but rather use it to help lighten the burden of volunteer directors.

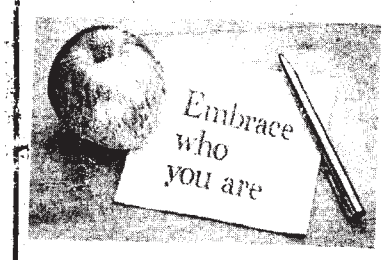
Some boards shy away from committees because they feel they are a conflict of interest or a challenge to their powers. Nothing could be further from the truth if the committee has clear, concise guidelines and genuine support from the board in order to produce a successful committee that will operate efficiently and harmoniously.★

Marilyn Lincoln is a condo owner, director and author of The Condominium Self Management Guide 2nd ed. Email marilyncondoguide@hotmail.com with questions.

LIVING FREE

ANDRENE GREGORY

The path to self acceptance



The beauty of life is its diversity. No two things are exactly alike: not even identical twins. We each have our unique qualities and characteristics. The sooner we realize this, the sooner we will be able to accept our flaws and appreciate each other for their differences. As the saying goes, *"the grass is always greener on the other side."* But wait until you get closer or realize the cost and the work that goes into making it greener. Beauty and wellness are about three things. If you want a beautifully balanced life, you have to accept yourself, invest in your life, and be mindful of others.

Self-acceptance is the rejection of what other people think of you: good or bad. Mother Teresa famously said: *"If you are humble nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are."*

Today, I want to encourage you by telling you that if you accept yourself, nothing that others say about you will affect you because you know who you are. I am not saying that some things won't sting a bit. But what I know for sure is that hurtful words are like vaccines. They hurt for a while, but most of the time, they make you stronger. And the times when they don't, they point to deeper knowledge about yourself. Sure it is nice to have the recognition and approval of our peers and family, but if they don't give it to us, eventually it makes us stronger in all the broken places. It's like kintsugi. Kintsugi "is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery" by fusing the breakage with lacquered gold, silver, or platinum (Wikipedia).

There are many ways in which we can intentionally adopt the attitude of self-acceptance. To start with, we cannot let praise and recognition go to our heads. We are who we are with or without them. We can take feedback from others as an opportunity for growth without feeling the need to push back or to explain ourselves. We can also choose to invest in ourselves.

By investing in yourself, I do not mean to spend frivolously on yourself. A frivolous person is self-indulgent and lacks purpose. So by self-investment, I mean doing the work to make your grass green. Ask yourself: what can I do today that will make my life better six months, one year, ten years from now? And start taking tiny steps towards that.

Do you want to boost your self-esteem? Start working out. Exercise is a two pronged-approach to a better life. Not only does it improve our physical appearance, but it also raises the serotonin level in our brain that gives us a better outlook on life; thus making us feel happier and more confident. We have to mind our minds: our minds are the garden of our lives.

Finally, for a beautifully balanced life, we need to be mindful of others. Mindfulness is a word that is tossed about quite a bit without any real sense of what it truly means. The dictionary defines mindfulness as "the quality or state of being conscious or aware of some- thing." This entails being aware of our attitude towards others and what's going on around us. It begs us to wake up and pay attention. I encourage you to give some more thought to it. Although in Canada, we recognize mental health awareness in October, our friends in the States recognize it in May. That said, I dedicate this last section to mental health awareness. Mental Health awareness is all about recognizing that people have real-life ordeals that impact how they think and behave in society: physically, emotionally, and mentally.

In sum, it is important that as we learn to accept ourselves and invest in our development, we give grace to those who are struggling. This may mean dimming our light just a little bit to compensate for those who can't handle the blinding light. By doing so, we allow everyone to shine. As a civilized society, we are not growing if we are not mindful of others.★

Andrene Gregory is a life coach who helps adults live a healthy balanced life. She maybe reached at: coach@aggiestrongulc.com

SPECIAL DAYS

MARTINE FONTAINE

Eid al-fitr

The festival of Eid al-Fitr, of fast breaking, is an important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide, marking the end of Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting. The holiday celebrates the conclusion of the 29 or 30th of dawn to sunset fasting.

