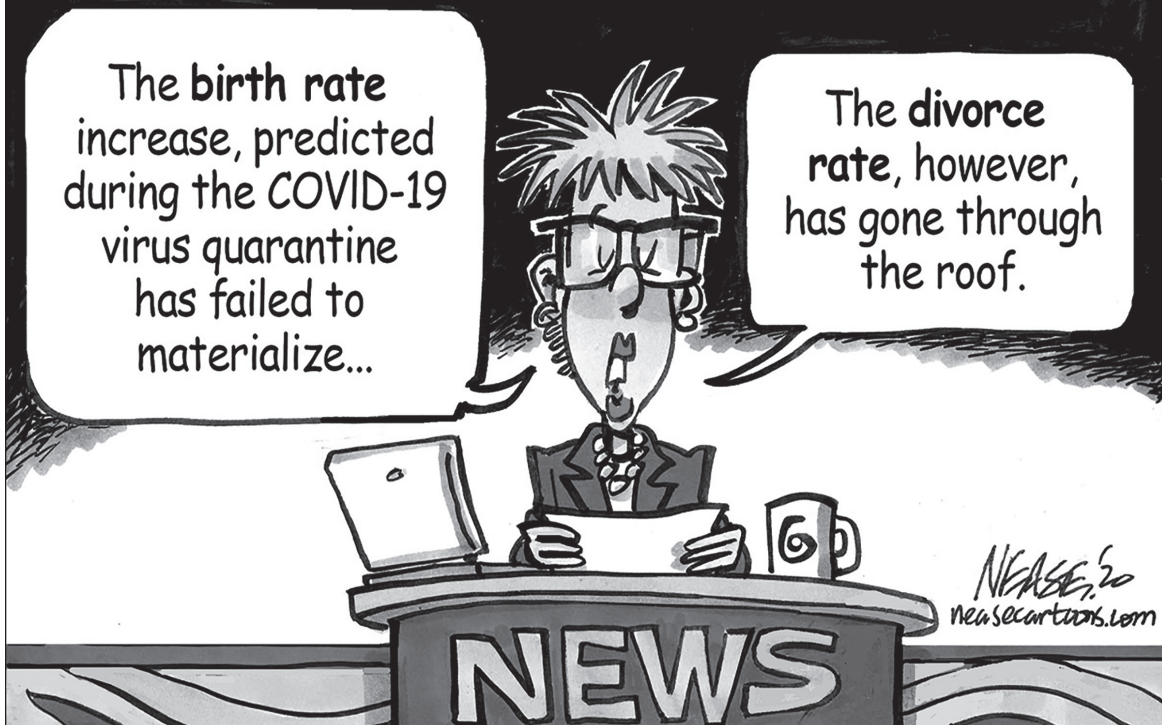


Dateline: December, 2020



Letters to the Editor

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knows.

Day cares, theatres, restaurants and bars. A worldwide pandemic worse than SARS.

A state of emergency is in effect. Do you have symptoms? Please get checked.

Use gloves and masks, be sterile and clean. The world awaits the latest vaccine.

There's a virus worse than this one, dear. It's a four letter word, and it's called FEAR.

Keep in mind a word from the wise: This too shall pass. Face Everything And Rise!

Sandra Owen,
Fergus

Rural residents matter

Dear Editor:

RE: *Wellington North prioritizes broadband over natural gas*, March 19 issue of the *North Wellington Community News*.

I was disturbed to see some of the comments attributed to Mayor Lennox in this article. He accurately pointed out that the vast of the township's population are residents of Mount Forest and Arthur.

However, this apparently led him to then question what role the township should have, and whether it should be spending our tax dollars, in providing similar services to the rural residents given that

those in our town and village are already well served by these utilities.

Firstly, I'm sure Lennox appreciates that he was elected to serve the interests of all the residents of Wellington North, not just those in Mount Forest and Arthur. I am a rural resident and I suspect I am not alone in being stunned by the ongoing increases in my property taxes, so permit me to believe that rural residents should receive equal consideration to our friends in town.

Further, if you carried Lennox's apparent perspective to its logical conclusion, you would question why we also "waste" money on providing any service to the rural minority, be it school buses, waste collection or road maintenance - since none of those may be of obvious benefit to our urban majority.

Secondly, I would point out that the history of Canada, as a large and sparsely-populated nation, is replete with examples where our governments appreciated the need to extend infrastructure and utilities to minority populations in remote areas.

