



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.
BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

BCSS Victoria

Newsletter "Voice"

Schizophrenia & Psychosis Awareness Day!



May 24th, Schizophrenia and Psychosis Awareness Day, is nearly here. It's a day we dress in purple and stand together - people with schizophrenia and psychosis, and families and friends - to celebrate the hard journey they, only 1% of the population, fight on.

This month's newsletter has chosen the theme of "voice" to remind us that the stigma of mental illness can be vastly reduced if we use our own voice and help share our stories to educate others. With Mental Health Awareness Week also coming up soon, we have some ideas of how to share your voice to spread awareness. Of course, there is also the creative voice, art in many mediums that comes from us. See our new art page and please send us your art to fill the page with all your talented voices!

At BCSS, we have many ways you can use your voice to the fullest, from presentations to support work. Please visit our website for info: www.BCSSVictoria.ca.



Join us for the 2nd Annual IRIS Luncheon!

In support of BCSS - Victoria

Friday, May 24th, 2013
Union Club - Main Dining Room
805 Gordon St., Victoria
Noon - 1:30pm

Keynote speaker: Dean Fortin, Mayor of Victoria
MC: Al Ferraby, Morning Host, CFX 1070 AM

Tickets: \$25
Sponsorships available.

The Iris is known as the "Flag of Hope" for people suffering from mental health disorders.

Like

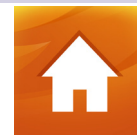
Join us here!



<https://www.facebook.com/BCSchizophreniaSocietyVictoria>



@BCSSVictoria



www.BCSSVictoria.ca

Mental Health AWARENESS WEEK!

Mental Health Awareness Week returns on May 6 through to the 12th. It's that time of year when businesses, organizations and leading professionals in the field spread the word about all things mental health with the goal of busting the stigma that looms over all. But, this honourable effort doesn't have to just be on their shoulders - it's an opportunity for all of us to pitch in and spread public awareness about the reality of mental illness. It's time to use your voice. It's time to share and educate!

Here are some great things you can do during the Mental Health Awareness Week to help battle stigma:



1. Educate people

There's a lot of misinformation out there about mental illnesses, whether caused by movies, media or by gossip. Simply, most people who don't know about these issues never had an opportunity to learn, so what better time for you to help? By being forthcoming and educating people about our or our loved one's illness we're ensuring that the correct information about mental health is shared out there!

2. Share on social media

Everyone and their mother are on the web now, so use your voice on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, your personal blog and wherever else you can reach the public online to share stories on mental health from other sites and your own experience with those who are still in the dark.

3. Get Involved!

By becoming a presenter at BCSS, you will be able to share your personal experience with a mental illness, or being a family member or friend of one, to educate others. Our presenters go in teams to high schools, nursing schools, police stations and many others to spread the reality of mental health and dispel the stigma.



Writing Contest!!!

How have you triumphed over insurmountable odds?

Tell us in 500 words or less and we'll publish the winning story in our next issue! Other notable stories will be posted to our website and shared on Facebook and Twitter, too.

Please email all stories to admin.bcsc@shaw.ca with your name and contact info!

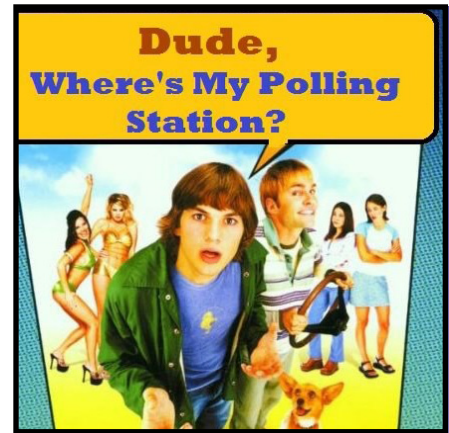


*Share YOUR story
in YOUR voice!*



BC Elections:

Votin' Time!



Mark the day! May 14, 2013, is the next provincial election here in BC. In fact, it's BC's BIG 40th general election. That means it's time to head to the polls and re-elect our Premier or vote a new one in! Regardless, this is our single most opportunity to partake in the process of choosing the one person to represent us and make all of the great decisions that will affect our lives day-to-day. No easy task!

