



April 2008

# THE RIGHTS STUFF

Mental Health Rights Coalition

**Drop In and  
Peer Support**

**Hours:**

11a.m- 4p.m,

Mon - Fri

*Our Mission: To encourage, enable and empower the voice and participation of consumers in the Mental Health System in Hamilton.*



## Parting words from Deb Sherman

We have tried to spread the word as best we can since last newsletter, but for some members, it may still be news that by the time you receive this month's Rights Stuff, I will have left MHRC. I have accepted the position of Executive Director of the Ontario Peer Development Initiative in Toronto, and am leaving MHRC just a week after my eighth anniversary date.

It has been a good ride. I am thinking back to how the place looked and what it had when I came, and what it has now – and how fortunate we have been to receive our share of the Ministry of Health's funding increases over the past several years.

I am reminiscing about the many staff who have come and gone in my time, so often moving up to better jobs in the mental health system or out of it, or returning to school – it reflects the way our

*(Continued on page 2)*

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

## MHRC's loss is OPDI's Gain Deb Sherman leaving Mental Health Rights Coalition after

After eight years working as the Executive Director of The Mental Health Rights Coalition Deborah Sherman is moving on to take on the role of ED for the Ontario Peer Development Initiative in Toronto.

"It's the same work, just in a bigger pond," says Deb of her new position.

Deb is pleased to take on the new role but is also sad to leave all those she has worked with in the Mental Health Community of Hamilton.

The staff, members and members of the community at large wish to express to Deb our sincere hope for great success in her new position. We could not adequately express our thanks

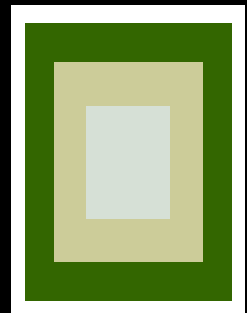
for all Deb has given to the consumer movement and to the mental health community of Hamilton.

We know the same devotion to the principles of recovery which Deb has displayed in her work here will go on to become a benefit to an even larger community.

It is our great privilege to call Deb our friend and we look forward to seeing her in other forums as we work together in advocacy and recovery.

Anyone wishing to join us in extending our thanks to Deb for her service to the community is welcome to join us on Tuesday April 1. *Details on page 2.*

**If you would prefer to receive an email copy of this newsletter please notify the editor at [mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca](mailto:mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca)**



## Deb Sherman: Executive Director

mhrced@bellnet.ca

(Continued from page 1)

community has embraced recovery and psychosocial rehabilitation. I am remembering the many board and committee members who have served MHRC with dedication and diligence during my time – how good to see people stepping up to empower themselves and others. I am listing the many different projects we have partnered in to create, change or pilot services – what an unusual and exemplary collaboration we enjoy with the mental health system we move within. I am thinking of the work we have done in groundbreaking peer support research – how good it is to be located in an area of the province that is large enough to be rich in academics who embrace participatory action research, but small enough to ensure that such research will almost always include us. Mostly, though, I am thinking of the many members I have met, who have come to learn and share, come to help, and come to be helped. The people who come here, who keep trying and triumphing despite symptoms, despite poverty, despite prejudice – you have taught me so many personal lessons about courage and about hope.

Life is change – that is how it differs from the rocks...I hope that MHRC will use my departure as an opportunity for change and growth. I know it will mean change and growth for me. My daily commute to and from work is about to change from sixteen minutes to three hours. I will have a benefits plan for the first time in 25 years. My work will bring me into daily contact with many organizations across the province like MHRC, with several provincial service provider organizations, and with Ministry of Health officials.

I will be back to help Barb with the financial year end reporting – don't know if that will be daytime, nighttime or weekends but my long nose will be poking into the place for a bit over the next couple of months. I hope to hear

that members are talking more control of the drop-in activities. (I bought a Karaoke machine, it'll be here soon... help staff decide what tunes to buy!!!) I hope to hear that the Board of Directors continues to pull together and make wise decisions for MHRC in the interim and beyond – especially the hiring committee, in their choice of my successor.. I hope to hear that the community is being gentle with our new ED (at least at first) and

helping that person to learn the system as they did me. I hope to hear that everyone is supporting and backing up Amy and Peg as they share many of my responsibilities and tasks in the interim, and Barb as she takes on all of the financial responsibilities. So long, and thanks for all the fish....