They realized that the private sector could not be permitted to have virtual monopolies on the provision of such services while only "cherry picking" the most profitable areas and ignoring the rest, and legislated and conducted procurement processes accordingly.

To be clear, I am not suggesting

that the township should be setting up a public fibre-based internet utility to serve everyone - clearly the private sector providers are best equipped to do this. I believe, though, that the private sector service providers should have been required to extend their services beyond the borders of our urban communities (perhaps as a later but committed phase) in order to win these contracts in the first place. And I find it galling that they are now approaching our local government to essentially perform market research on their behalf, on the taxpayer's dime.

Clearly our local government is not responsible for the sweetheart deals these utilities and service providers have been permitted by their regulators, but I believe that our township's elected representatives should not now be balking at conducting whatever additional work might now be required to redress this if it is simply redirecting staff to perform research at the expense of other intended work.

I do not begrudge the costly capital works projects this township undertakes to rebuild the infrastructure of Mount Forest and Arthur, but I would also like to see my tax dollars address my immediate needs as much as those of the residents of our urban communities.

Steve Bowley,
Wellington North

Thank you

Thank you to our many advertisers who made the conscientious choice to continue advertising with us during this crisis.

Without that support, *The Wellington Advertiser* would cease to exist.

As we move forward and the economic impact on small businesses takes hold, we will continue to rely on small businesses to support us through advertising as we forge ahead.

We will continue to strongly urge readers to support those businesses and groups who helped us in this time of crisis.

Better times lay ahead. We be-

lieve that without hesitation.

We further believe our work here is essential - now more than ever - as communities rebuild their economic base of local proprietors, shops and restaurants.

Wellington County continues to buck the trends and show what is possible when we believe in the power of print, professional journalism and the importance of community in the lives of families that call Wellington home.

We are all one at this time.

Our commitment is clear. Our dedication is obvious. Thank you.

Dave Adsett,
Publisher

County considering options, needs for emergency child care for front line workers

GUELPH - The County of Wellington is working in partnership with the Ministry of Education to support health care and other frontline workers in Guelph and Wellington by providing access to licensed child care at no cost during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The list of workers eligible for emergency child care is issued by the Ministry of Education.

The County's Children's Early Years Division is working as quickly as possible to assess the needs of those eligible for emergency child care to prioritize our implementation process.

Only emergency child care that is approved by the county has approval to operate as a licensed child care setting (both in-home and centre-based) at this time.

All current child care policies and requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, will apply to licensed child care settings providing emergency child care services. The county is working with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health to develop

policies and procedures that will be required in the operation of approved emergency licensed child care settings to help limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

This survey is currently only available to families whereby the occupation of both parents/guardians or a sole parent/guardian is listed on the Government of Ontario's Workers Eligible for Emergency Child Care.

"It's essential that health care and other frontline workers have access to emergency child care during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Warden Kelly Linton.

"The county will continue to work in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health to provide this crucial service."

Eligible parents and guardians who live and/or work in the County of Wellington or City of Guelph are welcome to complete the survey for children 12 years of age and under.

To survey can now be accessed at www.wellington.ca/emergency-childcareservices.yadvertiser.

Mayor 'quite confident' in steps taken by township to protect staff, residents

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ensure the safety of local residents.

"It makes the situation very real when it hits close to home like this," Lennox said in a March 24 interview.

The mayor declined to comment on specifics about the local COVID-19 case, including reports the man is employed by the municipality.

"I don't think it's appropriate ... (due to) privacy issues," Lennox told the *Advertiser*.

He noted the investigation is a public health matter and he's "quite confident" the township has taken all the proper precautions, including increased cleaning and sanitization, having people work from home and closing its facilities to the public.

Lennox stressed that, much like other local municipalities Wellington North is doing everything it can to continue offering residents basic services such as fire fighting, water/wastewater, and road maintenance.

"We've been in touch with public health ... and we're following their advice," he said.

WDGPH advice

Public health officials say they follow up with the contacts of known or presumed cases to ensure those who need to self-isolate are doing so and are able to look after

themselves.

"As this situation develops, [WDGPH] is again asking that everyone limit trips outside the home to only what is necessary such as groceries or medical care," stated a March 22 health unit press release.

"Everyone should be aware that the coronavirus, COVID-19, is in our community.

"Wash your hands frequently, maintain social distancing; if you have symptoms stay home and call your doctor for a telephone appointment. Together we can protect each other."

The best ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19, are to:

- stay home except for essential trips for food/medicine;
- wash your hands often with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve;
- clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily (use a disinfectant and follow manufacturer's instructions); and
- call ahead if visiting your health care provider for infectious symptoms so they can plan to protect others.

