

You can stick it to the flu

Last January a surge in flu cases put the emergency department at Brampton Civic Hospital and many others across the province into a state of gridlock.

William Osler Health System, which runs Brampton, Headwaters and Etobicoke General hospitals, reported a record number of patients turning up at the emergency department with flu-like symptoms.

During four weeks, the hospital averaged 372 emergency visits daily or a 22 per cent spike over what the hospital typically sees per day.

Dealing with the flu puts our healthcare resources under strain needlessly, and consumes valuable resources.

The answer is simple get a flu shot. The flu shot is safe and effective, and despite the urban myth, you can't get the flu from the shot.

The vaccine either contains inactivated virus, or a particle designed to mimic a flu virus to the immune system.

Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the U.S. states, Some studies have found a possible small association of injectable flu vaccine with Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS). Overall, these studies estimated the risk for GBS after vaccination as fewer than 1 or 2 cases of GBS per one million people vaccinated. Other studies have not found any association.

The risk is small but on the flipside the flu can kill. The flu killed Jill Promoli McGee's son, Jude, 2, had a low fever. She gave him some Tylenol and put him to bed.

A few hours later McGee found her son not breathing in his crib. Jude died in hospital last May. The coroner determined he died as a result of the flu virus.

McGee has turned her sorrow into a social campaign promoting the flu shot.

I felt really just sad and angry about it, because it is so preventable. And we know that, said McGee.

Children over six months can receive a flu shot.

There's no excuse for not getting the flu shot. You can book an online appointment at many pharmacies, attend a public health clinic, or see your doctor.

In 1918/1919, a flu pandemic killed 20 to 40 million people worldwide, and with the last pandemic occurring in 1968, experts predict we are overdue for one.

Protect yourself roll up your sleeve.

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"We are so small between the stars,
so large against the sky."

LEONARD COHEN 1934 - 2016



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Letters to the editor

Goodwill is everywhere

I needed to buy a few items at the Metro located in Georgetown South and I grabbed my credit card and proceeded to do my shopping.

As I only had a few items I entered into the 12 or under aisle and the cashier processed my order and presented the bill of \$66.

I pulled out my card and it was the Air Miles card, not my credit card at which point I was embarrassed and instructed her that I'll be back with the correct card.

I was only a few moments and when I arrived, the cashier told me the young man in the aisle had paid my bill for me.

I was thunderstruck. I fought back tears as I touched my heart with my hand and said thank you and said, What church can I make a donation for this deed?

He seemed surprised and stated no church and then said any church to which it was clear he was a true indi-

vidual. I then said I'll pay it forward to which he replied I hope this makes your day.

This act has made an impact not only on me ... it was witnessed in its truest form by the cashier, the woman behind the young man and all those that will hear of the generous act.

There is true feelings of goodwill in all of us and I will pass it on, as I'm sure the witness will also.

Merry Christmas and Peace on Earth

Krystyna Zablocki,
Ballinafad

Santa needs your help

For more than 84 years, the Georgetown Lions Club has organized and staged the annual Santa Claus Parade.

For the last few years the parade has been an evening event with literally thousands of spectators enjoying the parade. Hundreds of volunteer hours are required to run the event.

Many residents believe that the Town of Halton Hills runs the event; while they do provide assistance, the Lions Club provides most of the volunteers and the funding comes from our corporate and private sponsors. Each year we need to raise over \$12,000 to produce the parade and our costs continue to rise as we endeavour each year to produce a great parade but it is becoming more and more challenging.

We will require many volunteers to man our crowd control barriers in order to keep our costs down. We are looking for mature adult volunteers at each traffic barricade on the parade route. At this time we are looking for 50 to 60 volunteers to help on parade day to keep both our spectators and parade participants safe. The amount of time required is about four hours and there is a great benefit, you will have the best view of the parade.

If you are interested in participating, please email us georgetownlionsclub@gmail.ca or Doug Penrice 905-873-8469 and leave your name, number and email address. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Louie Violo,
Chair, 2016 Santa Claus Parade