



British Columbia  
Schizophrenia Society

# The Notepad

North Shore Branch Newsletter

**PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENING**

## Stand Up for Mental Health Comedy Troupe

### David Granirer's Class of 2005

([www.standupformentalhealth.com](http://www.standupformentalhealth.com))

**Date:** Wednesday, February 22, 2006

**Location:** Lions Gate Hospital  
Downstairs Auditorium

**Time:** 7:30 p.m. . . . *sharp*

### Family Support Centre & BCSS, North Shore Branch

#205 - 1865 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, V7V 1J7  
Open 9 to 5 Monday to Friday, or by appointment.

Tel/Fax (604) 926-0856  
[www.bcssnorthshore.org](http://www.bcssnorthshore.org)  
email: [bcssnsh@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:bcssnsh@vcn.bc.ca)

The B.C. Schizophrenia Society, North Shore Branch is an Incorporated Branch Society and Registered Charity, BN 89422 6935 RR0001

***Your generosity is appreciated.  
Receipts will be issued for income tax purposes.***

### Inside

- Stand Up at LGH .....2
- In Memoriam .....2
- Branch hires ED .....3
- Peer Support Plan.....3
- Family Involvement.....3
- Occupational Therapy...3
- Addiction Research.....4
- Christmas Party.....4



### Support Groups

Families and friends, come and share your concerns, questions, experiences and needs with other members of BCSS North Shore.

We hold monthly meetings for family members and close friends of those afflicted. A special sibling support group is also now being offered, and other special groups can be arranged as needed.

For more information on Support Groups please call (604) 926-0856.

## “STAND UP FOR MENTAL HEALTH” TROUPE AT LGH

To help offset the present gloom and damp, BCSS North Shore Branch is presenting the Stand Up for Mental Health Comedy Troupe at Lions Gate Hospital February 22.

The 9 – 10 person troupe is made up of graduates of counselor and comic performer David Granier's Stand Up for Mental Health course, offered twice yearly at Langara College.

“In David's course, mental health consumers turn their problems into comedy, then perform their acts at conferences, treatment centres, psych wards, and for various mental health organizations,” the Stand Up for Mental Health website states. The performers all have illnesses ranging from ADHD to schizophrenia.

**I would like to help the  
BCSS NORTH SHORE BRANCH  
205 - 1865 Marine Drive  
West Vancouver, BC V7V 1J7**

- with a donation to help keep the Family Support Centre open  
 *Cheque enclosed*
- I prefer to donate by monthly direct deposit \$20\_\_ \$30\_\_ \$50\_\_ Other \_\_
- by making a contribution to help the Branch build its endowment -- a gift that goes on forever
- by making a bequest to the North Shore Branch in my will;  *I would like some suggestions for appropriate wording*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## IN MEMORIAM

### FRED HUTCHINSON

Only weeks after chatting with us on a bench in the soft late summer sun and reminiscing about the wonderful life he had shared with his beloved Norah, Fred slipped away. He didn't quite make it to their sixtieth anniversary party.

Norah was a stalwart in branch activities from the early days, and Fred was always there to support her.

A few years ago, at Walk the World, when showers threatened to dampen spirits, the band started playing a medley of old-fashioned dance tunes. A few minutes later, those present were treated to a memorable sight: Fred and Norah, turning and gliding in the fugitive light with inimitable style and grace, were waltzing across the grass.

### AUDREY SAYLE ♦ SHEILA TAYLOR

Audrey was a North Shore Branch member and one of our quiet supporters for many years. Two weeks after Audrey's death November 1, her younger sister Sheila also died.

Both Sheila and her husband John were active in the early days of BCSS. John coordinated the bingo volunteers for the provincial society and served on the provincial executive. Sheila was active in the Riverview Family Group, and spearheaded the original campaign to save the Riverview lands and the heritage trees that were planted there when the first provincial botanical garden was located on the site.

*BCSS, North Shore Branch acknowledges the support of the Province of British Columbia, West Vancouver Community Foundation, Lynn Valley Lions Club, District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver and many other generous donors.*

## North Shore Branch hires first Executive Director

The branch is pleased to welcome Barbara Wallin, MA as its first Executive Director. "This is another step forward for the North Shore Branch," said president Marguerite Hardin. "Our Family Support Centre has been operating for nearly eleven years now, with considerable success, but we still see a great need to expand our services, to raise public awareness and help more families who are struggling with serious mental illness. Barbara will be a great asset in helping us achieve these goals."

