

May's Musings

Written by SHERALYN ROMAN

Sure, May isn't over yet but it feels like so much has happened already that delaying any mental musings until the month is officially over will simply result in an excessively long column. My 'May's Musings' may leave you feeling merry (there IS some good news) or maudlin, (ok, it's mostly bad) but one thing I do promise, I'll refrain from any further attempt at alliterations featuring the letter 'M.'

Mayoral Candidates

This musing is really just a happy confirmation that women; smart, savvy and committed individuals who love and support their community, are stepping up to place their name on the ballot for the upcoming municipal elections. I'm thrilled to be able to say to my daughter that there are at least two female candidates for Mayor of Caledon she can choose from. I'm also happy that our immediate northern neighbours in Orangeville will now have at least one female candidate on the ballot for their Mayoral race. It's way too early in the process to say anything other than congratulations to Jennifer Innis and Annette Groves in Caledon and Lisa Post in Orangeville for having the interest and the initiative to add your name to the ballot. Historically, women continue to remain underrepresented in politics and even though both Caledon and Orangeville have had women at the helm in the past, it still pleases me to no end that women are stepping forward again and again.

Highway 413

Just one question on this topic today if you'll indulge me. Why on earth have signs been erected both north and southbound Hwy 10 (at Old School Rd.) to announce this area is the 'Future Location of Hwy 413'? Isn't this just a tad presumptuous? Did I miss the release of the Federal level Environmental Assessment that's required to take place before construction begins? Has the month of May stretched on for so long that it's somehow already June 3 and Mr. Ford thinks his victory is assured and he can do as he pleases? How much money did the Progressive Conservatives spend just on those signs, never mind the billions and billions that will be spent on the highway to nowhere itself? Oops, looks like I misled you, there were quite a few more questions than just the one promised. My apologies.

On Crime and Punishment

I'm not talking about the classic book penned by Dostoevsky, but rather the crime committed by one Brady Robertson when he snuffed out the lives of three young girls and their mother two years ago. With 8x the legal level of intoxicants in his blood, he not only took lives (literally) but also ruined the lives of so many others in the process. In an ironic and cruel twist of fate, Jennifer Neville-Lake, who lost her three children (and her father) to an intoxicated driver just seven years ago, knew Karolina Ciasullo and spoke at the end of Robertson's sentencing hearing on May 16 asking, 'Why are we here again ? and again ? and again? We shouldn't be here again.' She's quite right. Why are we still seeing drunk and/or driving while high offenses even occur and why do the guilty parties appear to receive such light sentences? In the case of Marco Muzzo, who killed Neville-Lake's family, he is already out of jail and has been for some time. Best estimates place Brady's potential jail time at around 14 years considering time already served. A request to ban his application for parole until at least half of his sentence has been served was denied so it's anyone's guess when he'll walk free.

It Could Never Happen Here

Canada is a wonderful and welcoming country we proclaim as we thump our 'I am Canadian' t-shirts. We're rich in cultural diversity and we respect one another. Mass shootings never happen here and certainly, persons of colour, the Indigenous and/or racialized individuals are never targeted for crimes like the horror we saw unfold in Buffalo recently. At least that's what white, non-marginalized people are tweeting about. Perhaps instead we need to be asking the people who ARE targeted? A Muslim family

can't take an after-dinner family stroll down the streets of their hometown in London. Worshippers get gunned down in a mosque. The Federal leader of the NDP was verbally and virtually physically harassed by crowds outside of a candidates office and told to 'Go Home?' to where, exactly? It sure as heck can happen here and it HAS happened here and I'm pretty sure (although I'm sad to verbalize this) it will happen here again.

Get Out And Vote

Anyone know any young people? Maybe it's their first opportunity to vote? We need to do more as a community to encourage young people to use their voice to influence a future that will impact them more than any of us. If I knew how to use TikTok I would do it myself but I think the more important messaging would be from young adults themselves. If there were more exposure in high school to civics, law and social justice courses perhaps we wouldn't feel the need to try and actively recruit younger adults to vote because they'd already be engaged. With only a half credit required course on Civics ? in Grade 10 and long before they can vote ? and little opportunity to take ?interest? based courses because of funding cuts and a drive to finish school in four years, I'm not sure how we raise a more informed and curious voter base. Don't get me wrong, there are many, many young adults who are actively engaged but not enough to potentially influence the forming of a government and I think our current elected officials know it. Older people do vote and tend to vote along established party lines based on opinions formed years ago. In other words, the potential for change is minimal. In truth too few of us across the board at any age make the time to vote, further limiting the potential for ?democracy in action? to actually represent true democracy. It's a sad state of affairs when a country with so much freedom (despite what convoy attendees claim) and with relatively easy access to accessible polling stations within just a few kilometres from home, can't be bothered to exercise a right that many countries are literally still fighting for. ?Thank goodness we live in a democracy,? we all exclaim enthusiastically ? and then do absolutely nothing about it. Perhaps we get the government we deserve.

See what I mean about May? It's been a long, long, long month and by the time you read this we will have only just squeaked beyond the halfway point. I'm not sure how merry you all are feeling but frankly, I'm feeling pretty maudlin myself.