

The Second Miler

BC Schizophrenia Society, Nanaimo Branch

Winter 2007

OUR MISSION

"To alleviate the suffering caused by schizophrenia"

SCHIZOPHRENIA IS....

- A medical illness PERIOD.
- A brain disease, the result of physical and biochemical changes in the brain
- Afflicts 1 in 100 people worldwide
- Almost always treatable with medication

In this issue:

President's Welcome	1
Disability Tax Credit Certificate	1
Strengthening Families Together	2
Nanaimo Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Council	2
Photo: Ron Plecas	2
Wheels for Wellness	2
Naked Bungy Jump	3
Book Review	3
Event Calendar	4
How you can help	4
Christmas Dinner	5

President's Welcome by Margo Hamilton

Welcome to the November Newsletter!

I would like to extend a warm thank you to Marg Fraser, Manager, Mental Health & Addiction Services, for speaking at our October Share & Care meeting. Marg's talk on the Housing Program was very informative and it provided us a way to actively participate to activate change by being present and participating at our City Council meetings.

Charlene Riches is doing a terrific job managing our office. Thank you to Charlene for the new format of *The Second Miler*.

My thanks goes out to the members of our board, Doris Rumbsy, Carole Neill, Ron Plecas, Kris Sutton, Isabel Davidson, and Leila Guest for their on-going hard work and dedication to the BCSS Society.

I would also like to send a reminder out to those who have not renewed their memberships, which expired on March 31, 2007. Keeping our membership numbers up is extremely important! Make sure you have the Nanaimo Branch email address

in your contact list so you will not miss any messages we may send your way.

The Nanaimo Disability Resource Centre, where our office is located on Northfield Road is moving to a larger, centralized building soon. Our branch will likely move with them as we have had a close working relationship with them over the years. We will keep you posted on this development.

Our Family Education Program, *Strengthening Families Together*, is underway this fall and is co-facilitated by Kris Sutton and Ron Plecas with support from Carole Neill. This is an invaluable and empowering course for family members to gain knowledge of mental illness. Please call the office if you would like your name placed on the waiting list for the next available course.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at the annual Christmas dinner on December 1, 2007 at the Moose Hall. An invitation to the dinner is on pg.5.

Disability Tax Credit Certificate

The end of the 2007 tax year is quickly approaching and you may be eligible to claim the non-refundable Disability Tax Credit amount to reduce your income tax payable on your tax return. All or part of this amount may be transferred to a spouse, common-

law partner, or any other supporting person. This is only if a qualified practitioner certifies on form T2201 that the effects of the persons physical or mental functioning has a prolonged impairment and their ability to perform a basic activity of

daily living is substantially restricted. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) must approve the form.

**FMI or forms see the CRA Web site:
www.cra-gc.ca/disability
or call 1-800-959-2221.**

We gratefully acknowledge Nanaimo Mental Health & Addiction Services for their ongoing financial support.

Strengthening Families Together

-by Kristie Sutton, BCSS Director/SFT
Facilitator

Loosely based on the American "Family to Family" course, "Strengthening Families Together" (SFT) provides support, awareness and tools for those dealing with a loved one who is suffering from a mental illness.

Strengthening Families Together is a 10 week course providing information on topics associated with living with mental illness, specifically, causes, treatment options and research related to mental illness.

The program centers on the family tackling issues of stigma, communication, problem solving, and advocacy.

Facilitators, are trained family members who provide a "safe" place for participants to share their stories and experiences (perhaps for the first time) with others who understand their situation.

As a facilitator, I find that I am constantly learning and in awe of the strength and tenacity that families display during their journeys.



Ron Plecas, BCSS Director
*2006 Calder Cup recipient
with Nadine Saunders,
Director of Development &
Marketing, BCSS Provincial.*

Congratulations Ron!!
For all your efforts in the
Mental Health Community

Facilitators Needed

The *Strengthening Families Together* program requires additional facilitators. An information session will be held for those interested in facilitating this course.

Training to become a facilitator not only gives you the education about mental illness, but also the feeling of satisfaction from helping others.

If you are interested, please call the BC Schizophrenia Society, Nanaimo office at 729-9923 and leave your name and phone number. When we have a list of names, a date will be set and details will be communicated to you.

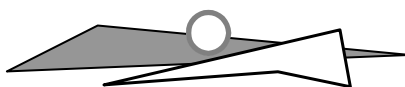
— Margo Hamilton

Strengthening Families Together
Helping Canadians Live with Mental Illness



Education Is the
movement
from darkness to
light.

— Allan Bloom



Nanaimo Mental Health & Addictions Advisory Council

The Council meets the third Monday of every month at the Nanaimo Health Unit, 1665 Grant Avenue. Family members and individuals with a mental illness who would like a voice in guiding Mental Health Services in Nanaimo are welcome to attend.
FMI call: 754-6296

- Ron Plecas, Chair NMHAAC

Wheels for Wellness Society

The Wheels for Wellness Society provides transportation for residents of Vancouver Island to and from non-emergency medical appointments.

The Society uses a fleet of 13 minivans and transports 50 people a day, more than 800 monthly door-to-door appointments free of charge. Operating since 1997, they rely on donations. The Charity was presented with the BC Kidney Foundation Patients Services award last year.

To book an appointment and/or make a donation call:
(250) 338-0196 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

website: wheelsforwellness.com

We gratefully acknowledge Nanaimo Mental Health & Addiction Services for their ongoing financial support.

