

## CMHA Events of Interest

Sir Sanford Fleming College is holding a health fair on Thursday January 27, 2005. The CMHA-VCB will be present with a Virtual Hallucination exhibit from Jansen-Ortho. You can experience sound, sight and smell hallucinations through the use of computer-driven virtual reality equipment.



CMHA offers various groups throughout the year, generally one in the spring and one in the fall. Currently it is an eight-week assertiveness training group. Other groups have included boundaries, anxiety and depression. Keep an eye out for advertisements in the newspaper.

### MENTAL HEALTH *Matters*

is published by the  
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## Working together to promote mental health

A person dealing with mental illness needs support, not fear or shame, in order to be a competent, contributing member of society. One of the pillars of that support is good, reliable information. There is a huge amount of information about mental health and illness on the Worldwide Web. What can a person believe, what can be trusted?

Thanks to an affiliation between CMHA and the Canadian Health Network, there is easy access to dependable, current and credible mental health information on the Internet. Simply go to [www.canadian-health-network.ca](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca) and click on Mental Health. There you will find a collection of mental health information that can be relied upon to be accurate.

Topics include, for example, Stress, suicide prevention, depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder, support groups, crisis lines, etc.

CMHA-VCB thanks the United Way, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for their financial support.



# MENTAL HEALTH *Matters*

Canadian Mental Health Association — Victoria County

Volume 5, No 2

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*The CMHA envisions a society which values human dignity and enhances mental and emotional well-being for all.*

*Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 4-11, 2004*

## Faces of mental illness

**Face Mental Illness** – that is the theme for Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) in 2004. It is an appeal to all of us, each and every single one, because we or someone near to us may well have to **face the fact** of life that is mental illness.

It can come from out of nowhere, and it has innumerable **faces**. We come **face to face** with four of them, individuals living full and successful lives with mental illness, on posters at the MIAW website (<http://www.miaaw.ca>) on the Internet. They are certainly worth a click or two.

These men and women have **faced up** to the challenges of their conditions. They have **flown in the face** of social stigma. They have taken their situations at **face value**, found solutions, tools, strategies to put a **new face** on their lives, they've done an **about face**, they've effaced their own biases and fears, and, **fresh-faced** and calm, smile out at us from the posters.

Make no mistake, their mental illness may not have gone away once they **faced up** to it and learned to live with it. But they have not allowed their illness to define them, it is simply one more challenge they are **facing**, one more thing they (and those close to them) must consider in living and planning their lives.

**Face it!** More than six million Canadians are affected by mental illness. That is, one of every five people you know...



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## Who's Who at CMHA-VCB:

In each issue of *Mental Health Matters*, we interview a staff member of the agency. This time, it is

### Sue Edwards

Community Support Worker Sue Edwards has spent her entire career with the Victoria County Branch of CMHA. It was as a student of social services in Peterborough that Sue came to Lindsay on a placement assignment and — happily for the agency — has made it her workplace of choice.

She began ten years ago, as a staff member at the home called Harrison House, when it was the agency's sole program. She must have found the job fulfilling, since she stayed with it for years, but looking back today on the shift work, with little variety in her days and nights, she admits that it became somewhat boring.

When she became a Community Support Worker, though, she remembers how rewarding it was, following people as they made their way from Harrison House to living in increasing independence in the community. She now supports a full caseload of individuals who deal with mental health issues in the com-

munity, and says that her work these days is “anything but boring”.

In addition to her full complement of cases, Sue helps to fill the mental health needs of people who have no permanent residence of their own. With provincial funds allocated through the municipality to the Homeless County Program, she works with individuals who have found refuge with the local organization named A Place Called Home, but also with those who come to her “straight off the street”, so to speak. They are the ones rejected by society under aggregate and remote terms like “the homeless” or “street people”.

Sue, on the other hand, sees them as individuals, each with his or her own story and issues, and she is there to give them a hand on the road to health and stability.

She works with the person to obtain any medical, legal or other help he or she needs in the community. For example, some of the local agencies she can refer to include Community Counselling, the John Howard Society, SPAN, the Whitby Mental Health Centre's community outreach program (located in Lindsay), and others.



