



D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 5

Newsletter

BC Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch

"Knowledge is Empowering and Gives Hope"

For info or self referral: visit www.bcssvictoria.ca or call 250-384-4225 email: admin.bcss@shaw.ca

Knowledge is Empowering

by Don Palmer



The quote "knowledge is power" can be traced back as far as the writings of Francis Bacon. It's one of the most frequently referenced phrases to inspire; to empower; to give hope; and to motivate people to take action to realize their dreams. The very successful singer/songwriter Mary J. Blige, says she wished she had known that "education is the key; that knowledge is power; knowledge elevates you". Kofi Annan was the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations and co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001. He says "information is liberating; that education is the premise of progress in every society, in every family".

Education is one of the five key concepts in WRAP – the Wellness Recovery Action Plan. WRAP workshops have been helping people around the world through their recovery process since 1996. Long before that peer support programs recognized that anyone, no matter the degree of their challenges, is capable of adding to their knowledge base in a way that will contribute to their wellness. That means learning about a variety of treatment options; identifying and satisfying lifestyle needs; investigating career opportunities based on interests and potential; expanding your understanding of healthy relationships; how features in a living space contribute to wellness; and learning the benefits of leisure time activities and exercise.

You can educate yourself by going to workshops, lectures, support groups and spending time with a peer supporter. You can review educational resources like pamphlets, articles, books, newsletters, CDs, DVDs, certain television programs, websites, and contact mental health organizations. It's important to consider many perspectives, ask questions, join in discussions, and decide what feels right for you. Your own well-being is the most important project you'll ever have so isn't it important to take the time and make every effort to find what is best for you. I have presented many ideas here for your consideration. It may feel overwhelming and you may not know where to start. Keep in mind you don't have to do this alone. Find someone or some service to support you in your education travels. BCSS Victoria is here to help you in a number of different ways.



10th Annual Naked Bungy Jump for BCSS 2016

February 20 & 21, 2016

The Naked Bungy Jump is an extremely important annual fundraising event for the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, Victoria branch. This will be the 10th year that BCSS will be teamed-up with WildPlay Element Parks to raise funds for individuals living with schizophrenia and psychosis.

Also on our side, is a generous anonymous donor who has increased the amount that they match pledges up to \$25,000 this year. This means that each pledge will be doubled automatically!

This year Andrea Bennington, one of our very own in office volunteers, will be jumping for BCSS Victoria! If you would like to pledge towards her jump you can do so by calling BCSS Victoria at 250-384-4225, go to our website www.bcssvictoria.ca and donate via Canada Helps, or you can come to our office at 941 Kings Rd. There's no support that's too small; every dollar pledged makes it possible for BCSS to provide: individual and family counselling, peer led programs, and education to the estimated one in 100 individuals and their families on Southern Vancouver Island affected by schizophrenia and psychosis.

18TH Annual Schizophrenia Conference



This island wide conference provides the latest information for clinicians, psychiatrists, general practitioners, service providers, family members and people with lived experience of mental illness. The conference sold out again this year and we received rave reviews about the speakers. Every year we feature three plenary speakers and host 8 afternoon concurrent workshops. The theme for this year, "Road the Recovery" saw Dr. Dawe speak about recovery oriented systems of care, such as that in his jurisdiction of Ontario Shores. He even shared some information about how they are moving towards an online access feature to accessing one's own health charts! Dr. Clare Beasley spoke about the latest in biological aspects of schizophrenia and the role of inflammation in schizophrenia. Dr. Steve Mathias spoke about the youth with whom he and his team work in Vancouver. He elaborated on the approach taken to enhance engagement with youth and how he works with a youth population with concurrent disorders (substance use and psychosis). He and his team work hard to ensure that relationship is formed strongly so that the youth can take the steps needed to work courageously on their recovery. Thank you to all the afternoon concurrent presenters who provided stimulating, hopeful and enriching workshops. We are tabulating the evaluations so that we can ensure to include requested content for next year's conference. We are collecting the presentations from the speakers who are open to having their powerpoint presentations handouts on the registration website. Feel free to check in the link.

