

# THE HALDIMAND PRESS



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Haldimand's best source for news and local event coverage since 1868

## Vigil held for unknown girl found in Dunnville waters



DUNNVILLE—Susie Mageran of Dunnville placed candles and said a prayer with her friend's children, Shayla (9) and Lanna Chrysler (6).

—Haldimand Press photo by Valerie Posthumus.

By Valerie Posthumus  
The Haldimand Press

DUNNVILLE — On Monday, May 23, 2022, many silent tears were shed at a candlelight vigil at the Dunnville bridge in honour of the unknown baby girl that was found by fishermen in the marshes on Tuesday, May 17.

For the purposes of this vigil, the baby was named Anahita after a river and water goddess who is graceful, pure, and without fault.

Eleasha Topolniski, along with Jessica Bathurst, coordinated the event. Topolniski said they coordinated this "because no one else was doing anything and this girl deserved more; she deserved something. She was just a child. If no one in her family is mourning her, then we as a community are going to."

The child has remained unidentified since being discovered around 1:22 p.m. on May 17.

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## MPP candidates address local issues at debates

By Mike Renzella  
The Haldimand Press

HALDIMAND—Three debates were hosted last week for Haldimand-Norfolk MPP candidates to share their platforms with residents. This included the Haldimand Federation of Agriculture debate in Cayuga on May 17, followed by The Haldimand Press debate in Caledonia on May 18, and a Simcoe Chamber of Commerce debate May 19.

All three debates were attended by six candidates. Freedom Party candidate Thecla Ross reported that she was ill and therefore could not attend, while independent candidate George McMorrow did not respond to requests to attend. Haldimand County Mayor and local PC candidate Ken Hewitt politely declined all three debates, citing that he was busy meeting with constituents. His absence drew questions from the public, with 'Where's Hewitt?' signs being displayed at the debates from the public.

At The Haldimand Press debate, the candidates were faced with a series of questions compiled through reader suggestions ahead of time and those submitted night of by attendees. Each candidate started with an introduction.

"I've spent the past 23 years working for the people of Haldimand-Norfolk in my role as executive assistant to MPP Toby Barrett. I was told by a member of the Premier's team just a few weeks ago that they could run a monkey in this riding and win, as long as it

**I was told ... that they could run a monkey in this riding and win, as long as it had a PC logo on its back.**

Bobbi Ann Brady, Independent Candidate

had a PC logo on its back. People across Haldimand-Norfolk are offended by this. As the local PC president for the past 20 years, I am offended as well," said Independent candidate Bobbi Ann Brady.

"I am an electrical engineer. I've been working in this profession for more than 25 years.... I have experience in design and project management, and I have successfully completed many projects in my life. I have been working with the Liberal Party of Canada for the last 10 years. I've worked in many provincial and federal elections," said Liberal candidate and Mississauga resident, Aziz Choudhery. "This is a beautiful riding."

Green Party candidate Erik Coverdale said, "I'm an engineer by training. I have 14 years experience building solar energy projects. I've had a fruitful career doing this, but it's a really politically charged industry. It shouldn't be that way, but because politics is always interfering with renewable energy, I felt the need to get involved in politics."

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## Canfield nurse helping out in Lviv, Ukraine

By Mike Renzella  
The Haldimand Press

CANFIELD — When Canfield resident and Registered Nurse Kimberly Wiebe first signed up for Disaster Assistance Response Training (DART) through the organization Samaritan's Purse (SP) last summer, the war in Ukraine was not on anyone's radar. Now, one year later, the young nurse finds herself readying for her second deployment to Lviv, Ukraine, where she will once again work with Ukrainians fleeing devastation.

"Going to people in need to provide aid and share the gospel is something I have always dreamed of doing. As a little girl, I would read stories of women like Mary Slessor and Amy Carmichael, and dreamt of doing something like that someday," said Wiebe, who went on to work as a Registered Practical Nurse before returning to school and graduating as a full RN.

"After I graduated last



CANFIELD — Registered Nurse Kim Wiebe is preparing for her second deployment to Ukraine through the faith-based organization Samaritan's Purse.

—Photo courtesy of Samaritan's Purse.

spring, the third wave of COVID hit and it led my hospital to ask for nurses to volunteer to work in ICU. It gave me confidence as a nurse and I learned a lot, something that God clearly worked out with perfect timing in my life."

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## Caledonia sees big fireworks show



CALEDONIA—David, David JR, Janey, Dani, and Michael Marshall were some of the many people that made their way down to the Caledonia Dam for fireworks on Sunday, May 22, 2022. After live music on the stage, attendees saw a huge fireworks show above the Grand River. See photos on Page 18. —Haldimand Press photo by Rachel Vaarkamp.

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It was easy to decide on cremation. Now, what about the rest of the decisions?

It's easy to think that once you've decided on cremation, everything else is taken care of. There's the matter of disposition (what will happen to the cremated remains), a service (or not), or, you can even have a funeral. Helping people with decisions like this is something we do every day. If you need to finish planning your wishes, call the experts or try our new "prearrange online" feature on our website.

