

## Readers weigh in on Caledon's fireworks ban

I completely agree with Caledon banning the use of fireworks by any individual for personal use.

For anyone that has pets and animals that are terrified of the noise, this is a huge relief.

Not to mention farmers with livestock and all wildlife that is affected. Or how about those that suffer from PTSD? There is simply no justification for using fireworks this day and age when there are other means to celebrate occasions.

Some cultural holidays last for days and fireworks are going off in the middle of the night at 2 and 3 and 4 in the morning! What about the people that are not getting proper sleep and have to get up and go to work?

There are just far too many instances where people have not been considerate to others and it's just time to ban it.

For those that will disobey the bylaw, they need to be fined.

### **Deborah Hepburn Caledon**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this unprecedented over-reach by Town Council.

My wife and family will have resided in Caledon Village for 40 years and this banning of a long-standing tradition of family fireworks in celebrating Canada Day is consistent with the gradual decline in resources and services prioritizing the needs of youth and families in our community.

It's also an astonishing disregard for the changing demographics of our community with the celebration of other religious and non-Judeo/Christian cultures such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Caledon Village lost its only public pool and the popular Kids of Steel event years ago due to poor Town fiscal planning. Village youth are still forced to skateboard on the post office steps while we're waiting years for the promised community skate pad.

We still don't have a public baseball diamond and are dependent on the good grace of the Agricultural Society.

We lost the popular annual Winter Fest at the Fair Ground. The Village recently even had the

Village Santa Claus parade cancelled, again due to questionable safety concerns.

We only recently acquired an outdoor skating rink.

Do I need to go on?

Even though some of these events were privately organized, the Town showed no interest or investment in supporting their continuation.

From my perspective as a community and clinical social worker having been involved in numerous community youth planning initiatives, and from my personal childhood experiences celebrating 'Fire Cracker Day' in my family backyard in Scarborough, I consider enjoyment of fireworks celebrations to be a 'rite of passage' for Canadian youth.

We live on a 1.5-acre property in the Caledon Village and as grandparents enjoy having our grandchildren along with other extended family (two of whom are firefighters) over to our home every Canada Day to safely enjoy a family fireworks display. I have seen no

reported evidence of significant damage to property or fires in the community to justify such a draconian move as to essentially ban domestic family fireworks.

It seems inconsistent with Council's relaxed position on allowing residents to keep chickens in their back yard with obvious community health concerns.

The last time I looked a few years ago, Caledon already was unique in Ontario in its rigid restrictions by not allowing even a single rain day back up provision for fireworks displays.

There seems to be a distinct longstanding unjustifiable bias by the Town against fireworks demonstrations.

The only complaint I've personally heard from residents is the noise disturbance affecting their pets. While the rest of us non-pet owners are generally tolerant of nightly and early morning dog barking and droppings on our boulevards, we should expect some reasonable consideration and tolerance of fireworks two nights out of the whole year.

This is a real slippery slope by Town Council in its apparent overzealous concerns for community safety trumping family and cultural/religious traditions.

What next? Will Council ban tobogganing, ice fishing, road hockey, outdoor Christmas lighting displays as potential safety hazards, putting Christmas lights up before Veteran's Day, or restrict Halloween audio displays and trick-or-treating after dark?

How much of the enjoyment of life are we willing to give up in the name of safety? It's also pretty insensitive of Council to at this time to ban a well-established tradition of families celebrating Canada Day on the heels of two years of unprecedented restrictions on our civil rights and freedoms in addressing COVID.

### **David McWhirter Caledon Village**

I wanted to email my support of the fireworks ban.

For the past five to six years of living in Bolton, the quiet town turned into a nightmare on any day fireworks were allowed.

Not only does fireworks trigger many individuals with PTSD and other disorders, it affects animals, dogs and other domestic animals who are terrified of the noise.

Further to that, our neighbours continuously shot fireworks off in a dangerous manner all over other houses and were never regulated in how the fireworks should be done safely.

The next day we would wake up to firework debris all over the lawns and rooftops. Thankfully, no fires were set as the days before had rained.

I had young children during the past years living here and it disrupted and destroyed our lives for years.

Neighbours would set them off at 11 p.m. and at times even 1 a.m. Their comments were that our young children didn't need to wake up for work so why should we care.

This is the best thing that could be done for the Town of Caledon.

I am proud of the decisions that have been made and it makes me feel confident in our elected officials. Thank you again for standing your ground and making decisions for the good of this city and community!

## **Sophia Caggiano Bolton**