

REINVENTING THE NEWSROOM

WE REMAIN CONNECTED TO READERS AS WE #STAYATHOME COVERING THE NEWS, WRITES MELANIE HENNESSEY



MELANIE HENNESSEY
Column

It's almost hard to believe a month has passed since our newsroom dispersed to work from home. In some ways, it has flown by, but in others it seems strange to think that just a few weeks ago, I was able to safely sit in close quarters with my fellow reporters.

At a time when community journalism couldn't be more important, we're overcoming the challenges presented by our new workspaces to continue churning out the latest news from our home offices, kitchen tables, bedrooms and patios.

Essentially anywhere in the house that I can find a peaceful space, I'll hunker down to work. This comes as no small feat sometimes when I'm now home 24-7 with my two children, and my husband as well on his days off. Ironically I've been interrupted so many times while trying to write this paragraph, I've lost count!

By and large, though, my kids have been patient and understanding when I say I'm on deadline, or writing an important phone call.

This may mean there's been some extra screen time in our household late-

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ly, but I think all parents working at home can agree, sometimes you do what you gotta do.

As journalists, we've entered uncharted waters in more ways than one. Not only have we been forced to stay at home while covering the community at large, but it's the first time we've delivered insights on the local impact of a worldwide pandemic.

This has come in many forms, from our consistent updates on the local number of cases, to the more in-depth pieces that put a face to the Halton citizens on the front lines.

We've been working the phones, email and social media hard to connect with residents to share their stories, and health authorities for the most current facts on this ever-changing situation.

While much of the world has stopped and sheltered in place, it's true what they say — the news never sleeps.

Whether in the newsroom or the living room, we're just as committed to keeping our readers informed during this unprecedented moment in history.

Melanie Hennessey is a reporter with insidehalton.com and theifp.ca.

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SNAPSHOT



Tony Fortunato photo

A spring storm blows over Georgetown. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

TIPS TO HELP YOU ADAPT TO WORKING FROM HOME

#STAYATHOME: AT THE END OF THE DAY, 'CLEARLY MARK THE TRANSITION TO PERSONAL TIME,' WRITES MCGREGOR



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Column

space where I'm working.

- I begin my day early with emails and check-ins with clients. I am a morning person and was always in the office early, so I'm trying to schedule my home working day similarly, which helps me feel more in control.

- I call up co-workers that I would typically see around the office to talk about work and also have some laughs.

- When I'm done working for the day, I clearly mark the transition to personal time. I turn off and put away my phone and laptop, then

have a cup of tea to signal to my body and mind that work is done for the day. I know that if I left my devices on, I'd keep working in the evening, which I want to be family time.

- I've developed a "Daily Quarantine Questionnaire," where I ask myself meaningful questions for that day, including what I'm grateful for, who I'm checking in on, how I'm moving my body, and what expectations of "normal" I'm letting go of.

Most of all, hang in there and know you're doing the best you can.

Melanie McGregor is the communications and advancement specialist at the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region Branch, which provides mental health and addiction community support and education. Visit halton.cmha.ca for more information and follow @cmhahalton on Twitter.

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