



October 2008

The Rights Stuff

Mental Health Rights Coalition

Our Mission: To encourage, enable and empower the voice and participation of consumers in the mental health system in Hamilton.

Drop In and
Peer Support
Hours:
11a.m- 4p.m,
Mon - Fri

Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) – October 5-11, 2008

The slogan of the Mental Illness Awareness Week this year is Recovery is Possible. For consumer organizations like Mental Health Rights Coalition this basic premise has also become a sort of mantra and we happily join in the promotion of the national and local events planned in this important week.

This annual national public education campaign is coordinated by the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH). Local mental health providers in Hamilton have also planned activities around this week which hold the same goals as the MIAW program.

The CAMIMH activities include a national

marketing campaign, broadcasts, print promotions and the “Faces of Mental Illness” project and the annual Champions of Mental Health Awards.

These activities and those coordinated for the same week in local communities, are meant to raise awareness about the importance of mental health promotion, treatment and prevention. They are also designed to reduce the prejudice and discrimination associated with mental illness and to keep mental health issues in the forefront of the national social policy agenda.

In the promotional statement this year

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Local Headliners for MIAW

Free presentation

Tuesday October 7, 2008

Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office presents

Do You Have a Police Record? Are you sure?

In F144 at St. Joseph’s Centre for Mountain Health Services

1 -3:15 p.m. with David Simpson PPAO Program Manager & Lisa Heslop, London Police Services.

Let’s Make Some Noise About Records!

A celebration in the cafeteria from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m.

Interactive Drumming, cake, snacks and Refreshments

AGM & Annual Scope Awards

Mental Health Rights Coalition held it’s Annual General Meeting and Scope Awards on September 15, at Emmaus Place on Aikman Ave. in Hamilton. The crowd of about 40 was addressed by Mary Lou Martin of St. Joseph’s Health Care, speaking about the results of a recent study on Police and Mobile Crisis.

MHRC was pleased to entertain so many people at this combined event. Attending the

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Election 08 October 14

Is democracy a right of the rich?

By Peggy Guiler-Delahunt

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“Democracy is when the indigent, and not the men of property, are the rulers...” said Aristotle.

So it should be but there are times when getting those who may be considered the “indigent” (meaning the poor and needy) are in a place, either by accident or design, that they cannot exercise their democratic right to vote.

The federal government began changes to the rules for

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**MHAW Luncheon
Wednesday, October 8,
2008**

11:30 to 2 p.m.

With Keynote speaker

Shelagh Rogers—CBC Radio and TV Personality

Liuna Station

\$65/person

Limited number of bursaries available

Live performance by “The Hype” and Rick and the Krickets

For more information call 905-522-1155 X 36253 or email: Muir-head@stjoes.ca



Executive Director: Frances Jewell

Wow!

Time is flying by. Summer is officially over, the AGM and

SCOPE Awards have come and gone, and in just a couple of weeks I will be gathering with a few friends and family members to say thanks for another summer and the harvest of food.

Thank you to all of you who came out for the AGM and SCOPE Awards. In particular I'd like to thank the recipients for honoring us with their presence. Of particular mention, Deb Sherman, who took the day to be with members and friends alike. The day was a good chance for me to get to know some of the long time members

and a way for MHRC to welcome new folks.

Some of you may have heard MHRC will be moving it's location soon.

Our long time landlord Aboriginal Health Centre desperately needs the basement area to expand programs for the community. We have had a long and wonderful relationship with Aboriginal Health Centre leading back to 1999. It will be sad to leave here but it's time for us to move on. MHRC is currently in negotiations for space and we will let you know the location as soon as the decision is made.

We said a fond farewell to Peer Worker Mark Sadler this month. Mark has moved on to a new and full time

job in Halton. We here at MHRC wish Mark well and would like to thank him for his dedication to members. Mark will be missed by all.

With autumn here and the daylight hours slowly shrinking, my thoughts turn to comfort food and long walks on the Bruce Trail. I hope you will have a chance to enjoy the change of season too.

The Rights Stuff

**A monthly publication of the
Mental Health Rights Coalition.**

Editorial Policy

The Rights Stuff is published every month by the Mental Health Rights Coalition. Our purpose is to inform our membership and other interested partners in mental health and the community about issues and events which may be of interest. Included is a calendar of events for the upcoming month at MHRC.

The Rights Stuff is published two or three working days before the end of each month. It is available to our members via mail and to others as requested via email and our web site at:

www.mentalhealthrights.ca

The Rights Stuff welcomes submissions & letters of 250 words or less. Be advised that MHRC reserves the right to edit and/or decline publication of any submissions.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month (or the closest weekday).



