

Letters to the Editor

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'Deal with it'

Dear Editor:
RE: *Minto residents receive anti-Pride flyer in mail*, July 11.

Personally, I take no issue with anyone who identifies with 2SLGBTQIA+ or otherwise and do not identify with a group. I stand firmly against the indoctrination of children and misrepresentation of the majority.

Pride doesn't represent culture or diversity. Inclusion of everyone provides diversity by default.

Mayor Dave Turton and council have graciously heard delegations regarding this issue but failed to comprehend and apply neutrality, stating they can't provide a bylaw that allows banners/flags/side-walks to remain neutral; totally missing the meaning.

As a Minto taxpayer I don't want my community suggesting I support the beliefs aligned with Pride and I don't expect them to support mine.

Deputy mayor Jean Anderson stated the issue is "tearing the community apart." It is indeed creating division as council has catered to a category.

Categorization is division. When done to individuals hostility ensues. Council failed to comprehend and appropriately apply neutrality; now to admit and deal with it.

Bonnie Hollinger,
Minto

'Their true selves'

Dear Editor:
RE: Deeply concerned, July 18.
We are certainly living in the midst of enormous change when it comes to gender identity. It is all-encompassing.

Scientific research on hormones and genes confirms that there is a spectrum related to gender; gender dysphoria is biology.

I am relieved to know that individuals can live their true selves in a society that is inclusive and loving. It may take another generation to see social norms catch up with the science.

Sheila Koop,
Elora

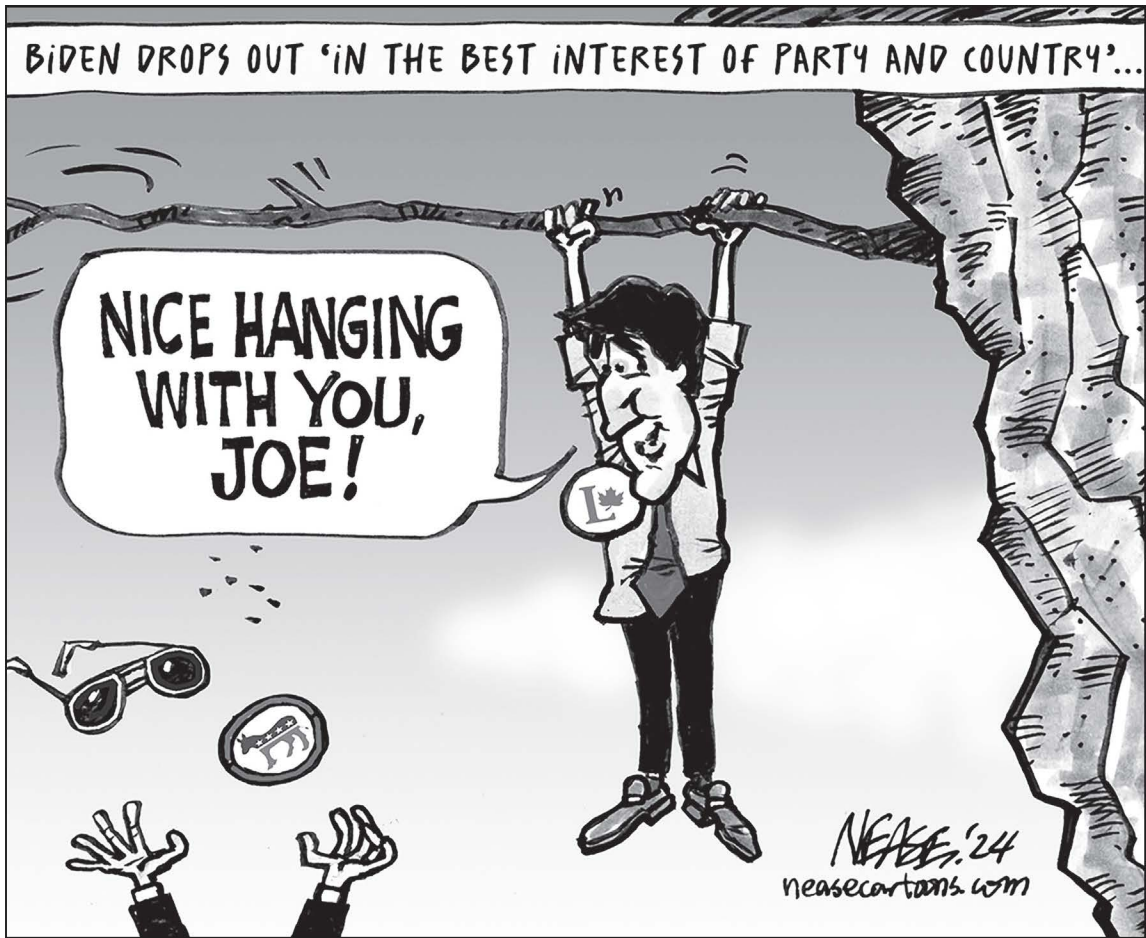
'Empty prayers'