<http://islandschizophreniaconference.webs.com/> Thanks to all who worked together to make this conference such a huge success. We hope to see you next year! -Hazel Meredith



A Memorial for Bill Buckle *September 9, 1939-August 5, 2015*

by June Pryer

Bill Buckle's achievements were many during his life but I would like to just mention some of the ones related to the local branch of the B.C. Schizophrenia Society. He first became involved as a member of the board in 1987 where he remained for 20 years in various posts including treasurer. As well as involving himself in many of the special events for the society he had his day job as an administrator of two group homes in the city. In 1989 he was a founding member of the Friends of Music which has strong links with BCSS.

Well aware of the needs of both clients and their families, Bill also realized the importance of fundraising. He was instrumental in providing a never-ending supply of volunteers for the weekly Bingo games that raised from \$20,000 to \$30,000 annually for the society. In 2002 the Gaming Laws were changed that eliminated the need for volunteers, but Bill continued to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Greater Victoria Bingo Association.

His hard work on behalf of mental health garnered him two awards. First in 1997 by the Capital Health Region with an award, 'in recognition of outstanding contribution as a volunteer in the field of mental health', and later in 2000 he received the, 'B.C. Schizophrenia Award for Outstanding Service by a Non-family Member'. Bill was nominated and was the runner-up at the University of Victoria's VERA award (Valued Elder Recognition Award) in 2014.

In 2015 Bill was still on the local BCSS board and had been President of the Friends of Music for 24 years. So many achievements but let's not forget the man. The many Christmas parties where he presided as Master of Ceremonies dressed in his tuxedo and bow tie. He was always charming and had a caring attitude for all present. It certainly won't be the same without him.

I'm so happy to say, it was so good to have known you Bill.

*From all of us at BCSS Victoria,
we miss having you around.
You brought wisdom, passion
and kindness to our
organization. Your work on the
board, the Memorial Fund
Committee, and our festive
events will be remembered. You
will not be forgotten. - Hazel*





BCSS Victoria Annual Christmas Dinner a Great Success!!

This year over 180 people attended the 31st Annual BCSS Victoria Christmas dinner and dance and a good time was had by all! Many thanks to chef Steven Walker Duncan who, with the help of Albert Van Citters and others, prepared a full turkey and ham dinner that was absolutely delicious! The music put on by three bands from the Friends of Music was fantastic and helped everyone to get in the Christmas spirit and there was dancing with spot dance prizes after the dinner. Thank you everyone who donated and volunteered their time to help to make the dinner an enjoyable evening for all!!

Thanks to our Donors: Cam Millar, Andree & Murray Galbraith, Bruce Saunders, June Pryer, John Gray, Kate Mansell, Joan & Blane McIntosh, Joan Appleton, David Axon, Norm & Sherrill Eyres, Eileen & Peter Schieldrop, Lynn & Gordon Rowland, Sharon Max, Janet Bassal, Adapta Software Inc., Joan & Doug Bell, Patty Milne, John Owens Moore, Charlotte Dickson, Bonnis North, Hazel & Don Tufford, Mary Ann Tuller, Yvonne Pierce, Betty Flowers, Arlene Murrell, Effy Korkoras, Patricia & Tom Gubbels, and Wendy Wingerter.

Thanks to our Volunteers: Marion Gibson, Joan McIntosh, Murray & Andree Galbraith, Sus & Barbara Tabata, Bruce Saunders, John Gray, Bill & Janet Bassa, John Pang, Joan Appleton, Robert Anderson, Cindy Player, Peter & Eileen Schieldrop, Lynn & Gordon Rowland, Charles Crossland, Chris Caleb, Corey Maruca, Wendy Wingerter, Kent & Tammy Laforme, Heather Keel, John Burke, Kim Ferko, Sherrill Eyres, Lorna and Luke Villiamy, Kory Smith, Jason Richardson, Carolyn Brooks, Annuska VanderPoll, Charles Crossland, Patty Milne, Jocelyn Gile, Carolyn Powers, Cindy Player, Lorna McRae, Randi Dawson, Erika & Trevor Pryer, Caroline Brooks, Germaine Williamson, Kathrine Wyne, Jenna Grant, and Joan Bell.

