

*Our mission is to encourage,
enable and empower
the voice of consumers in the
mental health system*

The Rights Stuff

Fall 2013

Sept • Oct • Nov 2013

Notice of Annual General Meeting

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Annual General Meeting & SCOPE and POWER Award Presentations

**Tuesday, September 17, 2013
4-7 pm**

**35 Aikman Ave., Hamilton, ON
—details SEE PAGE 2**

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The “POWER” Award
certified peer sup-
has shown outstand-
compassion in their



is awarded to a
port worker who
ing ability and
formal role as peer

supporter with consumers of mental health and addiction
in a consumer organization, agency or business within
the City of Hamilton and surrounding area. This award is
only available for front line staff who have graduated from
a recognized peer support training program. It excludes
management. The award will be presented at the AGM
September 18th, 2013.

—Criteria and nomination information page 2.

**Thank you to our vol-
unteers who freely
give their time, energy
and
resources to the work
they do**

Notice of Annual General Meeting

POWER/SCOPE Awards

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

35 Aikman Ave., Hamilton, ON

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

4:00 pm—Alise De Bie Mad Students Society

4:30 — Local Musician Al Barubek

5 pm—Awards Presentations

5:30 pm — Dinner

6-7 pm — AGM

SCOPE is a non-competitive award event: every nominee receives a SCOPE certificate and is invited to the award presentations, along with their nominator.

This meeting will include the election of officers to the board of directors.

Please update membership to ensure voting privileges.

If you will be attending please call 905-545-2525

**Power Award—Cont'd
from pg 1**

The deadline for nominations is September 6th, 2013, 4pm

Nominations are to be submitted to the Executive Director of MHRC in the form a letter stating:

- the name and workplace of the nominee
- the reason the nominators believes this peer supporter to be worthy of the nomination
- two names supporting the nomination including contact information.

The nominee does not need to be aware of the nomination.

The award will be presented to the selected recipient at the Annual General Meeting of MHRC.



SCOPE Award—Supporting Consumer Opportunities for Personal Empowerment

SCOPE awards recognize people for their contributions and efforts which empower consumer/survivors of the mental health system in Hamilton.

Nominations are made by mental health consumer/survivors who are members and staff of the MHRC. Those receiving the award may be family, friends, and support workers. It is an opportunity for consumers to publically thank those who have supported and continue to support them in their recovery. MHRC staff are not eligible for this award.

SCOPE Award forms may be picked up at the MHRC offices,

20 Emerald St S. or on the website at

www.mentalhealthrights.ca

or email mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca

Nominations close September 6, 2013. SCOPE awards will be presented at the Annual General Meeting, September 17, 2013

The Rights Stuff

Published quarterly

by Mental Health Rights Coalition

Editorial Policy

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

The Rights Stuff is available to our members via mail and to others as requested via email and on 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 the month previous to publication.

Printing dates are March 1, June 1,
September 1, and December 1.

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



By: Amanda Carey

This summer marked the 10th anniversary of the well known Hamilton Fringe Festival, a theatre festival where companies from across Canada and The United States came together to display their work from July 18th



to the 28th in different theatres across Hamilton. This festival provides opportunities for both emerging and established Theatre Companies to perform original work.

There were several works at the Fringe Festival that explored mental illness. I had the pleasure of attending two plays on the subject and a third that did not have a mental illness theme.

Asylum, wasa musical set in 1939 in a mental institution. It explored the institutionalization and controversial use of electro-shock therapy* for everything from Schizophrenia to truancy. Patients were nameless numbers on a chart. One nurse struggled with strong feelings of ambivalence due to this treatment of patients. Relationships formed between the patients and were tested by the symptoms they faced and the environment they lived in. Though all were in the institution for different reasons, they found commonalities, the principle behind peer support. "You don't know what it's like to not know who you are."¹ says (sings) one patient "But I know what it's like to be confused," is the other's reply.

One patient has voluntarily committed himself to the hospital. When he is getting better by his and the doctor's accounts, he is then offered shock therapy. At that point he decides to leave the asylum². Eventually his mental health declines and we are led to a dramatic ending that left me breathless in its content and it's portrayal.

The songs were well-written and performed, though the venue was too small to accommodate the large wall of sound that the cast created. Overall it was a powerful piece and well-performed. We each left the theatre profoundly affected by this piece. The only criticism of this play I would have is the juxtaposition of self-injury and suicide which may suggest that they are linked, when in fact they can be quite separate. While people who self-injure may also attempt suicide, self-injury itself is not a suicide attempt.

A Little to Close to Home. This play was powerful, moving and captivating. The audience was enchanted by the characters whom they meet sitting tableau on a paint splattered canvas drop cloth and small boxes that make up the minimal set. The audience is very close to the set and at stage level. The actors were at times inches from an audience member. At the same time, the actors did not engage the audience directly or become distracted by them. They were lost in their scene and characters and drew us in.

