



It's about the content, not the medium

Lucio Palazzo



Community Columnist

If you're reading this, then good for you. That means you're not holding a digital device, you're holding a newspaper.

Yes, an actual newspaper! For years I've been hearing "paper is out, digital is in." Not in my world, though.

Recently, my wife forwarded me an adult colouring app for my phone. She knows that one of my favourite pastimes is colouring with my daughter.

So, I downloaded the app and up popped a nice design to colour. Wait a minute, though, all I have to do is choose a colour and touch a blank area on the picture and, voila, it's coloured? Boring!

I have a smartphone that I use daily and it serves many purposes. I use it for retrieving email, sending orders to my office and reading some news on social media. The calendar reminds me of my next dental appointment.

But, it's not my end all. I rarely download ebooks; I need to hold a book in my hand. And apparently so do others. Kobo analyzed its data recently and found that 60 per cent of ebooks are never opened after the purchase.

Samir Husni, also known as "Mr. Magazine" said, "If one magazine dies, it's not the end of the industry. Do I need to tell you how many TV

shows have come and gone over the years? Yet nobody said that television was dead."

In addition, a Temple University study concluded digital ads are processed more quickly, but print ads engage readers for a longer length of time, and that subjects reported no preference for either print or digital, but showed greater emotional response and memory recall from print media.

Effective print ads will inevitably result in digital purchases, as the Temple University study also pointed out. Great information for business people, certainly.

For the average person, like you and me, there is no reason they can't exist together. It all comes down to content.

I read the *Mountain News* because I like it. I like it because it has exactly what I need – local timely content that is very important to me and my family and a ton of advertising flyers to peruse.

A newspaper is like a good friend. The tactile experience is very important — heck you can even give it a hug if you like.

Any medium providing news and entertainment must focus on the one and only important factor, the audience. Provide content your audience wants, and voila, you have a winner.

In the end, I'd rather colour with a crayon.

Lucio Palazzo is a Hamilton resident, writer and small business owner (Smartoil.ca) who loves to colour. If you would like to write in this space, call editor Gord Bowes at 905-664-8800 ext. 335.

Council hopefuls should pledge four years service

The citizens of Hamilton, and in particular those in central Mountain Ward 7, should not be facing the necessity of a byelection.

There should be in place rules and regulations that would have prevented this byelection from being required.

When elected, a councillor in effect has a four-year implied contract to represent the constituents in their ward. Other than death or debilitating illness, that contract should not be able to be broken.

It must be the responsibility of those choosing to enter an election contest to be certain they will be able to fulfill their obligations clear of all other matters for the next four years.

If that clarity doesn't exist, the candidate must not enter the contest.

If circumstances change that clarity during the run-up to the election, the candidate must withdraw.

Those should be the clear and simple rules. Any violation must be penalized heavily. A start would be absorbing all the costs incurred due to the byelection.

Being able to resort to a fallback of councillor should an election bid for provincial or federal position be lost, must be ruled out. Taxpayers must not be expected to bankroll the ambitions of elected officials seeking higher office.

Don Phillips
Hamilton Mountain

Get ready for more outrageous repair bills after Sherwood

Re: Saving Sherwood

Why has the board waited so long to invest in a school that it committed to in 2012?

The costs involved in the rehabilitation of Sherwood started at \$5 million in 2007, jumped to \$28 million in 2011 and are now quoted at a whopping \$37.5 million. One cannot help but question the accuracy of these numbers since the study itself is shrouded in secrecy and has not been released to the public. We do not even know what the study has identified as requiring refurbishment and to what extent.

Sherwood is not special, it is like every other school in the city.

It should be treated with the same respect and maintenance as every other school in the city.

The fact it has been systematically starved of capital funding for over 15 years proves the HWDSB has not treated Sherwood like every other school in the city.

My advice to all trustees is this: question the numbers and stop treating board facilities as disposable. The \$37.5 million is ridiculous and I predict we will see similar outrageous quotes for the other nine schools, too, unless Sherwood is indeed looked upon as being special.

Scott Wear
Hamilton Mountain



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