Smiling Sue Edwards

*claims are now the fastest growing category of long-term disability in Canada. (Manulife Financial Group)*

#### It's an expensive problem:

*In Canada, the cost of mental illness represents nearly 14% of all corporate income. Households with a disabled family member consume on average 40% less in goods and services than the average household.*

*The Canadian economy loses an estimated \$30 billion a year in productivity due to mental illness and addiction problems. (Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health.)*



### Let's face some facts:

Investment in community mental health programs pays off for persons with serious and persistent mental illness, including those who are homeless. Clients show improvements in day to day functioning, reduction in symptoms and use of substances, and experience fewer crisis episodes and fewer days in hospital. Community-based support services save the healthcare system money. It costs \$35,000 per year to provide services in the community compared to \$170,820 per year to keep a person in hospital. Specifically:

#### In Kingston:

Clients experienced decreased hospitalization rates. They felt that the service helps them stay in their own homes, in their own communities.

#### In Ottawa:

Clients experienced fewer symptoms, lower rates of drug abuse and better overall life functioning as a result of the support services in the community. Housing outreach services found homes for the homeless and after nine months, 91% had maintained their tenancy.


#### Toronto's Inner City:

Clients' overall functioning improved 20% after nine months of service. Visits to emergency rooms dropped by as much as 60%, and hospitalization was reduced by 86%.

#### City of Kawartha Lakes:

Supports provided by the Canadian Mental Health Association have also been successful — in 2004, by the end of July, 126 people were supported in the community with only six needing re-admission to a psychiatric facility.

This supports the agency's 95% success rate helping people maintain their tenancy in the community.

While community mental health programs like those provided by CMHA are obviously helpful, it must be borne in mind that most people with serious mental illness still live in poverty, without access to employment opportunities. 

- Developing networks to exchange strategies and knowledge to address mental health issues in the workplace;
- Provide access to the latest information for employers, employees and mental health professionals about mental health in the workplace;
- Provide information on early identification, prevention, and accommodation;
- Developing and distributing training materials and information kits for employers and employees;
- Collaborating with organizations to design and pilot training initiatives;



*Mental Health Works is an initiative of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. To more or about how you or your organization can get involved, contact:*

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## Mental Health Facts

### It affects all of us:

*Health Canada (2002) indicates that: 20% of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime, and the 80% remaining will be indirectly affected by its impact upon a family member, friend or colleague. Suicide accounts for 24% of all deaths among 15-24 year olds and 16% among those aged 25-44.*

### It's a growing problem:

*Mental health disorders are one of the three leading causes of disability in the world today. Since 1994, depressive disorders have grown 100% as a percentage of short-term and long-term disability claims, 40% as a percentage of Worker's Safety and Insurance Board claims and 55% across all categories of disability-related absences from work.*

*Stress and mental health-related problems currently represent 40-50% of the short-term disability claims among employees of some of Canada's largest corporations.*

*Over the next 20 years, Harvard University and the World Bank foresee depression becoming the leading source of work time lost through disability and premature death. Heart disease will be second. Psychiatric*

One of her proud accomplishments was helping to create a social and recreational program, which has blossomed into a valuable source of fun and enjoyment, as well as an opportunity for CMHA's clients to practice new social and life skills. (For more, see p. 5.)

In a job as intense as that of a Community Support Worker, there is always the matter of how to keep from becoming jaded, depressed, or even burning out. Sue pauses thoughtfully at the question, and then explains how much she attributes to the collegial, non-hierarchical atmosphere at the agency, and the generous mutual support among all the staff. Even, she muses, in the temporary absence of supervisor Jennifer Cox, who is sorely missed as she is on maternity leave.

Asked for some personal details, Sue begins by mentioning three grown children, two stepchildren and one grandchild — is that possible? She seems so youthful... Originally from Fenelon Falls, she went to Peterborough to obtain her Social Services diploma, and now lives with her family near Lindsay.

She has a number of other interests: her involvement with a local church is something she enjoys, a new digital camera has claimed her enthusiasm, and camping is another of her pleasures. Hers sounds like a truly well-balanced life.