Dear Editor:
RE: Deeply concerned, July 18.
Let me reassure Doug Vanderveen: the term "bigot" is not used lightly. It is not a "burn"; rather, it is a condemnation of some peoples' moral failure – their misconstrued, narrow-minded and, yes, bigoted sense of what is right and wrong.

The term describes intolerance, an appalling degree of arrogance, and a complete lack of compassion. This is not to be celebrated. It must be countered and logically and morally discredited, then shunned, shamed, and shut out of societal debate.

The Christian-nationalist views Vanderveen espouses are fundamentally exclusionary, dangerous, and dehumanizing – he and others are actively denying the inherent human dignity of members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Members of the LGBTQ+ community do not need his prayers, which are materially inconsequen-



tial. Instead, we need access to inclusive and appropriate health-care, access to non discriminatory government services, and the ability to live in a society that is free from public and private discrimination.

Perhaps rather than offering empty prayers, he might strive to work towards a more inclusive and understanding society, instead.

Connor Maitland,
Centre Wellington

'User-pay solution'

Dear Editor:
When I was on council last term, I was originally very sympathetic to the plight of termite-infested homes and voted certainly to find a community solution. The new exorbitant cost of termite treatment with serious tax increases this year and the recent letter from a new Fergus resident insisting that he is owed, as in entitled, to treatment at every other taxpayer's expense has made me rethink this problem.

The resident letter (Termite treatment, June 13) stated the resident knowingly bought a termite infested, probably on a discount, treated it, put an addition on his home and now it has termites that he treated at thousands of dollars of cost. He now insists he wants the general public to pay up to \$60,000, which is the termite report price tag, to fix his termite problem.

I have a problem with that. Is he going to pay the money back to the community when he sells his \$1-million-plus home with perhaps a profit? Highly unlikely.

Yes, the problem is massive. There are over 280 homes confirmed and up to 500 possible for immediate infestation. Yes, it needs a community-wide solution that is comprehensive, rapid and immediate.

Yes, it can and is financially onerous for private owners of the termite-infested homes. But it is wrong to make the whole general public pay for the advantage of private owners increasing the value of their personal homes. This needs a user-pay solution with a loan/lien against the houses that are designated for treatment so the public gets the monies forwarded back when the houses are sold. With financial products like reverse mortgages in the market place I am sure the legal and financial department of the township

can figure out an agreement.

A capital reserve created to advance the capital for quick and comprehensive termite treatment and then collect the administrative costs, funds and interest when the houses are sold.

This council needs urgently to rethink this problem that requires no general tax increases and facilitates a user pay solution.

The fact is 26.8% of Canadians are struggling financially, living barely week to week, and those 25 to 54 years of age at 32.7% and locally elderly and lower income residents are struggling to pay rent let alone own a home. Also, there was a 35% increase in use at the local food bank last year.

Centre Wellington council subsidizing owners of million-dollar homes with termites is not a good use of public funds. The only just solution is a user-pay solution.