Naked Bungy Jumping Fundraiser



Following up on the successful fundraiser in 2007, on the weekend of Feb 23-24th, 2008, Wild Play Element Parks of Nanaimo will be holding another naked bungy jumping fundraising event to benefit the Mind Foundation / BCSS. For more information and to register go to: www.wildplayparks.com

Book Review by Katherine Nightingale **The Lancet.com**

The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness

Hyperion, 2007.

ISBN 1-40130-138-X. Pp 352

A Story of Schizophrenia

People with bipolar disorder, writes Elyn R Saks, often recite lists of the famous and successful forebears of their illness. But there is no such list for schizophrenia. The mathematician John Nash stands alone in the public eye as a schizophrenic who experienced success.

This absence of such a heritage was one of the motivations for Saks, associate dean at the University of Southern California, to write *The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness*. She wants to bring hope to people with schizophrenia, and improve the public's understanding of this illness. We don't often hear the voice of people with schizophrenia, since the illness—or its medication—can rob people of the eloquence to tell their story. And, as Saks herself says, the rare few with schizophrenia who become successful are not in a hurry to tell the world.

Saks describes the fruits of her "shattered mind" and disordered thinking—depression, paranoia, delusions, and hallucinations—from childhood via the blossoming of her schizophrenia in her late teens onwards. She now lives a fairly stable life as a university professor, finally accepting the nature of her illness and the importance of medication, something she long fought against.

She writes with clarity and vigour about how she has dealt with her illness using talking therapy and the structure of academic rigour. Saks explores whether she is foremost a scholar, an independent woman, or a psychiatric patient, and questions how her greatest asset, her brain, can also be her greatest enemy.

This is a rare, valuable, and cogent account of schizophrenia. Yet Saks can't speak for all schizophrenics. She is from a resource-rich and understanding middle-class family, who equipped her with the intelligence and tenacity to decide which treatments worked best for her and an unwavering, even arrogant, determination to succeed. Saks puts her success largely down to the ticket she drew in the lottery of life, but I couldn't help thinking of all the losers in that lottery.

- - - The Lancet 2007; 370:1410

BC Schizophrenia Society,
Nanaimo Branch

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Nanaimo, BC
V9S 3B9

Tel: 250-729-9923
Fax: 250-729-9203
Email: bcssnanaimo@telus.net



**A REASON TO HOPE.
THE MEANS TO COPE.**

Charity BN/Registration
89348 5425 RR 0001

Event Calendar

BCSS Nanaimo Branch

Nov. 29, 2007: 6:30-9 p.m. Share and Care
3151 Barons Road, Nanaimo. Speaker- Kerry Thompson NRGH

Dec. 1, 2007: Christmas Dinner (see pg. 5)

Feb. 23-24, 2008: Bungy Jump Fundraiser
Wild Play Elements Parks, Nanaimo. Proceeds benefit the Mind
Foundation/BCSS Provincial

Open Minds Open Windows

Feb 1, 2008: Annual Fundraising & Awareness Concert,
Port Theatre

Disability Resource Centre

Nov. 17, 2007: 6:00 p.m. Annual Beer and Burger Fundraiser.
Harewood Arms Pub. Tickets \$10 available at the Disability
Resource Centre, 2122 Northfield Road.

Jan. 27, 2008: 12:00-3:00 p.m. Mike Harcourt Luncheon,
Dorchester Hotel. Tickets \$75 available at the Disability
Resource Centre.

How You Can Help

There are many ways you can help the BC Schizophrenia Society. Whether you make donation, become a member, participate in an event, or volunteer your time, any contribution is greatly appreciated.

MAKE A DONATION : By making a financial contribution, you can help families affected by mental illness, assist them to better cope with their illness, and give additional hope and support.

BECOME A MEMBER: Our voice is only as powerful as the number of families and friends dedicated to our cause. Help us continue to speak for families by joining the Society today.

VOLUNTEER: Volunteers are an invaluable part of our organization. Help us make a difference in the lives of people with mental illness and their families. Please contact us at 729-9923 or bcssnanaimo@telus.net.

BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

Nanaimo Branch

2122 Northfield Road, Nanaimo, BC V9S 3B9

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **Prov** _____ **PC** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Other Phone:** _____

Email: _____ **Fax:** _____

Donation Gift \$ _____

Membership \$20.00 year
(April 1-March 31)

Volunteer

Please make cheque payable to
the BC Schizophrenia Society.
Thank you for your support!

We gratefully acknowledge Nanaimo Mental Health & Addiction Services for their ongoing financial support.



BC SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY, NANAIMO BRANCH

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

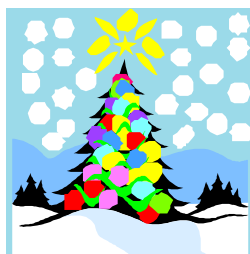
INVITATION

DATE: Saturday, December 1, 2007

TIME: 5:00 p.m. Doors Open
6:00 p.m. Dinner

PLACE: Moose Lodge
1356 Cranberry Street, Chase River

R.S.V.P.: By November 23, 2007
B.C. Schizophrenia, Branch Office – 729-9923
Or
Doris Rumsby – 758-7076



We wish to acknowledge and thank the Loyal Order of the Moose & BC. Schizophrenia Society, Nanaimo Branch for sponsoring this event!

We gratefully acknowledge Nanaimo Mental Health & Addiction Services for their ongoing financial support.