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# Six of nine provincial candidates address issues ranging from Nanticoke development to health care

Continued from Page 1

New Blue Party candidate Nate Hawkins said in his introduction, "Career politicians and political operatives care more about their careers than they do about the people they represent. That has to change. It's time for everyday folks like you and I to step up and take back this riding."

"There will be a lot of promises made here ... (and) the reality is most of the people at this table cannot deliver those promises. Many people feel disenfranchised with the current political system; they don't feel represented. This is why we have a slate of candidates from brand new political parties and independents," said NDP candidate Sarah Lowe. "This province is in big trouble and we need to invest heavily in sectors that have been left to starve for so long."

Lastly, Ontario Party candidate Sheldon Simpson said, "We've seen what can happen when a rural riding like this turns into a commuter village or town that ends up becoming a city.... We've seen an awful erosion in the health care system.... I'm concerned about the education system.... I think it's time to look at where our problems originated from. Legacy politicians and legacy parties have had their chance."

Up first, candidates were asked their position on the proposed Nanticoke development that would see up to 40,000 people and 11,000 new jobs created on industrial lands.

"My problem with the development in Nanticoke is not what they want to build, but how they are going about getting approval for it," said Hawkins. "It's a lengthy, complicated process to get developmental approvals, unless you know the right people. Do you have the right connections with the PC or Liberal parties? If you do, it's a piece of cake; you get to skip local democracy."

Hawkins added, "A certain candidate who isn't here tonight has lots of development friends," a clear jab at Hewitt that drew laughter and applause from the gathered crowd.

Lowe was also concerned about what she called unchecked development taking place without consultation: "This particular

development will, invariably, be done through a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO), and that is because Empire Development Communities have been significant donors to the PC party, almost guaranteeing an MZO.... What about the people of Haldimand-Norfolk? They're going to build on a piece of land with nothing around it, no schools, no hospitals, no social services. Who gets to foot the bill for all of those amenities once we have an explosion of big homes that nobody can afford?"

"I've spoken out on this proposal and so has Toby Barrett," said Brady. "An industrial park is the last place 40,000 people should live.... Folks from the city will gobble up these cheaper homes, commute to work, pick up groceries in the city, with no benefit to Haldimand County. In fact, it will be a drain on the community."

Coverdale supported the idea of the development if residents support it, but noted, "It all sounds really good, it just needs to be done right.... They should all be net zero green homes, there should be electric vehicle chargers there ... (and) there should be a long-term sustainable job for every home."

On Haldimand's aging population, plans for care, and a projected doctor shortage due to physicians retiring, Brady said, "We need to offer doctors incentives to stay in our small communities. They don't often like to stay in our small communities, because they don't feel supported in the health care system.... We know seniors prefer to stay at home as long as they can, and we must take steps to promote healthy living to ensure that can happen."

Chouhderly said the Liberal Party has a plan to hire 100,000 new doctors and medical professionals. He also pledged to beef up support for local retirement homes: "We will make sure that our nursing home workers and our seniors get the better treatment they deserve."

"I will be advocating for local health services," said Hawkins. "Just because we are rural does not mean we shouldn't have access to basic health services like mental health or having a baby. I would like to see seniors provided with health care dollars before they have to go to retirement homes.



CALEDONIA—The Haldimand Press' debate was held at the Caledonia Lions Community Centre on May 18, 2022. —Haldimand Press photo.



KOHLER—The Haldimand Federation of Agriculture's debate was held at the Kohler Agricultural Hall on May 17, 2022. —Photo courtesy of Charlotte Huitema.

They deserve to stay at their homes as long as possible."

On Indigenous issues such as the ongoing land claim disputes in Caledonia, "I've heard that prior to what happened in Douglas Creek, the relationships between Caledonia, Hagersville, and Six Nations were incredible," said Lowe. "All of that exploded after Douglas Creek.... We need it to be put to bed for the citizens of Caledonia, of Hagersville, and absolutely for the citizens of Six Nations. We cannot move forward until this is settled."

"The Indigenous people have had a really tough time. We've had lip service paid to them for a number of years. It shouldn't be that hard to find a way forward," said Simpson. "Truth and reconciliation only happens

when both sides come together and we decide we're going to move forward... We have to understand the concerns on both sides."

"Nobody is above the law. The credibility of government is lost and doomed to failure when the law and democratic processes are allowed to be sabotaged," said Brady, asking how a state of emergency could be called so shortly in Ottawa following the convoy protest, but events in Caledonia have been allowed to transpire for many years.

The candidates debated on a number of other issues, including the 'Freedom' movement, housing crisis, education, and more.

Visit The Haldimand Press on Facebook to find a link to the full debate, or find it on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/qd4wlSgSWU>.

Send Letters to the Editors to [publishers@haldimandpress.com](mailto:publishers@haldimandpress.com)

# OPINION

## Letters to the Editors

### Refusal to be seen

Here are quotes from Haldimand's Mayor Ken Hewitt, responding to my request for a meeting regarding open, transparent, and accountable government concerning Haldimand County: "...as Mayor I have no desire to meet with you and address the concerns that you have."

