

Salute the brave

What a winter it has been. After a mild beginning, long fingers of cold air have reached mercilessly down from the Arctic, and brought temperatures to this area that are the same as those in northern Alaska and Nunavut.

It's no surprise that this month is tied, with February 1904, as the coldest February on record.

For those of us who travel in a comfortable vehicle from one heated garage to the next, with an occasional frosty moment hauling groceries in the supermarket parking lot, the cold might seem like a novelty.

Snow squeaks underfoot, the stars shine brilliantly in the pristine winter sky, the uncovered face tingles with pain after a few minutes. It's the picture-perfect Canadian winter that the rest of the world imagines for us, even when so many of our citizens live in the relatively mild cradle of the Great Lakes.

But for those who actually must work or travel while exposed to these temperatures for longer than a few minutes, these past weeks have been a real test of our fortitude.

And so we salute the garbage and recycling collectors, the construction workers and the people— volunteer and professional— who maintain outdoor skating rinks. We tip our hats to the crossing guards who routinely stand for an hour or two in the freezing weather to allow vulnerable children to cross busy streets so they can get to and from school safely.

We honour the police, firefighters and emergency workers who are there when we need them, whether that's to direct traffic in an emergency or to search for hours for a doomed little boy in Toronto who somehow wandered outside wearing just a shirt and a diaper. For these people, the difficulties of weather are just part of the job.

There are the people who work night shifts at convenience stores and gas bars and have no other way to get to work but to walk. They all know, better than anyone, that life goes on, even when it's cold outside.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

As measles spreads across the North American continent. Do you agree vaccinations should be mandatory?

- Yes, for the safety of everyone (79%,)
- No, it's a parents' decision (21%)

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Letters to the editor

Vaccines don't cause autism

I am appalled that the Feb. 19 Letters-to-the-Editor section of the Georgetown Independent provided a forum for Adrian Visentin to spread the proven lie that vaccines cause autism.

This myth began with a now totally discredited 1998 study by former British doctor Andrew Wakefield. I say he is a former doctor, because he was stripped of his medical licence due to his study having been proven to be a total fraud.

Since then, numerous studies have been done, trying to see if there is a link between vaccines and autism, and every single study has shown that there is no such link.

The only "medical expert" still pushing this lie is Playboy playmate Jenny McCarthy, and anyone who bases their child's medical treatment on Jenny McCarthy's expertise is incredibly foolish.

For your paper to further this lie is totally irresponsible and you owe your readers an apology.

Mike Baker

Vaccines carry toxins as a preservative

Hooray for Adrian Visentin for writing such a succinct and reasonable letter to the editor about vaccines.

As a wellness consultant I see many families with various toxicity issues.

Vaccines carry one of the most frequently found toxins which make people sick — namely mercury — in the form of Thimerosal as a preservative in vaccines.

Babies immune systems are just not developed enough to take that much toxic load.

If people think that there is no evidence, just go to some very highly respected research done by Dr. Mark Geier and David Geier that show the connection between autism and vaccines. If you want to read it, go to www.jpands.org/vol8no1/geier.pdf.

There are numerous articles in the archives of the International

Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology www.iaomt.org.

Government only responds to the greatest pressures and best funded lobbies.

If you read Shiv Chopra's book *Corrupt to the Core*, it will open your eyes to what Health Canada's agendas are.

Oksana M. Sawiak,
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Letters policy

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