For the latest health information regarding COVID-19, visit the public health website. For the latest news visit wellingtonadvertiser.com.



Kelly Waterhouse

WRITE OUT OF HER MIND

Quarantined

Thank you to everyone who has inquired about the Carpenter's status in this time of self-imposed quarantine. I thought I'd give you a visual. Imagine a caffeinated squirrel with power tools, a lot of scrap wood and some rather concerning pyromaniac tendencies trapped in a tree house full of unfinished projects and no budget to finish them.

Now imagine that squirrel has been told that he cannot go to work for a month, maybe longer (whisper that last part), and also, despite free time to finish countless projects in the treehouse, he cannot spend money to do so. He cannot go to his favourite drive-thru for more caffeine either. And his treehouse is continuously full of his equally squirrely family. There is no escape for the unforeseen future.

Poor squirrel, er, Carpenter.

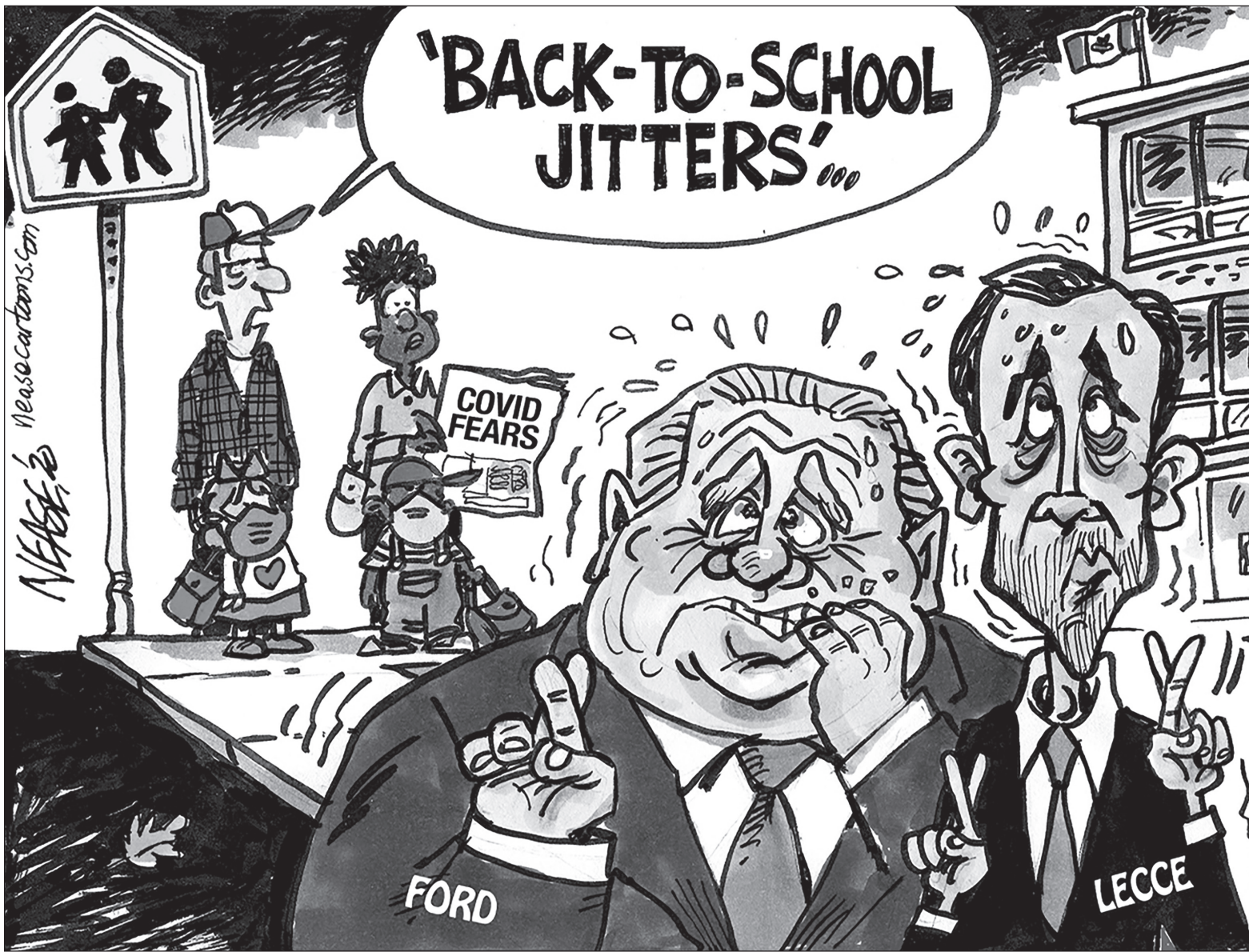
Day one, he was sullen. Day two, restless. Day three, I awoke in the early morning to the screeching sound of recycled wood being dragged through the steel blade of a table saw. I heard the quick, repetitive grind of a chop saw. The echo ricocheted through the garage, reverberating off the quiet homes of our neighbourhood. Minutes later, I heard a power drill whizzing in the backyard, followed by the rhythmic whack of a hammer smacking down nails, over and over and over again.

