

Open Editorial

Cont'd From Page 2

affect us:

1. Blasting - Several times a year the company blasts rock. The explosions are not loud but instead a deep, powerful, low rumble. What is most concerning is the vibration that shakes our house. We are very concerned about the effect on our foundation as well as the possibility of affecting our well. We have a deep 300' well. We know, from research, that such blasting can seriously damage wells.

2. Crushing operation - This is by far the most distressing part of the whole operation. The crushers start at 6am and often do not stop until 9pm. Early in the morning the sound overwhelms everything else and continues throughout the day becoming fainter at times and then starts again, almost cyclical. Being over 3 kilometers away we thought the thick forested area would absorb much of the sound but it does little to soften the effect. While in operation our idyllic site becomes almost intolerable."

"I felt like I had to take a stand and vote against it." ~ Councillor Bill Green

Councillor Bill Green told 'My Bancroft Now' reporter following the Faraday Council vote in February, "I felt like I had to take a stand and vote against it." He said after speaking with his constituents he would not have been able to live with himself if he went with it. Reeve Dennis Purcell, Deputy Reeve Marg Nicholson and Councillors Murray Bowers and Carl Tinney voted in-favour of the quarry.

Bancroft is exchanging its 'mining town' and radon-fearing reputation which has been difficult to shake, to 'quarry town' status. Good-bye tourism. Many people have expressed that they will sell their homes and cottages and leave this area if the quarry goes ahead on Bay Lake Road.

"This narrative reads like a dramatic novel. Tourism vs Quarry. There is a powerful, natural beauty at risk here. But the story does not have to end as a tragedy", says Bill Empey, retired economist, local land owner.

'Blue Zone Project' - Bancroft and area has a realistic opportunity to become the first recognized Wellness Destination in Canada and establish itself as a strong contender for Ontario tourism dollars

Anne Dimon, President of the Wellness Tourism Association (global) of which I serve on the board of directors writes, "As wellness tourism advances to become a one trillion dollar global industry, and with Grail Springs the third-time top wellness retreat in Canada, Bancroft has the opportunity to become the first recognize Wellness Destination in Canada. As a fellow resident of Ontario, I implore you to make the right decision."

Our community had our first chance over a decade ago to rebrand Bancroft. I served on the committee that was to look at the wellness resource component of this region. Our team presented the research on 'Blue Zones', people live long, healthy and happy lives around the world because of lifestyle choices including strong community ties and a high-respect for nature. My committee proposed an initiative to make Bancroft the 'Wellness Capital of Canada'. One week later, a council member's comments were returned to us saying 'that

was the stupidest idea ever'. The initiative is a challenging one but it is an exciting one which ignites the imagination! We intuitively knew that every family, home for elderly, youth, school, pet store, farmer, business, institution and organization could get behind this initiative - to be inspired, and inspire! The possibilities are endless. 'Blue Zone Projects' are being initiated by regions all over the world now - serving the community and tourism. And it is not too late. We can still stake our flag in the ground.

There is a right place for quarry. But it is not here.

The Leveque Bros., is an experienced, massive, fully operational quarry eight kilometres north of Bancroft with hundreds of years of product. If there is truly a need for more product and jobs, then it would show up as a demand and Levesque will hire those three new personnel. Why is Grail Springs looked upon as having no value and willingly put at risk? This amounts to an unconscionable choice to begin with.

'Experience' is a valid barometer that goes beyond what experts can contribute. When you've lived in adversity vs wellbeing, when you've witness the significant return of wild-life after the closing of a quarry, when you know the distress of others living in communities surrounded by quarries, when your elected officials act against the broader community's interest, you must stand up for what is right, what is truth, raise awareness and mobilize, regardless of the costs.

The harm done by being distanced from nature however is becoming unmanageable. We at Grail Springs coach every age group, with the younger emerging as the 'indoor generation', suffering from all variations of physical, emotional and mental-health issues. And it will only get worse. They are living in a world where they see the disregard for the environment, animals and people, and feel powerless. They see the powers that be CHOOSE to do business as usual. Business as usual is pushing people to the edge of hopelessness, anxiety and depression, destroying species, life-giving resources and our planet.

One citizen stated during the NPFAQ street campaign on May long weekend, "just because the ministries check off all of the boxes, does not make it morally right." They cited what happened to Canada's First Nations people. The Ministries 'checked all of the boxes' and look at the devastation they afflicted on human life. Though this country is slowly making some restitution through the Reconciliation Program of which I am trying to do my part, there is irreversible damage done to an entire people.

I only wish the powers that be, our future which rests on their conscience, deciding to vote yes or no on June 18th, could appreciate, be proud, and want to passionately protect the forty of us who change lives for the better each and every day. The Grail Springs Team is a group of talented, caring people, proud to help others and add to life, not take away from life. Should this quarry pass, Grail Springs may have no choice but to relocate where people, animals and the environment matter and are protected, taking with it, its significant vision and mission to serve lives, along with its economic contribution to this community.

We will be missed when we are gone.

PROTECT OUR TOURISM JOBS

"Protect our jobs, our livelihood, keep our families here - this is no place for a quarry."

Gloria E	Chris B	Caroline S
Amanda T	Evita O	Melissa G
Dawn B	Wendy F	Jason S
Lindsay R	Richard C	Brian C
Kirsten P	Mary-Catherine C	Sheila M
Darlene D	John P	Tony I
John R	Ashley C	Kathy T
Laura MW	Ashley K	Joan W
Mychaila S	Kristina YS	Brenda P
Rosemary S	Shaun Z	Crystal B
Sue P	Jeff P	Andrew N
Treena M	Karen R	Michael M
David D	Darlene C	Madeleine M

Grail Springs Retreat Centre for Wellbeing
2004 Bay Lake Road, Bancroft

**Awarded 'Canada's Best Wellness Retreat'
World Travel Awards 2016-2017-2018**