

Choose your own adventure

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Welcome to our first interactive, choose your own ending column. There will be a number of choices you can make throughout, and we'll try to ensure as many options are included as the variety of readers there are here in Caledon. Of course, that's impossible, but since the previous two columns appearing in this space seem to have generated significant conversation, it seemed like a good idea to encourage even more this week. Have fun!

First things first. Have you voted? If the answer is NO, and you are reading this before 9 p.m. ? GO NOW. Seriously. Go right now. There are very few excuses not to vote when you live in a free and democratic country and have the right to do so. Some might even argue that right is actually a responsibility, defined as ?having an obligation to do so.? Policies that are most likely to impact us as citizens are largely decided at the municipal and provincial level. Not voting is an abdication of your obligation to help create the kind of community we'd all like to live in. It's choose your own adventure time. You have a choice to make now. Here's hoping you do the responsible thing.

If the answer is YES in this ?choose your own adventure,? thank you! Regardless of how you voted, thank you for exercising your democratic right to do so, particularly in these trying times where it seems the very concept of democracy is in peril. Feel free to reward yourself now. Are you a sweet or salty snack lover? If you've chosen an option starting with the letter ?S,? go ahead and snack away, you've earned it!

Perhaps you think my comments about taking the right to vote so seriously are an exaggeration. Maybe you think local municipal politics, or even provincial politics just don't matter all that much. Perhaps you're thinking the only thing that really matters is ?F Trudeau?? First of all, let's keep this clean, it's a family newspaper after all, and as for getting rid of Trudeau? Well, he's already stepped aside ? so stop griping and do some reflecting on who is actually responsible for some of your current woes. In the following examples, choose one:

If you have an issue with exorbitant rent, or lack of affordable housing options do you blame: A) Trudeau, B) Doug Ford and Sylvia Jones or C) Mayor Groves?

If you feel our roads are unsafe to drive on due to serious truck training/licensing issues, who do you blame? See options above.

If you're worried about the greenbelt, non-existent highways and tunnels, taxes on and/or availability of alcohol in corner stores, again, who do you blame? Same options as in the first (and second!) question.

If you are concerned about access to health care in Caledon/Dufferin, or illegal trucking yards, quarries or public transportation ? who do you ask for help? (See options listed in questions 1, 2 & 3)

You get the idea ?. the concerns many of us have right now, the concerns that impact our daily lives, affecting how we get to work, the type of housing we can afford, even when snow gets removed from our streets are all policies and decisions made largely at the municipal and provincial level. To not take your right to vote, nor have an understanding of who makes these decisions on your behalf is frankly, irresponsible.

Finally, speaking about the importance of having your say, whether by vote or in other ways, the last several columns appearing in this space have generated a great deal of conversation both on and offline. That's a good thing. We don't always have to agree on the matters discussed, and I'd go so far as to suggest I can usually predict with some confidence those times when we might not, and that's ok. It's my firm belief that this space is meant to provoke thoughtful conversation about, and serious consideration of, the issues impacting all of us who live, work and play here in Caledon. Whether we're talking about what's happening locally, about key decisions made (or not made!) by our municipal council, or promoting important local good news stories, talking about our various

non-profits, celebrating PRIDE month, or honouring Remembrance Day, we're sharing a local perspective on issues that may be of concern to every Caledon resident.

As the 'Talk Caledon,' title suggests, we're talking about things that matter to our residents and that have the potential to impact the greater good of every member of the community. So, whether we agree or disagree, let's keep engaging respectfully in conversations that keep the dialogue flowing. We're all each other's neighbours after all.

P.S. Before we go here's your last chance to choose your own adventure, this one will be about the next four years. I'm conducting an informal poll. Will it be 'Deja Doug,' or as David Bowie might have crooned in a song once, will there be 'Ch Ch Ch Ch ? Changes coming to Dufferin/Caledon?'