

No shortage of flu vaccine here

Once again it is that time of year when the health experts remind us to get a flu shot. We all remember the problems the nation experienced two years ago when a British vaccine manufacturer was forced to destroy close to 50 million doses of the vaccine leaving the nation severely under protected against the flu.

After checking with my health commissioner, Dr. Anthony Billittier, I am happy to report that the Centers for Disease Control have reported no such shortages again this year.

As last year, the CDC is recommending that those individuals over the age of 65, or under the age of two, and those suffering from a chronic illness such as asthma, diabetes, etc. should be first to receive the shot. After that time, health care providers can provide the vaccine to the general population.

If your health care provider does not have the flu vaccine, please go to www.immunizewny.org for a listing of flu shot clinics in your area.

Last winter there were numerous reports pertaining to the avian flu, or bird flu as it is more commonly known.

Our health officials tell me that the bird flu is a new, highly virulent strain of influenza that has world health experts concerned. Presently, there is no vaccine to prevent this flu, but vaccine development efforts are under way. Experts suggest that the prescription medicines approved for human flu viruses would work in preventing bird flu infection in humans.

However, flu viruses can become resistant to these drugs, so these medications may not always work.

Should this occur, there are several methods by which individuals can avoid catching the flu. A proper diet, along with hand washing, covering your mouth or nose when you cough or

sneeze, will go a long way toward stemming the spread of the influenza virus.

Dr. Billittier has informed me that the Erie County Department of Health continues to monitor the international efforts being conducted by the World Health Organization, while working closely with the New York State Department of Health and the CDC to prepare this region in the event of an outbreak.

These activities serve as another example of how Erie County government is constantly working to hone its preparedness capabilities in the event of any type of disaster.

However, should this flu season becomes more severe than recent years; rest assured that we in Erie County government will work diligently to protect the health and well-being of our residents.



JOEL GIAMBRA

Erie County Executive

Bee

Heard

call: 632-0390

(Editor's note: Call The Bee at 632-0390 and record a one-minute comment on our Bee Heard line. It gives readers an opportunity to comment quickly and candidly on items of local or regional interest. Callers do not have to identify themselves and no callers' names will be used. In the interest of fairness and good taste, The Bee will not publish derogatory or insulting comments. All comments are by our readers and are subject to editing.)

✓I'm a businessman in Williamsville. I can't believe there is no money in the supervisor's 2007 budget for Williamsville Library. There are always people at the door waiting to get in, even before it opens. It's the busiest building in town! It's bad business not to provide for this facility.

✓No one should be thinking the suburbs are immune from major crime. Cat burglaries, home invasions in the southtowns, murders in Clarence and Amherst; we do not need to be thinking now about reducing our police force!

✓I attended the homecoming events the weekend of Sept. 29/30 at Williamsville South High School as a chaperone and volunteer.

What was supposed to be a community event became a drinking fest. How sad. Kids need to learn to have fun without the sex, drugs and alcohol.

✓Well it's certainly no surprise that Amherst Supervisor Satish Mohan cannot fulfill yet another one of his campaign promises; namely, to cut the budget by 15 percent. It's clear that he always shoots from the hip and continues to do so since his campaign, doesn't do his homework, doesn't understand the budget, and basically just pulls numbers out of the air, which of course he still does. What he has managed to do is alienate the town workforce.

✓Can someone explain why the Amherst court clerks at the window are not there at 8:30 and done working by 4 p.m.? I made two trips to the court and found that one of the clerks was busy on a phone call, while the other clerk was arriving at 8:42 for work. The second visit to pick up what I had requested mailed to me, but never received, was later that same day and the window was locked up before the 4 p.m. closing time. How many clerks are really needed to support us residents?

✓I moved to Amherst to feel safe, not because rats, criminals or any other menaces stop at a line on a map, but because of a vigilant and protective town government. This is no time to be diminishing police protection, including overtime, to achieve a paper victory!

✓I was at the town board meeting where Supervisor Mohan had to cry because he said later he was forced to fire a man convicted of incompetence, but yet when he did the budget where he is going to terminate three members of the planning department, his quote is, "With their training, I'm sure they'll get better jobs." What hypocrisy!

✓I just heard that the supervisor's budget does not include any money for the Williamsville Library; I hope this is not true. I go there two to three times a week, and it's crowded and busy all the time. I can't see this library being closed; it's an anchor, it's a cultural and community center in the village.