As the date depends on the sighting of the moon, there may be variations in the exact date.

Eid al Fitr was started by prophet Mohammad who had the first revelation of the Holy Qur'an The Qur'an is the Holy book for Muslims, revealed in stages to the Prophet Mohammad over 23 years, regarded by Muslims as the sacred word of God.

Eid al Fitr is also celebrated to pay respect to Allah (the Arabic word referring to God) for providing strength and endurance during the month of fasting.

Muslims celebrate Eid al-Fitr with prayers called "Salat al Eid", in Arabic. Muslims will gather in Mosques or open spaces and offer two units of prayers-followed by a sermon, in which the imam (leader or model) asks for forgiveness, mercy, and peace for every being across the world.

A key element of Eid-celebrations is giving money to the poor and doing other charitable works. It is also a time of sending Eid greetings and feasting with families.

The phrase commonly used by Muslims as a greeting on this day is *"Eid Mubarak,"* which is Arabic for "blessed festival" The proper response to Eid Mubarak is *"Karr Mubarak"*, which wishes on the person who has greeted you.

A special treat associated with this festival in Pakistan is Sheer Korma, which is pasta cooked in milk and sugar, and sprinkled with almonds, pistachios and dates. This dish is served on the morning of Eid after the Eid prayer at breakfast, and throughout the day to any visiting guests.

May the festival of breaking the fast put all the magic of love and happiness together.
Eid Mubarak.★

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South China Sea – one nation's attempt to usurp 3.6 million square kilometers of resource rich international waterway

The South China Sea is a very important 3.6 million square kilometers of commercial waterway connecting Asia with Europe and Africa. One-third of global shipping, or a total of US$3.37 trillion of international trade, passes through the South China Sea. It takes a modern warship over three days to sail at top speed of 30 knots from its northern edge at Taiwan to the southern edge at the Strait of Malacca. About 80 percent of China's oil imports arrive via the Strait of Malacca, in Indonesia. They then sail across the South China Sea to reach China.

The sea is also believed to contain significant natural resources, such as natural gas and oil. As per some estimates, the sea contains up to 22 billion barrels of oil and 290 trillion cubic feet of gas. The South China Sea also accounts for 10 percent of the world's fisheries, making it a critical food source for hundreds of millions of people.

China illegally claims almost all of the 3600000 sq kms of the sea for itself .

China's self claim on the South China Sea

China's claim to the sea is based both on the Law of the Sea Convention and its so-called "nine-dash"line. This line extends for 2,000 kilometers from the Chinese mainland, encompassing over half of the sea. This line, which skirts the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Vietnam, was first drawn by China in 1947. The claim had no basis in international law – then, or now.

In a historic decision in 2016, an international tribunal in *The Hague* ruled against part of China's claims to the sea in a case brought by the Philippines. In its ruling, the tribunal considered the South China Sea to be a "semi-enclosed sea" as defined by the Law of the Sea Convention — a body of water tightly or largely contained by land features.

This status carries with it the expectation that coastal states should cooperate on everything from conservation issues to commercial exploitation. This concept is important: it means that by definition, the South China Sea is a shared maritime space. China rejected the authority of the tribunal and its finding in the case.

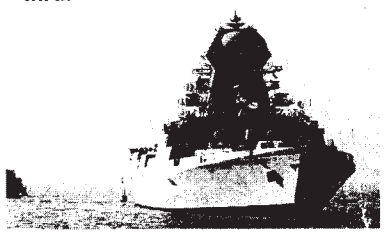
China set a precedent for armed conflict in the South China Sea during two encounters with Vietnamese forces, in 1974 and 1988. In both incidents, China used force to stake its claim to territory far beyond its shores. During the 1970s and 1980s China collided with Vietnam over territorial rights in the South China Sea. China occupied several islands and reefs resulting in more than 100 deaths and several Vietnam ships being either sunk or damaged beyond repair

Entry of the Quad – a gamechanger

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD, also known as the Quad) is an informal strategic dialogue between the United States, Japan, Australia and India that is maintained by talks between member countries. The dialogue was initiated in 2007 by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan, with the support of Vice President Dick Cheney of the US, Prime Minister John Howard of Australia and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India. The diplomatic and military arrangement was widely viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power.