Love to you all,  
Deborrah



  
*Farewell*

### Appreciation Event For

## Deb Sherman

**After eight years of service Deb is leaving the Mental Health Rights Coalition to join the Ontario Peer Development Initiative as their ED in Toronto.**

**Please join us in thanking Deb for her service to mental health consumer/survivors and the mental health community of Hamilton and in wishing her success as she goes on to serve the mental health community on a different scale.**

**Tuesday, April 1  
1—3p.m.  
Emmaus Place  
Community Room  
35 Aikman  
Hamilton**



**Mental Health Rights Coalition**

**Phone: 905-545-2525 Fax: 905-545-0211**

**E-mail: [mentalhealthrights@bellnet.ca](mailto:mentalhealthrights@bellnet.ca)**

**Website: [www.mentalhealthrights.ca](http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca)**

## Peer Support Coordinator:

**Amy Rogers**

peersupport@bellnet.ca

The latest Peer Support Training group is well under way. The group started the first day of training with a lively discussion about Canada's laws around suicide. We've had some great discussions, with lots of strong opinions, which have contributed to a great learning experience. Thanks to all the participants who have brought their ideas and opinions forward for debate.

A reminder that the Hamilton Peer Recovery Network Conference, Driving the Mental Health and Addiction System(s), is coming up on April 23. All Peer Support Workers and trainees are expected to attend. This confer-

ence is a fantastic professional development opportunity for anyone interested in learning more about grassroots movements, and wanting to have a voice in driving the system that affects us all.

The conference is not just for peer supporters, it's for all consumer/survivors! Everyone is welcome to attend. The more voices we have, the louder we'll be. The conference is free, lunch and entertainment will be provided, and there are some fantastic door prizes available to be won! (See page 8 for more information.) Space is limited, so call today and register through MHRC.

## Administrative Assistant

**Peggy Guiler-Delahunt**

mhrprograms@bellnet.ca

I just nicely get here and the boss decides to leave. Needless to say things are going to be a little harry and scary around here for a while but in the short time I've been here I have learned there are many very capable people in the organization who will help pick up the slack. I also know there are many people in other agencies who are our allies and friends who are willing to help when help is needed. I thank them in advance.

I am very sorry to see Deb leave. We have worked together on various committee, attended many of the same conferences and done speaking engagements together many times over the past eight years and I have always admired her commitment and quiet but unwavering promotion and defense of the basic premises of the consumer movement.

Since I came to Mental Health Rights Coalition I have enjoyed working with Deb and was looking forward to spend-

ing more time in her tutelage.

As sad as I am to see her leave I could not think of a better person to be taking the reigns of OPDI. Deb will bring a new vision and her experience with many other provincial organizations will broaden the understanding OPDI has of the consumer initiatives around the province.

For those who may be wondering the change in personnel will have no affect on the hours of operation. We will still be open from 11-4 each weekday. The very capable Peer Workers will still be welcoming people to the Coalition and Amy and myself will still be here doing our jobs and sharing the responsibilities of the ED until the position is filled.

A quick reminder to all members that your membership renewal is due in April. There is a form in the newsletter to the right and you can email me if you would like a electronic copy of the form. The forms are also available in the office.

## Membership Renewal Form

\*Please Note: if you fill in your phone number and/or email, address, we will assume it is ok for us to contact you to give notice of important events or meetings.

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

**Do you live, work or receive services within LHIN 4? (Hamilton, Niagara, Brant, Haldimand, East Norfolk)**

YES

NO

***Please Print***

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Birth Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Check One:**

- I am a consumer/survivor (full privileges)
- I am not a consumer/survivor (Limited privileges, and news letter by email only)
- I would like to receive the newsletter via email

If you would prefer to send this update via email please email the membership coordinator at mhrprograms@bellnet.ca and ask for a form.



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Hamilton, ON L8M 1K2

Phone 905-545-2525

Fax 905-545-0211

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

## **Applications are invited for the position of Executive Director, Mental Health Rights Coalition of Hamilton**

*The ED of MHRC will possess a unique combination of skills in non profit organization management, office administration, human resource management, financial accountability, team building, systemic advocacy, public relations, and a sound knowledge of and experience with the mental health system.*

### **The E.D. will**

- Support and assist the Board of Directors and committees with strategic planning and budgeting
- Be accountable for day to day management of human and other resources and legal requirements
- Be responsible for financial accountability and other fiduciary duties to funders and governments
- Supervise and manage staff of 8 -10 individuals in recovery from mental illness, plus volunteers
- Represent and act as spokesperson for MHRC and advocate on behalf of its community.