That's it, I thought: he's finally lost it. Noah built the ark to prepare for the flood and the Carpenter was building a wood pile enclosure for our bonfire pit for the pandemic. Seems about right. Biblical times call for biblical measures.

Now, despite having no knowledge of this project and zero con-

sultation about its placement, I couldn't help but be mesmerized by the speed and agility of my Carpenter. He was blissfully gathering tree limbs and twigs from the yard, transferring the wood stack that we already had to its new fancy locale. Oh, he was proud. Ladies and gentlemen, he even gave the wood pile a roof made from a recycled door, with a nice handle so it can be lifted for easy access. But the icing on the cake was the shingles. Yes, he shingled the wood pile.

I cannot make this stuff up. This is my life. I married a resourceful, frugal and skilled man who, when plied with coffee and forced confinement, is remarkably handy. It's like living with a stranger, who is a squirrel, but with a tool belt. This could be a fun few weeks. Stay tuned. Stay well. Stay home.



WRITE OUT OF HER MIND

Kelly Waterhouse



Cold sore

I realize there is a pandemic sweeping across the world right now, so this may seem like a “first-world problem,” but I’m so sick of COVID this and COVID that.

Let’s discuss another annoying virus that has made a recent appearance in my life, more accurately, my face: herpes simplex virus. Or as I refer to it, Derek.

Why Derek? Well, he came out of nowhere and he’s a bit of a hanger-on. He has lingered for weeks now. Of course, the name choice is totally random, not linked to any person living or dead or who may or may not have attended my college from 1989 to 1991, so there.

He’s that guy who just won’t go home when all the party guests have left, ya know? Such a Derek (this is for all the Karens out there who are really tired of the Karen jokes).

I woke one morning to find a little bump on my lower lip. By lunch time, Mick Jagger would have been jealous of my bulbous bottom lip. I had the kind of pout some women pay a lot of money for. I was not impressed. Over-the-counter medicine didn’t stand a chance.

By the next day, Derek was massive. A beacon of grossness. I was convinced everyone was looking at Derek. He was hard to miss. A total cold sore narcissist. Look at me, he said. Everyone look at me. Derek was so needy. And painful.

Twice a day for weeks, I lathered Derek in icky medicine that only added to the attention Derek was craving. Finally, he reduced himself to a massive scab. A big Derek scab. Crusty and brown. Sexy. I have never been happier to wear a mask. Yay for masks!

After a few weeks, I’d had enough. I called my doctor. I apologized profusely for bothering him about a measly cold sore, recognizing we are in a global pandemic and no lives will be lost with my herpes, but I believed Derek needed to die (note: I didn’t refer to Derek by name, because I wasn’t sure my doctor would know how to process my humour).

Doctor appointments by telephone are convenient. The doctor asked a few obvious questions. We discussed my treatments, side-effects, etc. Then it got weird. The doctor asked me to email a photo of my cold sore. Awkward. Derek was such a spotlight-seeker. That puss bag knew no bounds, clearly.

Thus, I snapped the most horrific selfie of my life and emailed it to him. I imagined the medical staff of my family health team gathered around the computer to see the horrific attachment, basically a close-up of Derek and a lovely reminder that my COVID mustache could really use a wax. Sexy.

I imagined them howling in laughter. Pointing. Knee-slapping. Giggling. Oh, the shame. Derek was loving his status.

Derek has kindly left his mark on my lip, a subtle reminder that he’ll be back. Such a Derek thing to do. Jerk.

But here’s my takeaway: it’s a crazy time in our world, so keep your sense of humour, especially when your dignity is hampered by vanity. Don’t take yourself so seriously. Even the ugly parts of you need love to heal.

Also, book that lip wax. Seriously. Who do you think you are, Burt Reynolds? Have some pride.

Keep laughing.
Later, Derek.