✓It's obvious that all those callers who constantly complain about Dr. Mohan are town workers and police families who don't like it when someone threatens the overstuffed jobs. Why do we have to pay taxes to fund a D.A.R.E. program, for example, when it's the responsibility of parents to educate their children about drug awareness, sex and other family issues? It's gotten to the point

where we pay taxes for what the parents should be doing in the first place. As for firemen who are already being paid by our taxes, why do we have to contribute to their drives? The extra money only often goes into their social affairs. When an emergency call is made, the firemen come in droves and stand around gawking. Dr. Mohan is trying to run our town cost effectively. *(Editor's note: all firefighters in Amherst are volunteers and none receive a salary.)*

✓Regarding the fire departments' reserve accounts, those reserve accounts are usually in order to buy expensive equipment to help them do the job they do as volunteers. That money isn't set aside just to be a buffer or pump up the fire companies; it's for equipment. If they don't have that money or funding from the state, then the community will be at a loss when the equipment is inadequate to fight a fire or rescue someone or perform some other task in order to help the community.

✓It was interesting to see three letters in The Bee attacking Jack Davis, this at a time when Tom Reynolds has done nothing but bring embarrassment to our area with his association with disgraced associate Mark Foley. Perhaps if Congressman Reynolds paid less attention to furthering the interest of the Republican Party, he wouldn't be in the trouble that he is today and we would be much better off.

✓I look forward to the delivery of The Bee every week with great anticipation. I especially enjoy the articles by Brian Ackley. I wish I could say the same about the comments in Bee Heard and the letters to the editor.

✓My children attend Williamsville North High School. In light of the recent school shootings around the country, I was wondering why the Hopkins Road entrance to Williamsville North is always unlocked. I had occasion to be there on Tuesday, and the door was not only unlocked, it was propped open and I walked right into the school. I would like this to be addressed.

✓I don't know what Supervisor Mohan is thinking, cutting the fire and police budgets. Cutting the police budget, God forbid anything would happen on the bike path, because there will be no police presence. Cutting the fire budget, I just hope nothing happens to him if there is a fire at his house and firemen show up and say they don't know what they are doing because they're not trained. If he cuts the budget, that's what's going to happen.

✓It's time Clarence woke up! If they want a police department working just for them, they need to get their own police department, and pay for it like we do in Amherst!

✓As a resident of Buffalo, I'd like to sound a wake-up call to the residents of Amherst. Your supervisor is planning on reducing the size of your police force to save money. Trust me when I tell you, savings won't be worth the cost. Our police department was gutted over financial concerns, and what do we have to show for it? Record-high murder rate, open drug dealing on the streets, resurgence of street gangs, plummeting property values. After trying to sell their house for over a year, my neighbor was forced to give their house to the city for taxes owed. Don't think it can't happen to you! A well-trained and staffed police department is essential in retaining the quality of life you take for granted in Amherst. It's a thin line between civilization and anarchy, and that line is blue or, in your case, grey. Don't be shortsighted.

✓Someone at The Amherst Bee should check out the budget submitted by the supervisor and look particularly in his own office to see the numbers he has produced. The supervisor has increased the budget for his office for 2007, while drastically cutting others. It seems to me, if he thinks spending should be reduced, he should start in his own office.

✓There is no line item in the Amherst supervisor's town budget for the Williamsville Library. As a lifelong patron, I believe the small sum requested for this library is reasonable and essential. If you agree, please help by contacting the supervisor and town board members. Let's keep the Williamsville Library open!

✓People in the Town of Amherst should take a good look at their tax bill; go line by line and evaluate each line. It is amazing to me that all of the scrabbling that Dr. Mohan is doing trying to save 10 percent on town services is actually going to accomplish (it may save us \$20), yet if you look at the teachers getting a 4 percent raise, take a look at your school tax bill and you'll know where the problems are.

✓I think it's very sad that when you go shopping, if you don't want to wait in line, it's best to check yourself out. Shouldn't we be getting a discount for doing their job? Everybody wants your money, but no one wants to take care of the customer anymore. Whatever happened to customer service?

Dr. George T. Danakas
is pleased to announce that
Dr. Diane J. Sutter

has joined the staff at AuroraCare of WNY, Inc. and is seeing patients at both the East Aurora and Buffalo offices. Dr. Sutter is an experienced Board Certified Ob/Gyn with specialty certification in menopause. Other areas of interest include PMS, Menstrual Migraine, PCOS, adolescent gynecology and Well Women care. Call today for an appointment.

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