### **Education and/or experience and skills are required which will support the following activities:**

- Non profit board and committee work,
- Financial management for a diverse and complex funding portfolio
- Systemic advocacy for issues faced by people in recovery from mental illness.
- Management, supervision and support of paid and volunteer workers
- Written and oral presentations including public speaking and dealing with media
- Interpersonal connection and collaboration in one-on-one and group situations, involving everyone from the most marginalized, to clinical service managers, to elected officials and government bureaucrats.
- Effective problem solving, negotiation and accommodation for individuals with special needs
- Office management requiring fluent computer literacy (email, MS Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Access) and interpretation to board of income statements, balance sheets etc.
- Experience with complex financial reporting, specifically MIS/CDS and WERS
- Personal lived experience of recovery from a mental illness, is considered a strong asset.*

*Please send your written application and resume, by mail or by email, no later than  
Noon, Friday April 11th 2008, to the address below,  
stating your specific qualifications and expectations as they relate to the job description.*

HIRING COMMITTEE, MHRC

c/o Peer Services

Mental Health and Addictions Program, CMHS

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

100 West 5th St., Box 585

Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3K7

[bennettm@stjoes.ca](mailto:bennettm@stjoes.ca)

***Please do not contact the above, or MHRC offices, to make personal inquiries about this position.***

*A complete job description and information about MHRC are available at [www.mentalhealthrights.ca](http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca)*

*We thank everyone for their interest, but only those selected for interview will be contacted.*



# THAT'S CRAZY



Your RoboCoach

That's Crazy is a column which will appear periodically in The Rights Stuff and which will bring ideas and "stuff" which affects mental health consumer/survivors. We hope this will be informative but will also provoke some thought and even discussion about the topic. If you have ideas about the subject or other subjects we might use for this column please send to the editor.

## An Electronic Psychologist talk to any time on your computer

The Mind Mentor is an electronic psychologist. The web site says he can solve most of your problems but he cannot cure severe mental illnesses or substance abuse.

The secret to the success of the RoboCoach, the inventors claim, is that "the mentor helps you find your own solutions."

The online psychologist is available 24/7 and the promotion says his mission is "to help people achieve their goals and solve their problems."

The cost for one hour with the robot is 4,95 EUR or about \$7 Canadian. "A very modest investment for your well being" say the owners.

The site warns that if you don't have an hour

to sit down and work through the problem with the robot that you should come back another time when you do.

The site offers both male and female robots so you can converse with whatever sex you are most comfortable with.

Discretion is not an issue with the RoboCoach. Consultations are guaranteed to be in the strictest confidence.

The system, the inventors say is based on five different systems.

The prominent approach for the program is Neuro linguistic programming which began in California in the 80's.

Secondly they use "projective testing"

which is like the famous "Rorschach ink blot" tests. Third is "provocative therapy" which helps by challenging people. Then "client centered therapy" which is supposed to help people gain clarity with a very positive attitude and uses reflective listening. Last is the "Pavlovian classical conditioning" which connects mental and emotional response to images so people can easily connect to the image when they are in a situation which is stressful.

This 'robocoach' was designed by two clinical psychologists Jaap Hollander and Jeffrey Wijnberg, from the Institute for Eclectic Psychology in the Netherlands. The official site of MindMentor is <http://mindmentor.com/>

### Some thoughts about RoboCoach

By Peggy Guiler-Delahunt

This approach could be very helpful in reducing the wait times for those with more serious mental illnesses because those with less severe or less persistent illnesses could gain significant benefit without using the very expensive resources of private and public psychiatric services.

The secret to the success of the coach is no surprise to those who work in recovery oriented systems. We understand that people's opinions should be central to their treatment.

The RoboCoach could also prove to be valuable for those persons with personality disorders who some clinical supports often find quite annoying and difficult to treat.

The frightening part is that more and more we are moving away from face to face experience in all aspects of our lives. With internet orders and deliveries we no longer have to meet with the grocer, or the pharmacist and we don't even have to talk to our friends in person. Technology is replacing the most intimate of relationships and is increasingly adding to our isolation as humans. I wonder what sort of society we will become when we don't even know how to say hello to one another any more if we don't have a key board in front of us. And those without the benefit of a key board will be completely exempt from our society.

