

Community News

Published by:
W.H.A. Publications Limited
 P.O. Box 252, 905 Gartshore Street Fergus,
 Ontario, N1M 2W8
 Telephone 1.844.843-5410
 Fax 519.843.7607
 communitynews@wellingtonadvertiser.com
 Published on Thursdays
 Deadline: Monday at 10am
 Subscriptions:
 \$98.31 plus HST in Canada

CIRCULATION ISSUES:
 We do our very best every week to deliver our newspaper to all residences in Minto, Mapleton and Wellington North.

If you have a concern or need assistance please contact us: circulation@wellingtonadvertiser.com

A MEMBER OF:



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Community News
 EDITORIAL

PATRICK RAFTIS
 REPORTER

Media bashing way off the rails

The dream is always the same. It's also in black and white. *I'm on the witness stand in a drab hearing room, facing a cold-eyed inquisitor. He stabs an accusing finger in my direction and shouts, "Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the mainstream media?"*

To be clear I made that up for a hook (Yeah, yeah, fake news – get a grip). I'm sleeping just fine thanks, but since you're reading now anyway, why not come along for the ride?

While I haven't yet heard of any firm plans to begin formal McCarthy-style witch hunts to root out the MSM among us, the past few years, and especially the past few weeks, have shown it's not really safe to discount any possibility.

Case in point, just last week I came across a tweet from Rick Nicholls, a sitting Member of Provincial Parliament. "MSM can't deny the inevitable. When we've won, should MSM be dismantled?" posed the inquisitive Conservative representative from Chatham-Kent-Leamington.

Just to help you get into Rick's head space, the tweet was accompanied by an image of a transport truck in a review mirror with the caption "Freedom is closer than it appears."

These days I have to wonder how many actually realize the correct answer to the MPP's rhetorical ques-

tion is: "Yes, certainly, if your aim is to facilitate the establishment of an authoritarian society."

If it's true, as they say at the *Washington Post*, that "Democracy dies in darkness," then the lights are surely flickering of late.

That a man whose livelihood and continued relevance depends on getting people to vote for him feels comfortable to publicly call for the free media to be "dismantled" is a pretty unsettling thought. But, then again, he did garner 2,700 likes (apparently the currency of the realm) on Twitter, so Nicholls is clearly not alone in his longing for freedom from information. And it makes no sense.

If you're not "main stream" media what kind of media are you? Well to begin with, unprofessional.

The reason traditional media has served the public so well for so long is that at its core it's a profession. It's a job. In fact, it's big business.

Reporters who consistently got stories wrong would get fired, because outlets that publish wrong information lose readers and advertisers and market share. If they did it on purpose, as some seem to suggest is a thing, they'd never work again at a respectable outlet.

There is absolutely no incentive to make stuff up or conform to "a narrative" and there are numerous deter-

rents. Much is made in social media commentary streams of the traditional media being "bought and paid for" by the current prime minister through a \$600 million fund first announced in 2018.

What those who rail about this "bailout" tend to gloss over is the money is spread over five years and mostly targets smaller legacy outfits like newspapers through measures like tax credits to support some labour costs related to creation of original content.

While \$120 million annually might seem nothing to sneeze at (it's staged so not being doled out at that level yet), it's divided among about 1,000 newspapers and Lord knows how many broadcast and online content producers. And it's not divided evenly, so it ends up being little more than a drop in the bucket whether you're a big player or a small one. According to News Media Canada total advertising spending on major media of all types accounted for \$14.4 billion in 2020, so this is not keeping anyone afloat, let alone dictating editorial policy.

In more than 30 years of newspapering - and I've worked for companies owned by Torstar, Sun Media and numerous smaller corporate entities (we're completely independent here

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Rolling protest set to run through local communities on Nov. 19

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"To make sure that everyone that starts the convoy, ends the convoy," he explained. "So they know that everyone's safe and then they would be going home from here."

Mayors weigh in

Contacted on Feb. 10, Mapleton Mayor Gregg Davidson said he had seen online promotion for the event the previous day.

"I haven't been invited to it, but I did see it," he told the *Community News*.

Davidson said he had no concerns about the event.

"I respect the rights of people to make choices and if they want to have this protest ... I'm not against people coming forward and saying their piece, as long as it's done peacefully," the mayor stated.

"My dad was a union organizer and I understand about standing up for your rights."

While promotional material for the local event does not directly mention the "Freedom Convoy" currently blocking streets in Ottawa in protest of COVID-19 mandates or various blockades at border points in Ontario and Western Canada, the slogan "We stand with our truckers – Convoy 2022" appears on the online poster.

