

*Editorial*

# An ounce of prevention

**A**n ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is an old saying that has an element of truth, especially when it comes to getting a flu shot.

Halton Region has launched its 2004 Universal Influenza Immunization Campaign this month with the goal of immunizing at least 90 per cent of high risk residents and 60 per cent of the general public. The Halton Health Department is running free flu clinics over the next three months, and they're not alone. Local pharmacies are also providing the vaccine and the VON-Halton is offering on-site workplace clinics.

Although a flu shot will not prevent colds or other respiratory illnesses, an annual influenza vaccination is considered to be a valuable health promotion initiative and is strongly encouraged by Health Canada. It is effective in preventing flu in 70-90 per cent of the adult population and 30-40 per cent effective in the frail elderly. It is also safe, as the vaccine does not contain a live virus.

Those at a high risk for complications from the flu include anyone over the age of 65, those with chronic medical conditions such as heart or lung problems, those with weak immune systems, and healthy children aged six to 23 months.

Many states in the U.S. are unprepared for the coming winter and are facing a vaccine shortage. Ontario doesn't share that problem; there's enough vaccine—free—for everyone who wants it.

And why wouldn't you? Would you rather spend a half hour getting a needle or two weeks recovering from the flu—that's the value of prevention.



## Letters to the editor....

### Residents should be grateful they live here

Dear editor,

I have been following the articles as of late regarding the barn-style garage located on Joycelyn Crescent.

I am often surprised at how quickly some individuals can become overly concerned with such matters. Should this family want to build this garage, let them and come to terms with the fact that we do not all share the same tastes!

How quickly we forget how blessed we are to live in a country where we are allowed to generally live our lives and conduct our business the way we choose. Be thankful that we can go

about our business and not have to worry about being the victim of a bombing, modern-day war or reckless terrorist attacks, like those of other countries that are not that far away.

Those residents who have been recently complaining should be thankful they have nothing else to worry themselves with.

Andrew Kingdon,  
Georgetown

### Reader says 911/411 column contains error

Dear editor,

Constable Barnett's October 6th column 911/411 entitled "Helmets are mandatory for cyclists" contains a serious error when it refers only to Section 104(2.1) of the Highway Traffic Act as the authority for requiring that "No person shall ride on or operate a bicycle on a highway unless the person is wearing a helmet that complies with the regulations..."

In fact, regulation 610, section 5 of the same Act exempts persons 18 years of age or older from being required to wear a bicycle helmet.

It is without doubt the fact that helmets are not required for older riders which makes their acceptance by some young riders a problem.

That said, the bicycle is far less of a road safety problem to children than the automobile. In 2002, in Ontario, over eleven times as many children were killed in connection with automobile accidents as were killed in bicycle accidents—many of which involved automobiles as well.

Allan Johnson  
Georgetown

### Flag thief strikes again

Dear editor,

Twice bitten and lesson learned. (Theft of flag hurts, Oct. 8). A new flag pole was purchased at a cost of \$80. It was replaced this time an additional four feet higher. I couldn't reach it without a stepladder.

Once again, much to my disbelief as before, our flag was stolen some time during Thanksgiving. This time it was Megan who noticed that her flag was missing. As she was standing in the kitchen crying, I explained to her that there are very bad people in this country and that I would do my best to find her flag.

You see, her original flag was a very important gift from the people of Canada and she wanted it flown where everybody could see it. She was proud of her accomplishment and wanted to show all of her friends on the school bus. Have a good look up and down your street. How many flags? Not a very patriotic bunch are we for a country as great and free as ours. Every wonder why?

Nonetheless, and not to be discouraged, a new flag will be placed on the side of our house next July 1 and heaven help the thief that climbs up on to my deck and tries to steal it.

David Betts, Norval

### Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited.

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