Administrative Assistant

Peggy Guiler-Delahunt
mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca

So much going on and so little time. September was extremely busy around here with AGM and Scope Awards. On top of that Frances and I had to send off a Trillium report which was a monumental task for us because we hadn't been here for the beginning of it so we had to learn a great deal in a very short period of time in order to put the final details together.

One of the great products of the Trillium report is the booklet "Journeys" which Mark Sadler put together. It is a collection of art work and comments about Peer Support. There is general information about Peer Support in the front and then comments from consumers about peer support entwined with incredible art work. I am in awe at the talent represented in this "Primer on Peer Support" and hope you will all take time to look at it when we get it posted to our web site.

The Peer Support Training and the Voices of Experience Training Programs are my next big project.

Peer Support Training is only one person shy of being full as I write this. It is nice to have so many people enthused about taking this program. It begins October 6 and runs through to very close to Christmas. We have switched to Mondays to accommodate some other meetings which happen around here. The

Voices training begins Wednesday, November 5 and runs for five weeks until December 3.

We have added many new volunteers to the MHRC team in the past month. Most of them are students and I just received another list of 15 more students who want to do some work here. Two of the students are with Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) program at Mohawk. The others are all university students who want to have a better understanding of mental health and the issues. The enthusiasm and special talents of all is much appreciated but they are keeping me busy with keeping them busy.

If you prefer to receive an email copy of this newsletter please notify the editor.
mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca



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Our Mission is to encourage, enable, and empower the voice and participation of consumer/survivors in the mental health system

Election 08 October 1

Is democracy a right of the rich?

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voting about two years ago and mental health advocates along with advocates for other groups of marginalized people began to protest the changes.

The difficulty the changes present is that those who do not have access to picture identification (ID) along with some other piece of identification like a utility bill or tax return which displays their address, cannot vote.

In a discussion with James Novak, Returning Officer for Hamilton Centre, Mental Health Rights Coalition was able to negotiate some help for our members who live in lodging homes and may not have all of the required documentation.

Mr. Novak explained that if I sent him a list of lodging homes he would contact them and then have his staff attend the homes to assist voters with getting on the voters list and he would also provide the residents of the homes they visit with a letter confirming their status to vote. This letter replaces the need for the second piece of identification.

There are 91 homes on the list we sent to Mr. Novak and he could provide no guarantee that all of the homes would be visited though he promised to try. He explained that only those homes with more than four residents would be eligible for this program.

If residents do not have second piece of ID the prospective voter could have someone "swear" for them at the polling station. Taking a crowd who need to be sworn however is not possible because an individual is only allowed to swear one other person for the election. A document which substitutes this second piece of ID can be issued for those in lodging homes if the returning officer has time to get to them.

While this may solve the issue for a few there is still concern that many people will not have the ability to vote for a variety of reasons. They may not have anyone to advocate on their behalf and get the returning officers out to their homes. More importantly they may not be aware of the need for this extra piece of ID. There is no guarantee that those who live in lodging homes, those with limited literacy skills or those who do not have access to the media even know

there is an election.

The operators of lodging homes, shelters and other community service organizations are all running on tight budgets with few staff to cover their present needs so there is not much likelihood they will be able to provide any sort of support or encouragement which would get their clients out to vote. It is possible that promoting the right to vote could cause agencies and homes considerable stress.

As advocates for the marginalized agencies also have to be very cautious they are not seen as "influencing votes". For some people who may not be as informed about election and issues it would be easy for those who are respected care givers to sway opinion in favour of their candidate or party of choice.

The very act of introducing the legislation requiring this difficult identification process against the recommendations of several advocacy groups, shows a blatant disregard for the "indigent". It appears democracy has become a privilege of the well to do. In centuries gone by and in other cultures such disregard for the "peasants" has caused many an uprising and led to civil wars and great unrest.

"Democracy is when the indigent, and not the men of property, are the rulers..." said Aristotle.

FOR SUPPORT...



Give Us A Call! A Peer Support Worker is available Monday to Friday, 11a.m.-4p.m. 905-545-2525

Membership Renewal

Memberships must be renewed annually before the end of April.

If you are an existing member you may renew your membership by calling the MHRC at 905-545-2525 weekdays between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.

