

# SITUATION HAS ONLY WORSENERED WITH PANDEMIC

Continued from front

few minutes out of your day to help us deliver a clear and direct message to our federal, provincial and municipal political leaders: Enough is enough, immediate measurable action is required to address this crisis and save the lives of our vulnerable seniors and their caregivers.

In recent days the focus on this crisis has intensified and our political leaders have committed to more action, in particular the imminent priority vaccination of long-term-care residents and staff.

Unfortunately, the plans and timelines are unclear and the action is not being taken fast enough to save lives.

We must ensure that meaningful action is taken immediately.

We must also take steps now to focus on several longer-term systemic initiatives to fundamentally



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change the relationships among government, business and our elders and related health-care staff.

We believe the five actionable items below are needed to save lives and provide the humane, respectful care that our vulnerable seniors and their caregivers deserve:

First, the province of Ontario must immediately deploy rapid COVID tests into long-term-care facilities to test residents and staff and commit to vaccinating all long-term-care residents and staff by Feb. 15, 2021. Provincial and municipal authorities must work collaboratively to en-



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sure all measures are taken to support these immediate vaccinations. Federal authorities should volunteer the deployment of military health-care professionals as necessary to support this initiative.

As part of this commitment, provincial authorities must immediately establish a public tracking system to record and report vaccinations delivered on a facility-by-facility basis.

Second, the province of Ontario must immediately reinstate the mandatory inspection regime and introduce mandatory public reporting of all long-term-care facilities, focused on

infections, medical supply and long-term-care staff availability, and appropriate access to local hospitalization and specialized care. Provincial and municipal inspectors who are currently under-utilized, such as health inspectors, should be deployed to assist this program.

Third, both the province of Ontario and the government of Canada must provide \$100 million in immediate emergency funds to hire additional full-time long-term-care staff and raise the wages for all long-term-care workers as the government of Quebec has recently instituted.

Fourth, the province of Ontario must establish an emergency rapid response task force comprised of trained infection-control health-care workers available to act immediately as emergencies are identified.

Fifth, the government of Canada and the province of

Ontario must appoint independent federal and provincial ombuds, respectively, with a national regulatory authority attached to Health Canada, to receive and review all complaints and investigations from long-term-care residents, their families and long-term-care staff to oversee strict new long-term-care standards related to ensuring humane care and residents' rights, staffing and pay levels, building designs and usage of funds.

We believe that Ontarians want immediate action on these above-noted items and we urge our political leaders to take these actions to heart and move with haste to save lives.

We commit to closely tracking the weekly progress of our key elected officials on these requests and to measuring their performance.

We ask that you and your family and friends

help by signing this letter or sending your own "call for action" directly to your elected municipal, provincial and federal politicians. Please scan the QR code below or visit [thestar.com/ltc](http://thestar.com/ltc) to ensure your voice is heard on this life-and-death matter.

Together we can make meaningful change that will directly result in saving the lives of our most vulnerable seniors.

**Paul Rivett  
and Jordan Bitove  
Co-proprietors  
of Torstar**



## NEWS

# WHISTLE NAMED FOR MCCAULEY BECOMES NHL STANDARD

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Games between the Toronto Maple Leafs and Montreal Canadiens stir up a lot of emotion, but who would have thought a penalty call in an exhibition game between the rivals would be the trigger to pull at the heart strings.

"Quite frankly, I welled right up," said Ron Foxcroft, the owner of Hamilton's Fox 40 International, as he watched referee Wes McCauley call a slashing penalty on Montreal's Jordan Weal. "First penalty of the game, and Wes calls it using our whistle, that we named for his dad."

The NHL had never really taken to the iconic,

higher-pitched, Fox 40 pea-less whistle, until eight years ago when some of its officials started using a newly re-engineered version — called "The Caul" in honour of longtime officiating giant John McCauley — for their outdoor games because, with no moving parts, it doesn't retain dirt or moisture so it doesn't freeze up. Not all striped shirts opted to use it, though.

But beginning with last season's restart and continuing into the start of the NHL season next week, every official in the league is using that whistle for every game.

"It is a pretty neat and humbling experience that not only myself but my all

fellow officials are using whistles named after my father," said Wes McCauley. "The whistle sounded great and I'm looking forward to using The Caul in all our future games."

The Georgetown native refereed his 1,000th NHL game in December 2018 and last year in a poll of NHL players was named the league's best referee, earning 71 per cent of the vote. His father was also widely-admired during an officiating career that stretched from 1966-81. John McCauley was the NHL's director of officials when he died from complications of gall bladder surgery in 1989 at the age of 44.

Foxcroft and John McCauley were close

friends and long before the Hamilton entrepreneur designed the original Fox 40 pea-less whistle, they'd been discussing the need for a whistle that wouldn't seize up.

"When John died I was very upset and told our staff that the next time we did a hockey whistle we would tribute it to him," Foxcroft says. "The engineering to make it work perfectly for outdoor games was very difficult. But when we finally got it right, his sons Wes and Blaine were very emotional that we named it for their dad."

"The biggest part of this is that dad's been gone since 1989 and people still honour him," Wes McCau-



Paul Bereswill photo  
NHL referee Wes McCauley will be using a whistle made by Fox 40 in his father's memory.

ley says.

The Caul, with its flexible grip, is worn on the fingers like a standard whistle but has two air chambers and is easily cleaned. The pitch is 10 decibels lower than the Fox 40 Classic, so

its trill approximates what hockey players, officials and fans have always heard.

"There's no pea in it, you have to exhale less than with a normal whistle to make it work, and the air doesn't shoot out the top so it's likely safer, so it was the time to switch," said the NHL's director of officials Stephen Walkom, who was hired by McCauley to referee in the AHL in the 1980s.

While many other sports are testing Fox 40's electronic whistles during the pandemic, some NHL officials didn't want to use it, partly because it needs to be activated by the push of a finger and hockey officials need to use both hands to mount the boards to avoid being part of the play. The "warble" is also less familiar. The Caul addresses both needs.