



North
Shore
Schizophrenia
Society

The Notepad

The NSSS Newsletter

PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENING

Mental Illness and HIV/AIDS

Speaker:

Maxine Davis

*Executive Director
Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation*

Date: Wednesday, September 28, 2011

**Location: Lions Gate Hospital
Auditorium
13th Street entrance**

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

Family Support Centre

**Personal Support and Information on
Major Mental Illnesses—Schizophrenia,
Bipolar Disorder, Depression, and Anxiety Disorders**

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

Tel/Fax 604-926-0856; Sea to Sky 604-898-9372
www.northshoreschizophrenia.org
email: info@northshoreschizophrenia.org

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society is a
CRA Registered Charity: BN 89422 6935 RR0001

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

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Gillian Santo in one of her many volunteer roles. See page 2.

Support Groups

Come share your questions, concerns, and experiences with members of the North Shore Schizophrenia Society. Support Group meetings are held each month at the Family Support Centre and in Squamish, for family members and close friends of those afflicted with any serious mental illness.

Please call 604-926-0856 for more information, upcoming dates, or to register.

Volunteer Spotlight



Gillian Santo

Gillian Santo is one of our key volunteers working to ensure our financial future at NSSS. As a member of the Fundraising Team and a table captain for our annual Circle of Strength fundraiser, her enthusiasm, dedication and outstanding organizational skills help

us move closer to reaching many of our goals.

Not satisfied with serving on just one team, she put her name forward as a candidate for the NSSS Board of Directors at our most recent AGM in May. Gillian joins the board as a member-at-large, putting her skills and experience to work at the board level.

Gillian has also helped out at our Christmas banquet - setting up and cleaning, driving group home residents to the event and home again, and helping Santa's elves select and wrap gifts.

Thanks, Gillian, for everything you do for the Family Support Centre and NSSS.

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

- with a donation to help keep the Family Support Centre operating.
 - Cheque enclosed*
- I prefer to donate by monthly direct deposit, please send me the form.
- by making a contribution to the NSSS endowment fund, a gift that goes on forever
- by making a bequest to the North Shore Schizophrenia Society in my will; please contact me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Tel: _____

November Lecture Date Change

Our public education evening has been moved up a week in November as the auditorium will be closed the last week of the month. The lecture will be on Wednesday, November 23. Look for your November *Notepad* newsletter a week earlier than usual too.

A New Face at the Family Support Centre

NSSS welcomed a new staff member this summer. Melanie Scott joins our team as our advocacy coordinator and writer.



Melanie Scott

Our advocacy work has expanded significantly over the past few years as we have taken on cases involving avoidable tragedies such

as the deaths of Marek Kwapiszewski and David Wesley. It had become apparent that important issues involving people with serious mental illnesses and their families were not being adequately addressed or even, in some cases, were being ignored. To continue this essential work, we needed another pair of hands.

Enter Melanie. Her writing experience and interest in helping the mentally ill and their families are the ideal combination to help NSSS continue to raise crucial issues and keep the spotlight focused on system failures and improving access to treatment for the most seriously ill.

Melanie grew up in a small coastal community in northern New Brunswick, but always yearned to see the west coast. After living for a few years in downtown Toronto, she uprooted herself from Central Canada in 1999 and moved to Vancouver. In her spare time she enjoys writing for local magazines such as *Vancouver Review*, *alive*, and *Western Living*, and is interested in learning photography.

NSSS Plans for the Future

Strategic planning is an important part of ensuring the continued strength and growth of an organization like NSSS.

One of our major long-term objectives was to diversify our funding sources, so that if one of our important funding sources was cut off, as happened in 2002, it wouldn't be too much of a shock. This has been accomplished, with memberships, donations, provincial gaming grants, municipal and foundation grants, service club allocations, some modest endowment revenue, and our May fundraiser, Circle of Strength, all contributing to our revenue.

Another objective was to expand to the Sea-to-Sky, which didn't have an organization of its own providing family support. For quite a while we weren't able financially to manage it, but we never forgot the idea or put it aside. We knew it was needed and we knew we would have to do it. And as soon as we were able, in 2008, we did go ahead, hiring Sea to Sky coordinator Christine Buttkus on a part-time basis to lead our effort.

Providing a good roster of trained Family-to-Family teachers was also crucial. Several years ago, we brought teacher trainer Eileen Callanan down from Terrace for the three-day training course for the purpose. We now have plans – there's that word "plan" again – to establish a teacher-training capacity of our own in anticipation of the day when Eileen, a pillar of strength in the Northwest and a great help to us, hangs up her hat.

