

IT ALL DEPENDS ON WHERE YOU LOOK

One of the things I really appreciate about our home and neighbourhood is the wide variety of visual feasts I can enjoy. Peering out windows of the kitchen and my home-based office I enjoy a sweeping view of the Pacific Ocean, just minutes away. Stepping out on the back deck, the vista expands to include a peek into the neighbours' yards. No snooping, though – just checking to see if the kids (i.e. our son, daughter and grandchildren) are stirring. No lights on? Don't phone. On the other side of the fence, a smaller version of our deck provides me and my friend with a place to share an evening cup of tea.

There's more, though: the sight and of children playing together, the culinary "perfume" of food being barbecued somewhere close (and now, the nose-tingling scent of wood smoke as folks stoke up the furnace for cooler temperatures) and the prickly but satisfying sensation that comes with plucking the rest of the tomatoes, squash and cucumbers from the vines.

I love the rows of well-groomed yards and equally well-maintained houses on our block...with one exception. From our living room I look out on the one less-cared-for home between Hawthorne and Fir streets. Under the once graceful but now decrepit front porch sits a deserted green toilet. What more can I say...it's just there waiting in full view for, I hope, the owners to install it somewhere, take it to the recycling depot or fill its cavities with dirt and plant geraniums.

What's even more important, though, is where I choose to focus my attention: the good things, the beautiful things or the abandoned toilet.

"...whatever things are true...noble...just....pure; whatever things are lovely...of good report...if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

Let's choose our views carefully!