## Matches Available

Any consumer looking for on-going peer support by a trained volunteer is encouraged to call the Peer Support Coordinator, Amy Rogers, at

905-545-2525.

## FOR SUPPORT...



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

905-545-2525

# A Frog Story

Submitted by Mental Health Rights Coalition member Ivy.

A group of frogs were traveling through the woods, and two of them fell into a deep pit. When the other frogs saw how deep the pit was, they told the two frogs that they were as good as dead. The



two frogs ignored the comments and tried to jump up out of the pit with all their might. The other frogs kept telling them to stop, that they were as good as dead. Finally, one of the frogs took heed to what the other frogs were saying and gave up. He fell down and died.

The other frog continued to jump as hard as he could. Once again, the crowd of frogs yelled at him to stop the pain and just die. He jumped even harder and finally made it out. When he got out, the other frogs said, "Did you not hear us?" The frog explained to them that he was deaf. He thought they were encouraging him the entire time.



This story teaches two lessons:

1. There is power of life and death in the tongue. An encouraging word to someone who is down can lift them up and help them make it through the day.
2. A destructive word to someone who is down can be what it takes to kill them.

Be careful of what you say. Speak life to those who cross your path. The power of words... it is sometimes hard to understand that an encouraging word can go such a long way. Anyone can speak words that tend to rob another of the spirit to continue in difficult times. Special is the individual who will take the time to encourage another.  
Author Unknown



## Free Income Tax Clinics

There are a variety of Free clinics available for those who need help with their income tax. They have many different times and locations. A list is posted at the Coalition.

There are some which require an appointment and some which don't. There are membership limits for some clinics.

If you or someone you know needs help figuring out the list we would be happy to assist.

Call us at 905-545-2525

## An Idea I had

This column will appear periodically in the Rights Stuff and is the work of members at the Mental Health Rights Coalition. The opinions are those of the author and may not reflect the opinion of the Mental Health Rights Coalition. The Editor reserves the right to edit as seen fit, any material submitted for this column

## A Positive Attitude

By Rosemary

Positive Attitudes make life more exciting. No matter what we do, attitudes go a long way toward making life a joy or a pain. Friendliness, cooperation and dependability make life easier. Days pass quickly and our environments should be pleasant places to be. Positive Attitudes are emotional lifts that give an optimistic outlook to life in general.

Being positive works! It helps us thrive. Having a positive approach can help make life more satisfying and can fulfill many of our personal needs. Being with positive people can make us feel good, because their 'positiveness' is infectious. When we are with positive people we often feel their energy, there's excitement in the air. They make us feel good and ready to tackle things that happen in our lives and indeed make an effort to

"Count our Blessings".

Being negative, on the other hand is an emotional drain that deflates those around us and us. Such attitudes can make us feel unhappy and unfulfilled. Let us try and make our attitudes work for us not against us.

When things are difficult it might be hard to be positive. Dealing with tough problems or situations can make it difficult for us to focus on things and can take away our ability to be positive. However if we take a little time and a closer look at the situation, we may be able to see ways in which we could become more positive. Being more positive can help us cope with and maybe, even resolve some of our problems.

A negative attitude says; you cannot achieve success.

A positive attitude says; you can achieve success.

Think Positively

## ISAC Action Alert: OW/ODSP Clothing Allowances

Beginning in July 2008, the Back-to-School and Winter Clothing allowances for families on OW and ODSP will be rolled into the monthly Ontario Child Benefit payment.

The Income Security Advocacy Centre explains "Families will continue to receive the funds, but they will be spread out over the whole year in small, monthly amounts instead of coming all at once in August and November."

The ISAC believes this change will cause hardship for families who are already struggling with monthly expenses.