Stephen Kitras,
Centre Wellington

Bank parking

Dear Editor:
This is regarding the parking sign on the street beside RBC Bank in Fergus.

I suggested to Centre Wellington Township and the mayor that the sign could be changed to a disabled sign since there is only one parking spot in the lot and it's quite a long walk for someone disabled.

I myself have to stop once or twice while walking to rest and then continue on. To me it only makes sense to have that sign a disabled one.

That would be so much easier for us and we've talked to other people and they agree so I'm writing to you for others to read this and see if they also agree.

Yvonne Levely,
Fergus

Popular pilot

Dear Editor:
An open letter to the aerobatics pilot that flies in the area of Beatty Line and Sideroad 10.

Whenever I hear your plane I drop everything and run outside to watch you from a few kilometres away, where you appear as a little spec on the horizon doing loops and dives.

On July 20 I had the privilege of being right underneath you as you flew, and I just have to tell you that your talent and your plane are

extraordinary!

Hope to see you featured in the paper sometime; would love to know your story. Thank you for the joy, excitement and amazement that you bring!

Shelby Pozza,
Centre Wellington

'Doggy do'

Dear Editor:
We are fortunate to have great walking trails in Centre Wellington. They are maintained by hundreds of anonymous volunteers. Thank you.

If you are using the trails, do your part. If you carried it in, carry it out. If your dog dropped it, pick it up and take it home.

A lawn mower and "doggy do" makes a huge mess. Be a helper not the problem. Carry it out.

Dave Scharman,
Elora

Another store needed

Dear Editor:
I've been living in Elora for 15 years. I'm single, in my mid-70s but I can still drive.

We really need another grocery store in Elora. I heard No Frills may be coming but needs zoning changes. Get on with it! They changed zoning for McDonalds.

The other grocery store needs competition; its prices are high compared to Walmart and Freshco.

Sharon Roche,
Elora

'Rural supplement'

Dear Editor:
This letter pertains to anyone living in a rural location but has their mail delivered by a Toronto CMA post office. The Canada Carbon Rebate has an additional supplement for rural residents living outside of the Toronto CMA. This year, our government is checking postal codes to identify location.

If you live outside of the Toronto CMA but have a postal code that "straddles" a CMA location, you will be denied the supplement. For example, Erin residents with a postal code of L7J or L7G will not receive the rural CCR funds.

If you agree this is unfair, contact the CRA (or your MP) to have your rural supplement re-instated.

Renata Georgeff,
Erin

WRITE OUT OF HER MIND

Kelly Waterhouse



Sliver

I stepped out of the shower onto the soft, luxurious mat and immediately felt the pain of something sharp pierce the ball of my foot. Ouch.

I hobbled upstairs to get my eyebrow tweezers, (something I own but have no idea how to use for their intended purpose – sort of like the glue gun incident we don't talk about anymore).

I settled on the bed, pulled my left foot up on to my right knee, and with sound effects that were not sexy, attempted to excavate the black sliver. Gross.

You should know two things about me: I don't like feet, mine or anyone else's. Period. Also, I do not handle wounds with grace. I'm queasy. A boo-boo that opens the skin, draws blood, needs to be picked or cleaned makes me want to pass out. Typing that sentence made me woozy.

I did my best to negotiate the black barb of cruelty from my freshly washed feet. I picked, scraped and pinched at the sliver with the tweezers. It was awful. Little by little, I pulled the sliver of agony out of my foot, but I could see I didn't get it all. It had to be at least an inch long (it was barely a millimeter, but this is my story, so I'm going for dramatic effect. Play along). My foot was inflamed from my botched attempt to remove this ginormous sliver.

I'm no delicate flower (despite all obvious statements above to the contrary), so I focused on the tasks of the day. Then late afternoon, my foot started to hurt again.

I didn't want to ask the Carpenter for help. He enjoys picking out slivers the way some freaks like to pop pimples (I just threw up a bit in my mouth there) because it gives them some sick sensory pleasure. Slivers are an occupational hazard for the Carpenter, so he has perfected the art of removing them; but worth noting, he has tough skin so things that hurt my delicate nature don't hurt his thick, coarse hands.

