

Enjoying the feeling of summers past

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There's nothing quite like a Canadian summer, when the sun gently kisses your cheeks.

It's as soothing as any aromatherapy or spa treatment.

These quiet, peaceful moments in the backyard or back 40 should be cherished and embraced.

I was lucky enough to enjoy a few moments of sun-soaked reflection on the weekend, one of the nicest to date.

While our house is in a subdivision in Bolton, we back onto a forest, that proverbial million dollar view. It's calming, even medicinal. I grew up on a four-acre parcel north of Bolton so I'm well acquainted with country living. Our former home is where most of my family memories were crafted.

Most King residents fully understand an appreciation for nature and natural beauty.

What's also important is the mind set, the mental massage that makes everything okay.

There have been many occasions when I've relaxed in my backyard, corralling the setting sun, forcing it to take me back to a time less complicated. As the afternoon sun caresses me goodbye, after a BBQ to cap off the day, I close my eyes, and free fall into the past.

My wife often tells me not to live in the past, but I protest. I stress that these bygone days of my youth have a unique appeal. This was a time when boys and girls were boys and girls and a kiss under the bleachers was something special.

The music, on the radio in our dad's car, was equally important. The tunes of the day told stories and we hung on those words, and the advice of DJs who spun the vinyl. We had tape decks and cassettes.

These days, my car radio is set to Boom, 97.3, which plays hits of the 1970s, '80s and '90s. These may not sound like classics, but I'd like to point out that 1990 was 25 years ago! Yes, I'm shuddering right along with you.

There's no question we 45-plus Boomers have a special insight into human nature and simply get it.

I have become quite fond of the station's morning host Stu Jeffries, whose heart-felt, spot-on commentaries pull it all together. Stu cleverly draws upon the past and applies tried and true methods to current issues. He connects with listeners and I'm just one fan, one listener who appreciates it.

While I haven't quite convinced my wife to join the legion of 97.3 fans, my kids have warmed to many popular tunes of that era. In my opinion, those decades turned out some interesting music and artists and really defined modern pop and rock. Musicians of that era were multi-talented - they sang, played an instrument and wrote music. They were the definitive storytellers.

Who doesn't have a memory linked to a song from that era? I could name a couple of dozen hits that I never get tired of hearing.

I'm glad Toronto area DJs and hosts have longevity. I have aged well listening to CHUM-FM's Roger, Darren and Marilyn. Again, here's a trio who relies on wisdom and experience to entertain their audience. They're all a little over 40, so they, too, know their stuff.

And nothing makes Canadian summers more pleasant than connecting with hits that made the summers of our youth so memorable.

Dashboard lights of the radio beckoned and while we had to crank the windows open by hand, we enjoyed the simple things life had to offer.

Even today, a Canadian summer isn't complete without Patio Lanterns (Kim Mitchell), Summer of '69 (Bryan Adams), The Boys in the Bright White Sports Car (Trooper), Young and Restless (Prism), Photograph (Nickelback), American Woman (The Guess Who), Rocking' in the Free World (Neil Young) and Sunglasses at Night (Corey Hart).

So, to my fellow Boomers, crank the tunes from the '80s, spark up the BBQ and share some lemonade with friends and family. There's nothing like it.