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## NEWSPAPERS NOW MORE THAN EVER MATTER NATIONAL NEWSPAPER WEEK OCTOBER 1-7, 2018

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## LOCAL NEWS NEEDS SUPPORT 'NOW MORE THAN EVER,' SAYS CAMPAIGN

SAIRA PEESKER

speesker@metroland.com

With newspaper advertising revenues decreasing and communities across the country increasingly at risk of losing local news, the time to support journalism is "now more than ever," says the professional body that represents newspapers in Canada. News Media Canada is hoping to spread that message far and wide during National Newspaper Week, which runs from Oct. 1 to 7.

"It's an opportunity for people to reflect on the importance (of newspapers) in their communities, in civic dialogue and civic society in general," explained John Hinds, News Media Canada CEO, in late September. "It's about recognizing that journalists are skilled, trained professionals that have real knowledge of the community. They have background, they can do the digging and ask the tough questions.

We've structured our society around having that role where someone can ask the tough questions."

That civic role is increasingly under threat in Canada, according to a study released Sept. 25 by Public Policy Forum, a think tank. Called "Mind the Gaps: Quantifying the Decline of News Coverage in Canada," it studied news coverage in 20 communities across Canada over a decade, and found that the total number of articles declined by almost half. Coverage of local councils and civic affairs declined by one third.

Veteran journalist Sherine Mansour, who teaches at Oakville's Sheridan College, says the arrival of the internet in the 1990s changed the news landscape drastically.

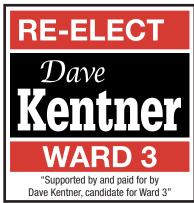
"Almost 20 years ago we saw the internet as an exciting new

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Nikki Wesley/Metroland

Oct. 1-7 is National Newspaper Week. Special coverage to mark the occasion can be found throughout this week's edition of the Independent and Free Press.













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