Catholic students excited to be back at school

By Jaime Myslik

ERIN – “Kids are excited to be back.”

That’s the sentiment St. John Brebeuf Catholic School principal Lowell Butts shared in a Sept. 14 interview with the *Advertiser*.

“I do the ‘kiss and ride’ outside of our school and we had 40 or 50 cars pulling up and dropping off kids and all of them are super excited to be back at school and see their friends,” he added.

Wellington Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) director of education Mike Glazier agreed it’s been a happy start to the school year.

“It’s actually a nice feeling to have the kids back into school and it sort of brings back some of that routine that they crave and some of our staff crave as well,” he said on Sept. 14.

The board’s first and primary focus, in addition to keeping students physically healthy and preventing COVID-19, is on mental health and wellbeing.

“Trying to help our students to make sure that they feel safe and comfortable as they come back and then once we make those connections and we’ve got that safe environment with our classrooms, then the focus on academics becomes the next important factor for us to consider,” Glazier said.

To help prepare, Wellington Catholic delayed the start of the school year by two days.

“We took the two extra days just to make sure our staffing was in place, that all those staff knew all ... the health and safety protocols that were in place,” Glazier said.

Even then, when the school year officially began on Sept. 10, the board used a staggered opening model.

“The opportunity to do a staggered entry is good because we’re allowed and grateful for the time to teach [students] about social distancing, the safety protocols around wearing the mask, hand washing, staying responsible that way and staying in our cohorts too,” Butts said.

“It’s been a long lead up getting

to here so I’m grateful for the opportunity to just be able to welcome kids back safely again.”

Glazier said the board is grateful for parents’ understanding and flexibility this year.

“We know it’s been challenging for everyone as we start to come back to the school year but I’ve really appreciated the way in which people have supported us as we reopen our schools,” he said.

Before students attend school each morning, the board is encouraging parents to screen their child to ensure they are feeling well. If there is uncertainty parents are asked to keep their child at home.

Once at school, what happens largely depends on the school and what the principal has decided.

Glazier said students who are walking or being dropped off by parents are encouraged to arrive as close to the bell time as possible so they can go directly to their class. Depending on the school all students may go directly to their class like an inclement weather day or they may go to a designated area in the school yard they will share with other students in their cohort.

This is an advantage for many schools in Wellington County.

“We’re a school of 243, about 17 per cent are online, so at the end of the day I’ve got a little less than 200 that are on the yard and over a five or six acre footprint we’re able to social distance pretty well so the kids can spread out and still enjoy recess outside,” Butts said.

And schools have worked out ways to maintain physical distancing as much as possible when students enter at the beginning of the day, very similar to when families are out grocery shopping or in other public spaces, Glazier said.

“As they come into the classrooms we’ve been really focusing on hand hygiene so we have hand sanitizers within our classrooms and our hallways so that students can make sure that their hands are clean as they come in,” he said. “We know that that’s an important part of reducing the possible transmission of the virus.”

Teachers have been taking their students through the different sce-

narios when they arrive at school, so everyone knows what to expect throughout the year.

At dismissal, Glazier said students in elementary and high schools would be leaving at staggered times so there is a controlled exit.

WCDSB students from Grades 1 to 12 are required to wear a face covering when in the school building, while junior and senior kindergarten students are strongly encouraged to do so.

In the first week, Butts said he’s surprised he hasn’t had more trouble with students not wanting to wear their masks.

“It’s something they’ll grow into,” he said. “Some of the kids are up on the latest little mask carrier.”

“They have different fanny packs or whatever and they kind of embrace that.”

Some kids even forget to take them off when they get outside.

“I get some kids that are proud to have a mask of a certain colour or theme that they want to show to their friends,” Butts said. “And they’re wearing it and they said ‘oh yeah I forgot I got to take it off,’ and then they tuck it away in their fanny pack or whatever.”

Schools are also working in more outside education time this year.

“They get a break from their mask outside because they can social distance ... and they can play with their cohorts and the health unit says give the kids a break when they go out for recess,” Butts explained.

He gives a lot of credit to the students for how smoothly the start of the school year has gone.

“They all kind of embrace it because I think they know that this is what we have to do,” he said. “Being guided by science and rooted in faith you believe that an informed decision is a good decision and we keep doing our very best with the information that we have to make good decisions ...

“We’re very blessed to have the guidance of our senior admin and our public health and stakeholders that have helped us put this plan all together.”

To help schools develop outdoor

education the board has hired a facilitator who is helping staff learn how to encourage children to play outside and take advantage of the natural environment.