New members may complete a form available at MHRC

Membership entitlements:

- Access to peer support
- Voting privileges at all General Meetings
- Receipt of the "The Rights Stuff" - the monthly newsletter via mail or email.
- Participation in the drop in
- Access to the Resource Library
- Access to special trips and events
- May join internal committees
- May apply for membership on the Board of Directors

Non consumers members are considered associate members and will be non voting members . They will not be eligible for all the rights of membership.

Any personal information collected by Mental Health Rights Coalition is kept in strict confidence and is not shared with any other agency or corporation.

Members must be residents, working or receiving service within LHIN 4 (Hamilton, Niagara, Brant, Haldimand, East Norfolk

Members must be mental health consumer/survivors.

Peer Support Matches Available

Consumers needing on-going peer support by a trained volunteer are encouraged to call the

Peer Support Coordinator

at

905-545-2525.



Trillium Grant Special Project launched

Former MHRC employee Mark Sadler stands with one his paintings at a recent show of art by the artists of the Cottage Studio.

The work of many of the Cottage Studio artists is part of the booklet Mark

produced. The project, Peer Support Job Development, was sponsored by the Ontario Trillium Foundation in cooperation with Hamilton Program for Schizophrenia and the MHRC. The project intent was to develop and study the effect of peer support positions which were added to some traditional mental health service agencies. The book displays the art of several consumers and quotes others who have found benefit in peer support.

Questions to Ask the Candidates

Health in general is a huge issue for this election but mental health in particular and the social issues surrounding it like poverty and housing are all things which Canadians can expect our candidates to have some answers about.

The federal government has a short but distinctive history with a high profile senate committee on mental health report authored by Senator Michelle Kirby and the subsequent establishment of the Canadian Mental Health Commission which is just over one year old. For more on the CMHC go to www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

A statement on the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) web site says, "The most vulnerable Canadians should be able to live a full and active life with dignity. Among the most vulnerable people are those who face complex challenges related to mental health disorders, and as a result often lack basic necessities of life such as adequate housing."

In an article from Ottawa on September 24 the CMHA issues a "strong reminder to politicians that Canada remains the only G-8 country without a mental health strategy, spending only 5% of its health budget on mental health services." For more on this story go to http://www.cmha.ca/bins/content_page.asp?cid=6-20-21-2226-2441&lang=1

It is well known that 1 in 5 Canadians lives with a mental health issue. Political leaders can be brought to account for the care of this nearly 2 million citizens.

MHRC asked several advocacy agencies to provide questions they might like to ask the federal candidates but they did not respond. We can only assume that is because they are underfunded.

The National Network for Mental Health, a consumer organization, has posted two questions which consumers might consider asking candidates or their representatives who come to the door or at public meetings.

They are: What is your party's social policy and how will they be moving it forward?

What is your party's commitment to a recovery oriented mental health system across Canada?

If you would like backgrounder information on these questions you can visit the NNMH web site at: <http://www.nnmh.ca/index.html>

Social Planning Network in Canada has issued a resource called Canada Votes 2008. It profiles 13 issues which should concern Canadians and provides some thought provoking questions for candidates. http://www.cdhalton.ca/canada_votes_2008.htm

SCOPE AWARD RECIPIENTS 2008

Jennifer Armstrong
John Bouchard
Kathy Bennett
Patricia Brezen
Ron Dick
Calvin Ferris
Deb Fournier
Rosemary Garside
Sandra Iacona
Sandy Leyland
Michell Migatovic
Mukul
Tricia Nichols
Deb Shermean
Dan Warburton
Fiona Wilson
LeeAnn Wiebe

AGM and Scope Awards

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event were members of the MHRC along with several recipients of the Scope Awards.

After a short AGM meeting and lunch the presentation of the Scope Award took place. SCOPE is an acronym for "supporting consumer opportunities for personal empowerment." The award is given to those people who may be family, friends or service providers who have made life better for the members of the MHRC. The contribution of those who believe in consumers as individuals and who hope, with us, for a life which reaches beyond the limitations of illness and disability are the greatest contributors to our recovery.

The Scope awards is an opportunity to thank supporters publically for all they contribute to us as individuals and to the cause of mental health survivors.

A list of this recipients appears above.

Start thinking now about who you might nominate next year.

Coming Events

There is all sorts of information available on line about local events. If you need help finding events or need some assistance with computer searches please ask the front desk staff for help.

MHRC Events

Peer Support Training

Next 10 week session begins October 6 from 1 to 4 p.m. Runs on Mondays through to December 15. There are just a few seats open. Please contact us or visit the web site for more information and registration details.

<http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca/Active%20Pages/ps.html>

Voices of Experience Training

Training begins Wednesday, November 8 from 1 to 4 p.m. and runs through December 3.

