

Reflections

by SHERALYN ROMAN

In the midst of a pandemic it's important, now more than ever, that we take some time to reflect on the good in our world rather than all the bad news we're bombarded with every day. It's important too however, that we forgive ourselves for the occasional wallowing in despair. These are the darkest times many of us have ever faced and there is absolutely no comparison to anything we have ever experienced before. Some will rise to the occasion and some will let their anger, fear, and frustration get the better of them. What strikes me as most important during this time is something that every major world religion suggests in one form or another, which is ?judge not, lest ye be judged.? During this time, we must all try to focus on the positive.

Let's start with some good news. Stories are emerging of young adults who are taking this time away from school to do some pretty amazing things. They're setting an example for the adults around them about how to handle a crisis. What do you do? You dive right in, ask how you can help, then set about doing something of service to the community. There is Fiona Welch-St John, who we learned about from Tony Rosa, Ward 5 Councillor. She's in Grade 10 at St. Michael's in Bolton and she is putting her sewing skills to good use making masks for health care professionals. She's using her own personal stash of material, taking all necessary precautions while creating them and then setting them out, sanitized and ready for a safe porch pick up for those in need. Visit Councillor Rosa's facebook page to find out more about how to get in touch with Fiona. Thank you Fiona!

In another shining example, there is a young man in Caledon Village who is also doing his part to contribute, making ear guards for the health care professionals who have to wear masks day in and day out for 12 hours shifts and who are starting to feel the pain of doing so. Inspired by a facebook post, 14 year old Josh Bamford began making ear guards using his 3-D printer and offering them to local health care providers. He did the research online to find the design and began production immediately. Josh is offering these ear guards free of charge and, like Fiona, has created a sanitized and safe porch pick up option. To date, he's had requests from as far away as Meaford where he recently shipped 10 to ER nurses working there. Josh isn't looking for recognition, donations or anything else other than the opportunity to use his experience to encourage anyone with a 3D printer to consider doing the same. You have to see a picture to truly appreciate how this product works ? no more constant chafing behind the ears! Visit the Caledon Village Community Group facebook page and use messenger to connect with Angie Hopkins if you'd like to place an order.

On a less positive note, we continue to witness and hear stories of folks who are taking out their frustrations on grocery store staff. I'd like to remind everyone that throughout this crisis, it isn't only the Doctors, Nurses and other health care professionals who are providing an essential service, it's your local cashier, stockperson and store management too. Some of these folks are part time students who are now juggling online learning, dealing with the public while managing their own fears around this pandemic and whether part time or full time ? these are the folks who are keeping your family fed! Be nice to them! It costs you nothing to say a simple thank you at the end of your checkout experience. Thank them for showing up to work each day so you could feed your family. Unlike front line workers like paramedics and firefighters, these folks didn't ?sign up for this.? They are simply supporting their own families or working hard to save money for their future. Please everyone, enough with the griping, complaining and downright mean spirited comments. I'm frankly appalled at some of what I have heard.

The same comments apply to those keyboard warriors who sit in safety, at home, posting comments on social media about a local businesses they drove past once, saw an ?Open? sign and assumed the worst. Immediately passing judgement based only on a glimpse is harmful and unnecessary and goes against the spirit of what I know Caledon truly stands for. Perhaps these companies have curbside delivery, perhaps they aren't open at all but merely a shopkeeper working on their accounts in the backroom or simply checking on their store. ?Judge not lest ye be judged? has never been truer than now. These are difficult times for small business owners and they need our support, not condemnation. Don't assume anything. We're all in this together and only by uniting our efforts toward this common enemy will we be successful.

Finally, for both Christians and Jewish families around the world and here at home, this is a sacred time of year. It's a time when many families would normally gather in worship and to enjoy a meal together. It's also a time for our little ones to celebrate, as many

might be expecting a visit from the Easter Bunny. I implore you all to remember the rules of physical distancing while still embracing this opportunity to put thoughts of the pandemic on hold for a day or two. Attend religious services virtually. ?Visit? with family through Zoom or facetime or other social media tools that facilitate a safe way to gather. Help your little ones to enjoy this special occasion, even if it might look a little different from any other year. They're coping with a lot too. No school routines, no friends to hang out with and parks are off limits. The Easter Bunny has thankfully been declared an essential service ? so do the best you can to continue whatever time honoured traditions you follow in your house, knowing that the best you can is good enough in a time where these traditions will look a little different this year. No one should be judging.