When the Carpenter knows I have a sliver, he gets this medieval, maniacal medical practitioner look in his eyes.

"Get me the tweezers," he bellows.

He patted his knee, motioning for me to trust him with my foot, while snapping the tweezers like tiny crab claws the whole time, and flashing a wicked smile. He was enjoying my anxiety far too much.

I don't like anyone, including the Carpenter, to touch my feet. Hands off my feet. I should mention here that I am very ticklish. Jumpy ticklish, as in likely to involuntarily kick the Carpenter in his most delicate of places, simply out of reflex (cough) if he strikes a nerve.

He scraped and scraped and scraped the sharp edge of the tweezers on the ball of my foot, squeezing my foot tightly to secure that whole reflex option, and then pulled at the skin, gently but with enough pressure to make me curtsy suggest he be done. He ignored me.

And then, just when I was thinking of kicking him with my right foot, he dropped the tweezers and put his hands in the air as if to signify success.

Well, I'll be darned.

"You big baby," he said.

I'll accept that, but only from a guy with coarse hands and a soft touch. Giggles.

Send letters to: editor@wellingtonadvertiser.com

—THE—
WELLINGTON ADVERTISER

The Wellington Advertiser was founded and registered in March, 1968 as a long-needed service to the retail and service establishments and the shopping public of suburban and rural Wellington County.

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A member of: The Ontario Community Newspaper Association and the Canadian Community Newspaper Association

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.
Nous reconnaissons l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.

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Circulation 40,441

EDITORIAL



Dave Adsett
PUBLISHER

‘Banned’ is the correct term

As Centre Wellington council decides whether it will allow historic Elora Mohawks banners to be reinstalled at the Elora arena, it is hoped sensible conversations ensue.

A long-standing lacrosse fan asks in a letter to the editor why our print headline was different than the online version of the same story. Prior to leaving the office last Friday we asked the editor about that oddity.

It turns out high-level staff at the township of Centre Wellington had contacted the reporter who filed that story looking for the headline to be tamed down. Unbeknownst to the editor, the headline was changed online after township influence.

The word “banned” is negative, township officials claimed – “consciously inflammatory,” as the letter writer suggests. It was, regardless, the correct word.

The inappropriateness of the request by township leaders has been addressed with the mayor and the town personnel involved. A newsroom chat will happen as well that edited copy approved by the editor stands – unless an inaccuracy exists, in which case it will be corrected or clarified with speed and professionalism, as is our custom and pledge.

To assist those tempted to grab a dictionary or search for a definition:

Ban (banned) – to forbid something officially or legally so it cannot be done, used, seen or read.

To forbid somebody from doing something.

At the end of the day, it was the correct word to use. But alas, the war against precision and utility of the English language rages strong, as does the battle to decipher truth, half-truths and mistruths.

In the coming weeks council will face some choices after staff failed to reinstall decades-old banners. The renovated Elora arena re-opened as the Jefferson Elora Community Centre in January of this year.

Something good can happen here if the parties involved choose to listen prior to drawing conclusions, but Mayor Shawn Watters could have his hands full on that score.

Already the matter has become far too political, with staff intervening to downplay this issue and one particular councillor giving parties involved the impression that “these older longtime residents are going to have to get with the times.” This hardly sounds like open minds when it comes to deciding how to deal with the past and finding a path forward.

Lacrosse is recognized as Canada’s oldest sport, dating back to 1859, although its roots precede that. Unreservedly, Lacrosse Canada summarizes this sport’s place in Canada’s history with

Dear Editor:

RE: *Elora Mohawks banners banned while township develops policy on Indigenous-themed sports logos*, July 18.

Your front page print story regarding the Centre Wellington council decision not to reinstall Elora Mohawks championship banners and jerseys at this time was consciously inflammatory.

