

Keep the beat

If you found yourself in a situation where someone in your presence suffered cardiac arrest would you know what to do?

Apart from calling 911, chances you could not offer much benefit to the person whose life was in jeopardy.

With February being “Heart Month” the Oakville-Milton & Halton Hills branch of St. John Ambulance is reminding residents that heart disease kills between 35,000 and 45,000 Canadians each year and in Canada, only about 15 per cent of the population knows how to perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

A recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine showed a four-fold increase in survival if CPR is started early in the cardiac arrest casualty.

As most cases of cardiac arrest happen at home (approximately 85 per cent) the chances of survival for many victims would be greatly increased if more family members knew CPR.

All too often CPR is not being performed when professional medical help arrives, and those precious minutes spent waiting for paramedics to arrive could mean the difference between life and death.

Dr. Ian Stiell, an Ottawa emergency physician and principal CPR-researcher, says that doubling the amount of people who know CPR could save 1,000 lives annually in Canada.

Another key determinate of survival is the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). The easy-to-use machine delivers a measured electrical shock to an irregularly beating heart and restores the heart to a normal pumping rhythm. Early application of a defibrillator can improve survival by up to 30 per cent and when combined with immediate vigorous CPR offers the best chance of survival from cardiac arrest. For each minute that goes by without CPR, there is a 10 per cent reduction in the chance of survival.

“The Oakville-Milton & Halton Hills branch has increased the amount of classes being offered so that as many people as possible can learn this life-saving technique.” says branch manager Tim Bauer. “The training is not complicated and does not require a great deal of time, but is rewarding when you are able to save a life; especially that of a loved one.”

To register for a CPR/AED course contact your local branch by visiting www.sja.ca

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

E-mail: jmcghie@independentfreepress.com
Mail or drop off: Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1.

The Independent & Free Press

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You have 'Olympic Fever'. It'll fade to 'Post-Games Withdrawal' and 'Deficit Depression' in a couple of weeks...



Steve Nease

905-873-0301
Publisher: Ken Nugent
General manager: Steve Foreman
 (sforeman@independentfreepress.com)
Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell
 (ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)
Managing editor: John McGhie
 (jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)
Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler
 (ngeissler@independentfreepress.com)
Classifieds
 Kristie Pells
 (classified@independentfreepress.com)
Accounting
 Rose Marie Gauthier
Editorial
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor
 (cgamble@independentfreepress.com)
 Ted Brown: Photography
 (tbrown@independentfreepress.com)
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer
 (ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports
 (emaher@independentfreepress.com)

WEB POLL RESULTS

In the wake of the scandal involving ex-mayoral candidate Adam Giambrone in Toronto, do you think politicians' personal lives should be a factor when determining their worthiness to hold office?

- Yes (66%)
- No (34%)

Go to www.independentfreepress.com

Letters to the editor

Reader missed point about prorogement

Dear editor,
 Concerning Tom Bradshaw's critique of Barry Peters' "63-day prorogement" (Feb. 2 letter "Prorogue math off").

Although his math and technical understanding of the duration of prorogement are above reproach, Mr. Bradshaw has much to learn about the issue.

The second annual Harper prorogement, as the insult it represents to Canadians, our system of Parliament and notions of democracy, began not on Jan. 25, 2010, but on Dec. 31, 2009, when the Prime Minister made a move which, unlike past prorogements, will be legendary in Canadian political lore.

This attempt to use the Olympics to hide his government's world-class embarrassments on the Afghan detainee and international climate change files has contradicted his positions in opposition, killed legislation Parliament has worked hard to pass for Canada, and sought to hide behind feigned fiscal responsibility the dizzying overspending that, even before the stimulus program, made him our most costly prime minis-

ter— EVER.

Mr. Peters is clearly speaking to our country's political reality, rather than the abstractions of technicality and mathematics which are Mr. Bradshaw's only defence of a government that deeply offended its constituents.

Christopher Dawes,
 Georgetown

PM angers voter

(This letter was originally sent to Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong. A copy was made available for publication.)

Dear Mr. Chong,
 I am writing to you to express my extreme dissatisfaction with your government's action to prorogue Parliament.

I feel that it was not only a move merely to avoid political embarrassment, but it also also revealed to the world your party's true attitude towards the Governor General, Parliament as an institution, and the people of Canada.

Playing politics is one thing. However, the way in which the prorogation was done was even more disturbing to me than the action itself. The Governor General represents the Queen, our head of state; the ultimate authority in the land according

to our Constitution. So how did your government "advise" the GG of its intentions? A phone call.

To top it all off, the PM did not even make the announcement himself or make a speech to Parliament or the Canadian people to explain such drastic action. Rather, your party had some backroom flunky (and an unelected flunky at that) do all the talking.

When the prime minister finally broke his silence, the PM attempted to speak for us, saying that we apparently don't care about prorogation or how Canadian army officers behave overseas. Well, your party is wrong. I, for one, do care about both.

With the Liberals, Greens and NDP giving me nothing to vote for, you, personally, still had a possibility of getting my vote (my personal loathing of Mr. Harper notwithstanding). You lost your cabinet position because you broke with your party and voted on principle on the Quebec resolution. That earned my respect.

However, if you remain quiet now, you will be complicit in making Parliament answerable to Mr. Harper, rather than the other way around. And that, sir, will mean that I will do everything in my power to ensure your defeat in the next election.

Michael Halsall, Georgetown