"To be very clear. I will NOT meet with you regarding your concerns..."

Is this how a 'leader' is to represent the public and address serious concerns as the mayor?

Ignored/excluded Cayuga resident, Jesse Little

### State of democracy in Haldimand-Norfolk

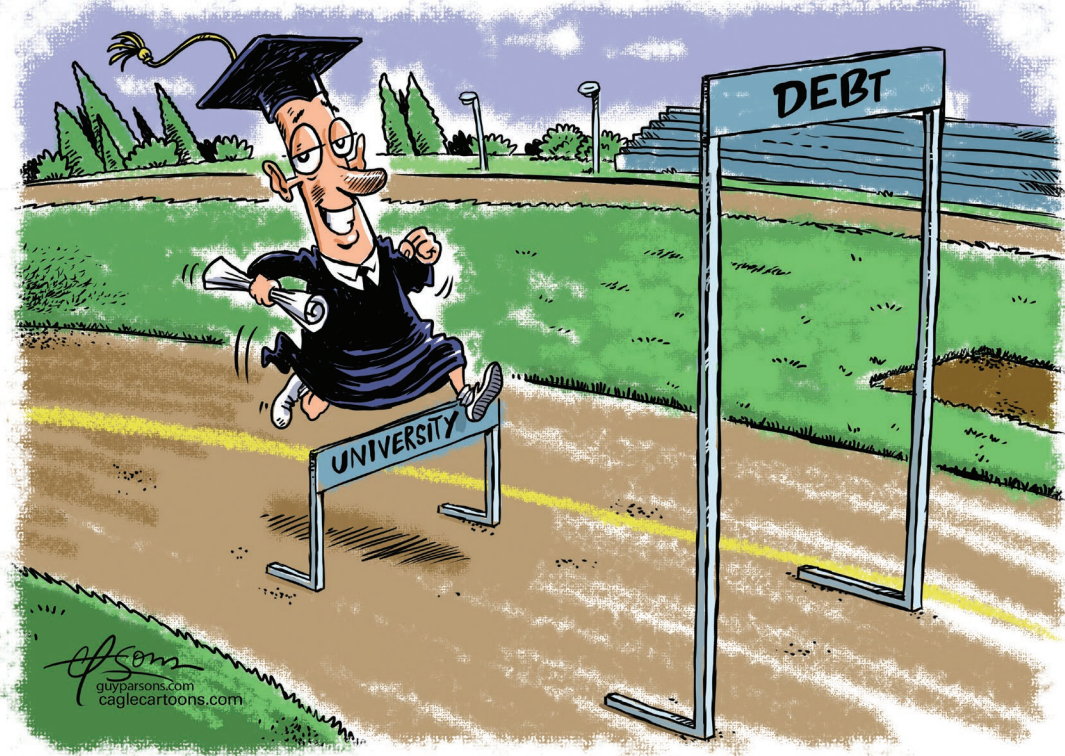
It is hard to understand why the Premier of Ontario would decide to appoint a candidate to take the place of our MPP, Toby Barrett, who is retiring after 27 years of service in this riding. Where is our democracy? Why was the selection of a new candidate for the PC party not done by the people of Haldimand and Norfolk?

There has been a disconnect between the mayor Ken Hewitt and the constituents of Haldimand. Several large and very costly projects have taken place in this area, which were not supported by the majority of people in this community. These projects went ahead despite overwhelming opposition. Our mayor has stepped down in order to run for

the MPP position. How can we trust that in this office, he will now consult and listen to people's opinions and concerns?

I attended an all-candidate debate at the Kohler Agricultural Hall and was interested to hear from some articulate and well-spoken candidates. However, there was no sign of Mr. Hewitt. I have heard from friends who were at the debate held at the Caledonia Lion's Hall, but unfortunately Mr. Hewitt was not present there either. This does not bode well for communication and connection with the community, going forward.

Charles Gillyatt, Cayuga



## Creative CORNER

Do you have something creative to submit? Send it to [publishers@haldimandpress.com](mailto:publishers@haldimandpress.com). Submissions can be a poem, a photo of physical artwork, a short story, photography, etc. Send your name and town of residence with submission. Publication is not guaranteed.

### Lament for Mother Earth by Anton S., Jarvis

Dry lakes, low water  
Nothing but pollution  
Fish dying, no solution.  
Ozone layer is being depleted.  
All our children will be cheated.  
The air they breathe is so mistreated.  
What are we to do? Who will mend things?  
Who caused this problem? Who can we blame?

Just look around you to see the shame.  
The world is travelling much too fast.  
Status symbols, they just won't last.  
Money is no object to gain more control,  
Yet they don't know what's in store.  
The world will self-destruct in time,  
Back to dust and lime.

**This week's little gem** 😄

What kind of tree fits in your hand?

A palm tree!

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