## Peer Support Planning Proceeds

Janet Scott, who for several years has kept busy doing Partnership Presentations on behalf of the branch, is currently our rep on the Peer Support Planning Committee. "Peer Support Workers are part of the continuum of care, and can be a great help to patients living in the community" she says. "Because they have struggled with an illness themselves they have a special kind of empathy and can be a great help to their fellows."

## Promoting Family Involvement

An article by branch president Marguerite Hardin appeared in the recent suicide-themed edition of *Visions* magazine. Using the tragic case of the young UBC student Stephanie James as an example, Marguerite suggests that routine acceptance of family involvement in care would be a positive step in helping prevent suicide. The article is now posted on our website (see **News and Events** on the home page for the link), and her *Manifesto*, which provides further background, can be found under **Family Involvement** in the Advocacy section of the site.

Marguerite has recently been invited to present as a panelist on the topic "Families and Confidentiality" at a conference for families to be held April 29 at UBC. Details will follow.

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CAN HELP MENTALLY ILL



*Therapist Michael Lee at Lions Gate Hospital*

On November 23, Michael Lee gave an engaging presentation on occupational therapy for the mentally ill, as part of our Public Education Meeting series. A Clinical Assistant Professor in The School of Rehabilitation Sciences (Division of Occupational Therapy) at U.B.C., Michael teaches occupational therapy and also does hands-on work at Riverview. He has been an occupational therapist for 20 years, "accidentally" specializing in mental health when his first job was at a psychiatric hospital.

In dealing with mental illness, Michael sees three main barriers to a return, or entry, to the workforce: motivation, skills, and habits. In order to develop a skill it must be understood, the brain and the hands need to work together, and daily practice leads to the formation of habits. Practice brings the patient from fear to comfort.

Several different types of skills are addressed. Social skills programs build on basic steps, proceeding with tiny increments. Advanced skills (e.g. dating) require the gradual expression of emotions and feelings. Interview skills include help with resumes, so that long absences from work are minimized.

The North Shore Branch is an Incorporated Branch Society, and financially independent of the provincial society. Please send contributions to help the Branch directly to 205 - 1865 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, BC V7V 1J7

## UBC SCIENTISTS CREATE PROTEIN TO BLOCK ADDICTION CRAVINGS

A team of researchers at the University of British Columbia has found a way to block the communication between brain cells that triggers drug cravings, a finding that could lead to new therapies to treat addiction and relapse, as well as compulsive behaviours associated with schizophrenia.

The breakthrough was made possible with the support of a \$1.5-million team grant from the NeuroScience Canada Brain Repair Program that enabled five scientists from across Canada to join their labs and fast-track their research. Two of the members sharing this grant led the work at the Brain Research Centre at UBC Hospital. Senior UBC investigators Dr. Anthony Phillips and Dr. Yu Tian Wang have created a peptide - or protein fragment - that in animal models can block specific chemical messengers that remember the body's response to stimulant drugs, such as amphetamines and cocaine. When chemical communication is disrupted, the brain "forgets" the previous drug experience, and cravings, the impulse to renew the drug sensation, are reduced or eliminated.

"We now have a model for re-programming communication between brain cells," says Phillips, Director of the UBC Institute of Mental Health, and member of the Brain Research Centre at UBC Hospital. "The peptide we created acts in a very specific way to block drug-induced learning without side effects on other learning, memory or basic physiology," adds Wang, a UBC professor of Neurology who is also a member of the Brain Research Centre and the team leader of the Brain Repair Program grant.

The researchers estimate that the peptide will be ready for therapeutic drug development within two years.

## CHRISTMAS BANQUET

On December 3, 2005, the North Shore Branch Christmas Banquet was held at St. Stephen's Anglican Church. Thanks to a tasty dinner catered by Cheers Restaurant, the musical talents of the West Vancouver Adult Pops Band and the Dave Myles trio (called The Unmentionables), and the efforts of numerous volunteers a most enjoyable time was had by the ninety plus folks who attended.



*The Dave Myles Trio Serenades the Crowd*

Santa was a great hit as usual, and the hand-knit toques he delivered to a number of guests were particularly appreciated. We noticed that several recipients donned theirs immediately and wore them for the rest of the evening. We thank Mrs. S.H. Sevier of Yakima, WA for this very special contribution to our festivities. Thanks also to first-time Santa Ken Winters and his sprightly elf, Marti, all our musical volunteers, and to St. Stephens Anglican for use of the hall.

*The Unmentionables held everyone's attention*