"I support people in their right to protest," said Davidson when asked about related protests.

However, he noted, "there comes a time where if it's now blocking food getting to our grocery shelves, they need to be cognizant of that and let some of those vehicles through."

Asked if the municipality was concerned about safety related to

the event, Davidson said the township was not anticipating taking any action.

"We're not planning anything in the municipality," he said.

"We expect this to be peaceful and it's just going down our local and county roads and, you know, once they're on the roadway that's an issue for the OPP not the township."

Minto Mayor George Bridge, fresh from a local economic development committee meeting where he heard about the impact of the border closures on Minto industries such as TG Minto, which was forced to significantly reduce production on Thursday and Friday this week, wasn't supportive of the Perth-Wellington convoy.

"How can I support this? How can people support this? I don't understand it," said Bridge.

He noted the protests against mandates have arrived, ironically, just as decreasing COVID-19 case numbers and hospitalizations are allowing the province to continue lifting restrictions as planned.

"If you look what the province has said they're going to do," Ontario should be "getting pretty well past it," by the middle of March, said Bridge.

Bridge stated the town isn't planning any measures in response to the convoy, noting roadways are under OPP jurisdiction.

"I would imagine they'll be reluctant to do anything, but just watch it," he said of police.

Traffic issues?

Contacted by the *Community News*, Wellington County OPP indicated they are "aware of a planned demonstration ... and will be moni-

toring the event.

"Should there be an impact on traffic, the OPP will advise the public via our West Region social media accounts and traditional media releases," indicates a statement from media relations officer Jacob Unger.

Asked if organizers are concerned about upsetting other motorists on the roads affected by the local convoy, Steckly said the group is going to do its best to be respectful to people in the community.

She noted participants will be told not to honk their horns in towns and organizers have spoken to the police.

"We're doing no harm to anybody," she said. "We have no nefarious intents or ill will toward anyone."

She later added, "We have no intentions of going out of our way to be rude."

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No skis? Just poles? An overview of the benefits of pole walking

By Nick Serafini

You may have seen them out there and wondered why are they just using just poles? But for those who are walking with poles, commonly referred to as "Nordic walking," they may be a step ahead in terms gaining more benefits while participating in their exercise.

There have been many research articles over the years to support these benefits so let's explore what they are!

The first benefit that we will explore is confidence. Yes, that's correct. For many, the fear of falling can be more than

enough to prevent them from doing any exercise at all. And without exercise, our overall health as well as our quality of life decreases. These two components are arguably the most vital to our longevity. Plus, a little can go a long way.

Next, we can actually increase the amount of energy that we are utilizing during our walk. Because we are now incorporating our upper body, this means that there are more moving parts, which increases the demand for energy to be used.

Think about how much tougher it may have been to

use an elliptical versus a treadmill barring any musculoskeletal issues or injuries. The use of poles actively engaged the upper body to propel the person forward during walking, resulting in higher activation of the upper body musculature, and it increases cardiovascular metabolism compared with walking without poles at the same walking speed.

So, regardless which speed you are travelling at or the terrain that you are on, there are marked improvements to our health.

Studies have shown an increase in cardiovascular

function (how well the heart and lungs work together) and beneficial effects on several relevant parameters such as resting heart rate, blood pressure, exercise capacity, maximal oxygen consumption, and quality of life in a wide range of diseases.

Using poles can actually make your activities feel easier also. A research article showed that the use of poles in Nordic Walking increased physiological responses at a given speed but decreased the RPE (rate of perceived exertion) in comparison with the normal walk uphill. Rate of perceived exer-

tion is a commonly used scale to compare how you feel when exercising at any given time; the lower the number, the easier the activity feels. This can help you monitor your progress week to week, month to month.

In conclusion, there is research to define the additional benefits of using poles for walks. If you are going to spend the time to exercise, why not get the most out of it?

There are an abundance of options out there covering a wide range of price points, so there is no reason not to get yourself (or gift) a pair! And with telescopic or collapsible

poles, they can be easily stored away for spontaneous adventures. Finally, considering the situation we are still in, why not take advantage of the beautiful landscapes our communities have to offer!

For more information about any of the free services offered by your local Family Health Team ask your doctor or nurse practitioner during your next visit, visit the website www.afhto.ca or google 'family health team locations'.

Nick Serafini is a registered kinesiologist with the Upper Grand Family Health Team.

Media criticism perplexing

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at WHA Publications by the way)- I've never heard of a directive to take a particular editorial stance. Lots of push to put out more special sections and cut costs to enhance the bottom line, but never a call from corporate saying anything like "Go easy on Trudeau (or whoever), he's our meal ticket."

