

EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

What it means to be Canadian

What does it mean to be Canadian? This is the question The New Tanner posed to readers for both our Word on the Street and Word in the Village features this week, and the answers we received were as varied as the people we asked. But I wondered, as I often do, what my own answer would have been?

As Canadians, we are peppered with stereotypes—some crazy like we to eat nothing but poutine while drinking gallons of beer, and others perhaps a little closer to the mark like a reputation for being polite. However, in a time when a world leader can push past another world leader for his chance at a photo opp, perhaps consideration and respect for others is something everyone should be practising a little more of. But that's a rant for another day.

We, as Canadians, are known for apologizing. I'm sorry, but I just don't get that one. Were known for the words "oot and about" and "eh," which I vehemently deny Canadians say. Though, I conceded there may be a slim possibility that after years of exposure, I just don't hear them anymore.

We are known for the cold, for hockey, maple syrup and our strange ham-like bacon. I can't help but notice just how many of these stereotypes centre around food, and that's not even including ketchup potato chips and Kraft Dinner. Were known for being funny, and some might even add passive aggressive, but I would like to believe there is more to being Canadian than food and humour.

I prefer to think about how talented, creative and innovative Canadians can be—proven by the invention of things like the zipper, insulin, and butter tarts—more food—and talents like Margaret Atwood and the Tragically Hip. The list of things Canadians have contributed to the world is extensive and in some cases even surprising.

I like to think that most Canadians are kind and supportive to those in need as we've seen evidence of when disasters strike locally and around the world. I believe we are a country who is inclusive and truly appreciates diversity and freedom. And we are fortunate to live in a country that is vast and beautiful, filled with natural wonders.

This Canada Day I will be celebrating with family and friends. There may be beer, though poutine is unlikely. I will do my best to be considerate to the people around me. I'll apologize if warranted. I will not say "oot and about" or "eh." Mostly, however, I will celebrate the things I love about this country. I will celebrate how I want to, and I hope others celebrate the way they want to, and that's what being Canadian means to me.



MONUMENT CONCERNS: Many residents called into the Town last week to report vandalism at Acton's Fairview Cemetery, but workers were actually carrying out monument repairs. Halton Hills staffer Roger Vanderham said several of the larger monuments were starting to lean, and to prevent them from toppling, they had to dismantle them completely and level their bases. - Vivien Fleisher photo

Letting kids be kids



By
Angela Tyler

In 48 hours we will be in full sesquicentennial mode. We will wear our red and white, don our Canadian flags, toast our fabulous country while watching parades, eating at picnics and indulging in a cold beer or a "timmies" as true Canadians do and for once we will not apologize.

However, what happens after our grand day?

School is out for this year. The big 150 is over. It is summer time and enter the question... what are you doing this summer? I find now with the kids being in elementary school we get that question a lot. "Soooooo what are you guys doing? Going on vacation? Going to camp?" people ask. Some are just asking to be nosey. However, for most it is small talk and the thing to ask kids.

For some moms, though, there is a lot of pressure on what they are going to do with their kids. If both parents are working parents, there is the normal course of action—daycare or summer camp. Long gone are the days of only having a choice of going to a town run day camp. There are science camps, nature camps, magic camps. There are soc-

cer camps and hockey camps, and of course, the town run day camps. It is actually overwhelming the choices of camps kids have these days. A lot of people are shocked to find out that we booked our camps in March. I found out the hard way a few years back that if you're wanting to get a kid into a day camp, you can't expect to book in June.

However, not every kid goes to camp or daycare, and even if they do go to one, there are still a lot of other days that the pressure is on for the parents to "find something to do". In Milton, there is actually enough local parks and splash pads that a mom created a bingo card sort of thing that takes a family through every park/splash pad for a month. Every day is a different park.

Parents are begging for ideas for things to do with their kids and it doesn't take long to add up financially. I know for us, an outing to the movies and dinner out can easily cost \$100. We

haven't ventured yet to Wonderland, and I can't even begin to think what that would cost. I'm guessing the days when I bought a seasons pass for \$25 are long gone.

However, why do we parents feel the need to "find something to do" with the kids? Why can't some of the summer just be kids being kids? Summer for me when I was a kid was riding my bike every day for hours on end throughout Acton and playing at one or two parks. If it rained, we would head inside to play Barbies. If it was sunny, we played tennis on the street using the big crack in the pavement to mark the net. Then at the end of the summer, what we "did" was go the CNE for a day and if we were lucky we would park off site and ride the TTC to the grounds.

We live in a world that is riddled with stress. Why do we feel that when someone asks "what are you doing this summer" that our reply needs to include elaborate plans? Why can't we just let kids enjoy being kids and their summer vacation? Why do we feel the need to do when maybe all we really want is to be?



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