If you think this decision should be changed the ISAC suggests you

1. Contact your local MPP—to find out who your MPP is visit [www.ontla.on.ca/web/home.do?locale=en](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/home.do?locale=en)

2. Email the ministers responsible and tell them the change is unacceptable and that you want allowances restored.

They are The Hon. Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community & Social Services, 80 Grosvenor Street, 6th Floor, Toronto, ON M7A 1E9 Email: [mmeilleur.mpp@liberal.ola.org](mailto:mmeilleur.mpp@liberal.ola.org)

And The Hon. Deb Matthews, Minister of Child and Youth Services, 14th Floor, 56 Wellesley Street West Toronto, ON M5S 2S3 Email: [dmatthews.mpp@liberal.ola.org](mailto:dmatthews.mpp@liberal.ola.org)

3. Get your Municipal Council, District Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) or Public Health Board to pass a resolution calling for the allowances to be restored. A sample resolution is available on the ISAC alert web site at

<http://www.incomesecurity.org/documents/BacktoSchoolandWinterClothingAllowances-Feb2008.pdf>

## Up Coming Events of Interest

**Sunday May 25, 2008**

**Walk of Hope Gage Park, Hamilton, ON**

Registration begins at 12:30

Walk begins at 1:30

Sponsored by the Ontario Schizophrenia Society this walk is designed to reduce stigma surrounding schizophrenia.

For more information contact Tamara Leniew or Jill Dennison at 905-523-7413 or email [jdennison@schizophrenia.on.ca](mailto:jdennison@schizophrenia.on.ca) or

## Demystifying the Justice & Mental Health System

**Saturday, May 3—8 1.m.—5p.m.**

**A conference for families**

In the Courtyard Marriott, Downtown Toronto.

Registration is free for family members. Space is limited. For information or registration contact Vani Jain at 1-800-449-6367X253 or email [vjain@schizophrenia.on.ca](mailto:vjain@schizophrenia.on.ca) Registration ends April 10th

## Doors Open Hamilton

This educationally focused program allows citizens to visit historical and arts buildings free of charge. To find out more watch for the booklet in the April 26th edition of the Hamilton Spectator or visit the web site at

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

## Community Health Bus

This service of the Public Health Department provides free dental services including Xrays, extractions, fillings and cleaning. The service is offered at a variety of locations. To see a calendar with locations you may contact Public Health Services

Healthy Living Division

Dental Program at M905-546-CITY (2489) or look at the calendar on the Mental Health Rights Coalition board.

The Hamilton Peer Recovery Network Invites you to

## Driving the Mental Health and Addiction System(s)

A full day conference celebrating the knowledge and power of people with the lived experience of mental illness and/or addictions

- Unite your voice with others who wish to see change in the Hamilton mental health and addiction system
- Help us set key priorities for local system planners

With Special Key Note Speaker

# Pat Capponi

Pat Capponi is an author of seven books, a facilitator, advocate, and public speaker. She overcame an abuse-ridden childhood and subsequent mental illness, as well as warehousing in a psychiatric boarding home, to become one of Canada's leading spokespeople for improvement in the quality of life for those labeled mentally ill.









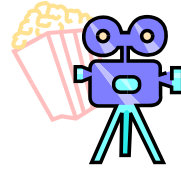













Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008,  
9:30 am to 3:00 pm  
Liuna Station, 360 James Street North

For more information & to register please contact the Mental Health Rights Coalition at 905-545-2525.

Exclusively for Consumer/Survivors  
Free lunch and entertainment will be provided  
Door Prizes: DVD & MP3 Players, Gift Certificates. Must be present to win.

**Be inspired. Be activated. Be involved.**

# April 2008

S	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	S	
	 Join us April 1st at Emmaus	<b>1</b> Coalition Closed Fare-well/Appreciation party for Deb Sherman at Emmaus Place—35 Aikman	<b>2</b> Skip Bo 	<b>3</b> Crazy Eights 	<b>4</b> April shows art with Mark 	5	
6	<b>7</b> Movies & Popcorn 	<b>8</b> Monopoly 	<b>9</b> Cribbage  Sign up for HPS trip to the Science Centre	<b>10</b> Checkers 	<b>11</b> Movies & popcorn 	12	
13	<b>14</b> Yatzee 	<b>15</b> Craft day 	<b>16</b>  HPS—Trip to Science Leaves HPS at 9:15 a.m.	<b>17</b> Thirty One 	<b>18</b> May flowers art with Mark 	19	
20	<b>21</b> Movie & Popcorn 	<b>22</b> Dominos 	<b>23</b> <b>Conference</b> Coalition Closed—See page 8 for details	<b>24</b> Yatzee 	<b>25</b> Movie & Popcorn 	26	
27	<b>28</b> Monopoly 	<b>29</b> Bingo 	<b>30</b>  Happy Birthday Party for the April birthdays Cribbage 	Peer support Training continues on Wednesday's from 1 to 4 with the exception of the 23rd. Trainees are expected to attend the conference.			