Currently, we're in the midst of meeting our most important planning target ever: creating a trained support team to replace support coordinator Marguerite Hardin, who is past retirement age. Those familiar with Marguerite's support work and the huge knowledge base she brings to the table will realize what a challenge this is. The first two training sessions occurred this August, with a group of four volunteers. Our new advocacy coordinator, Melanie Scott, drawing on those two sessions and other material, is putting together a Support Team primer which will evolve, as the training continues, into a book-length manual. The objective is to transfer Marguerite's knowledge to a new generation. When the manual is completed and a more formal training program, based on the manual, is put into place, we'll have done that as well.

Mental Illness and HIV/AIDS

Mental illness and HIV/AIDS have many things in common: there are many harmful myths about both, people often don't want to talk about either one, and both are treatable with appropriate medical interventions, to name just a few. There are also many people who struggle with both HIV/AIDS and serious mental illness.



Maxine Davis

Our next public education evening, September 28, features Maxine Davis, executive director of the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation. She will discuss the intersection of HIV/AIDS and mental illness, and the programs available through the Dr. Peter Foundation. The lecture is in the Lions Gate Hospital auditorium starting at 7:30 p.m.

We know people with severe, untreated mental illnesses are vulnerable to many dangers, particularly when they are homeless. Assault, predation by unscrupulous individuals and the development of addictions can lead to serious physical illness, including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis-C and others.

Sean Stewart Addresses AGM

NSSS partnership program presenter Sean Stewart shared his inspiring story at the NSSS AGM on May 26.

Sean's struggles with schizophrenia began in 2001 when he fell ill. His recovery and accomplishments have been remarkable: He is now the disability liaison to the Capilano University student council, organizes events at school, speaks publicly about his experience and, most recently, has taken on advocacy work around disability benefits.

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Province of British Columbia; City of North Vancouver; District of North Vancouver; District of West Vancouver; Lynn Valley, Ambleside Tiddlycove, Mt. Seymour, and Capilano Lions Clubs; Soroptimist International of North and West Vancouver; West Vancouver Community Foundation; Community Foundation of Whistler; Squamish Community Foundation; HYDRECS, Lynn Valley Legion; North Shore Credit Union; and our many other generous donors.

Community Outreach and Celebration

Summer is a great time to get outside with family and friends, enjoy the sunshine, and get the word out in the community that we're here to help. Despite the cooler than expected weather this summer, we had fun walking and marching to raise awareness in three North Shore events. Our thanks to all the terrific volunteers who donned NSSS T-shirts and joined us for the festivities. Thanks also to Susan Inman for her encouraging words to launch our 20th annual Walk the World for Schizophrenia, North Shore Kia for the loan of a parade vehicle for the West Vancouver parade, and the James family for polishing up their classic 1961 Pontiac Strato Chief for the North Shore Canada Day parade.

West Vancouver Community Day Parade



A celebration of community and volunteer involvement, this year's West Vancouver Community Day parade featured music, gymnastics, classic cars, school groups and, of course, the North Shore Schizophrenia Society proudly marching with our banner.

Walk the World for Schizophrenia



It's hard to believe Walk the World for Schizophrenia has turned 20! It seemed like the sun came out just for us on the only nice day in a long spell of rain - just in time to fill the Sea Walk with people to see our signs and pick up our Family Support Centre flyers.

North Shore Canada Day Parade



The biggest parade of the season on the North Shore was a big hit this year. Thousands of people lined the streets, waving and cheering as we marched by. At one point, we even received a standing ovation!

Family-to-Family Fall Session

NSSS is offering the ground-breaking education course Family-to-Family once again this fall and there are still a few spaces remaining. Classes run 12 consecutive Tuesday evenings starting September 20. Call 604-926-0856 to register.

If you know anyone with a mentally ill family member, please ask them to get in touch with the Family Support Centre right away. As anyone who has taken the class can attest, Family-to-Family is a source of strength and empowerment, providing the information and building the skills a family needs to provide the very best care for their ill loved ones and themselves. Classes cover the different illnesses, how medications work, tips to help with treatment compliance, as well as special workshops on problem-solving and effective communications.

Get Your Tickets!

Soroptimist International of North and West Vancouver's 11th annual Treasure Chest of Hope is coming up on November 5 at the Hollyburn Country Club. This is an evening not to be missed, filled with fine food, music, and fun. Highlights include a silent and live auction, balloon raffle, and the title attraction, the Treasure Chest itself. Keys for the chest will be available for sale throughout the evening and two lucky winners will walk away with pieces of fine jewellery from Edgemont Jewellers.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the North Shore Schizophrenia Society and the North Shore Youth Safe House.

Tickets are \$75 each and come with a \$25 tax receipt. Stop by the Family Support Centre or call 604-926-0856 to get yours today.