For those who haven't voted before, here's how it works: You will have received a card from Elections BC (if you haven't yet, see the contact info below) that states your local voting station and the candidates from the different parties looking to be elected for MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly), your representative in government. Out of all of the electoral districts in the province, the one party leader with the most MLA's elected becomes our next Premier. Head to your station on the 14th, follow their instructions and there you have it: you've completed a time-honoured opportunity to have your say!

Why vote? Patty Milne, BCSS Peer Supporter, puts it best with her experience:

"I think that voting is a very important responsibility that every citizen should participate in. I believe that voting is not a right but a privilege. Many people died in war for the freedoms that we so often take for granted. And I do remember my first voting experience. It was so long ago, but I remember it as being like a right to passage. It was a very empowering experience. And once I voted, I had a feeling that I was part of something that mattered, like my vote counted for something. I think that if you don't vote in an election, you shouldn't complain about your politicians as you didn't vote!"



CBC recently created a new website to help those of us who have no clue about what issues the many parties support and want to change in our province. And they've done it in a totally unbiased way!

By logging on to www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bcvotes2013/votecompass and following the survey questions they ask of you (questions rate your stance on topics from the Enbridge Pipeline to faster medical care,) VoteCompass provides you with a result you can really use: a graph (left) of where you stand among the parties.

Here, you will be saved the hours of research and can easily pick the closest party!

The Victoria Invisible Disabilities/Mental Health Meetup

<http://www.meetup.com/the-invisible-disability>

Looking to meet some new friends?

Peter Cunningham's new group on MeetUp is a great way to meet people and do some fun things while you're at it!

"Any one can join," Peter says, "but the focus is invisible ones (autism, aspergers, ADD, bipolar, schizophrenia, FAS, depression people that feel different day-to-day and find it hard to connect with others."

Tons of activities: "Movie Mondays, coffee talks, music jams, camping, swimming, bowling, hiking and hopefully trips away, art therapy, music therapy and other stuff that will improve your mental health."

"People should join to get out of their houses and be a part of something great," Peter says. "We will never judge people on how they act look or anything they do that others think is weird."



Art x Voice

Share YOUR voice
through YOUR art!!!

We are now taking submissions for our new page dedicated to your creative works!
Submit your poetry, art, photography or comics to admin.bcsc@shaw.ca.

