

# north shore news

## Readers reply in earnest

[Tom Carney](#) / North Shore News

June 8, 2014 12:00 AM

Time to catch up with some emails from my readers.

Two recent columns discussing end-of-life choices drew a large and, in some cases, vitriolic response.

The polls suggest that the majority of British Columbians support assisted suicide. Not my readers. Most of those I heard from felt assisted suicide marks the start of a slippery slope towards a diminished respect for life.

I'm reminded here of a quote from the famed American investor Warren Buffet: "A public opinion poll is no substitute for thought."

I suspect that if care at the end of life were improved and death was made more comfortable, the support for assisted suicide in this country would fall dramatically.

A column on obesity left some readers wondering if I had lost my marbles. The idea that carrying a few extra pounds might actually have some health benefits for seniors proved too much for some.

"Do you believe everything you read?" asked one of my readers.

I don't, but when one of the leading cardiologists in America says fat is not always bad and has the numbers to prove it, I think we should pay attention.

Let's make sure our approach to the obesity problem is the right one.

The biggest variable tied to health is socioeconomic status rather than health or wellness promotion. Or, to put it another way, if we want to solve the obesity problem, think wallets instead of waistlines.

The costs and the fairness around driver's licence renewals, particularly for those over the age of 80, irks many of my readers. There is some good news on this file. The involvement of older drivers in both fatal and property damage crashes is down, not up, over the past 15 years.

We can thank improved safety features in modern vehicles for that.

Reader B wants to know when probate is required on an estate. In B.C., the basic probate fee of \$200 is waived if the value of the estate does not exceed \$25,000. Probate fees rise with the value of an estate but with some advance planning it's possible to mitigate these fees.

In a recent column I suggested, tongue and cheek, that we follow the European example of stay at home adult children. No need to cross the pond for that, said many of my readers - we've got them right here... in our basements. Census data shows that in 2011, 42.3 per cent of young adults aged 20 to 29 lived at home compared to 27 per cent in 1981. Another survey found that 43 per cent of young adults age 30 to 33 said that they had not yet achieved financial independence from their parents.

I've got two young adults at home myself, a son and a daughter. Last week I came across a survey that

suggested dads who do chores raise daughters who aspire to high-paying careers. Hmm. I wonder if it's too late to start doing the dishes.

Tom Carney is the former executive director of the Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society. Ideas for future columns are welcome. [tomcarney@telus.net \(mailto:tomcarney@telus.net\)](mailto:tomcarney@telus.net)

© 2015 North Shore News