

LET YOUR COMMUNITY SPIRIT SHINE

IF YOU CAN, PLEASE HELP THOSE IN NEED THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, WRITES RICK BONNETTE



RICK BONNETTE
Column

Winter is definitely here. The days are getting shorter, the nights are getting colder and the holiday season is around the corner.

It's a time to think about those in our community who are vulnerable and less fortunate.

There are many local organizations and charities looking for donations so they can provide clothing, toys and food to those in need. For those of you who can, please donate to these organizations that may give hope and a smile to a family or individual in need during the holiday season.

At a recent council meeting, we had a staff report on sidewalk snow clearing.

We clear about 160 kilometres of sidewalks in town. We clear the sidewalks in commercial and school areas, but we can't do them all, as that would be too costly for you, the tax-

payers, to pick up the tab.

So, to borrow a phrase from the City of Toronto, "Be nice and clear your ice." Your neighbours who may be elderly will be grateful.

Speaking of ice, skating is a great form of exercise. The town will once again (weather permitting) be making outdoor rinks. Last year we had more outdoor rinks than in previous years, including at additional neighbourhood locations where volunteers partnered with the town.

A special reminder to all parents: do not allow your children to skate or play shinny on stormwater ponds.

The ice on these ponds doesn't freeze to a safe thickness. Last year, a youngster in Milton fell through the ice on a stormwater pond and drowned. We don't want the same tragedy here.

I am very happy that our four-legged friends have an early Christmas gift. Our new leash-free park on Trafalgar Road is now open. Judging by the wagging tails, our new bark park is a resounding success.

Lastly, on behalf of town council and staff, I want to wish you a very happy holiday season (and merry Christmas). Please shop local and support our businesses.

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

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SNAPSHOT



Tony Fortunato photo

An eastern bluebird prepares to take a dip in a backyard bird bath in rural Georgetown. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

HOLIDAY SPENDING ON THE RISE

CANADIANS PROJECTED TO SPEND SIGNIFICANTLY MORE THAN LAST YEAR, WRITES PETER WATSON



PETER WATSON
Column

Holiday spending is forecasted to rise sharply from last year. After the pandemic lockdown, Canadians want to shop, celebrate and spoil friends and family.

This insight is according to Deloitte Canada's 2021 Holiday Retail Outlook.

Holiday spending during 2021 is expected to increase 31 per cent over last year, which is an increase of eight per cent since 2019.

A little over half of Canadians want to support small businesses in their community. That is their

this holiday season. That is more than double those that indicated they would not be spending in last year's survey.

Most of those not planning to spend this year have lower incomes. The main concern was higher food costs.

While it might be interesting to compare spending patterns with our southern neighbours, it is more meaningful to compare spending habits between Canadians depending on their financial resources.

Canadians have varying financial ability and spending reflects that.

On a positive note, Canadians expect to donate significantly more this year than they did in 2019.

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

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