

Keep flu at bay

If you weren't able to make it to Halton Region's last regularly scheduled flu shot clinic at the Halton Regional Centre in Oakville last Thursday, don't fret— it's not too late to get immunized.

Residents can still get their flu vaccinations from doctors' offices and walk-in clinics.

Influenza season runs until April so if you missed getting your flu shot in 2011, it's still important to get immunized, according to the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness and Promotion (CCIAIP).

Each year, influenza virus, a highly contagious infection of the airways that can spread rapidly, causes illness among millions of Canadians.

"Some people resign themselves to getting sick in the winter months but influenza isn't a mild illness like the common cold," said Dr. Susan Bowles, CCIAP chair. "Influenza is a serious viral infection with symptoms of cough, fever, fatigue and weakness, headache, general aches and pains, and respiratory congestion, and it can take several weeks to recover."

Influenza can lead to serious complications such as pneumonia for some individuals, according to the CCIAP. It's estimated that between 2,000 and 8,000 Canadians can die of influenza and its complications annually, depending on the severity of the season.

Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal said while the region has seen a dramatic drop in the number of flu cases this winter, the picture can change.

"The season is by no means over," he said.

In addition to getting the flu shot residents are reminded to wash their hands frequently with warm soapy water, cough or sneeze into your arm, not your hand, and stay home if you fall ill.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.independentfreepress.com)

Are you happy with the lack of snow this winter?

• Yes (68%)

• No (25%)

• It makes no difference to me (7%)

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Letters to the editor

Words and phrases that should vanish

In the January 10 editorial *Word games*, we asked readers to submit some of their least favourite buzzwords or phrases. Below are some of those submissions.

Dear editor,

Loved your list in the paper. Here are a couple I'd like to add

- Awesome (completely over-used by teens, adults and children alike)

- Like-um (This needs to become one word since teens have been saying this for decades. It is often inserted into one sentence three times because they can't seem to put their thoughts into words. It's not going away so it should become a new word added into the dictionary... even though I can't stand it.)

In the advertising in 2012 category:

If I hear these two captions one more time I'm ready to go insane:

1) "Like us on Facebook"

2) "Follow us on Twitter"

Ohhh puh-leazeeeee. Can we

banish this?

Thanks for the laugh.

Monica Keess, Georgetown

• • •

Dear editor,

I guess it's more of a platitude than a catchphrase, but I hate it when people say, "Everything happens for a reason."

No it doesn't.

Horrible, unfair, crazy things happen randomly all the time, with no rhyme or reason.

It's the meaning we create that gives it a reason. When tragedy strikes, we lose a job, or miss a meeting, we have to make sense of why these things happen. That becomes the reason.

Patti Post,
 Glen Williams

A new lease on life

Dear editor,

I have been a volunteer for the Upper Credit Humane Society (UCHS) for approximately 15 years... in fact, I am the longest volunteer with the organization. Some of your readers might be familiar with my stories on our needy animals which I enjoy doing immensely.

The one thing that has stayed constant over the years of my tenure with

the UCHS is that every animal passing through our doors is given every opportunity to be rehomed, however long that takes.

It is with great joy I report that our latest long-term resident Tizzy (now Raven) has been adopted! Tizzy has been featured numerous times in your paper and constantly on our website. Arriving on Sept. 7, 2010, the dedicated staff and volunteers never gave up seeking a new home for Tizzy.

To see an animal week after week is not an easy thing to do; how to keep the animal's hopes up, how to keep it from "kennel stress, rage or depression"...how to keep our own and our volunteers' spirits up. After such a lengthy wait, it becomes more urgent to place the dog/cat with even more diligence...yet we know every adoption is a leap of faith for both the adopter and the Shelter.

What makes UCHS special is the dedication to our mandate of giving every animal a fair chance at a new life, and Tizzy is our latest example of how pulling together, never giving up, that home was found and what a lift that has given to us all. She was indeed lucky to have come under the care of UCHS and never have to worry that a lengthy stay would result in her demise.

Judith-Anne Kolu, UCHS volunteer