

Family Day in Caledon

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Never has there been a more appropriate time for me to talk about family. February features several "holidays," one historical and co-opted by Hallmark and the other manufactured by the government of Ontario (in part to help us through the February "gloomies" I think) but both centred around themes of love and cherishing time with a loved one, family and/or friends. This February in particular, I have been given a stark reminder of just how important it is to spend time with a cherished loved one and how we should never, ever, take that time for granted. If there is someone special in your life, or if you are really lucky, a number of truly special people you love, use the excuse of either February 14th or 17th to spend time together making memories. Time truly is your most precious gift and in the end memories will be all you have left. Make sure they are good ones.

The Town of Caledon can help you with at least one of these occasions. Hint?it's not Valentine's Day! Family Day weekend is fast approaching and Caledon offers a number of things to see and do around town. Caledon Parks and Recreation are sponsoring free events on the 17th including free public skates at Albion Bolton Community Centre and both Mayfield Recreation Complex and the Caledon East Community Complex. Free shinny is also scheduled. If swimming is more your thing, free pool time is being offered at Mayfield and at the Caledon Centre for Recreation and Wellness. Speaking of the CCRW, there are a slew of other activities too. Families can enjoy rock climbing, the preschool area, the youth lounge, face painting, soccer, basketball and more. If exploring the great outdoors sounds like fun check out the Parks and Rec / TRCA Snowshoes, Snow Clues event happening in Caledon East.

Caledon also offers an abundance of trail systems to explore on your own schedule. Bring along a thermos of hot chocolate and plan a picnic in the snow. If you're dressed accordingly ? there's no reason not to enjoy some special family time in the great outdoors! Albion Hills offers cross-country skiing as long as the weather co-operates and places like Belfountain and Forks of the Credit offer stunning scenery to explore all year round. On February 17th, Spirit Tree Cidery has a Wassail Festival ? a chance to expose your kids to a history lesson without them even realizing! A bonfire, free marshmallows and cider are all part of the experience. Also on the 17th is an event for families taking place at Teen Ranch that features a free skate at the Ice Corral. Face painting, hot chocolate, tubing and snow sculpting (weather permitting) are also on the agenda ? check out the caledon.ca/calendar for more information on this event.

While our focus today is on Family Day, did you know the Caledon Public Library system offers a number of special items on loan throughout the year? These include things to do with family, like passes to PAMA, the Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives as well as combination family passes to the TRCA / CVC. Talk about an "assortment of places to visit and activities to do!?" All you need is a library card to take advantage of this program. Free admissions, special discount offers and special parking rates (some free) are all part of this initiative. Check out the Caledon Public Library website at <http://www.caledon.library.on.ca/community%20partnerships/Passes>

(BTW ? if you need binoculars for your adventure, or even a pedometer to track your steps ? they have those to! Check out their "Special Collections" section.)*

I'm sure there are a number of other events and activities going on "out and about town" and I invite you to do further research on any of the events I have suggested here, or to find out about more about any I might have missed. For me, what's most important about this time of year (apart from beating those February winter blahs!) is the opportunity this holiday provides to force us to take some downtime with family. Of course, we shouldn't need to be forced and my sincerest hope for all of you is that time together with your loved ones doesn't feel forced. But if all else fails and you do need a reminder like this particular designated day ? then let me remind you; respectfully and with the full benefit of life experience, to embrace this chance to be with your family. Give your parents or your kids a little extra hug and you know what? Tell them you love them. Go make memories. In the end, love and memories are what matter most.

*Full disclosure: I am a member of the Caledon Library Board but present this information as an FYI only, separate from my role on

that Board.