

Do It For Yourself

Please note: we cannot take health services/volunteer notices over the phone. We accept only faxed (873-0398), e-mailed (legamble@independentfreepress.com) or written notices for non-profit groups.

CMHA: The Canadian Mental Health Association—Halton branch is seeking volunteers for: finance, mental health, human resources, fund-raising and legal. Info: 905-693-4270. Must be a resident or work in Halton Region.

CNIB: The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) Halton/Peel District is currently seeking volunteer friendly visitors and drivers for clients. Training dates coming up. Call Carolann, 905-275-5332, ext. 24.

Schizophrenics: A steering committee is being formed for a new support group for schizophrenics called For Special People Only. If interested, call Barbara Franklin, 1-519-833-0712.

Cancer Society: Canadian Cancer Society is in need of volunteer drivers and council members (secretary, community fund-raising, community services, information outreach and volunteer development). Info: 905-451-4460.

Arthritis Society: The Arthritis Society of Halton-Peel is seeking phone volunteers, leaders and canvassers for the September residential campaign. Call the Arthritis Society, 905-455-6273.

VON Alzheimer Services: VON Alzheimer Services needs a volunteer with excellent communication

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

skills to facilitate a Georgetown support group for family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer Disease and related disorders. Meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Training provided. Info: 1-800-387-7127.

Diabetes Association: The Canadian Diabetes Association needs volunteers to lead support groups in the Georgetown area. If interested, call 905-455-9000.

HASS volunteers: Halton Adolescent Support Services, a non-profit charity serving troubled youth in Halton requires volunteers to join its fund-raising committee. Monthly evening meetings are from September to June. Call Jan Czuba, (905) 639-0025, ext. 242 or e-mail: janczuba@hotmail.com

Heart and Stroke: The North Peel & Halton Hills Area Office of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario needs volunteers for the reception and administrative support, special events and presentations. Call (905) 451-0021.

Organ donation: Are you interested in promoting organ donation in Halton/Peel region? Contact (905) 846-3092.

Can't find something to interest you or fit your skills? Check out Halton Social Planning Council & Volunteer Centre's volunteer opportunities Web site: www.haltonvolunteer.org.

Pet ownership: It's good for your health

Pets provide their owners with unconditional love and companionship. Now there's evidence that owning a pet is also good for your health.

A study by the U.S. Department of Health concluded that pets increased the survival rate of heart attack victims. The study revealed that 28 per cent of heart patients with pets survived serious heart attacks, compared to only 6 per cent of heart patients without pets.

Another study revealed that the cholesterol levels of pet owners were 2 per cent lower than the cholesterol levels of people without pets. The risk of those pet owners having a heart attack was reduced by 4 per cent.

Owning a pet can reduce blood pressure as effectively as eating a low-salt diet or reducing alcohol intake.

A U.S. survey of 1,000 Medicare patients showed that 40 per cent of the elderly sought the services of a doctor much less frequently than those without animal companions.

Nursing homes that use companion animal therapy have experienced a significant reduction in the use of prescription drugs. The overall cost of caring for seniors also dropped.

Pets make wonderful, loving companions. Many women believe their pets are more sensitive than their spouse or children. A study of women undergoing stress tests demonstrated that the presence of a dog had a greater effect

on lowering blood pressure than the presence of friends.

Recent surveys of pet owners revealed some interesting facts about people and their pets:

- Nearly 50 per cent of women relied more on their pets for affection than their spouse or children.

- More than 40 per cent of women said their pets understand their emotions and moods better than other family members.

- Pets reduced stress for 70 per cent of the survey respondents.

- More than 50 per cent of Canadian households own pets of some kind. Dogs, cats, birds and other companion animals are living in more than five million homes.

- Each year, Canadian families spend about three billion dollars on their pets. This exceeds consumer spending on children's toys, footwear, eye care, and dental plans.

- While virtually all pet owners talk to their pets, an astounding 94 per cent spoke to their pets as though they were human. One-third of respondents spoke to their pets on the telephone or via the answering machine.

Consider adding a pet to your household. Chances are, you'll live longer and feel better if you own a pet. For free brochures about pet ownership, contact the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association at 1-800-670-1702 or visit the association's Web site at www.ovma.org.

—News Canada



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