For more information contact us at MHRC or visit our website at

<http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca/Active%20Pages/voe.html>

Other Mental Health and related events

Shovel Ready

Affordable Housing Opportunities Across Ontario—bringing together a range of stakeholders to discuss emerging best practices, programs, and challenges in creating affordable housing. Hosted by Affordable Housing Flagship with the City of Hamilton, Government of Ontario and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.

Monday, October 6, 2008

Hamilton Convention Centre

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fee \$25

Contact Deirdre Dixon 905-522.1148 x0 or email sprc@sprc.hamilton.on.ca

- information about Hamilton's progress
- facilitated panel with developers from other cities about how they made projects work
- Learn from local and regional example of

creative and innovative building projects.

Professional Development and Educational Workshop

With presenter **Maggie deVries**, author of [Missing Sarah: A Vancouver Woman Remembers Her Vanished Sister](#)

Friday, October 17–9 to 11 a.m.

Presented by

Wesley Urban Ministries

\$20—

Register with Tamara at 905-528-5629

No need to be Bored in this City

Great listings of local events at this web site.

<http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton>

Just a few you might consider this month at the public library.

[The Art of Applying for Jobs Online](#)

Saturday, October 25

Learn how to effectively search for jobs online, register at jobsites and apply for vacancies using email.

- Monday, October 6—[Developing Business Series - Marketing Strategies](#)
- Thursday, October 16 [Poetry Workshop](#)
- Monday, October 20 [Developing Business Series - Insurance and Legal Considerations](#)

Views and opinions expressed in this newsletter represent those of individual contributors, and not necessarily of The Mental Health Rights Coalition.

Mental Health Awareness Week

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CAMIMH says, "Mental illness affects more than six million people across the country, or one in five Canadians. Mental disorders account for five of the ten leading causes of disability worldwide. Close to 4,000 Canadians die by suicide each year and it the most common cause of death for people aged 15 to 24. By 2020 it is estimated that depressive illnesses will become the leading cause of disease burden in developed countries like Canada."

"Many Canadians with mental illnesses live in the shadows. Too few know about the burden of mental illness in our society, and too few sufferers seek help when they need it."

The Faces of Mental Illness2008

Featured in the MIAW material are the faces of five Canadians who live with mental illness. The faces are there to remind us that behind the statistics are real people with friends, families, dreams and aspirations.

Promotional material for this week long program can be found on the MIAW web site at www.miaaw.ca



This stamp is going to be introduced by Canada Post during MHAW Week. It will cost ten cents more than regular stamps and every ten cents earned from the sale of the stamps will go toward mental

If you know of coming events which may be of interest to mental health consumer/survivors in the Hamilton area please email at mhrprograms@bellnet.ca or call 905-545-2525

Seeking Donations

If you or anyone you know might have access to fresh fruit or would like donate toward the purchase of fruit we would like to be able to provide it for our members each weekday.

For more information contact us at
MHRC








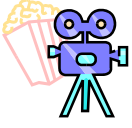

















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October 2008



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>Sandy L. will be doing crafts every week on Tuesdays beginning at 1 p.m.</p> <p>Special Halloween party on the 31st. Come in costume and win a prize.</p> 	<p>1 Board Games</p> 	<p>2 Karaoke</p> 	<p>3 Card Games</p> 	4	
5	<p>6 Air Hockey</p>  <p>1-4 PS Training</p>	<p>7 Crafts with Sandy</p> 	<p>8 HPS Trip to Norfolk County Fair in Simcoe Movie at MHRC open 11-11:30 & 2-4 only</p> 	<p>9 Movie</p> 	<p>10 Thanksgiving Pumpkin Pie Karaoke</p>  	11
12	<p>13 Thanksgiving</p>  <p>Closed</p>	<p>14 Election 2008 Crafts with Sandy</p> 	<p>15 Karaoke</p> 	<p>16 Card Games</p> 	<p>17 Air Hockey</p> 	18
19	<p>20 Karaoke</p>  <p>1-4 PS Training</p>	<p>21 Crafts with Sandy</p> 	<p>22 Crafts—vase Decoration</p> 	<p>23 Air Hockey</p> 	<p>24 Coffee Walk</p> 	25
26	<p>27 Bingo</p>  <p>1-4 PS Training</p>	<p>28 Karaoke</p> 	<p>29 October Birthday Party Movies</p> 	<p>30 Card Games</p> 	<p>31 Halloween Party—Scary Movie</p>  <p>Come in costume for a special prize</p>	