In May 2007 in Manila, Australian Prime Minister John Howard participated with other members in the inaugural meeting of the Quadrilateral at Cheney's urging, one month after joint naval exercises near Tokyo by India, Japan and the United States. These were followed in October 2007 by a further security agreement between Japan and India, ratified during a visit by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Tokyo, to promote sea lane safety and defense collaboration.

China is wary of the quad coalition which if push comes to shove can bring China to a stand still in matter of days if not hours. The USA has enough firepower in the region to sink the Chinese man made islands back into the sea. The Indian navy controls areas from the Straits of Malaca near Malaysia, south to the Indian Ocean region , past the oil rich regions of the middle east up to the horn of Africa and gulf of Aden. This is the route from where 80% of Chinese imports including oil and exports pass thru.



Deployed-warship-south-china-sea

The quad is not a formal military alliance yet but for all practical purposes , the navies of the quad countries have been conducting joint naval exercises and practicing interoperability of weapons and systems. China does not want to escalate the situation with the Quad and its official statement has said that multiple times .

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin reiterated China's hope that "relevant countries can proceed from the common interests of countries in the region, and do where 80% of Chinese imports including oil and exports pass thru.

The quad is not a formal military alliance yet but for all practical purposes , the navies of the quad countries have been conducting joint naval exercises and practicing interoperability of weapons and systems. China does not want to escalate the situation with the Quad and its official statement has said that multiple times .

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin reiterated China's hope that "relevant countries can proceed from the common interests of countries in the region, and do more things that are conducive to regional peace, stability and development, not the other way around." Afar cry from the unilateral bullying tactics it had used to usurp international waters and territories from other countries in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the last year, France, UAE and Canada have shown their support for the quad and their naval ships have sailed thru the South China Sea in support.

As the quad grows and formalizes into a formal military alliance, it has the potential to act as a counter balance to China's unilateral, bullying tactics. A dangerous military escalation is not in anyone's interest and can undermine decades of hardwork and prosperity for China and her ASEAN neighbours. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi has rightly called for an "open, transparent and inclusive" security architecture, which espouses "the habit of dialogue, promoting cooperation and friendship, and upholds international law." ★

Sam Goyal is a Toronto Tourism registered City Greeter based in Toronto. He is a Travel Blogger, Travel Writer, and Trip Planner. He hosts walking and sightseeing private and bus tours in English, Hindi, and Punjabi. For a guided Toronto city tour or for questions on Toronto, follow him on Instagram at tattooedtravellersam

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SPECIAL DAYS MARTINE FONTAINE

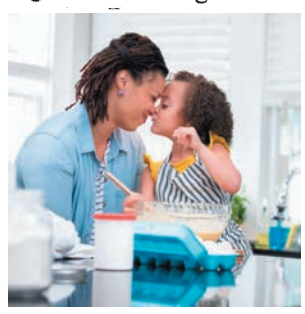
Mother's Day

Mother's Day is a special time to honour and cherish your mother, show her your appreciation and what she means to you. This year it is on May 9th.

The modern holiday of Mother's Day was first celebrated in 1908, when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother at St. Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia. In 1914 U.S. President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating Mother's Day to be held on the second Sunday in May as a national holiday to honour mothers.

Early celebrations of Mother's Day originated from the United States. The white carnations that are used to designate a mother who has passed away, red for all others, are not as common as they once were. But carnations in general are still a popular Mother's Day symbol in both countries. Some people may chose to wear a carnation as a brooch. However, other flowers are also given to mothers or mother figures to symbolize one's love and appreciation of them.

