

Time for action

January is Alzheimer Awareness Month, a time to draw attention to dementia, those who suffer from it and the loved ones who care for them.

Last month, health ministers from G8 countries held the first-ever Summit on Dementia in London, England. Among 12 declarations coming out of the conference was that world governments must start developing plans to “tackle the spiralling human and economic costs of dementia.”

Recently, Alzheimer Society of Canada CEO Mimi Lowi-Young asked Ottawa to make dementia a priority in the 2014 federal budget by committing \$3 million toward developing a national plan.

Canada's dementia figures are staggering. As of 2011, the society estimated nearly 750,000 Canadians—roughly one out of every 46 of us—were living with some form of dementia—an umbrella term used to describe a variety of brain disorders whose symptoms include loss of memory, judgment and reasoning, as well as changes in mood and behaviour.

In dementia patients, brain function is impacted enough to interfere with the ability to work, maintain relationships and perform everyday activities most of us take for granted.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia accounting for almost two-thirds of all cases. It is irreversible and eventually fatal.

Canadian family caregivers spend an estimated 444 million unpaid hours a year looking after someone with dementia.

That commitment represents \$11 billion in lost income and the equivalent of 227,760 full-time jobs.

For everyone's sake, we hope Canada takes a leadership role in this regard.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

Are you planning on taking a warm weather vacation this winter?

No (70%)
Yes (30%)

The Independent & Free Press

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Letters to the editor

Food vouchers a waste of money

Dear editor,

Giving out food vouchers due to the ice storm is ridiculous.

I'm a little confused. The power went out at our residence, just like most of Georgetown.

After a few hours, we took the ice from the freezer, placed it into a bowl and put it in the refrigerator. The food from the freezer was put in a plastic bag and put on our balcony. Problem solved.

When the ice melted in the fridge, I just went outside to get more.

So why food vouchers? It is costing my family money by using my tax dollars to pay for the vouchers and taking the food off my children's plate to put on others.

The people pictured in the article are older than me. Shouldn't they have more knowledge? What in the world would these people do before the invention of the refrigerator?

Am I missing something?

Jason Pavelich, Georgetown

Ted Brown column missed the mark

Dear editor,

Ted Brown's entertaining rant ignored an important justification for the government's ban on incandescent bulbs — global warming. They tell us that replacing all of the estimated 87 million bulbs in Ontario homes would save 6,000,000 megawatt hours annually — a really impressive number, just look at all the zeros.

Pav Penna

Can you spare some time for CASHh?

Dear editor,

Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills (affectionately known as CASHh) is in need of volunteers for our upcoming April "Give Where You Live" campaign. For this we turn to the residents of Halton Hills to help us reach our goal of canvassing every household in Georgetown, Acton and the surrounding Halton Hills area. We understand that not

everyone can donate funds to our charity, and when you "Give Where You Live" it doesn't have to be monetary...giving of your time is just as important.

Each and every one of our CASHh volunteers comes from a different walk of life. Retirees, doctors, homemakers, teachers, pilots, bank executives, firefighters, police officers, retailers, students, and many other volunteers make up our extended family. Our volunteers are second to none.

Please call us at 905-702-8886 to volunteer today.

We look forward to you joining our volunteer team.

Marilyn Inglis
CASHh

Campaign Co-ordinator

Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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