In Trudeau's case the idea is laughable. Mainstream out-

lets have pounded the man so relentlessly at times it's a wonder he's still standing. From the Aga Kahn vacation to the Tofino holiday, from the WE debacle to the SNC Lavalin affair, from "elbowgate" to blackface, the current PM has garnered more negative press than many serial killers. But the media's in his pocket? LOL!

Sorry to all the conspiracy theorists out there, but the

backbone of the "MSM" is just a bunch of working stiff reporters who know their pay cheque depends on getting it right.

On the other hand, what's the consequence of spreading lies and misinformation to that blogger, tweeter or poster who's putting it out for kicks or chaos?

Sadly, it's usually more followers.

And that, unfortunately, is how we got here.

Town of Minto reopens office

MINTO - The local municipal office is opening to the public in response to the recently-announced relaxation of pandemic-related public health restrictions.

"As the Province of Ontario begins to lift public health restrictions, all staff will be back in the office and the office will be fully open to the public effective Feb. 22," states a Feb. 15 press release from the Town of Minto.

As of March 1, the public will not be required to show proof of vaccination to enter town facilities, the release states.

However, due to renovations to the council chambers, council meetings will continue virtually until completion of the renovation, the release notes.

Updated public health measures can be found by visiting: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures#returning-to-our-plan-to-safely-reopen-ontario>.

To obtain proof of vaccination visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/proof-covid-19-vaccination>.

Keep masking

The Town of Minto is reminding the public to continue to wear a mask and wash hands regularly and get vaccinated or boosted when possible.

"It is critical that everyone continues to follow these measures to keep our great community safe. Minto is a resilient community and will get through this unusual time stronger together," the release states.

The municipality is direct-

ing individuals who have questions or concerns regarding COVID-19 to contact Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health at 1-800-265-7293 or visit www.wdgphealth.ca/coronavirus.

"The Town of Minto continues to keep public safety as top priority during the unique circumstances surrounding COVID-19. The Town of Minto remains committed to safeguarding the health, wellbeing, and safety of our employees," town officials state.

"The Town of Minto wishes to thank the public for their ongoing understanding during this unique circumstance."

Canadians worried about U.S. turmoil

VANCOUVER - Four-in-five Canadians say they are worried the current state of U.S. democracy will negatively impact Canada's economy and security. This is the majority belief across regional and political lines, though past Conservative voters are most likely to dissent at one-in-five (22%).

Further, there are many Canadians who believe Donald Trump winning a second term in 2024 would mean the end of democracy in the United States. Seven-in-ten (68%) of Canadians agree that democracy in the U.S. cannot survive another four years of Trump as president. They are joined in that sentiment by half (49%) of Americans, but many (44%) on that side of the 49th parallel believe democracy in the U.S. will be fine even if Trump is president again.

Reflections

BY LAURIE LANGDON

Awe and wonder in Heaven

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. (Isa. 40:5)

The number one attraction in Heaven is Jesus Christ. In fact, Heaven is what it is because he is in it. It is wonderful because he who is wonderful is here. It is glorious because he who is glorious is present. It is awesome because he is awesome!

It is interesting that Webster's Dictionary defines the word "awe" in two ways. According to Webster, around the 13th century it was understood to mean "dread" or "terror." At that time, if I referred to someone as being "awesome," I would have meant that they possessed the power, either by their presence or by their reputation, to inspire anxiety. And, while this sensation in no way embodies what I experience as a follower of Christ in the presence of my loving Father, it does define the atmosphere that exists when God's enemies are confronted with his pres-

ence.

The more modern definition of awe, according to Webster, is "an emotion variously combining dread, veneration, and wonder that is inspired by authority or by the sacred or sublime." This more accurately describes the atmosphere of Heaven.

Here in Heaven, because the One who is altogether lovely is present, worship is drawn out of me.

Here, because the phenomenon of his glory is fully revealed, a wonder exists beyond my capacity to absorb, hence my need of a glorified body. Here, because I am eternally stimulated by his influence, I am forever in awe.

In fact, the place that the living Christ occupies is beyond awesome!

Its courts ring out with the most glorious sounds ever heard by human ears and its sights are beyond anything ever imagined by the human mind. No glory is like it, no splendor can come close to it and no beauty can match it. His grandeur is abundant and his posi-

tion holds the highest dignity. No human words can express it, but as he is one day fully manifest to the world, all mankind will see it, and know beyond all doubt that the living Christ is the most glorious of all glories and the most wonderful of all wonders.

How awesome it is to live forever with the number one attraction in Heaven, Jesus my Messiah!

I can't wait!



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