Mother figures may include step-mothers, mothers-in-law, guardians (eg. foster parents) and family friends. It is a time for people to thank mothers and mother figures who took the time to care for them and help them through life's challenges.



Here are several ideas to do for Mother's Day. It used to be a time to take mom out for a special meal, not possible this year due to Covid 19. But you can treat mom to breakfast in bed, get Mother's Day started with chocolate for breakfast. Finish her to-do list, recreate her favourite meal. Send mom fresh flowers, take a class together. Help her relax with an at home spa or give her a gift "from the heart".★

REFLECTIONS

REV. JOHN JOSEPH MASTANDREA

Come to the heart beat of green

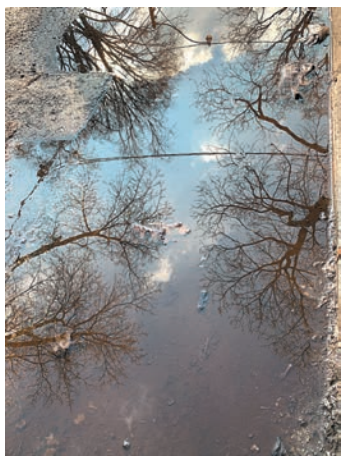


Photo by John J oseph Mastrandrea.

May is the fifth month of the year.\MAY. Named for the Roman goddess Maia, who oversaw the growth of plants. Also from the Latin word maiores, "elders," who were celebrated during this month. Maia was considered a nurturer and an earth goddess, which may explain the connec- tion with this springtime month.

Come to the heart beat of green.

All of us long to smell the fragrance of mud again, to take a deep breath and become intoxicated by the pollinating of blossom and bloom. Call in the bees; we want to hear, see and feel their rhythm at the core of our being.

This is the season of Beltane the midway point between Spring Equinox and Summer Solstice. Beltane honours Life. It represents the peak of Spring and the beginning of Summer. Earth energies are at their strongest and most active. All of life is bursting with potent fertility and at this point in the Wheel of the Year, the potential becomes conception.

Come to the heart beat of green.

Beltane is the union of Earth and Sky.

Beltane is a Fire Festival. The word Beltane originates from the Celtic God *Bel,* meaning "the bright one" and the Gaelic word *"teine"* meaning fire. Together they make *Bright Fire,* or Goodly Fire, and traditionally bonfires were lit to honour the Sun and encourage the support of Bel and the Sun's light to nurture the emerging future harvest and protect the community.

Come to the heart beat of green.

May is the month of Mother's Day, so named in honour of Mother's for Peace Sunday. The countless thousands of women who wore white flowers in protest of the American Civil War. A reminder of the need today to stand strong in solidarity for peace in the face of the many wars that ignite around the globe.

Come to the heart beat of green.

We are frequently at odds with each other as we continue to look for a way forward in this pandemic era.

May offers us the May Long weekend.

The milestone and beacon for planting, for retreat away, for a time out to discover moments inside ourselves.

May 24 once called *Empire Day.* Now it is a gift of three days of time.

For May there are fire works to light the night sky and perhaps ignited by the DNA of our bronze age ancestors who lit the fires to celebrate.

Come to the heart beat of green.

We are called to the green man and woman.
Called to the spirit of the pulse of sap that flows in the trees, the next building of birds, flight of the bumble bees, the rush of rivers and the lengthening of days.

Come to the heart beat of green.

Discover being human again for each with each other.
Closer to home we have become awakened to the Shelters in our many neighbourhoods and the gift of our own time and talents to be present to and with each other.

We are seeing each other for the first time; beyond, the colour of our skin the creed of our heart.

People as people the common ground of the new day

Come to the heart beat of green

The Rev. John Joseph Mastandrea serves at the Manor Road United Church, Toronto.Manor Road United Church, Toronto. manorroadunitedchurch.com
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$4.3M in grant funding has been awarded to the High Park Nature Centre and City of Toronto. It will support vital renovations to facilities for the High Park Visitor and Nature Centre, in partnership with the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario.

