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We are all so intricately connected

by Mark Pavilons

No man is an island, wrote John Donne in the 1600s.

He was referring to the fact we are all connected as friends and members of the same community. In order to strive and thrive, we must be part of something bigger than ourselves.

I?realize that at times, we're like leaves floating in the river, being dragged along by the current, sent this way and that. But when we come to rest, we rest at home. Our home is not just the brick and stone of our dwelling, but our neighbours, friends, service clubs, hockey teams, local shops and yes, the team that makes up our municipal government.

This is where our heart, and our biggest investment is.

Many people are somewhat removed from their community and their municipal government. Some have an aversion or apprehension of politicians at all levels, and put councillors in the same basket.

But our local politicians and many of our Town staff are friends, neighbours, homeowners and consumers. They're right next to us as we line up for gas or grab our coffee in the morning. They have the same concerns and worries that we do.

Henrik Ibsen said a community is like a ship, and ?everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.?

?Real, sustainable community change requires the initiative and engagement of community members.?

??elene D. Gayle

Casual observers and busy taxpayers may not fully realize just how entwined and inter-connected everything is in our community.

Take a sidewalk for example. It's a device to move pedestrian traffic, but it impacts a village's walkability; improves walk-in traffic for local business; provides dog-walkers with a safe path and even adds to a town's aesthetics.

A stop sign or speed hump are traffic calming measures. But they're safety devices and they show that a neighbourhood or village cares about its residents.

They're reminders about how to behave as motorists and how to respect our friends and neighbours.

Both take engineering, planning and coordination to achieve.

Last week we elected our newest MPP and Sylvia Jones will step up and serve Caledon residents. Many were put off by provincial politics this year, but it's essential we have a working relationship with our MPP and close ties with Queen's Park. Again, no municipality is an island, and we not only receive top-down mandates from Toronto, but we can leverage this relationship to ensure Caledon gets its fair share.

The same is true with our federal representatives and the decision-makers in Ottawa. Some aspects of our lives are governed by the folks we sent to Parliament Hill.

Our councillors and staff work together with these representatives and bureaucrats to ensure Caledon's voice is heard. Should the need arise, help will be readily available.

That takes work, schmoozing and even some arm-twisting at fundraising dinners or conferences.

Town staff and politicians don't clock out at the end of the business day. Nor do they stop promoting Caledon, ever.

A lot of our political clout outside our borders is about image; how we are perceived. That image is tied to our hard resources ??he parks and modern facilities provided to residents.

Municipalities have to managed all of this on a shoestring budget, by cleverly leveraging those ties, relationships and mutual arrangements.

We can all contribute by working together. Our service clubs, Chamber of Commerce, arts groups, citizen's group, church groups and horticultural societies all bring together engaged citizens, who work toward a common goal.

All of these are tied together, by invisible threads ??earts and minds. Caledon has become what it is today because none of us are ?islands.?

?People crave comfort, people crave connection, people crave community.?

? Marianne Williamson