

Random Rumbblings, episode 3 or maybe it's 4?

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Occasionally, I replace my exclusively Caledon-centric focus with the random rumbblings that consume me in the middle of the night. Sometimes they're pertinent to current events in the Town and sometimes, not so much. I may not be sure what episode this is, but I do know these random rumbblings are hard to quell, bubbling up to the surface often enough that they demand attention here. With the month of August now upon us and the dreaded countdown to the end of summer having started, I hope you'll indulge me. Perhaps you share some of these same thoughts?

With back-to-school ads in full swing, backpacks and coloured pencils on sale, but nary a bathing suit available in stores, the dichotomy of the Canadian shopping experience is in full swing. If you'd wanted a bathing suit so you could swim in all this heat, you should have been shopping in March. If you're looking for a snowsuit, however, they're probably on sale now at Costco.

I don't know about you, but it seems to me the 'start' of the 'end of summer' is starting sooner each year. June 1 felt like a week ago, building toward the excitement of a summer soon to come. Driving past the Caledon Fairgrounds and seeing the sign for Strawberry Fest had me thinking that July 1st was just yesterday. Didn't we just celebrate Canada Day exuberantly - perhaps more so than usual this year because - well, because, 'thank goodness we're not Americans right now'? Yet somehow here we are, already it's August 1, and we're facing the countdown to the CNE (long known as the automatic end of summer) and I'm left wondering where the heck summer went?

Speaking of fleeting time, let's talk about motherhood. Yes, here it is, my brief ode to motherhood - the only job in the world where, if you excel at it, you'll eventually work yourself out of a job. In some cases, you'll be replaced by a newer, younger model - typically referred to as 'spouse,' 'wife,' 'husband,' 'life partner,' or other terms of endearment. Or, you might not be replaced at all, but your independent fledgling will have flown the coop, rendering you redundant.

But don't despair, we're told. It's all a direct result of your excellent efforts at: birthing, bathing, burping, feeding and ferrying (to school, to sports, to camp, to band practise, to the library, or to a friend's house.) Your promotion to irrelevancy comes from watching a million school performances, coaching hockey games, sewing costumes for dance recitals or 'helping' with homework, 'helping' in quotes because who the heck knows how to do the 'new math'? Your reward for not sleeping because they were teething, colicky, had nightmares or stayed out past curfew is that they grow up and leave your over-protective hands.

Now you get to replace the always waiting: waiting for them to pass through stages like teething or the terrible twos; or as teens, waiting for them to buckle up, smarten up, cheer up, or get home safe from the party, the concert, or from college, with always waiting for them to remember to call or visit. If you kept your kid alive, mostly got them to school on time, and they learned a few things along the way about being a nice human - kudos to you. Chances are you won't get a 'thank you' or any kind of promotion, salary increase or plaque-mounted award, but you do have that beautiful macaroni necklace from Mother's Day circa 2004. Cherish it.

Random rumbblings continued, I believe I have shared some silly superstitions in this space before. Being the first of the month, there's literally no better time than now to share another. I invite you to consider a timeworn superstition in our house, one I grew up with and ironically (I thought I was alone in this silliness) one that I recently found out is shared by the beautiful person about to become an official member of our family later this month. It involves saying (or in more recent years, texting) 'white rabbits,' or 'rabbits' on the first day of the month, preferably before noon. Why? I have no idea, but from the time I was old enough to say my own name I've started each and every single month of my life saying 'white rabbits.' I'm sure you'll agree that's a lot of wasted verbalization, but as I nudge slowly toward my sixth decade I'm not likely to break with this superstition now, lest this one act alone has been saving me from disaster!*

One last thought that's sort-of, kind-of, related to the themes of this episode of Random Rumbblings. I LOVE Canada. Not in a

convoy, hanging the flag from a hockey stick on my pick-up truck kind of way, but honest to goodness love this country. I'm sure we'll agree it has its flaws and while we brag about things like free healthcare, said care is in dire need of repair. However, it's still the best, most beautiful country on earth where most people, processes and policies are ? nice. You know what is not nice? The weather.

This entire column wouldn't exist if I hadn't been so sad about the fleeting glimpse of sunshine, warmth and pleasantness that is summer. And ya, sure, I might not ?appreciate the seasons? if we just had one long summer but you know what? A little longer summer and a little less winter is a good thing, in my opinion. I'm pretty sure I'd still appreciate the seasons and this slight weather adjustment would make Canada pretty much perfect! Rumbblings done. For now. Join us for our next episode where it's entirely possible we'll have figured out which episode we're actually on!

*A post-column Google search found multiple reasons for the existence of this particular superstition, most of them (not surprisingly) linking back to the belief that rabbits are lucky, so some folks might carry around a ?lucky rabbit's foot.? Perhaps not so lucky for the rabbit though?