

Warm spell has 'been terrific'

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"On Friday it was full from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.," said McSween.

Praveen Suresh of Boston Pizza said the patio there has been a popular spot since they opened it last Wednesday. He said Tuesday afternoon "all of the (occupied) tables in the restaurant are on the patio."

The summer-like temperatures have also brought out the golfers early.

Jeff Czuba, Director of Golf at Granite Ridge, said they have been busy since the opened March 7— a month earlier than last year.

"It's been insane," said Czuba. "We have been fully booked on both of our courses. It's been a terrific start."

The beautiful weather has inspired many to fire up their barbecues as well.

Pat Commisso, owner of Pat's Prime Cuts & Deli Mountainview Rd. said he's been really busy.

"When the weather is good, business is good," said Commisso.

He said over March break it was busier than usual because area residents who didn't head south were home enjoying the weather and barbecuing.

People have been buying anything that can be grilled. Commisso said it's been challenging keeping up with the demand, but he's not complaining. He's even had to beg some of his suppliers to bring in more product.

While some believe the warmer than normal spring will translate into an unbearably hot summer, Environment Canada's senior climatologist David Phillips says that may not be the case.

Calling our balmy winter "unprecedented" for breaking warm weather records, Phillips said that while higher than normal temperatures have contributed to an abnormally warm start to spring, the trend may not necessarily last.

In spring, warmer air from the southern U.S. moves into Canada and is tempered by the winter's Arctic air— usually. This year's southerly winds are not only several weeks ahead of schedule, but that Arctic air is almost non-



Runner Debbie Sharp found the warm weather made the run a bit more enjoyable Monday.

Photo by Ted Brown

existent, causing a much warmer end of winter and start to spring.

A normal high temperature for this time of year is 6C. We might see a record 26C today, but don't expect the 20C leap to last.

"There's no way its going to be 47C (in June)," Phillips said. "You can't extrapolate."

But the recent warm trend is not your run-of-the-mill heat wave. Since March 11, many parts of Canada including the GTA have enjoyed double-digit temperatures and the last day of snow was March 9. Warm-weather records have been set across the U.S. and Canada, including the GTA.

And if there's no snow until next winter, a whole new record will be set— it's never happened before, at least since record-keeping began in 1937.

The weekend forecast calls for a sunny high of 17C on Friday before the temperature falls drop to a more moderate 12C on Saturday and 15C on Sunday with rain expected both days. The normal high is 6C.

—With files from Torstar News Service

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