“It’s also a great opportunity for learning when we incorporate the curriculum with the outdoors,” Glazier said.

“It’s taken a bit of a re-imagining of how we typically would have done our school day and required some flexibility and creative problem solving and just general adherence to the public health guidelines that have been provided,” Glazier said.

As the weather gets cooler, Glazier said schools have been working through what to do with snow boots and snowsuits.

In high schools, lockers are not available to students. They’re asked to bring just the necessities to school and keep their backpacks and coats in their classroom.

In elementary schools staff are working through routines where physical distancing is possible.

Apart from public health practices students must adhere to personally, the school environment will look a little different, too.

While collaborative learning and desk groupings were common in the past, Glazier said desks are now most likely set up in more of a traditional format with seats in rows facing the front as per ministry and public health guidelines.

Another difference is that volunteers will no longer be able to help out at the school as no non-essential visitors are permitted to enter.

“Our focus really in our classroom has been trying to make a fun and engaging place for our students to learn,” Glazier said. “We’re all adapting to this new environment and people are coming up with creative ways to make the learning environment fun and engaging.”

For those interested in learning more about what a school day could look like for elementary students, Butts and the staff at St. John Brebeuf put together a video for students at <https://bit.ly/2FwrXhL>.

All students will be in class at WCDSB elementary and secondary schools by the end of the week.



BUSINESS MATTERS

Jaime Myslik

Community involvement

This week I would like to give a shout-out to a few business owners who donated their time to help with student mental health and made big donations to community organizations.

Last week Grade 10 students at Centre Wellington District High School participated in My Best Self Day for one period in the afternoon. They could choose which activity they wanted to participate in, be it art, martial arts, bike repair and more.

Two local business people also donated their time.

Meredith Blackmore of Studio Here in Fergus ran a workshop during which students were asked to draw charcoal chaos. Many students participated in the workshop and they were all talking and comparing their drawings once completed. By using charcoal they dirtied their hands and participated in an activity they likely wouldn't get to do in their everyday school life.

The other business owner who donated her time was Evelyn Gould of Jester's Fun Factory in Fergus. She brought a variety of board games for the students to try out.

Having walked through the majority of the activities in the My Best Self Day, I must say the Jester's board game workshop was one of the most well attended and all the students were engaged and having fun in their activities.

Thank you to the business owners and the teachers who ran these activities. The idea that students got to spend a period enjoying themselves doing an activity of their choice is wonderful. It's so nice to see the community coming together to make this happen.

Tim Hortons on Thompson Crescent in Erin donated \$4,997 to East Wellington Community Services. Of 250 Tim Hortons franchises, the Erin restaurant raised the eighth highest amount of money through the Smile Cookie fundraiser with support from local Remax agents.

Shaman Seth Financial Services Inc., in Elora, with the help of other local businesses, raised \$6,500 for the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington.

Heads up downtown/BIA businesses in Wellington. Digital Transformation Grant applications are due on Dec. 31.

The program is funded by the Province of Ontario in partnership with the Ontario BIA Association and will help small downtown businesses across Ontario improve their adoption of technologies to better promote themselves online, sell online and run back-office processes online.

Participants must first complete an online survey of their technology use now and then develop a Digital Transformation Plan based on a provided template.

To help make the plan happen, businesses can apply for a one-time grant of \$2,500 to help with the costs of adopting the new technology. For more information visit <https://digitalmainstreet.ca/digital-transformation-grant/>.

Don't forget to email questions/news tips to businessleader@wellingtonadvertiser.com.

Letters to the Editor

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ans do not concur with Mr. Raftis' opinions. In fact, over 30 per cent of Canadians have stated such to polling firms (30% is almost majority government territory in this day and age, and those people need to have a voice).

Few media outlets want to report about the viewpoints of scientists and doctors such as Patrick Moore, Susan Crockford or Diana Cassell along with a slew of others. Why? The lack of consensus amongst today's scientists regarding human activities accelerating the speed of global warming in connection with climate change is exactly the point of having this discussion.

Why should Canadians risk their prosperity by being forced to pay a carbon tax, when there is simply no proof that these actions will cool the planet? They shouldn't. Why should Canadians have to suffer through all sorts of actions and costs over which we have no control? They shouldn't.

Nunavut residents have seen an increase in the polar bear population and a particularly notable increase since the 1980s, even though Environment Minister Catherine McKenna and organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund have used the polar bear population as evidence of the effect of climate change.

