

CARPE DIEM

The way we approach our senior years is, to some extent, conditioned by what our parents taught us. Valerie and I were discussing this the other day and comparing how our parents looked at the future and how we were behaving. As she pointed out our parents had suffered through 2 world wars, serious economic depression and in my case immigration to a foreign country (Canada) because of religious riots in their home country Northern Ireland.

The basic instructions to me as a lad by my parents was that as a male I was expected to get as much education as could be afforded, start to work as soon as I could (in my case 10 yrs old as a part-time delivery boy), save my money, get a good permanent job, marry, raise a family all the while saving what I could.

The goals they saw for me were have a good job, provide a home and security for my family and help my children to have a better life than mine. The goals for my sisters were much the same except they should not work after having children but rather concentrate on raising the family. Work after the children had grown up was okay but usually by that time your skills were not saleable on the market.

Since both parents were ordained Pentecostal ministers there were a number of other goals, as I'm sure, you can imagine. There was not much room for "frivolous fun" and travel was okay as long as it did not negatively impact on the future "security" of the family.

How dreary I can hear some of you saying but this "puritan work ethic" approach to life, was, in my view, one of the factors that formed the basis of the strength of the so-called free world. While both Valerie and I were raised in similar ways we did not, of course, follow it blindly except, perhaps, the emphasis on the work part.

After retirement we were free to indulge ourselves but for a time some feelings of guilt would arise if we felt we were, perhaps, being profligate. Our "need" to work did not diminish and we both have been active volunteers since we retired. Plans for the House in the South for winter have been shelved and we have begun to travel more. The volunteer part, I suppose, overcomes the warning in Luke 12, 16-22 often quoted to me as a youth dreaming of amassing great wealth.

Our children are well situated and certainly do not raise the grandchildren the way we were. This presents no problem since times have certainly changed. Today there is more emphasis on self fulfillment on finding out what we are good at and what makes us happy even if the path is not necessarily financially rewarding. There is the notion that

relaxing, taking things easier, taking time off and having a balance in life is good for you. Just imagine suggesting that to my or Valerie's parents.

As we get older we recognize that as long as we have good health we should take every opportunity to see and do the things we always have wanted to. Valerie is determined to visit Egypt, but every time we think about it some violent event appears in the news, but we are coming to the conclusion that carpe diem – just let's go!

This idea that time is fleeting was bought home to us this week. A friend, whom we admired greatly, loved spending time with his family who lived in various parts of the world. He relished each day, had, as Valerie described, a true joie de vivre and always strove to be pleasant to everyone he met. He relished the success of his children and friends. He truly lived by the motto, Carpe Diem—live for today and enjoy the present.

We were shocked the other day to receive an e-mail advising that he had died after an accident.

- John A Jackson

Quinte Conservation Encourages You to be 'Well Aware'

Quinte Conservation is 'well aware' that an old, unused well can be a direct path for contaminants to reach our groundwater. The local conservation agency is taking steps to properly decommission old wells on its properties and is encouraging other landowners, both private and public, to do the same. A well near the parking lot at the Portland Conservation Area located on the east side of Highway 38, about 2 km south of the Village of Verona was publicly decommissioned on June 21.

"An unused and un-maintained well that has not been properly plugged and sealed poses health and safety hazards. Quinte Conservation wants to create awareness and provide leadership on this important issue by properly decommissioning one of its unused wells," says Mark Boone,

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