



March 2009

The Rights Stuff

Mental Health Rights Coalition

Our Mission: To encourage, enable and empower the voice and participation of consumers in the

**Drop In and
Peer Support**

Hours:

11a.m- 4p.m,

Mon - Fri

You'll get the Short Version

This month and next month MHRC is producing a shortened version of the Rights Stuff because of the move.

There will be lots of news to share in the May edition.

Important updates on MHRC and other items of interest will be posted on our web site at

www.mentalhealthrights.ca



370 Main St. E.

By Peggy Guiler-Delahunt

After ten years in our present home at the Aboriginal Health Care facility MHRC is moving down the road to 370 Main Street East.

Our present landlord, Aboriginal Health Care, has been very generous to us over the years but they are making some changes of their own and need the space. MHRC is very thankful to them for their support and for their patience these past few months while we sought other ac-

commodation.

Moving day for MHRC is March 31 and staff expect to be able to welcome members to our new location on April 1.

Thanks to the staff and volunteers who are pitching in to help with the move.

MHRC is also thankful to the neighbourhood which has been home for so long. There has been a good relationship with many of the Homes for Special Care, several residential care facilities and St. Giles Church. Many of their residents and clients are also our members.

MHRC hopes that many of the members who live near the current address will make an effort to visit us often in our new home.

On a personal note I will very much miss the good food at Tony's Submarines across the street. I may still slip down the block for some of those great subs and the best burgers around.



A Conference for Consumers and Service Providers

The Consumer Survivor Initiatives (CSI's) of the LHIN 4 (Local Health Initiative) are partnering to make history with a combined conference for persons with "lived Experience" in mental health and addictions and service providers of Hamilton, Niagara, Brant and Haldimand and Norfolk. The day long conference will be held at Liuna Station in Hamilton on March 26 from 9:30 to 3:30. Lunch is provided.

The event is free to consumers. Service providers are asked to pay \$30 admission.

(Continued on page 3)

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

Inside this issue:

Staff Notes	2
Membership Renewal Due	3
Mental Health Commission Seeks Consumer from those with computers	3
March Calendar	4



Executive Director: Frances Jewell mhrced@bellnet.ca

We're Moving!

It's official. Mental Health Rights Coalition has secured an office with drop-in centre. Our new home will be 370 Main Street East, Suite 101.

I must say it has been a struggle to find a good location with very limited funds. It is interesting to hear and read about a high vacancy rate in the city but find few affordable sites for not for profits like us.

And of course, in the search for new space I experienced some negative and discriminating comments about people with mental illness. I reminded a particular person that one in three people will experience mental illness in their lifetime and one in five will experience severe and persistent mental illness. As this person eyed me up and down, I commented that many of us experiencing mental illness hold down jobs, run busy households, volunteer in our community and have solid support from family and

friends. The experience has left me wondering if the stigma of mental illness will ever change.

On the other hand I had the pleasure of meeting Reverend Laura Marie Piotrowicz, Priest Associate with Church of the Ascension. Laura Marie generously offered us space within the church. This would have been a short term solution only.

So, here we go. The packing has started and on the 31st of March MHRC will end a long standing arrangement with Aboriginal Health Centre. I would like to thank Executive Director Chester Langille for the hospitality and kindness he and staff have extended to us over the years. We will miss our good neighbors at AHC.

MHRC participated in two Crisis Intervention Training presentations with the Hamilton Police Service. Many officers voiced an understanding of stigma and a desire to combat common misconception of mental

illness. There was healthy discussion around Police Records Checks, individual's privacy concerns and tackling the "us and them" attitudes of the community and Police. This was a positive experience for all involved.

You will receive a short newsletter from us in April as we will be busy organizing our new location.

Well, I had better get busy sorting and packing.

Bye for now,

Frances

Program Coordinator Peggy Guiler-Delahunt



Some notes on Peer Support

- Another Peer Support Training Program has begun—my second at MHRC—and we are having a great time.
- Peer Support Training is taking another tack this month as we begin doing some training for the new Peer to Peer Mentoring Program. The training program there will have some of the same components as ours and some which are specifically tailored to the group. MHRC offers only 6 of their sessions with the program directors doing the others.
- The Peer Development Task Force at OPDI of which I am a member, is taking off with some new developments in Peer Support as well. It will be interesting to watch and I'll keep you posted.
- We have enough volunteers trained and ready to work now that we can begin to match people one on one and I am seek-

ing potential matches. One staff member at Intac has been sending us some challenging match possibilities and it would be good to have more from other agencies as well.

Thanks to Contributors

There are many contributors of time at MHRC. We have a growing and very enthusiastic volunteer force to whom we are very grateful but recently we put out requests for donations of fruit for the drop.