The play depicted a family struggling to deal with a father's Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Over and over they replay the same day, trying to successfully complete it without getting stuck in a pattern of OCD behaviours. More and more the family becomes worn out and torn apart the longer treatment does not seem to be working. Perseverance and patience pays off and slowly recovery begins to take hold and the family can try to rebuild.

One criticism that others have shared with me was the depiction of violence. It is often linked to mental illness, however it is not true that those with mental illness are any more likely to be violent. To me the violence depicted in the play was the result of the family dynamic and personal frustration, not mental illness. These things any person could feel, with or without a mental illness. Thank you to Luke Reece and Little Black Afro for your support of Mental Health Rights Coalition

The Gore Misfits. This play does not deal with mental illness, but instead shines some light on some the people that congregate around Gore Park. It is an interesting story, one the director called a "fictional play about real people." I wish more people could see it and have their eyes open to the fact that these are in fact people not "misfits" and they have lives, histories and feelings that many so easily disregard. This is often the case with I had the interesting pleasure of attending when some of the people on which the story was based were there. They quite enjoyed it, laughing more than the rest of us, which I take as an indication of the spot-on characterization achieved by writer Robert Savoie, who spent a great deal of time getting to know the folks on which he based this story. Thank you Robert for the opportunity to attend.

1 The current treatment called Electro-convulsive Therapy (ECT) is radically different from the shock treatment used at the time in which this play is set.

2. Though mental health facilities are not called Asylums now it is an accurate term depicting the time in which the play is set

Hamilton's 1st Mad Pride

A small but exuberant group of consumer-survivors met at First Pilgrim United Church for the first Hamilton Mad Pride event on July 27.

With contributions from Joachim Brouwer

The first hour of the event was devoted to the Mad Hatter's tea party. Individuals wore or made wild and wacky hats and enjoyed tea and treats on fine china. Thank you Mad Students society for the wonderful job in the kitchen.

Tea was followed by open mic and speakers. Alise De Bie, chair of Mad Pride Hamilton started the speakers portion of the program with an explanation "Mad" and the importance of mad-consciousness in our society today. "We come from a long history of mad people who have been stigmatized, institutionalized, and chemically incarcerated." She called for a celebration of our uniqueness and pride in our community of consumer-survivors.



Giving life to the history of the Mad movement, John Serafino gave an impassioned off the cuff monologue about his involvement in the proto-mad movement in the Niagara region and here in Hamilton marching to protest electro-shock therapy which was a standard practice in mental hospitals right into the 1970's.

The open mic saw a variety of talented individuals perform spoken word prose, poetry and monologues, music and comedy. Additionally people had the opportunity to participate in a workshop on comedy/improvisation. The open mic was a great success, allowing people to creatively express themselves in a safe and appreciative environment.

Attendees also had the opportunity to contribute to a collage that will be taken to gallery. A 'zine (or self-published magazine) is still in the works. Send your submissions to the email below.

A good time was had by all. Hamilton's first Mad Pride can be counted a success. The organizers will meeting throughout the year preparing for a bigger event next year. Anyone who identifies as a consumer survivor is welcome to participate. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved please email mad.pride.hamilton@gmail.com and check out www.facebook.com/MadPrideHamilton

Submit to our zine!

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ Advice | ✓ Pictures | ✓ Visions |
| ✓ Artwork | ✓ Poetry | ✓ Wellness Tools |
| ✓ Blog Posts | ✓ Questions | ✓ What Needs to Change |
| ✓ Comics | ✓ Rants | ✓ What You're Proud Of |
| ✓ Emails | ✓ Recommendations | ✓ What You've Learned |
| ✓ How You Celebrate | ✓ Resources | ✓ What You Want to Know |
| ✓ Letters | ✓ Short Stories | ✓ Wish Lists |
| ✓ Lyrics | ✓ Sketches | |
| ✓ Photographs | ✓ Tips | |

EMAIL:
PHONE:

mad.pride.hamilton@gmail.com
647-931-7563

If you're a student at any school or planning to go back to school, consider attending a Mad Students Society peer support meeting or joining our 24/7 private email discussion listserv. We meet monthly in Hamilton. Check out www.madstudentsociety.com. Email outreach@madstudentsociety.com or phone 647-931-7563 for location details/to join.



Mad Pride Photos



Hat made for the Mad Hatter's Tea Party; Hamilton Mad Pride Button; Banner and chalking adorned the location.

Meet our Summer Student

By Amanda Beck

For those who I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet, my name is Amanda and I had the good fortune to have worked as the summer student for MHRC this year. When I'm not at work or at school you'll often find me out hiking or gardening, or cuddled up on the couch with my dog, watching Star Trek while I knit or cross-stitch.