Over 100 years ago, the historical High Park Forest School was established to connect children to nature during a health crisis due to tuberculosis. A small school was erected in the 1930s to provide nourishment, healthy activities, and education to students who needed fresh air and the benefits of nature. Since 2015, the High Park Nature Centre, a charitable organization offering year-round nature programs within the park has been the sole occupant of the forest school building..

SPECIAL DAYS

Victoria Day

MARTINE FONTAINE

Canada has been a monarchy for centuries - first under the kings of France in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, then under the British Crown in the 18th and 19th centuries, Today, Canada is a constitutional monarchy, in its own right.

Statue of Queen Victoria

When Queen Victoria of England died, Canada's parliament officially named her birthday *Victoria Day,* to be celebrated on the second last day in May. The holiday has been observed in Canada since at least 1845, originally falling on Victoria's actual birthday (May 24th).

Victoria Day is a federal holiday, as well as a holiday in six of Canada's provinces and all three of its territories. Canada is the only country that commemorates Queen Victoria with an official holiday. Federal protocol dictates that on Victoria Day, the Royal Union Flag is to be flown from sunrise to sunset at all government buildings- including airports, military bases and other crown owned property across the country.

Victoria (Alexandriana Victoria) was the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from 20 June until her death in 1901. known as the Victorian Era, her reign of 63 years and seven months was longer than that of any predecessors.

The Queen who became an Empress, approved imperialist policies which established Britain as the most powerful nation in the world. Her popularity in Britain soared as she became a symbol of empire towards the end of her reign. (Imperialism is a policy of ideology of extending the rule over people and other countries, for extending political and economic access, power and control).

Today, there is the Commonwealth of Nations, a free association of sovereign states comprising the United Kingdom and a number of its former dependencies who have chosen to maintain ties of friendship and practical co-operation and who acknowledge the British monarch as symbolic head of their association.

When I think of May long weekend, I think of camping, family picnics at the park and starting the garden. It feels like the un-official start of a new season, as we begin to look forward to summer and all our favourite warm weather activities.

Typically there are parades, fireworks and all sorts of festivities as well- it has been that way for hundreds of years.

This year. there will be no big group activities or late night fireworks- but you can still infuse a little fun into your Victoria Day at home with these simple and inexpensive ideas. Watch a fireworks performance from Canada's Wonderland... The little ones won't have to stay up late and you can control the volume too! Have a family balcony gathering and light some sparklers for a mini-fireworks experience. For the teens and adults, cozy up and watch a movie about Queen Victoria, like the *Young Victoria* or *Victoria and Abdul* (both of which on are Netflix Canada.)

Happy Victoria Day weekend! Wishing you all a safe and wonderful long weekend!★

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
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Please contact my office for issues relating to:

- CANADA PENSION PLAN (CPP)
- GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT
- CANADA CHILD BENEFIT
- CANADA REVENUE AGENCY
- CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION
- NSLSC
- PASSPORT CANADA
- VETERAN AFFAIRS
- OLD AGE SECURITY

CELEBRATING
ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH 2021

My team and I are here to serve. Although my office is not physically open due to public health guidelines, my team and I are still helping constituents virtually. Please contact my office via telephone or email if you have any questions or are in need of assistance.

430 Parliament St. Toronto, ON M5A 3A2

/MarciienTO /Marciien /Marci.Ien

CAT OF THE MONTH

Miss Torti

This month, we'd like to introduce you to Miss Torti, a lovely seven year old female. We were contacted by a man who had been feeding them for several years in his backyard. He had to sell the house and asked if we could take the cats in. We did and most of them have found homes. Miss Torti is shy but has come a long way since she came to her foster home. She is quite intimidated by the other cats in her multi cat foster home, so we think she'd do best as a single cat. She loves people, once she knows and learns to trust them. She'll come for pets and enjoys a belly rub. Please note that an adoption fee applies. For further information, please contact Katherine, on behalf of the Scarborough Bluffs Cat Relief at 647-476-4797 during business hours.