In the year 2000, NASA published information about the Milankovitch Climate Theory, revealing that the planet is, in fact, changing due to extraneous factors that have absolutely nothing to do with human activity. But, this information has yet to go mainstream some 19 years later, due in no small part to the media.

In any event, I for one firmly believe in keeping the planet as clean as possible. In 2004 I installed a small wind and solar system that has been running our home entirely. This came at the cost of a significant personal investment, one which it seems many climate alarmists do not bother to make, not to mention flying around the planet on vacations and every other reason under the sun.

There is plenty we can all do to keep our environment cleaner and paying a carbon tax is clearly not one of them. I encourage all of you to do your own research on this subject and then form your own opinion.

Please do not let the mainstream media tell you how it is, as it is so evident that they have an agenda, and it is not to educate Canadians, but rather to make you believe in their blithering.

Roger Fuhr,
St. Pauls Station

'Time is running out'

Dear Editor:

RE: *Tropes not truth*, Oct. 31.

Patrick Raftis' article lays out facts - not "alt facts" - for the climate deniers to see. It's astounding to me that we still need fact checkers on this issue, so thank you for presenting the truth on a number of climate issues.

The Conservative Party missed a huge opportunity during the last election cycle by not laying out a clear, proactive plan on climate.

It's what Canadians want and would demonstrate much needed leadership. Time is running out.

Lynn Johnston,
Fergus

'Stop developments'

Dear Editor:

An open letter to Mayor Kelly Linton and Centre Wellington council.

The township's "Focused Direction" leaflet in last week's *Advertiser*

caught my eye with its lovely graphic colours. I pride myself with keeping abreast of happenings within Centre Wellington, and especially around my home town of Fergus.

I read with interest the note under Healthy Growth: "We will manage the pace and scale of new development, and retain our small-town feel." An ambiguous comment, for I am unsure of its intent.

My husband and I moved to Fergus 17 years ago, because we loved the small-town feel, yet lately I have not thought of Fergus as being all that small. I see housing developments springing up all around Fergus. Some are taking up chunks of former farmers' fields. The houses, which are by no means small, seem to each be plunked onto small plots of land, with what appears to be postage stamp-sized backyards of about six feet deep.

First, why is "small-town feel" noted in quotes on your leaflet? Second, does the typical family need such large houses? Third, how do you play ball with a child in a yard only six feet deep? Fourth, where are the people coming from who will reside in these new houses, and where do they work?

I can see from a financial perspective that council may find the development fees for new housing projects and the resulting long-term property tax revenues an appealing prospect.

As a resident of Fergus, I now see more vehicles on the road and more stop signs and stoplights, all of which slow the flow of our small-town life. I also wonder about climate and environmental issues, such as clear cutting trees and plowing under native bushes and plants - or worse, the loss of the all-important agricultural fields.

The new developments do not seem to have large trees landscaped into their plans. A major concern with climate control is the lack of pollution-fighting and life-sustaining trees. Southern Ontario has a marked lack of trees, and as such, the Green Legacy Program and Neighbourhoods have become important resources here.

We in Fergus have so much to be proud of, and our small town seems to have sustained more than its share of recent development.

All of these issues are reiterated in the 2019 Vital Signs publication under Environment, and on the reverse of that page relating to housing affordability and the lack of rental housing, etc.

Fergus was a small town, but is now developing to the stage where that designation might even change. I implore you, Mayor Linton and council, to consider all aspects of our community, and stop the developments that threaten to strip us of the small-town feel (without the quotes) that we so enjoy. Thank you.

Carol Turner,
Centre Wellington

Important to remember

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed the column entitled "Make Time" by Kelly Waterhouse, (Nov. 7). When I read this column, the statement that stood out to me was "My country. Your country. Our towns." It made me realize that, although we are proud of our Canadian freedom, we often forget the sacrifices made to gain that freedom.

Freedom is what we as Canadians have always had and I think it is extremely important to really reflect on how blessed we are as a country.

The "We Will Remember Them" display featured at the Wellington County Museum is a moving sight and is a good way to quietly remember, but so many people, especially

young people don't often hear about these displays. It is so important that young people honour the fallen soldiers too, so the display should be made well-known to all generations. Students should take the time to go to the cenotaph on Remembrance Day and contemplate on past sacrifices.

In order to realize how fortunate we are, we have to do more than subconsciously wear a poppy. As a generation based on technology, it is essential that we spend time away from technology to reflect on how privileged we are to live in Canada.

It is important to honour the fallen soldiers, especially of our home, and create remembrance traditions that will continue through future generations no matter how important other things become in our lives.

