

Hope ?Springs? Eternal

by SHERALYN ROMAN

As I write today, I am bathed in brilliant sunshine. Walking the dog this morning did not involve dodging massive snow drifts; enormous puddles made by melting snow drifts, or skating across frozen surfaces caused by melting then freezing snow drifts. I'm sure you catch my drift. It's a beautiful day, the kind of day that many might still find a bit on the chilly side, but one where you'll also find some hardy Canadians wearing shorts. Why? Because it's that time of year when we collectively stick our heads up out of our burrows, run outside to stare at the weird bright light in the sky and have hope ? a hope that ?springs? eternal every year around this time ? hope that spring is finally here.

Were we an alien elementary kid's science experiment, viewed under a bubble they've artificially created in order to watch us hatch, match, and dispatch, it's this time of year that they must be laughing at us so hard. ?Look,? they exclaim excitedly as the 24/7 cameras trained on us track our every move. ?The humans are running outside, they're staring at the sun ? one of them even has shorts on! Let's release some more snow just for fun!? And so it continues. Whether you believe in God, Allah, Aliens or Science, there is one universal truth we must surely all agree on and that's the naiveté of Canadians. Year after year after year we sigh contentedly on March 21 exclaiming loudly that spring is here, only to have our hopes madly dashed soon after by a significant dumping of snow or the overnight arrival of freezing rain, both turning our roads and sidewalks into skating rinks.

If that isn't bad enough, here in Caledon, spring also heralds the arrival again this year of your new best friend and mine: the LDD month.

Apparently, nothing kills those little fiends ? not even snow and ice. This spring, and even though they've been newly rechristened as the ?Spongy? moth (a creative name it took a team of 50 scientists and forestry management people to come up with) they're still as poised and ready as ever to invade us yet again.

As an aside, if you are looking to blame someone for the sheer volume of caterpillars/moths eating your foliage this year (it's not the Town of Caledon's fault), according to the Smithsonian, you can blame an amateur entomologist named Leopold Truevelot. The records indicate he was attempting to breed a hardier version of silkworm in the 1860s when several adult moths escaped his home in Massachusetts and now here we are.

This year, the first day of spring also heralded the arrival of the first day of no masks, or as some people refer to it, the first day of the next big ?super-spreader event.?

I'm guessing all that fresh air and sunshine does a better job of killing COVID than any of us (even the experts at the science table) thought and therefore, what better time than the first day of spring to doff the masks and breathe freely! After all, some of y'all will be wearing shorts what with the temperature climbing above zero so perhaps it also makes sense for you to feel the breeze both north and south of your waistline?

As for me, I might be temporarily blinded by the sun in the sky but I am not blind to the continued (perhaps even escalating) risk of contracting COVID. Just as my legs rarely see a pair of shorts, it'll be a rarity that my smile greets the sun without a mask on. I might be hopeful that spring will eventually herald the arrival of actual good weather but I'm willing to wait and see for a bit longer.

Spring almost always disappoints us at least once. Despite the sun, I'm reasonably certain there will be a dumping of snow again soon and I'm anticipating a dumping of COVID related cases too.

Ahhh spring, the eternal harbinger of both raising ? and crushing ? hope!