**We tell the stories that matter to you.**

Main Street has changed. There was a time when you could find just about everything needed at a locally-owned shop. If it didn’t have exactly what you were looking for, an employee would help you source it.

Customer service and loyalty to community: These are ideals diminished in an era of big box stores and one-click shopping, business dominated by the largest corporations in the world. Today, there are far fewer decision-makers on Main Street. It means fewer businesses to sponsor a local team, or help fundraise for a new fire truck, equipment for the local hospital or school trip.

Through all this turbulence, we are still here with a single powerful focus. We tell the stories that matter to you. It is what makes this community newspaper unique. Some media have a global focus. Some are national or provincial. We only care about you.

There are more than 865 of us across this country. You might be surprised there are so many community papers still publishing, in many cases thriving, in predominately small, rural communities. We are the voice you may not all always agree with, but you know we share a love of this place. It is home and it matters.

You trust us to be your eyes and ears. Sometimes we are the only member of the public at the local council meeting, reading documents and financial statements and asking questions on your behalf.

Democracy flows uphill. When a community paper is closed or stripped of its assets, oversight of public institutions is diminished. We are proud to be there for you.

As we celebrate National Newspaper Week, take a moment to think about what this paper means to you and this community. We’re the glue that bonds our community together, because your stories matter.

*Paul MacNeill is a community newspaper publisher (Island Press Limited) in Montague, Prince Edward Island. Paul is also an award-winning investigative journalist, a frequent CBC contributor, and a board member of the Canadian Journalism Foundation and the Michener Awards Foundation.*