

We will survive

One can be forgiven for thinking the death of printed newspapers is imminent, especially given recent events at Postmedia and Metroland's *The Guelph Mercury*, where about 100 people combined were laid off and newsrooms across the country are being merged.

But be assured, while the community press is beset by challenges (like any industry), this isn't the beginning of a widespread death spiral. This has less to do with a print crisis than it does a Postmedia crisis. Any company that extends its reach and accumulates vast amounts of debt, as Postmedia has done (and Canwest did before it) puts itself in a precarious position.

This isn't about new technology killing newspapers. This is about a complex mix of social, political, economic and structural challenges, some of which are unique to Postmedia.

Yet as technology advances, questions invariably arise regarding the future of the printed medium. The viability of newspapers in an environment where there is increased competition for reader attention and ad dollars becomes an almost all consuming question, where assumptions are made that a new technology will inevitably overwrite existing technologies.

But that's not how it works. Radio did not kill the newspaper, nor did television. Instead, the power balance within the media industry was renegotiated as new media forms entered and were eventually absorbed into the evolving media market.

Indeed, print has been remarkably resilient in the face of so-called disruption. And it's not like it's always been easy for newspapers.

Filled with an entrepreneurial spirit, early newspaper owners set up rudimentary hand presses in settlements across the country, carving for themselves a niche role within the nation's slowly emerging news market. They became not just chroniclers of history, but also a key source of communal information. The pages of these early gazettes provided information, recorded shared experiences and generally built a sense of collective identity, much like today's community newspapers. Newspapers are renegotiating their place as the market adjusts to accommodate the newest entries. Newspapers, especially hyperlocal weeklies, are still an important part of a reader's news diet.

With that in mind, we can say with confidence that *The Independent & Free Press* will continue to serve its community well into the future.

The Independent & Free Press

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Letters to the editor

Don't paint us all with the same French brush

This is in response to Sonia Labbé's article regarding the three available options for students in the public or Catholic school system.

If parents want to station their child in an all-French school, that's great. Yes, it is a good choice, but not the only good choice.

So please do not diss the professionalism or competencies of teachers of the immersion tract, inferring that we are "horrible".

Comparing your "horrible" experiences in Quebec with the English language teachers has no connection or bearing to any teacher here, as you do not know their personal background nor their level of mastery.

Case in point, je suis francophone, née/élevée à Boucherville, éduquée dans la province de Québec, bilingue avec un baccalauréat et un diplôme d'études approfondies dans la langue

française.

In summary, your biased attempt to pit one tract against another was disrespectful and unfounded.

A. Baron,
Georgetown

Clean fill is a fact of life

Our mayor and council promote "support our local business community".

When all is said and done our long-time businesses, including T&R Paving, which has been a local business for over 38 years, are being discriminated against by not being allowed to dump clean fill within the community.

This raises the costs that are passed on to the consumer.

Not just paving, but pool installation and building in general, are more costly to the community because our local dump sites are not made available for their use. This also becomes a safety hazard when pits are left open and unused.

Tom Cordingley,
T&R Paving

Hospital care was great, says reader

This letter was sent to Debbie Hansen, Nursing Supervisor, at Georgetown Hospital and filed with *The IFP* for publication.

I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for the wonderful care that I received while at the Georgetown Hospital from Dec. 27 until the next day.

While it was a short stay, I was extremely well looked after and I am especially grateful to Head Nurse Gail Shedoski and her team for their efforts in providing for my care and treatment.

Their positive attitude and smiling faces, in spite of the busyness of the season, were greatly appreciated.

Once again thank you.

Mike Adams,
Georgetown