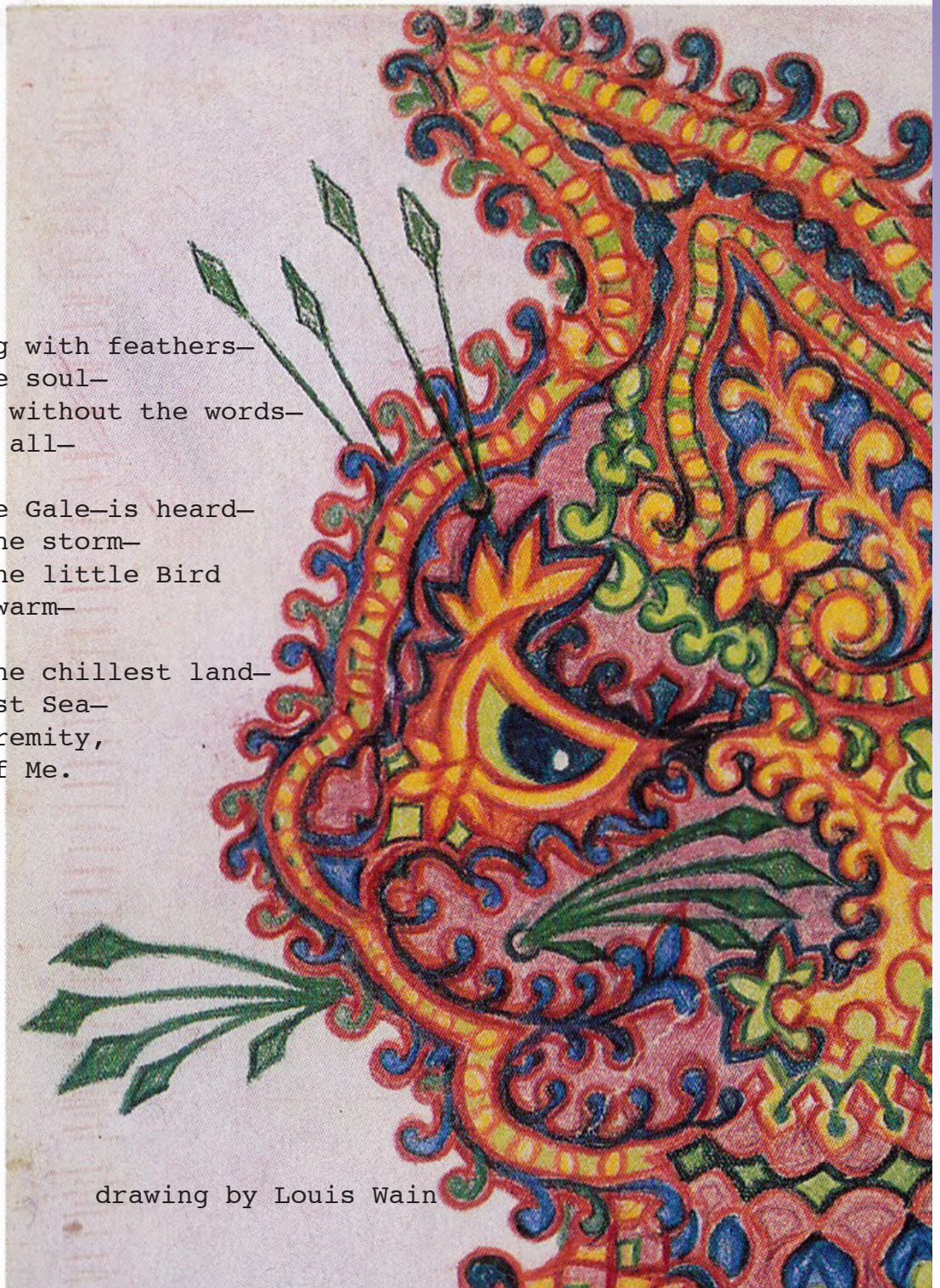
Each month, selections will be featured on our website and Facebook, with the month's best appearing in the next newsletter! We're looking forward to seeing your work!

"Hope" is the thing with feathers—
That perches in the soul—
And sings the tune without the words—
And never stops—at all—

And sweetest—in the Gale—is heard—
And sore must be the storm—
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm—

I've heard it in the chilliest land—
And on the strangest Sea—
Yet, never, in Extremity,
It asked a crumb—of Me.

—Emily Dickinson



drawing by Louis Wain

The W.R.A.P.® Up!

BCSS' Exciting New Program

by Don Palmer, MSW - WRAP Supervisor and WRAP Facilitator

WRAP® (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) is a safe, simple, easy way to construct your own plan for maintaining wellness, learning from lapses in wellness, and building upon that to stay balanced for longer periods. Having a WRAP is about living a life that is fuller, more fun, and more secure. No one is entirely free from physical illness; the same is true of a mental illness. The WRAP is evidence-based, has been in use since 1987 and is practiced all over the world. It's not just for people with a mental illness but for anyone who knows the value of strong mental health.

WRAP as presented by BCSS – Victoria Branch, is a weekly workshop of eight sessions and limited to 12 members. It's free of charge to people BCSS serves. A workshop is facilitated by two trained facilitators with lived experience. WRAP is based on 5 key concepts – Hope, Personal Responsibility, Education, Self-Advocacy, and Support. After participants learn the meaning of these concepts they identify ideas for their Wellness Toolbox. Certain ideas in the Toolbox are selected when one designs a daily maintenance plan and the 5 action plans. The first part of the actual WRAP is the Daily Maintenance Plan which is followed by identifying one's particular triggers, ones early warning signs, then signs of when things are breaking down, a crisis plan, and a post-crisis plan.

Our very own Peer Supporter recently underwent training to become a WRAP Facilitator. He says: “My experience of building my Wellness Toolbox has been transformational. What is truly fun about WRAP is that it's a living document that will change as I grow. I am finding new Wellness Tools almost every day! Through life experience I have come to learn what is good for me. My Crisis Plan lays out an ideal strategy for my supporters to follow. If my early Action Plans somehow fail to prevent me from falling into a crisis, my Crisis Plan and Post-Crisis Plan give me and my family a great deal of confidence to manage the situation and the ability to learn from it. WRAP has been an incredible way for me to open conversations with friends and co-workers. Even more importantly it is fun and rewarding to follow my own guide to living well.

