



*Wendy Matthew*  
Junior Past Grand Regent

## **Heal the World**

“‘Where are we going, Pooh?’ ‘Home, Piglet. We’re going home because that’s the best thing to do right now.’” —A.A. Milne

So ... what did you do for the 90 days when the world as we know it changed?

I heard about a bad virus in Wuhan, China but didn’t really pay attention until the Diamond Princess was quarantined in Japan. Many of you know I love cruising. Okay, now I’m listening.

Princess Cruise lines later announced they were stopping all cruises for 60 days for the safety of their passengers and crew. My heart was breaking for all of them. Of course in the back of my mind I’m trying to imagine what that would be like ... how disappointing ... especially since I was leaving for my dream cruise to Hawaii on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Then Mid Year Conferences started being cancelled and the land borders between Canada and United States were closed except to essential workers. What next? I found out soon enough ... that dreaded email ... my cruise was also cancelled. To be honest by then I was prepared because with everything going on it was bound to happen. No problem, now I can go to the District meeting and I won’t miss the last couple weeks of darts ... wrong!!

Next, our Ontario Mid Year conference was cancelled. I totally understand why it had to happen but I still don’t like it! We have a lot of fun at our Conferences and this was going to be our very first as a Joint Association. Hopefully we’ll have an even bigger party in September! Ontario co-coworkers, thank you for your continued love and support ... you’re the best!

And then the unbelievable happened ... people started buying and hoarding toilet paper ... really??? Next the shelves were empty. It was nearly impossible to find Lysol or Clorox wipes, bread, flour or any kind of baking supplies.

We now have a greater appreciation for our truck drivers and I’m sure all those Moms and Dads who had to work from home along with home schooling their children have greater respect for teachers.

We even learned a whole new language ... the Corona Virus, COVID-19, Front-line and Essential workers, PPE, Social distancing, Wash your hands, Use hand sanitizer, Self-quarantine, Wear a mask, Stay home and stay safe!

Since the pandemic started, our Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has given daily messages from his home in Ottawa, our nation's capital. His messages have been encouraging to the Canadian people. Some days he talks about our health and safety reminding us to wash our hands, stay 2 metres apart, stay home and stay safe. Other days he has talked about the Canadian companies that stepped up and retooled to make hand sanitizer, face shields, or medical gowns. There was immediate financial assistance for those who were suddenly without jobs, small businesses that were forced to closed, loans and wage subsidies for those who needed it.

I love the days when he speaks to the children helping them to understand what's going on and answers their questions ... or the messages to women and children in abusive situations to let them know help is available if needed. Additional hotlines were also set up for mental health issues.

After the senseless death of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the consequent protests and riots, we were also reminded that racism exists everywhere and it needs to stop.

And then there were the days when he addressed a nation in mourning ... after the mass shooting in Nova Scotia or the lives lost in the Canadian Forces helicopter crash near Greece and the death of a Canadian Snowbirds pilot during their cross Canada spirit tour honouring our front-line workers.

Just as our Prime Minister has kept us informed, our leaders at Moose International have done the same. Our CEO and Director General Scott Hart quickly put out a message encouraging Moose members to make use of this time when our Lodges were closed. What a great opportunity to call members in arrears, clean up our Moose homes with deep cleaning, sanitizing or a fresh coat of paint. The Loss and Prevention committee even sent out detailed instructions on getting our Lodges ready for reopening.

Our Grand Chancellor Barb McPherson was very busy while working from home and dealing with all the Chapter situations that didn't stop because of this virus. She was in contact with the Grand Council on several occasions to make decisions to ease the restrictions and help our Chapters during this difficult time when we couldn't physically meet. Weekly updates from Moose International kept us informed.

Thank you Denielle Baile for posting the messages on Facebook and answering coworkers' questions. Kudos to the Women of the Moose staff for everything you do to help us every day ... not just during this pandemic!

“You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.” —a quote from Maya Angelou.

What did Moose members do during this time? Every day there were pictures on social media of our members cleaning their Moose homes, calling our delinquent members, supplying meals for children and those in need in their communities, and making thousands and thousands of face masks. Someone even started a Facebook page ... Moose Virtual Social Quarters. A co-worker designed a T-shirt for this group and sold them with all proceeds going to Moose Charities. We also mourned together after the loss of some of our Moose members to COVID-19.

Have you seen the photos of our Mooseheart children playing outside and planting gardens ... love the smiles! And how about our creative staff at Moosehaven for coming up with events for our residents like Hallway bingo, Hallway exercises and of course that rolling bar cart delivering refreshments! Thank you for keeping our Mooseheart and Moosehaven family safe.

As we all know, Mooseheart Graduation weekend, Blessing of the Bikes, International Sporting Tournaments and our International Conference in Milwaukee were cancelled for the safety of our members. Although we are all disappointed, just imagine the celebrations we will have in 2021 when we gather again for these events!

It's hard to explain my feelings as my term as Junior Past Grand Regent ends. As I said last year in Las Vegas, I've had the time of my life and I owe it all to you!

Thank you Grand Chancellor Barb for this once in a lifetime opportunity to serve our fraternity in this capacity and to the International Boards and Grand Council members I have served with these past two years. We have made a lot of difficult decisions for the future of the Women of the Moose and our fraternity but we had soooo much fun doing it!

To all my brothers and sisters in this great organization, thank you for your hospitality in my travels but most of all for what you do each and every day for others!

The words from Michael Jackson's song come to mind ...

Heal the World/ Make it a better place/ For you and for me/ And the entire human race.

Co-workers ... our fraternity has gone through many changes over the years and there are more to come as we become ONE MOOSE ... but our purposes have not changed. There will always be children who need a place where they can feel safe and secure, a place where they can learn and become the leaders of tomorrow and learn

to care for others. The senior members of our fraternity will continue to need care and a place to call home where they no longer have to worry about food, housing expenses or healthcare. And we will get through this together!