

Doing the right thing is no accident

One day, while travelling past a friend's house, I noticed my friend's vehicle had sustained a great deal of damage. I quickly contacted her to find out how she and her family were doing. I was relieved to learn that none of them had sustained any injuries, as none of them were in the vehicle when the accident occurred.

Their vehicle was in a parking lot, and there were no witnesses to the incident. I was appalled to learn, given the extent of the damage, that no one had come forward, as much as they solicited the neighbourhood for help. To this day they do not know who damaged their car. This was an accident that has become a crime.

This was in stark contrast to what I had experienced a few years ago when I witnessed a lady accidentally backing onto someone else's car. She was visibly shaken by this, and immediately looked around for a pen and paper in order to leave a note on the other person's vehicle. Although the vehicle had a foreign licence plate and she probably would never have bumped into the owner (pardon the pun), I thought it was highly civil of the lady to do so. I am sure that the people who had their vehicle hit appreciated the gesture of responsibility as well.

The lady who hit the foreign vehicle is an example of proper etiquette and civility toward others. She probably reacted to the situation in a way she would have liked, had her vehicle been the one that had been hit. She honoured the golden rule of treating others as you would like to be treated. While accidents do happen, and laws are created to govern society, and yes, to err is human, the basis of a civil society is a genuine concern for others, and a self-imposed responsibility for our actions.

Helpful Etiquette

by Mabel Stewart

Starved for darkness

Rena Woss

Lethbridge Astronomy Society

In our orbit around the sun, we crossed the darkest point in our journey a few months back (Dec. 21 winter solstice). We're now well on our way towards the spring equinox. As you've noticed, the days are growing longer and the nights shorter. No doubt you're feeling better already!

We can't deny our love affair with light. Without it, there would be no life. But have we gone too far? Since the invention of the electric light bulb a mere 140 years ago, we've intruded upon the night so thoroughly and intensely that from space our planet now glows like a ginormous light bulb; and today, if we wanted, we could be immersed in light 24/7!

Scotobiology is a branch of science that studies how darkness affects living organisms. It turns out that as much as we need daylight for health, we also need darkness — time away from light. For it's only in complete darkness that the body is able to produce melatonin and a host of cancer-fighting hormones vital for health. Every living thing needs darkness, including trees, birds and butterflies, your indoor plants and the fish in your aquarium.

Rule of thumb is if you are going to expose your indoor plants and creatures to artificial light, give them an extra dose of artificial light during daylight hours to keep them in sync with the rhythms of nature. For yourself, consider removing laptops, night lights and lit gadgets from your bedroom — you'll find you will sleep better and feel better. Many of today's modern diseases including cancer, diabetes and a host of mental disorders are linked to not getting enough darkness.

For more on this fascinating subject, check out <http://darksky.org/light-pollution/human-health/> or <http://www.lethbridgeastronomysociety.ca/light-pollution.html>.

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PHOTO BY MANSOOR LADHA

It was coffee time for these Greek women who enjoy their break and a little bit of gossip.

ATHENS

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Most of the tourist shops are stocked with lot of stuff and most of it is junk but you'll always find something interesting to take home as souvenir. As a habit, I usually like to buy something from every country that I visit to remind of the great time I had. I bought a Greek vase beautifully decorated, now proudly displayed in our living room.

The Greeks consider themselves as foodies. It's very common for Greek families to gather around the table to enjoy a meal prepared by the housewife. "This is a strong social Greek custom well honoured," explained our taxi driver Stavros Exarchos. "Therefore, we cherish the same atmosphere in an ordinary Greek restaurant or tavern: relaxing, simple and informal." Stavros said he takes his family for a meal to his favourite restaurant, O Thanasis.

On the high recommendation of our friendly and knowledgeable taxi driver, we went to O Thanasis, located in the heart of Plaka. Patrons can either sit outside or go in. When we arrived there, we had to wait for a table of four for outside for about 10 minutes but the wait was worthwhile as we were not disappointed with the food served. Thanasis specializes in lamb dishes such as Greek lamb kababs and Greek lamb souvlaki. The restaurant owner obliged us with a tour of the facility and described the beginnings of the restaurant.

I generally avoid going into a restaurant in touristy areas whose staff are standing outside trying to coax customers to come in. Thanasis makes no attempt to lure patrons as they seem to be known for their dishes. A

restaurant owner from a different area who was dining at the time told me Thanasis was the only restaurant besides his own where he has been dining for years. What a recommendation!

One of the other recommendations, courtesy of our friendly taxi driver, was Vouliagment Lake in Athens. I highly recommend that you should check out Lake Vouliagmenti, a part saltwater, part spring water lake where people can swim year-round due to its steady temperature and warm water, known for its therapeutic mineral qualities and healing properties, which has been used for years to bring relief to arthritis sufferers.

Located dramatically against a huge jutting cliff just off the coast and flanked by a high rock face on one side and trees on the other, the establishment has changing rooms, a café and a restaurant offering Mediterranean dishes. It is a popular location for weddings, baptism receptions, children parties, business meetings, theme nights and fashion shows.

One evening we went to a restaurant which offers traditional Greek dances and meals. Local entertainers delighted the packed audience with typical dances, songs, music and periods of audience participation. It was a fun evening of laughter, music and good food at a reasonable price of equivalent to \$35, all included.

Despite its abundant tourist potential, Greece remains in debt to Germany due to years of unsound dealings with them. Greece had to be bailed by the European Union and is expected to be in debt to foreign countries for years. Greeks have an excellent chance to save their country by concentrating their efforts to boost tourism with its natural beauty, historical and ancient monuments, unique culinary experiences, friendly people and scenic beauty.

Mansoor Ladha is a Calgary-based journalist, travel writer and author of "A Portrait in Pluralism: Aga Khan's Shia Ismaili Muslims." His new book, "Memoirs of a Muhindi," is scheduled to be published in 2017.

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IS YOUR BIBLE MISSING SOMETHING?

Mark 15:28 ~~And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors:~~

Missing from: AMP, ASV, Hoc, HBE, CEV, CJB, [CSB], DBY, ERV, ESV, GNB, GWN, ICB, ISV, JB, MON, MRC, MSG, NAB, [NAS], [NAU], NCV, NEB, NET, NIV, NJB, NLT, NRS, NWT, Ph, RER, RSV, TNIV, WNT and all Greek 'study aids'.

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