

OUTDOOR RECREATION SHOULD BE REOPENED

EXPERTS AGREE THESE ACTIVITIES AREN'T THE CAUSE OF COVID SPREAD, WRITES RICK BONNETTE



RICK BONNETTE
Column

Premier Doug Ford's most recent lockdown has shut down outdoor recreation (golf, tennis and pickleball), patios, hair salons and much more.

I have written the premier, passing on your concerns to reconsider these closures. Here is why. Every epidemiologist that I have seen or heard on the radio or TV is supportive of outdoor activity. Here are two samples.

"If you're outdoors and spaced apart, or wearing masks, the risk is low. This year has shown us how important it is to get outside, and it's actually a nice thing knowing it's safer outdoors." — Ashleigh Tuite, epidemiologist, University of Toronto

"Closing golf courses, tennis and pickleball is not the answer. We know where the vast majority of transmission occurs, and we know it is not outdoors. Let's focus our energy on where the vast majority occurs and that's indoor environments." — Isaac Bogoch, infection disease specialist, Toronto General Hospital

Physical health leads to good mental health.

I have heard reports of a few people being unkind to our staff who are working in the field.

This includes public works employees who are posting signs and erecting barriers, and bylaw officers who are responsible for enforcing provincial orders related to COVID-19.

Everyone is tired and frustrated — I get it. The lockdown orders, while tiresome and inconvenient, were enacted by the provincial government to safeguard all of us from further spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The reality is we must adhere to the safety protocols. Together, we will get through this. In the meantime, please be kind.

Please be respectful. Town staff are just doing their jobs.

It is our responsibility to carry out and enforce provincial direction.

Congratulations to Halton Hills Hydro president Art Skidmore on his retirement. Art worked for Halton Hills Hydro for over 20 years. He was a tireless worker who served on many boards, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Georgetown Hospital.

I was very saddened to hear of former Georgetown Citizen of the Year Dee Dee Haynes-Ridley's passing. Dee Dee touched many lives. Our deepest sympathies to her family and friends.

Rick Bonnette is the mayor of Halton Hills. Follow him on Twitter @RickBonnette1 and Instagram @rick_bonnette1.

YOU OPINIONS

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SNAPSHOT



Diane Curtin photo

A pair of doves enjoy the morning sun in a backyard in Acton. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

REAL ESTATE MARKET CAUSE FOR ANXIETY

ESCALATING HOUSE PRICES AND BALLOONING MORTGAGES CAN BE A SOURCE OF MENTAL STRAIN, WRITES PETER WATSON



PETER WATSON
Column

How much is your house worth?

That seems to be a hot topic these days. In many communities, house prices are escalating rapidly.

Bidding wars can turn into more than an attempt to purchase your dream home.

For many, it is a competition.

Some might make an offer at a price level that would have seemed out of reach for them financially even a week earlier.

The focus is on the selling price. That is what we all want to know.

Transaction details are public information. Often news travels faster by word of mouth.

In my opinion, the focus should shift to the effect this crazy housing market is having on the buyers of those houses.

Think of the mental anguish a homebuyer goes through.

Suddenly, a couple can look at their new domain and realize they have a mortgage approaching \$1 million or more.

That kind of financial jolt into carrying debt far above their comfort level can be overwhelming.

What happens if interest rates increase when you renew your mortgage? Can you afford to have an unexpected cost of repairing a roof or replacing a furnace?

What happens if someone within the household loses their job?

Your previous worry of being shut out of the rising housing market has now shifted to the reality of your financial exposure.

That is the new demon that can keep you awake at night.

Peter Watson, of Watson Investments MBA, CFP®, R.F.P., CIM®, FCSI offers a weekly financial planning column, Dollars & Sense. He can be contacted through www.watsoninvestments.com.

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