

# EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

## Stay safe this Victoria Day Weekend

For so many of us Canadians, the Victoria Day Weekend—a.k.a the May Long Weekend, or the May 2-4—means different things. For some it's a chance to spend time with family and friends with barbecues and parties, for others it's the beginning of cottage season. For gardeners, the May Long Weekend usually represents the point when one can begin planting flowers and be reasonably assured there will be no more freak snowfalls. Though, one can only hope that by saying so, I haven't jinxed us.

The Victoria Day Weekend dates back to 1845 when the legislative assembly of the Province of Canada declared Queen Victoria's birthday—May 24—an official holiday. Since then, Victoria Day is celebrated across Canada on the Monday prior to May 25 except in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. In Quebec the holiday is called National Patriotes Day (Journée nationale des Patriotes).

The Victoria Day weekend often feels like the unofficial launch of the summer season, and between the barbecuing, camping, cottaging, and gathering with friends and family, it isn't unusual to enjoy a beer, glass of wine, frothy cocktail to celebrate. However, while celebrating the coming season, it is important to drink responsibly.

The Canada Road Safety Week campaign, running from May 15 to 21 and endorsed by police services across the country, reminds us of the importance of not getting behind the wheel of a car after consuming drugs or alcohol, as well as slowing down and not driving while distracted—stop texting or using your phone while you drive.

Ontario Provincial Police released a statement earlier this week noting that OPP saw the highest number of road fatalities last year—343—in five years. The statement also indicated that not-at-fault motorcyclist deaths were on the rise, and that last year's "historically tragic motorcycle season" with 48 deaths marked a 10-year high.

Nine of last year's 22 off-road fatalities found drivers not wearing a helmet. The same number of deaths occurred the previous year—2016—with the same number of drivers not wearing a helmet.

As we get ready for the long weekend and welcome the summer weather after a long cold winter, it's important to remember to be safe. Whether travelling out of town or staying local on Victoria Day, remember to drive safely; put away your phone, watch your speed, don't drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and wear a seat belt. And I hope everyone has a safe and happy long weekend.



**WORK GOES ON:** Site servicing construction is well underway for the new townhouse development on the former Heller industrial lands at the west end of McDonald Avenue. - Les Schmidt photo

## Knowing when to let go



By  
**Angela Tyler**

May is probably my least favourite month. It's insanely busy for me. Before having kids, it was just a nice spring month. Every household has at least one month a year that everything overlaps. This is our month, and it is brutal.

First, the Dude is incredibly busy at work. Long days, longer nights and if asked, "how are the wife and kids?" he will jokingly reply that he's not sure because he hasn't seen us in a month. He sees us but we're ships passing in the night, so to speak. A few minutes here, a peck on the cheek or a phone call squeezed in there. Every moment is appreciated in anticipation of when the mad rush slows down at the end of the month.

On top of it all, we also have the start of dance recital season. Little J loves her dance and takes three classes—by her choice—and when recital draws near, she eagerly chooses to participate in both the opening number and finale. For those of you not familiar with the land of glitter and stage makeup, this means additional rehearsals on top of the regular lessons.

The little guy is our musician. His thing is drums and being a scheduling mom, I made sure dance classes and drum les-

sons co-ordinate. It is precision work that is meticulously timed. Leaving Two minutes late or road construction can throw the whole night off. I tell the kids if they want to do these things, I will make it work. But they know when it's time to go, we are more often than not running for my truck to make it on time. Being accountable and respecting the set times for lessons and classes is important in my books.

Lucky me, soccer also starts in May. This year, our musician/future David Beckham—who will support his mother through his soccer superstar fame, lol—is playing soccer two nights a week, and one of those nights happens to be dance and drum night. Precision timing just entered a whole new level. Good news for our soccer player, he will be getting his legs warmed up before he hits the field because he'll be running from my truck and he will be increasing his flexibility as he changes into his soccer uniform while wearing his seat belt properly. Not sure when eating will fit

into that night but I'm sure I can find a time slot.

As much as May is truly exhausting for me, I am thankful our insane schedule really only lasts about six weeks in total. I really don't know how families with kids that have multiple extra-curricular activities like this all year long do it. When I talk to my good friend whose kids are into typical Canadian ice activities, I don't know how she manages going from one rink to another from town to town then do it all over again in the summer. I am in awe of her, especially.

But I guess that's just what we do as moms and dads. We make things work. We learn to juggle and balance and make sure our kids are able to do the things they want to do. Then once a year in May and again in June our kids take a moment to thank us on Mother's Day and Father's Day. They give us the handmade card or the macaroni necklace they made in nursery school, or just tell us how much they love us because really that's all we need. We just need that one moment; that one gesture; that one "thank you" and "I love you mom/dad". Now, if I can just figure out when they're going to get dinner on Wednesday nights...



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