Interview by Káča Henley



## Board of Directors

The Victoria County Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association operates under the guidance of a Board of Directors, all community volunteers with a specific interest in mental health. This year, the members of the Board are:

Patrick Dunn, President  
Michael Goode, Vice President  
Tammy Claridge, Treasurer  
Joy Cross, Secretary  
Pat Cawker, Past President  
Doug Good  
Leonard McDonald  
Aileen Murray  
Mike Reynolds  
Rubi Zinstmeister



Melanie Jackson

## Family Network news

### Family to Family

“One of the most helpful programs I have ever taken” says a Family to Family Program graduate. This free 12-week program offers education and skills development to assist caregivers as they support someone with a mental illness. Facilitated by trained volunteers, sessions are held at various locations in Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough, Haliburton and Northumberland counties. For information or to sign up for the next session near you, contact the Network at the numbers below.

Kawartha Lakes graduates of the Family to Family Program are invited to a pot-luck Supportive Social Thursday, October 28, from 7-9 p.m. For information about the location and to confirm attendance, phone the number below.

A thank-you luncheon for our volunteer trainers was held in Peterborough. The support these volunteers offer to caregivers through the Family to Family Program is invaluable, and CMHA wants them to know how important their time is to us.

### Information and Events


Keep up to date by checking out the new Family Network information board in the downstairs hall at the 64 Lindsay St. S. for info about upcoming events and items of interest.

An exciting event planned for Thursday afternoon, October 7<sup>th</sup>, is a video screening marking Mental Illness Awareness Week. The Century Theatre will open at our request to show **Crisis Call**, a 90-minute video which follows an incident where police and other emergency personnel respond to a situation involving a mental illness, from the initial 911 call to its conclusion. The video and a panel discussion address concerns that arise when emergency services personnel are thrown into the role of front line mental health workers. To attend, contact Melanie at the number below.

### A Chance to Share

Survivors and family members are invited to submit some of their writings to the office. We are asking for contributions of prose, poetry, portions of journals, letters, etc to be used to help raise awareness about what it is like to live with a mental illness. Names may be withheld if the writer wishes to retain anonymity. There are several examples of such writings on pages 6, 7 and 8 of this newsletter.

We are planning a special event for our clients and need volunteer hairdressers for this December 2. If you can help with this one-time event, please call Melanie at the numbers below.

Family Caregiver Network contact info: phone 1-888-454-8875, 328-2704 x32, fax 328 2456, or e-mail [FCN@nexicom.net](mailto:FCN@nexicom.net). 

## New Provincial Dollars for Mental Health

Under the theme of *Healthier Ontarians in a healthier Ontario*, Minister of Health and Long Term Care George Smitherman has confirmed the government's commitment of \$463 million to support community mental health services for fiscal 2004/05.

This represents an increase of \$65 million over the last year. It also means a 2% increase in CMHA-Victoria County Branch's base budget, which has been frozen for the last twelve years.


The McGuinty government is embarking on a major transformation of the Ontario health care system.

Convinced that a strong community sector is essential, the government's plan includes putting resources and care in the community to relieve pressure on hospitals and to improve health outcomes.

There will be major emphasis on healthy living and illness prevention to keep people well.

The Ministry has developed key priorities, including: accessible community mental health, improved access to family physicians and other members of the primary healthcare team through the creation of 150 family health teams, reduced wait time for important

procedures, enhanced long term care and home care, a revitalized public health system, a comprehensive child vaccination program, reduced rate of tobacco use and child obesity, and a health care system that lives within Ontario's means.

The Canadian Mental Health Association congratulates the McGuinty government for moving forward in transforming the health care system, and remains committed to work with government in meeting the mental health needs of the residents of the City of Kawartha Lakes. 

## Mental Health Works

The World Health Organization has predicted that by the year 2020, depression will be second only to heart disease as the leading contributor to the global burden of disease.

Psychiatric claims are now the fastest growing category of long term disability in Canada. The economy loses an estimated \$21.4 billion annually due to lost productivity caused by mental health problems.

How we deal with mental health in the workplace is a problem that we can no longer afford to ignore. Mental Health Works helps organizations and individuals become part of the solution by:



David LaChapelle

### ***Coping***

Everyday is a battle  
 Inside my head  
 No place to rest  
 Just time to tread  
 Above the confusion  
 That dominates my mind  
 Fighting for reality  
 Is a friend of mine  
 Refuse to be a casualty  
 In this vicious cycle  
 Is the only way  
 I see myself

### ***Memories of a Broken Tomorrow***

My soul was in hiding  
 My spirit broken to the core  
 I was completely shattered  
 Nothing could have happened to me more  
 A new reality was smothering me  
 Frustrated, there was nothing I could do  
 A feeling of helplessness  
 A feeling I wish on no one  
 Not even you

