

WE ARE ABOUT TRUST

Benjamin Harris published 'Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick (sic)' in 1609 in Massachusetts and it is regarded by most as the first newspaper in the Americas.

The publication was the first multi-page publication, and until then news was delivered on single-sheet flyers, but after only one edition the Boston authorities shut it down.

In his cease and desist order, the governor stated the paper contained, "...doubtful and uncertain reports, (and) do hereby manifest and declare their high Resentment and Disallowance of said Pamphlet, and Order that the same be Suppressed."

Jump ahead 409 years to 2018 and two phrases resonate just like they did four centuries ago - "doubtful and uncertain reports" and "suppressed."

Not only had Harris invented the first newspaper in the Americas, he was also accused of purveying fake news.

Accusations of delivering fake news aren't a recent phenomenon. It's been around as long as newspapers existed, however in today's connected digital world flooded with media outlets of various shapes and sizes, the damage caused by bogus news stories can spread worldwide in the blink of an eye with devastating consequences.

That's why, as Canada marks National Newspaper Week, it warrants pondering the value of traditional media outlets - papers like the one you're reading now.

Our brand is built on trust, transparency and factual, bias-free reporting.

However, we do have our critics, and that's a good thing in a world where dubious reporting is on the rise. Do we make mistakes? Absolutely, but we quickly admit them, as not to break the bond of trust we have earned from readers and advertisers.

In today's slick digital world, it behooves news consumers to be skeptical and we strongly encourage it.

Readers must question media outlets. Did the writer study journalism? Does the story fairly present both sides of the issue? Does the media outlet have a code of conduct and belong to industry associations? Do they own up to their mistakes? Was the story obtained legally and ethically?

It's important to remember though that just because you don't agree with a story, that doesn't make it fake news as long as it was accurately and fairly reported.

Our only agenda is to tell your stories through a relationship of trust.

Show your support this week by tweeting a picture of yourself enjoying your favourite newspaper to #NewspapersMatter.

Visit newspapersmatter.ca for more information.

YOU OPINIONS

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NEWSPAPERS UNITE COMMUNITIES

OCT. 1 - 7 MARKS
NATIONAL
NEWSPAPER WEEK
AND WE MATTER,
WRITES PUBLISHER
KELLY MONTAGUE



KELLY
MONTAGUE
Column

For as long as I can remember I have loved reading print products. I devoured novels, newspapers and magazines from a very early age. When I was eight years old, I started producing a magazine - complete with stories and exposés and pencil crayoned advertisements that I sold to my mother and father for 25 cents each. It was quite an enterprise!

I have often heard that you should find your passion by doing what you loved as a child. I did just that. I am lucky enough to be able to live the miracle of newspaper production and

distribution every week. And now I consume news on various platforms - paper, phone, iPad and sometimes all three simultaneously.

Working with community and daily newspapers for more than a decade, I have seen this industry morph like no other. What has not changed is my shared passion and love of community news. Egad...community newspapers still matter?

In fact, with our multi-platform exposure, we are enjoying a broader audience than ever before in our history. It is absolutely no surprise to me that community newspapers continue to resonate with readers in many platforms, including most prevalently - print!

Because just like us, our readers care about their community and trust we will not let them down.

Study after study keeps shouting that people are still picking up this product (on average 80 per cent of you in the community read each week) to consume what is inside. The people in our community depend on the local paper to tell your stories.

I recently heard a quote that "community newspapers are a community having a conversation with itself." Where else will you find out about local events, news and the mood of the community?

We have feet on the street in our community to bring the news to your doorstep (and sorry, sometimes the end of your driveway). We have an engaged team that writes about our children's triumphs, our community's challenges and many successes.

As a publisher of a community newspaper, I realize that I have a big responsibility to our readers and the community. It is also an exhilarating opportunity.

Despite some perceptions and misconceptions about our product, changing business models and expanding reading platforms, we will continue to find ways to educate, inform, entertain, and incite thought from our readers for many, many years to come.

It is, indeed, an exciting time to be in the business.

Kelly Montague is Metroland West's Regional Publisher and Vice-president

ABOUT US

This newspaper, published every Thursday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. The Metroland family of newspapers is comprised of more than 80 community publications across Ontario.

This newspaper is a member of the National NewsMedia Council. Complainants are urged to bring their concerns to the attention of the newspaper and, if not satisfied, write The National NewsMedia Council, Suite 200, 890 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4W 2H2. Phone: 416-340-1981 Web: www.mediacouncil.ca

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