

?Dodging? Spring

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Is it possible to have two hopeful columns in a row when you are mostly a persnickety curmudgeon? I say this, because sometimes in this space I rant ad nauseum about the state of Caledon and our country, but the truth is I'm actually a pretty empathetic individual and mostly an eternal optimist. I always try to see the good in people and/or situations and my motto is ?try nice first.? These are not personality traits I would ever want to do away with, but seeing the world in this way does potentially leave you more vulnerable to bouts of despair (and the occasional inherently curmudgeon-like tendencies) brought on by the kind of disillusionment only an optimist can experience. That said, it's finally (and officially as of today) SPRING! So, much like last week's column talked about hope, the official arrival of spring still has me feeling good. Or does it? Like sushi left out on the counter overnight, it's dodgy.

Of course, I'm not feeling good as I traverse area roads filled with potholes so deep you could bathe a small child in some of them. But it's spring, and potholes are as predictable as death and taxes. And yes, you pay taxes so that potholes will be repaired, preferably before the bottom of your car falls off, but let's give the folks at Town Hall a break. As the snow finally melts and potholes become more pronounced, we have a responsibility as taxpayers and that's to report said craters to Town Hall. When properly reported, repair crews are then dispatched to deal with them. It won't happen overnight, nor is it reasonable to assume it will. There's a process and hint, hint, it's not posting and complaining about them on social media. Call Service Caledon at *311 or use the online tool, ?Report A Problem? on the Town of Caledon's website and then ? exercise some patience. I know most of us have very little of this increasingly rare commodity, but these things do take time. In the meantime, brush up on your driving skills as you play ?dodge the potholes.? Just dodge safely.

Along with patience and potholes, spring brings another ?p? word to mind and it's poop. You can say ?poop? in a family newspaper, right? Poop is worse than potholes because poop is something that can EASILY be fixed, no calls or special reporting tools required. Got a dog? Invest in poop bags. If you can afford a dog, and afford to feed a dog (hence the poop) you can afford to buy poop bags. Think of the poop as a physical fitness opportunity. Stoop and scoop. It's basically a squat. While you're out exercising (dog walking) take the extra 10 or 15 seconds it takes to be a human being, one that actually gives a s**t about your fellow human beings. (Oh, the irony.) As predictable as potholes, every year spring produces a plethora of poop that dog owners seem to think magically disappears in winter, leaving the rest of us dodging poop piles as they slowly melt into messy, biohazardous landmines dotting the landscape. There is literally no excuse for leaving your dog's business behind. Dogs don't know any better, but humans presumably do. Let's eliminate ?dodging doggie doo doo? as an annual springtime right of passage please.

But enough about that. On the bright side, did you know that according to a 2015 study (a bit outdated, but I'll take my good news any way I can get it) you are statistically safer in spring? Try saying that ten times fast! But seriously, it has to do with daylight savings time extending, well, daylight. Apparently with more daylight comes a 27% reduction in robbery rates. So more sunshine equals less crime. Or, in keeping with today's theme, you might say ?more daytime leads to less dodgy behaviour by those prone to dodginess.? Fun fact to keep in mind however, is that this bonus ?safe? time doesn't actually start today. That's because it's the spring equinox: a 24hour period with virtually the same amount of hours of both day, and night.

I'm sure there's got to be other things that are good about spring. I mean longer days and more sunshine are obvious; and eventually there will be flowers, but first comes all that rain, mud, and in some parts of Caledon, the very real risk of flooding. So even for an optimist like me, in spring it's easy to let the pessimist personality push through to the surface. Spring is a time when you can have a snowstorm and a thunderstorm in the same week, maybe even on the same day! Spring is a time when you leave the house in boots and a turtleneck and come home in a t-shirt and flip flops, but only if you planned accordingly, otherwise you're roasting like a fried egg on a sidewalk in summer. Spring is a time when you see grown men sporting shorts paired with a winter jacket because ?it's warming up outside? and nothing says that louder than bare legs, a coat and perhaps a toque. Spring is that quintessentially Canadian season when 10 degrees celsius is considered balmy, but in fall it would be time to don a heavy sweater or even a coat. Spring is essentially Mother Nature having a hot flash. It's a series of menopausal moments; hot, then drenched, then throwing open all the windows to let the cold air in. There's no dodging it. It's just gonna happen and with absolutely zero predictability. Now as one

woman to another, that I can relate to.