Kerissa Penninga,
Elora

Ban a bad idea

Dear Editor:

RE: *New provincial cell phone restrictions have no impact on local school board practices*, Nov. 7.

I enjoyed reading this article by Jaime Myslik. As a current Grade 12 high school student, you may think I might not be the best person to speak out about how a classroom should be run, but that's where you're wrong.

I completely disagree with Stephen Leece, minister of education, when he talks about how restricting cell phones is a "step forward in creating an academically-enriched learning environment." This is the complete opposite of what is actually happening.

By banning mobile devices, it is actually a step away from helping the students learn. App creators for phones are trying to create "edtech" to help students learn more in this advancing technological age. Phone apps like iTunes U, Duolingo, or Cite This For Me are all great ways to advance a student's way of learning. By restricting phones, however, the students are pulled away from the easily accessible knowledge that phones provide.

When it comes to using devices in the classroom, it should always be at the discretion of the teacher or educator. Taking away devices from those who misbehave and misuse them, won't help the situation. Those students will find something else to use and still remain distracted and distract others, and that is the truth because I have witnessed it in my own classes.

I strongly believe that it is up to the teachers and faculty to have control over these restrictions. If the teacher is able to understand how a few students misuse the devices, then they should be punished.

But if the teacher recognizes that some students actually are using it to benefit their learning, then taking it away from them will only push away their chance of growing in knowledge.

Zachary Kroezen,
Fergus

Bus effort appreciated

Dear Editor:

I want to thank the men and women of the service clubs, Rotary, Lions and others who have supported the small "Bus that Could" I understand it is to be mothballed in the near future, but it has done a great service to me and many others.

I retired my car when I was hospitalized last year and have enjoyed the bus and its volunteer drivers who have been very friendly and helpful. Thanks again.

Shelagh MacRae,
Fergus



WRITE OUT OF HER MIND

Kelly Waterhouse

Good night

There are some truths in a marriage that nobody can prepare you for, like issues tucked into your marital bed.

At times like this, the best advice is: never go to bed angry (fake forgiveness and let that fury simmer through the night). I think it's time we pull back the covers and fluff the pillows.

Unlike where your mind just went, I'm not talking about the subject of sex (it's a family newspaper and my mom reads it so ... wait for the podcast). I'm actually referring to the greater issue of bedding: bed sheets, pillows and blankets that dress the bed for our warmth and comfort. If there is one thing the Carpenter and I get rolled up in, it's the dreaded process of making our bed. Ironically, the phrase "the bed needs making" is an absolute turn-off.

Sunday is bedding laundry day in our house. This is my task because I love fresh, clean sheets, especially when the anxiety of the pending work week often makes it hard for me to fall asleep. Crisp, fresh bedding makes me feel happy.

So, Sunday morning, I strip the bed, remove the pillow cases and separate the duvet from the cotton cover. I wash them all, toss them in the dryer one load at a time, then throw them back on the bed for assembly. But I usually get distracted by another task and forget to make the bed.

If it were up to him, the Carpenter would sleep in the same sheets for months on end. Mind you, this is a man who doesn't even pull the covers back up to his pillow when he gets out of bed in the morning. He just flips the blankets back and gets out, leaving this massive triangle of mattress exposed. Savage.

But let me assure you, nothing upsets the Carpenter more than heading to our bedroom for his early bedtime only to find the bed is not made. Though he is fully capable of performing this bed-making task, he cannot reconcile the injustice that he has to make a bed that was perfectly fine when he got out of it that morning. Change is hard.

In these times of marital crisis (cough), the Carpenter and I silently blame each other, but resolution is compromise, so we make the bed together. It becomes a tug of war with fitted corners. We negotiate the flat sheet coverage per side. But nothing creates more frustration than the stuffing of the white duvet into the ridiculously small opening on the bottom of the duvet cover. (Who designed duvet covers? My guess: marriage counselors.)

We each attempt to make the duvet line up inside with the corners of the outside cover. I am better at this, which irritates the Carpenter, so just when I get the corners matched evenly, he grabs his end and snaps the blanket out of my hands, sending it floating into the air, landing on the bed in more disarray than when it began. I reach out to correct it, he does it again. And again. The duvet gets balled up inside the cover, but now my husband is grinning. He enjoys this more than he should.

It's okay. As I slip on my pillow case, I fluff the pillow and smile at him wickedly, putting it gently up to his face as if to measure it, suggesting that tonight, he'd be wise to sleep with one eye open.

Good night.