WRAP can become an important personal possession by strengthening you and empowering you to lead your life on your own terms. Good luck and I hope you get a chance to take a WRAP with us at the BC Schizophrenia Society – Victoria Branch.”

For more information on WRAP, check www.mental-healthrecovery.com.

The WRAP Crew ►



They Came, They Saw, They Jumped!

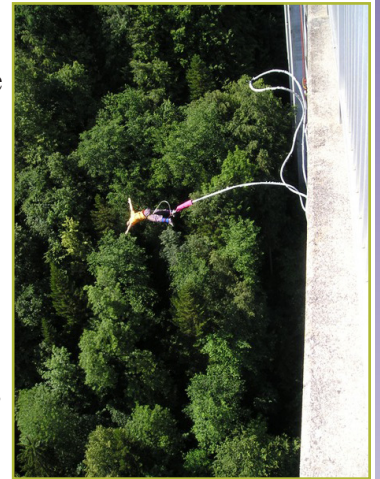
Our Awesome Annual Naked Bungee Jump!

by Rachael Grant

On February 23rd and 24th, there were many sights to be seen at the Wild Play Adventures Park. Scores of brave souls participated in the Annual Naked Bungee Jump put on by the BCSS; some for a thrill, some because of personal connections to the struggles those with mental illness face, but all because it's an amazing cause to contribute to, as the BCSS supports countless individuals struggling with the realities of invisible disabilities. With an estimated one in every one hundred Canadians living with schizophrenia, there was no shortage of friends, families, as well as individuals with mental illness baring it all in an effort to start a dialog about ignorance and misinformation, and to help put an end to stigma. Around a campfire, and through mouthfuls of s'mores, laughs were shared, as well as stories of struggles, triumphs, and sometimes loved ones tragically lost to suicide. Though sometimes heartbreaking, the words shared were filled with hope, and a belief that with organizations like the BCSS, we can strive to support those who struggle, and in doing so, empower one another to overcome barriers, and grow as a community.

Together, we raised \$15,000 for the cause! Thanks to all the donors, volunteers, pledgers and sponsors:

Jane Milliken, Shawna Gottschalk, Shawna Wenzel, Rowland Monaghan, Kevin Pryer, Clint Dalsin, Laura Dalsin, Kim Brousseau, Kees Bastiaans, Diane Bastiaans, Sarah Hughes (photographer), Hannah Jones, Connie Wylie, Corey Maruca, Nate Krell, Gabe's Café, Starbucks, Thrifty Foods at Terminal Ave in Nanaimo, Painted Turtle in Nanaimo and WildPlay Element Parks in Nanaimo.



Our Annual Jazz @ Café Berlin

A great experience was had at the annual Jazz at the Café Berlin featuring Maureen Washington, Louise Rose and the Cold Cut Combo. It is a fun evening filled with meaning and purpose. Organized by John Fear (a father who lost his son to suicide) BCSS Victoria Board members and staff, Paul McNair,



Jerry and Judy Cruz, the evening raised over \$3500! Funds raised support artists, students and others who have a mental illness through BCSS Victoria Memorial Fund. You can designate funds to invest in another's dream through the Canada Helps button on our website. www.bcssvictoria.ca We wish to thank all of the people and businesses who made the evening such a great success! Please take a moment to view our sponsors and tell them thanks for making a difference when you see them! If you like Jazz, stay tuned for next February!

Many thanks to all involved:

Hotel Grand Pacific, Pacific Opera, Suzanne Dannenberg and friend, Flavors Boutique, Jen V Designs, Reunion, Artworld, Butchart Gardens, Capital Iron, Illuminations Lighting, Intrepid Theatre, Langham Court Theatre, Long and McQuade, Olive Olios Coffee, Paul McNair, John Fear, Clint Dalsin, Delia Smith, Bo Love, Kim Mohns, Fabian Rousseau, Luke garrison, Fatima, Starbucks, Fantastico Coffee, MAC at Mayfair, Shawna Gottschalk, Edelweiss Club, Ursula's Kitchen, Larsen Music, Tempo Trend, Allison Piano, Munro Books, Tanner's Books, CTV and Digital Direct Printing.