Thanks to M B. and LD for your generosity. The fruit is a big hit. Also to SL for all her hard work in procuring new sources for fruit and food for the people who come here who are often hungry.

If you or your group think peer support training is something which might benefit your programs please contact MHRC for more information.

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 usually 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).

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

Seeking Donations

- Fresh fruit for our members when they arrive each week-day.
- Gift certificates for the purchase of groceries or for outings to the local coffee shop.

For more information contact us at MHRC



Mental Health Rights Coalition—678 Main St E, Ste. 102-
Hamilton, ON L8M 1K2
Phone: 905-545-2525 Facsimile: 905-545-0211
Email: mentalhealthrights@bellnet.ca

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

(Continued from page 1)

Those wishing to attend may register with their local CSI's or by contacting MHRC via email at mhrprograms.ca or phone 905-545-2525. You may leave a message if no one is available to take your call. Please be sure to include your full name, phone number and the name of the town or city where you live.

Geoffrey Reaume—Keynote Speaker

Save the Day's keynote speaker, Geoffrey Reaume, is now a professor at York University teaching "Mad People's History in the Critical Disability Studies MA program but it is his perspective of mental health as a consumer. Which brings passion to his work.

The "Y File", a York newsletter, states in it's February 2007 edition that the now 46 year old came "out of the closet" about his own mental illness when he was 27 "to his thesis supervisor". He was wanting to do his thesis "on life in a Toronto asylum from the patients perspective," the article states.

The article goes on to quote Reaume as saying, "I'm doing stuff that for too long has been ignored. My historical work is a form of social justice. I'm trying to change attitudes and give history back to the community of people that lived it. I'm using history to fight the prejudices that exist today."

Other events for the day

Lunch in the elegant surroundings of Liuna Station will be highlight for many. Afternoon events are yet to be determined. Speakers are not confirmed as of press time for the newsletter but MHRC will post the schedule of events later this week when it becomes available on our web site. For details please go to: www.mentalhealthrights.ca

Contact your local CSI (ConsumerSurvivor Initiative)

Brant Vocational Training Association
519-751-1694

Haldimand & Norfolk Resource Centre
519-428-0580 or 1-888-477-3717

Consumer Survivor Initiative of Niagara 905-732-4498 or toll free at 877-734-0025



Geoffrey Reaume—Conference Speaker



Mental Health Commission Seeks Consumer input from those with computers

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is making efforts to include consumers and providers in their decision making process however the only way to contribute is to do it "on line" with a computer connected to the internet or by downloading a 40 page document which can be filled out and sent to them.

MHRC has written to the Commission to ask if hard copies of the documents can be obtained and to inquire about the cost of sending the completed 45 page document via mail for those who do not have access to fax.

MHRC is committed to providing access to this important document and will make every effort to assist members to complete it on the member computer. Staff or volunteers will be available to help those with limited computer or literacy skills.

In the letter to the commission MHRC pointed out that this commitment is a strain on staff and volunteer resources. It is also an extra expense in paper for those who prefer not to fill it on line.

The Commission has also been asked if they are seeking ways to reach the many consumers who do not have supports like MHRC or other service providers and who might never know about the consultation. MHRC awaits a response and will updates as necessary.

If you want to fill in the documents on line you may visit <http://mentalhealthcommission.dialoguecircles.com/>

Membership Renewal

Due April 30, 2009

Those who have filled in memberships since February 1 will not have to renew their membership until April 2010.

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)

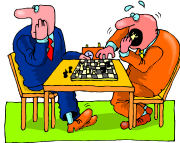



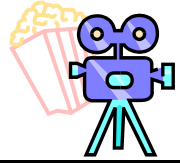





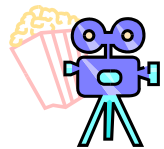












Members must be mental health consumer/survivors.



Support mental health in Canada—buy this special Stamp at your post office for an additional 10 cents.

March 2009



0Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Board Games 	Karaoke 	Current Events 1:30 Crafts Knit & Crochet 	Cribbage 	Movie 	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Cribbage 	Charades with Matthew 	Karaoke 	Air Hockey 	Coffee Walk 	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Movie 	Members Meeting 1:30 Craft 	Skip Bo 	Karaoke 	Crafts 	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Spring Walk 	Craft—Collages 	50's Malt Shop Theme Birthday Party 	Closed Save the Day Conference Liuna Station Register by Friday, March 13.	Karaoke 	
29	30	31				
	Card Games 	Limited Service Moving Day 	Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated.	Calendar Notes Computer training with Matthew on Thursdays—Please sign up for one of two one hour sessions.  	Some New Things 4th—Current Events 25th Malt Shop Theme Birthday Party 26th—Conference 31 Moving Day	