The first question that anyone asks me as a summer student is, "What program are you in?" People are often surprised to learn that I am studying electrical engineering technology. While working for the coalition is not directly related to my program of study, mental health is an issue across all disciplines. My personal experiences with bipolar disorder, OCD and anxiety have had an impact on how I approach learning and life in general. Since I set out on the long path to recovery, I have felt a desire to become more engaged in the mental health community. This is why, when I saw the job posting for the summer student position at MHRC, I knew that this was what I wanted to do this summer.

I have met some fantastic people in my time at MHRC. I have seen both happy times and sad times, and I have learned more than I ever thought possible in these two short months. I shared laughs and learned new card games with members, and I shared in the grief surrounding the loss of a long-time member. I have had an amazing summer thanks to the staff, volunteers and members at MHRC. I hope to take the knowledge that I have gained and use it no matter where my future may take me.

Editor's note: Thank you to our amazing summer student, the "other Amanda" and thank you for the opportunity provided by the Canada Student Jobs

**Service
Canada**

Do you want to shape the future of mental health care?



We are looking for individuals to join the **Patient & Family User Group** to give input and feedback for the preparation of the new hospital on the West 5th Campus.

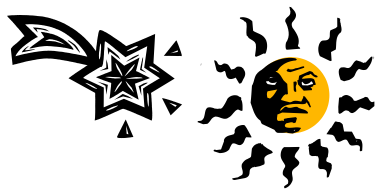
All interested participants will be invited to meet on a regular basis to review operational plans, share ideas and give input as we prepare to move into the new building in 2014.

If you would like to be a part of this important group, and have experience using the services at St. Joe's and/or are a family member of a patient, please contact Fiona Wilson at **905-522-1155 ext. 36446** or fwilson@stjoes.ca.

"The previous Patient & Family User Group gave valuable input into the building design process, and made significant change to the way the building is positioned on the grounds and to how it looks."







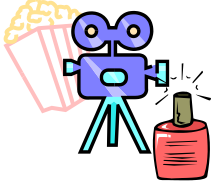















Please respond prior to August 30th 2013.




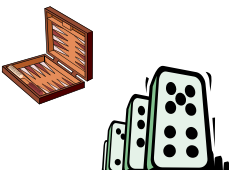








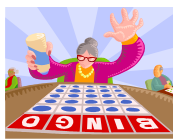




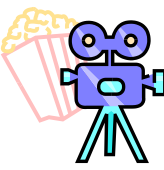
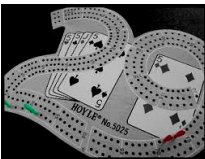



September 2013















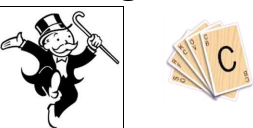








Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Labour Day Closed	Air hockey 	Walk the rail trail 	Dictionary game 	Music 	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Euchre 	Healthy Living 	Movie and Mani-cure 	Karaoke 	Pictureka 	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Member's meeting 	Cards  AGM & Awards evening 4-7 pm	Knit/crochet 	Bingo 	Healthy Living 	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Birthday Party Karaoke 	Crafts 	Improv workshop 	Current events 	Board Games 	
29	30	<p>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>Walking/Exercise activities are dependent on weather.</p> <p>Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.</p>				
	Skip-bo 					
		<p>MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION</p> 				

October 2013

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION 		Karaoke 	Cards 	Backgammon and Dominoes 	Neighbourhood Walk 	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		 Mental Illness Awareness Week. Stay tuned for more details!				Open House 
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Air Hockey 	Crafts 	Karaoke 	Members' Meeting 	Healthy Living 	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Knit and Crochet 	Bingo 	Improv Workshop 	Birthday Party 	Music 	
27	28	29	30	31	Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated. Walking/ Exercise activities are dependent on weather. Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.	
	Skip-bo 	Movie 	Cribbage & cards 	Halloween 		

November 2013

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1	2
<p>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>Walking/Exercise activities are dependent on weather.</p> <p>Please wear appropriate shoes and cloth- ing.</p>			<p>MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION</p> 		<p>Current Events</p> 	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<p>Fall Walkk</p> 	<p>Crafts</p> 	<p>Euchre</p> 	<p>Air hockey</p> 	<p>Apples to Apples game</p> 	
10	22	12	13	14	15	16
	<p>Board Games</p> 	<p>Healthy Living</p> 	<p>Karaoke</p> 	<p>Dictionary Game</p> 	<p>Healthy Living</p> 	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<p>Knit/Crochet</p> 	<p>Members' Meeting</p> 	<p>Monopoly Deal Scrabble Slam Card games</p> 	<p>Bingo</p> 	<p>Music</p> 	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	<p>Birthday Party</p> 	<p>Karaoke</p> 	<p>Improv Workshop</p> 	<p>Crazy Eights</p> 	<p>Movies</p> 