



# Connections

Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Newsletter

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## All together now!

*Message from the CEO*

CMHA/Peel has always believed in the power of community and in the importance of community development. In particular we have worked with the model of Asset-Based Community Development. We believe in the capacity of individuals to take action using the strengths they have to build community. As John McKnight suggests we see people as citizens not clients, we develop potential and we believe people are the answer.

So too as we address stigma, we turn to community to get out the message that mental illness can affect anyone, and in fact it affects 1 in every 5 persons at some time in their lives. However, as long as we believe it happens to “someone else” in “another community” we cannot address it.

Our third annual Community Fair to promote Mental Health Awareness will take place on Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup> 2013. *Changes in Altitudes, Changes in Attitudes* is all about perspective and how perspective can change our own beliefs. The Community Fair engages citizens from all walks of life in a fun filled day to learn about mental health.

Last year’s event welcomed almost 600 people and as a result encouraged a better community understanding of mental illness. As the community and its citizens better understand the various types of mental illness those who experience mental health problems will be better accepted at work and at play and will truly be able to take an active role of their own in community development.

Please join us on Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup> 2013, 11am to 3 pm at *Changes in Attitudes, Changes in Altitudes* and support CMHA/Peel to develop a strong community with “Mental Health for All.”

*Sandy Milakovic*

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## Changes in Altitudes – Changes in Attitude

Annual Community Fair promises fun for the whole family



Always a popular attraction, the dunk tank returns again to this year's community fair.

On Sunday, September 8, 2013, we will be holding our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Community Fair from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Fletcher's Creek Senior Public School in Brampton, to celebrate and raise awareness of good mental health.

The theme of this year's fair is *Changes in Altitudes - Changes in Attitudes* and hot air balloon rides, a climbing wall and kite flying lessons are just some of the high-flying festivities available.

Admission is Free and there is plenty to keep kids of all ages busy including games, bouncy castles, face painting a dunk tank and more! This event is hosted by entertainers *The Goodtimes*, and there

will be several performances throughout the day including: local rock band *The Blitz*; *I Rock With THE ONE* hip hop dance crew; the *Brampton Acro Ropers* competitive jump rope team; *Sanskriti Arts* classical Indian dancers; Afro-Caribbean percussion group *Tam Tam Foli*, as well as Zumba and Bokwa fitness classes by *Carol Szuky of Lullaby Divas*. There will also be a special performance for children by *The Space Chums*.

Food and snacks will be available from several vendors on-site including: burgers, hot dogs and veggie dogs from *M&M Meat Shops*; *Poutine Dare to Be Fresh*; *Jamie's Cracked Corn* and cool treats from the *King Cone ice-cream*.

**CMHA/Peel thanks the following local businesses for their generous support the Community Fair: Plan-it Events Party Rentals, Meri-Mac Inc., the Second Cup and the Lunchbox Café. We also thank Target Canada and Leon's Furniture Limited for their volunteer support of the community fair.**

## The remarkable life of Sharon Mercato



### The Shell People

And sometimes, they walk the streets  
with plastic bags hanging  
from tattered worn shoulders,  
and weary worn feet.

And sometimes, while they sleep,  
they wrap their arms around  
to blanket their own bodies  
from nightmares that creep.

And sometimes, when they dream,  
they remember the old faces,  
the places they have travelled,  
and the horrors they have seen.

And sometimes, when they smile,  
it's as fragile as an egg shell,  
and just as easily shattered,  
with all the 'could have beens'.

Be gentle.  
For they are the "Shell People".

This poem (left) was written by Sharon Mercato and featured at the beginning of her autobiography *The Shell People, My Story of Schizophrenia*.

Sharon was a pioneer in the field of stigma busting regarding mental illness long before many even understood that stigma existed. Her story was profiled in *Chatelaine* magazine and she spoke to a variety of community groups, including landlords, politicians, emergency room staff and the general public.

Her talks however to Peel Regional Police Services were on the cutting-edge (to use a very hackneyed term) of police awareness training. Sharon spoke with honesty and with candour of how it felt as a terrified woman holding a tiny dog for protection (or so she thought in her psychotic state) as four large police officers stood around her, trying to remove her to the hospital. Her advice to them – *sit down and take off your hats*.

She had an ability, which must have been frightening at times, to remember many of her hallucinations and delusions. That memory served to train others in what it was truly like to experience psychosis.

Sharon's courage and perseverance in doing these talks was inspiring. She was always afraid going in to speak, yet she took the bull by the horns and did it until she became too frail and could no longer do so.

Her book was truly her most remarkable achievement. For its honest and eye-opening portrayal of psychosis, it is now recommended reading for anyone in the mental health field.

Sharon was a gentle soul with the convictions of a giant. She influenced so many more people than she realized and the mental health field will be forever indebted to her for her contributions towards addressing stigma.

Sharon departed the world as a result of breast cancer on July 31, 2013.

*Rest in peace our friend.*

*Sandy Milakovic*

# Walkathon raises community awareness and over \$12,000!



Our second annual *Walk for Life – Walk for Hope* was held on April 27<sup>th</sup> at Erindale Park in Mississauga. Over 500 people of all ages came out to walk on what was a gorgeous, sunny spring day, raising over \$12,000 for CMHA mental health awareness initiatives.

Inspired by the memory of John Hanan, who took his life six years ago, CMHA/Peel supporters were joined by John's friends and family, including his mother, Mary Margaret Hanan. It was Mary's determination to have something positive come from her family's tragedy that brought about the first *Walk for Life – Walk for Hope*.

Plans for the 2014 *Walk for Life – Walk for Hope* are underway, so please check [www.cmhapeel.ca](http://www.cmhapeel.ca) for details in the coming months.



Special thanks to our wonderful volunteers who kept everyone on track!

## We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you to our wonderful sponsors who were an integral part of the 2013 *Walk for Life- Walk for Hope's* success.

**WINNERS**

**Marshalls**

**HOMESENSE**

**The Summerset Group**

Strategy Management Integration



**metro**



**BILL LORD TRUCKING INC.**

## Caring Community Awards

CMHA/Peel is pleased to announce this year's Caring Community Award recipients.

- **Winners International**
- **City South Ltd.**
- **Summerset Group**
- **Scotia McLeod, Jonathan Tyner**
- **Cheryl King**

The Caring Community Award recognizes dedication and support given to CMHA/Peel in making a difference in the lives of people struggling with mental illness.



## Annual BBQ raises \$10,000!



Thank you

On July 10, 2013, Scotia McLeod hosted their annual summer barbecue in downtown Brampton at Rose Theatre Square. We would like to thank Scotia McLeod and their employees for promoting "Mental Health for All" in our community, and for raising over \$10, 000 for programs at CMHA/Peel.

## Upcoming Training

### Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

If you want to feel more comfortable, confident and competent in helping to prevent the immediate risk of suicide, this two-day workshop is for you. You will be better able to:

- Assess the immediate risk of suicide
- Recognize opportunities for help
- Apply a model for suicide intervention

Date	Time	Location
September 12 and 13, 2013	8:30 to 4:30	Brampton
October 17 and 18, 2013	8:30 to 4:30	Oakville
November 21 and 22, 2013	8:30 to 4:30	Brampton
December 12 and 13, 2013	8:30 to 4:30	Oakville
February 6 and 7, 2013	9:00 to 5:00	Brampton

Cost: \$175 per person, \$125 per student/senior

For more information, call 905-451-2123, ext. 446.

To register for a session, go to [www.cmhapeel.ca/comingupemailregistration.php](http://www.cmhapeel.ca/comingupemailregistration.php).

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