### ***Moving On***

Time to move on,  
 Out of the comfort zone  
 Go and explore,  
 The unknown  
 Things will happen,  
 As they should  
 For better or worse,  
 It's a chance you have to take

Things won't stay the same  
 I cannot hide  
 I want to be more,  
 Than what I am today  
 Start doing things,  
 I want to do  
 Independence is worth fighting for

Putting the past behind me,  
 Is in my eyes  
 I know what I want  
 I know why to strive  
 To see the world,  
 And always come back home  
 Let's go,  
 Into the world I used to know

Sue Edwards

## **Social/ Recreation Program: Friends in Motion**


Following a contest and vote, CMHA's social/recreational program has been renamed **Friends in Motion**. The apt new name is the brainchild of Dave LaChapelle, who is also a member of this newsletter's editorial board.

Event co-coordinators are Janice and Dan Cooper. This past summer's events included a baseball game and barbecue; a hike at Ken Reid Conservation Area; a craft special (thanks to Marg Cornelius); a pool party; a backyard barbecue and games (thanks to Harrison House), and all-day events such as visits to the CNE; Orillia beach and a tour of a private railway collection (thanks to the Byers); and the Toronto Zoo.

Selling snacks at a soccer tournament helped to raise some funds for the program..

Recent events were a pork roast with fireworks and live entertainment by "Flashback" (thanks to Sheryl Currins for holding the event) and a visit to the

Lindsay Fair, with free admission and a morning of rides (thanks to Conklin Shows). Our annual meeting with clients is an opportunity to give feedback and share any new ideas for events they would like to see happen

Our social/rec program is a very important aspect of what we do at CMHA. It helps to get people out of the house and to have contact with others. From this program lasting friendships are made. It is truly wonderful to be able to be part of that. 



**"Flashback" entertains at the pork roast**

Dave B.

## Defaced

What happened to the boy who was so nice?

Why did he make so many mistakes?

Why couldn't he help himself escape all the trouble?

The answer my friend is actually a question: why does anyone suffer with anything? It is that mankind is Defaced.

Mental illness in my situation defaces my life with three D's, two W's, and three F's. They are Discouragement, Depression, Destruction; Worry and Withdrawal; and Fear, Failure, and Forgetting who I really am: not a sick person but rather who I am in spite of whether or not I had schizophrenia that added to my defacement.

These evil faces of mental illness manifest themselves in my life, when I sleep in, when I complain about other mentally ill people. When I get really bad thoughts which I most surely detest, and when I forget about all the good things in my life.

Instead I dwell on all the negative thoughts that say bad things, about everything! When I run and hide instead of facing problems full of courage.

I need wisdom from God to defeat this destructive thinking and actions.

*My name is David Byers. I am 35 years old. I have mental illness and my diagnosis is mild schizophrenia (although it was moderate for years). I am originally from Orillia, although I lived out in the country. I was raised in the Open Brethren Assembly and I truly believe that God gives doctors wisdom on how to prescribe medication. But I also believe that I must do my part in wellness and that's why I believe only the Bible based on true faith in its entire perspective gives answers to my life's problems and also the world's. But I also believe we will never know everything like God does, although at the end of the world we will all know a great deal more.*

*I wrote this poem four years ago about how I felt, while I was living on a farm in New Liskeard. Today there are four cats living with me. Precious (the mom), Snowy and Tiger (who are sisters) and Shadow from another litter. These little munchkins keep me going on.*

Linda Filts



## God Knows

**Feelings of loneliness, emptiness,**

**No direction to go.**

**Do I walk forward?**

**Perhaps to the left?**

**To the right,**

**Or go backwards?**

**I just don't know.**

**So I wander aimlessly**

**From mornings light to evenings dark**

**My thinking, the more I try**

**confusion engulfs me.**

**I think I'll sit to rest.**

**Try to relax while enjoying the  
warm rays of the sunshine.**

**Or look up towards the blue sky.**

**Making a game.**

**What shape is this cloud or that cloud?**

**They move so quickly.**

**A white marked calico cat  
walks into the farmhouse.**

**I feel so connected.**

**Comforted when she jumps onto my lap.**

**Warmth when we snuggle.**

**Not alone hearing her purr.**

**I named her Missey.**

**Two lost souls finding each other.**

**"God Knows".**

