

A LETTER TO OUR READERS

LET'S LOOK FORWARD - TOGETHER - TO THE YEAR AHEAD AND WHAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH, SAYS JORDAN BITOVE



JORDAN BITOVE
Column

Every day, I tell my family that I love them.

Going out the door. At the end of a phone call. Closing a text exchange.

It is something that can never be overstated or said often enough. As we get ready to enter another pandemic year, we know too well that time runs fast. And one of the most important things we can do during the time we have is to let the people we care about, know it.

So this one's for you. It's been 18 months since Paul Rivett and I had the privilege of becoming owners of Torstar, including the Independent and Free Press — a time that, thanks to many, has been an honour, an education and a tremendously rewarding experience.

I have had the chance to see the impact of the stories we tell in our communities and the work that goes into bringing them to you. And I've been granted insight

into the curiosity, interest and caring that drives our readers to turn to the IFP and theIFP.ca, which, in turn, inspires us to work even harder.

From our very first day, we have received letters and emails from readers. Whether it be kudos, informed critiques, or calls to keep up our small business support, it is evident everyone cares deeply and places great value on trusted local - journalism.

What you give as a reader, and by investing with the businesses that support us, is essential in allowing us to help bring our community together through the stories that reflect and reveal what matters most to people in Halton. And for that, I am truly grateful.

I want to thank our jour-

nalists — award-winning writers, reporters and researchers — for getting in the trenches and striving to do the right thing, digging for the details that keep us informed, and unearthing the gems that inspire and entertain us.

I have so much respect for what they do every day: challenging leadership, protecting the vulnerable and championing the people, actions and events that make such a great difference in our communities.

To our advertisers, we know first-hand how challenging things have been and we commit to do everything in our power to help you get your business back on its feet.

And to the local businesses and flyer advertisers who have fared well enough to support us

through these difficult times, thank you.

As we start 2022, it's impossible not to look back on 2021.

There's no gentle way to put it; it was rough.

At times it felt overwhelming with stories of violence, political division or natural disaster. But there were also good, uplifting stories.

I believe that's where our weekly papers shine — reporting important local news and also highlighting what's great about our communities; featuring the amazing people, places and things that surround us every day.

One of our main goals for 2022 will be to help our communities get back on their feet.

A strong local economy has never been more important.

As such we will ask business and community leaders to lend their voice on how we get things going.

We will ask you to sup-

port local businesses. We will ask you to support culture and arts by buying tickets to local events and fundraisers.

And we will call on you to aid those in our community who need our collective help.

With your help we can be champions for everything that makes Halton great, and we can challenge ourselves and others to be better, where we need to be.

As I said at the start, one of the most important things we can do is to let the people we care about, know it.

So please, take care of yourselves and the people close to you, get your booster shots, and let's look forward — together — to the year ahead and what we can accomplish.

Jordan Bitove is publisher of Toronto Star and co-proprietor of Torstar. You can reach him at jordanbitove@torstar.ca.

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Luciano, Sarah and Staff wish you a New Year filled with good cheer, health and happiness!

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