Pedersen's
EVENT RENTALS



Self-Care Tips for the Holiday Season



Christmas is supposed to be happy and joyful but for many people it is not an easy time of the year. Many people put huge expectations on themselves heading into the Christmas period. It is important for people to actively take steps to reduce mental stress over the Christmas season.

Keep your expectations modest. Don't get hung up on what the holidays are *supposed* to be like and how you're *supposed* to feel. If you're comparing your holidays to some abstract greeting card ideal, they'll always come up short. So don't worry about holiday spirit and take the holidays as they come.



Self-Care Tips for the Holiday Season *(continued)*

- Take time out for yourself and do something that makes you feel good. Be gentle with yourself!
- Don't be afraid to ask for or accept help
- Keep active. Exercise is great for your wellbeing
- Make sure you get plenty of sleep
- Eat a healthy diet that includes plenty of vegetables, fruits, wholegrains and cereals
- When drinking alcohol, do so in moderation
- Decrease your caffeine intake by drinking more water or herbal tea
- Have realistic expectations of the Christmas season
- Be realistic about what you can and can't do
- Spend time with supportive and caring people

Are you concerned about future planning for your family?



Upcoming BCSS Victoria Forum: Advance Planning for Families Affected by Mental Health Challenges

February 4, 2016 6:30-8:30 pm
Comfort Inn & Suites 3020 Blanshard St.
Topaz Room

BCSS Victoria proudly presents Fiona Hunter (Lawyer) and Shawn Strandberg (Chartered Accountant) who will provide an informative presentation on advance planning considerations for families affected by mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder and psychosis with/without substance use challenges. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer/ discussion period. Some of the topics include: Disability Tax Credit, RDSP, Wills and Estates, Social Assistance (PWD) and others. Suggested donation to BCSS Victoria: \$10 at the door (tax receipts \$20+).

DEAR MEMBER AND/OR SUPPORTER

ANNUAL APPEAL December 2015

I would like to tell you about a young man in his twenties who sought out our services. He is comfortable with us sharing his story but would like to remain anonymous.

"J" has struggled with psychosis since his teens and developed schizophrenia. He was poorly housed, often living on the couches of friends while he felt too paranoid to live in one location. Of course, he also struggled financially as he had no fixed address. Then he met a special young woman who inspired him to want more for his own health and wellbeing, and shortly thereafter, a beautiful baby girl was born. As he reached out for help he sought someone who could help him find a path to recovery. He wanted to feel hopeful, decrease his sense of self-stigma and start planning his new life and lifestyle. For a variety of reasons, he did not have family support but then he became connected with our Peer Support Program. For the first time, he found a role model who was also a father living with positive mental health despite schizophrenia. This young man further continued his journey through taking the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) which helped him structure his relapse prevention plan among other benefits. Over time, trust was built with this young man and our BCSS Victoria community. He delights us by stopping by the office, with his partner and little girl. He dotes on this little girl in a way that would melt your heart. His goal? ***"I want to give my daughter the attention and love I would have liked to have received"***. And, when I see this young family playing in the park next door to my office, it gives me hope. They receive some supports in the community and are a very happy family. All I can see is the love in his eyes for his little daughter and the new spirit by which he embraces his life. It's beautiful.

BCSS Victoria helps many people. We see ourselves as being experts when life gets very hard due to a mental illness. It can be complex. We are here to serve family members and people with psychosis, schizophrenia and related mental illnesses.

Your support can help young people like "J". You can help us 'live' our mission and realize our vision of bringing compassion and hope to those affected by schizophrenia and psychosis. You can donate securely online at www.bcssvictoria.ca on the Canada Helps button or you can send a cheque postmarked by December 31st, 2015, if you would like a charitable receipt for 2015. Your charitable gift ensures we can continue to provide high quality service and supports for those who need it.

We are on top on the latest developments in the field and welcome your support and engagement to help us assist those with serious mental illness. We believe no one should have to struggle alone. We believe people gain strength and hope in the company of others who have been there! **We helped over 2000 people last year, received over 2500 phone calls and drop ins and handled over 9800 emails.**

Thank you for considering our request! And all the best of the holiday season to you and here's to a happy and healthy 2016!

Yours truly,



Hazel Meredith, Executive Director