You Are Invited! BCSS Victoria AGM 2013

By Hazel Meredith

Proudly presenting guest speaker Chris Summerville

June 11, 2013 at 6:30pm

CDI College

950 Kings Road



Chris has served on 13 national, provincial and regional boards. He is CEO of Schizophrenia Society of Canada, Executive Director of Manitoba Schizophrenia Society and was appointed by Prime Minister Harper to the Board of Directors of the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2007-2013.)

“Mental illness is not just a health issue, but a social justice issue as well. When we, as one of the wealthiest societies in the world, know what helps people living with mental illness to recover, avoid relapse and experience a better quality of life and we do not provide those treatment options, supports and services, it then becomes a social justice issue!” -Chris Summerville

I met Chris in Winnipeg in 1994 when he approached me to work on a fundraising committee with him for MSS. I remained involved over the years until I left my work with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority in Manitoba for Victoria, BC, to become the Executive Director of BCSS, Victoria Branch. I have seen Chris be a staunch advocate for people affected by serious mental illnesses through advocacy work on topics from the Non-Criminally Responsible due to Mental Disorder (NCR-MD) Bill, stigma, discrimination, social justice, concurrent disorders and, of course, recovery.

You may wish to view some of these helpful links and reports:

Cannabis and Psychosis: <http://www.cannabisandpsychosis.ca>

Schizophrenia and Substance Abuse: <http://www.schizophreniaandsubstanceabuse.ca>

Schizophrenia: The Journey to Recovery: <http://www.schizophrenia.ca/docs/CPAGuidelinesFinalE.pdf>

AGM: BCSS Victoria Seeks Board Members

Philanthropic individuals with business, social enterprise, leadership, fundraising skills sought to broaden our team. Do you have a passion for mental health, mental health connection and or a “can do spirit”? Want to make a difference in the Capital Region?

Come and be a part of a dynamic organization with an exciting history built to make lives easier and more hopeful for people facing schizophrenia, psychosis related illnesses. We help people with mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar, major depression and others with or without additions. We help children, youth and adults across the age spectrum who have an illness or are supporting someone in their family who may have an illness. We are pioneering, enterprising, knowledgeable in a wide range of areas.

We are collaborative and believe we can make positive change. Please contact or forward a brief bio/and or resume outlining your expertise and interest to the Executive Director, Hazel Meredith at execdir.bcss@shaw.ca or 941 Kings Road, Victoria, BC, V9A 1W7.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

Please make cheques payable to:

British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch (BCSS Victoria)
941 King's Road, Victoria, BC, V8T 1W7
Phone: 384-4225; fax: 388-4391
E-mail: admin.bcscs@shaw.ca

Easy Giving on our website through Canada Helps Button: www.bcscsvictoria.ca

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of: _____ \$ (receipts issued for gifts of \$20 and over)
Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Province: _____
Postal Code _____ Email _____

- ☐ I wish to become a member of BCSS Victoria. (\$25 individual membership)
 - ☐ I want BCSS Victoria online newsletter (be informed, save a tree, help us save \$! Share with you network!)
 - ☐ E-mail me information about local events and news pertinent to our community! (unsubscribe anytime)
- As a local regional branch we provide up to date local info and newsworthy items of provincial, national and international scope.*

Subscribe to provincial info: <http://www.bcscs.org/2007/05/aboutbcscs/e-newsletters/>
Subscribe to national information: <http://www.schizophrenia.ca/newsletters.php>

Designation (undesignated donations will be put towards supporting BCSS Victoria Programs and Services):

- ☐ Programs & Services (includes children/youth/adult peer programs, advocacy, consultation and more)
- ☐ Memorial Fund (supports education, arts and other goal support)
- ☐ Endowment Fund *Thank you for your contribution!!*

Please consider giving throughout the year with payroll deductions programs (i.e. BC government employee payroll deduction program), charitable Christmas or gift giving in another's name or consider a legacy gift to help others who need us. Thank you!