Your digital version of the story quickly morphed its headline into a notably softer “banners won’t be re-installed” versus your print story of “banners banned”. Suffice to say, there is a distinctly negative connotation with the term “banned”.

Why council would decide to tackle this issue and create unnecessary noise as the team prepares to play for the Ontario Western title is beyond comprehension. Which is not to say the issue does not deserve careful and considerate scrutiny. But the timing? Come on! It’s an unnecessary distraction for a group of young men doing their very all to represent the community.

And what of the hard working members of those championship teams, most recently the Founders Cup champs of 2018? And those before them? Are we comfortable just erasing their legacy and accomplishments? If the banners need to be re-instated without the logo, if that is the sticking point, then do so. But don’t erase them from history. Remember, we celebrated them with a parade in 2018; let’s not brand them with a Scarlet letter in 2024.

Terry Williams,
Elora

SAID AGAIN :

SEE ARTICLE ON PAGES 1 AND 35

“We are not ‘heathens’ ... we have heart and spirit. We are people.”

Healing of the Seven Generations founder Donna Dubie

“And, we owe it all to the people of the First Nations - and the Creator.” That’s as definitive a nod to the First Nations and its sport, shared annually by over 100,000 players across the country, as one could wish.

The Elora Mohawks date back to the 1960s and have been a formidable team, winning many championships. Great athletes emerged from that program – some considered small-town heroes, as seems to happen with organized sports in small centres. Generations of families have played and given back to the sport over that time.

Their history is our history. The fly in the ointment at this current juncture is the past appropriation of an Indigenous symbol and the use of the name Mohawks, which may be offensive to some. Major league sports teams with Indigenous monikers have undertaken similar discussions to reconcile their past.

Some will recall that in 2022 Centre Wellington minor lacrosse adopted the name Riverhawks out of deference and respect to conversations it had about the Mohawks name and logo. The sky hasn’t fallen and hundreds of youth, parents and coaches continue to embrace lacrosse with passion each season since.

Whether the Jr. ‘B’ team makes

the change to a different name and logo is up to it. Council cannot force that, but if the team does not change the name/logo, the banner ban debate could well extend to the team itself being allowed access to this township-owned facility. That is the logical progression of this conversation over banners proudly won and displayed for decades, whether anyone wants to admit it or not.

Based on the Ontario Human Rights directive in 2019, the DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) push in recent years and long overdue efforts to respect recommendations within the Truth and Reconciliation Report, the issue has been brought to a head.

Why the matter was raised during lacrosse playoffs and summer holidays is a legitimate question. The first advisory, after all, was issued five years ago.

Also, the arena was closed from April 2023 until January 2024 for renovations, giving plenty of time to develop a solid plan or at least a strategy for this eventuality.

Despite the obvious fumble by staff, this is now a conversation whose time has come. Yelling from the rafters or pointing fingers from the council dais, aren’t going to get us where we need to be, without undue angst.

It is a time to listen.

Letters to the Editor

‘Inflammatory’

‘Digital tools’

new efficient tool does not in any way let the Doug Ford government off the hook for the appalling underfunding and support of our system.

However, I’ve learned that other digital tools are being introduced to add efficiencies for doctors and other health care workers. We patients will also benefit in the long run. I’m looking forward to learning about other tools in the works or already in use.

Liz MacLennan,
Elora

‘Respect others’ views’

Dear Editor:

I recently had a great conversation with a gentleman who responded to my invitation in this paper to have a conversation about Pride.

We found we both are passionate about people being treated fairly and all people being accepted and respected. We talked about the meaning of the Pride flag, which seems to vary according to the person who is looking at it. We need to get clarification on what the flag represents. Welcoming and including all people appears to be an important aspect.

I was glad to discover that it is okay to talk about Pride policies that have made their way into policies in our society.

We agreed that more conversations need to be had, in a respectful way. We don’t all have to agree, but we respect others’ views. Perhaps this would defuse a lot of the polarization, vitriol and nasty name calling that I originally complained about in my first letter.

Claudette Stevens,
Southgate

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