

Clubhouse Update



**Annapolis Valley District Clubhouse Network
Comprised of the Evangeline Club,
the Annapolis Clubhouse and the Kings Clubhouse**

The Evangeline Clubhouse

The Evangeline Clubhouse is a place to socialize comfortably with others who can relate to the everyday challenges associated with mental health issues. This helps build the self-confidence required to face every day social situations.

Many of the regular members travel back and forth daily from their homes to the Clubhouse via the Kings Transit traveling from as far as Wolfville or Bridgetown. Some local members walk or bike to and from the Clubhouse daily. Many members look upon the Clubhouse as “a second home,” looking upon other members as an extended family.

If you are, or know of, someone who feels alone, depressed, rejected by society, or just needs a safe place to go to talk to someone friendly and non-judgmental about a problem, please feel free to come to the Evangeline Clubhouse. The Clubhouse provides a friendly environment for the more than sixty club members to visit from Monday to Friday, between 9 am to 3pm (closed Thursdays).

Source
<http://the-evangeline-club.webs.com/>

The Clubhouse at Annapolis

“OCD and music can’t be in my head at the same time,” says Barry Mooney, “I need a reason to play (guitar), and everyone gets a lot out of it. It’s medicine.” Barry is the coordinator of the Annapolis Clubhouse Music group which meets Tuesdays from 1-3pm in the Middleton Baptist Church. Under the direction of Annapolis Clubhouse Coordinator, Kate Wasteneys, the group has also been learning to play the ukulele.

One Tuesday, I joined this group as they sat around a large table, singing songs from my youth aided by well-worn books and led by Kate and Barry on guitar. Song is a quick ice breaker and I soon felt at home feeling the youthful emotions this music revived in me.

Meeting with Kate afterwards, she described other programs offered by the Clubhouse. On Fridays from 10:30 to 11:30 am, three to fifteen people and two co-facilitators in the walking club meet at the Meadows in Bridgetown to follow the path around the nursing home. In the winter months, the group will walk in space donated by the Trojan Sports Club. There is also a music group in Annapolis Royal which is more of a jam session.

Kate is also planning to set up an exercise and movement class in the fall. She finds setting up Clubhouse events to be a challenge because the rural setting means more travel is involved.

For more information, call 902-532-0531.

By Heather Frenette



Members Strumming Ukuleles

The Clubhouse at Kings

The Clubhouse programs in Kings County offer social and recreational opportunities to people in our communities who are struggling with mental health issues.

“People with depression or anxiety may find it hard to leave their homes. The Clubhouse programs get people out in their community, socializing and meeting new people and focussing less on how they are feeling,” said Sarah Ehler, coordinator for Kings Clubhouse.

People leave the programs with smiles on their faces having had a good time. Sarah stressed that there are no expectations on members to discuss their health issues. “No one asks you why you are there,” she added.

Sarah said reaching people and then getting them to come out to programs has been a real challenge. She has used all the usual means to reach people including posters, Facebook and advertisements in local papers. She has also contacted local health care professionals, food banks, Acadia University, Beacon House and L’Arche in order to reach everyone. She is also working with the Wolfville, Kentville and the county of Kings.

Current Kings Clubhouse programs include the Walking Club, two Art Programs and the Music Jam Session. Sarah is planning a monthly movie time at the White Rock Community Centre and a floor hockey night at the Louis Millet Complex in New Minas.

By Heather Frenette

Annapolis Valley District Clubhouse Network

Mission Statement

The Annapolis Valley District Clubhouse Network will bring together community partners to provide enhanced and accessible social and recreational programming by and for people living with mental health issues.

A Visit to Established Halifax Clubhouses

This past year, staff from the Annapolis Valley District Clubhouse Network went on a tour of the more established Clubhouses in Halifax. Below are accounts of their visits to each of the Clubhouses.

Connections Halifax, Barrington Street

In operation for thirty years, Connections Halifax has been at its Barrington Street location for about fifteen years. This is a busy Clubhouse with forty to sixty members walking through the door every day. Membership requires referral from a general practitioner. The Clubhouse offers weekend complimentary medical care from a volunteer practitioner, whether a psychiatrist, acupuncturist, massage therapist or GP. The GP who works at the centre can refer his clients directly to Capital Health providing faster access to care.

The Clubhouse has three to four hundred members with varying levels of engagement along with twenty-four staff. Staff includes housing and outreach teams that do work in the community for those who can't/won't come to the Clubhouse. Also included are two psychiatric nurses who help with medication management and work in the community.

Caring and Sharing Social Club, Gottingen Street

Large storefront windows filled with art displays, a fish tank and a visiting therapy dog for members with anxiety are distinguishing features of the Caring and Sharing Club, operated by CMHA Halifax-Dartmouth. This Gottingen Street location has less stringent membership member qualifications: clients sign in on arrival.

The Clubhouse offers a social and recreation schedule in addition to the use of computers, phones, and other resources. Special programs have included rock climbing, a visit to the Ovens Park, and sun safety and nutrition talks.



Thanks to Sarah Ehler, Kings Clubhouse Coordinator for providing the report upon which this article is based.

Kings Clubhouse – The Walking Club

In June of this year, Steve Conn began a walking club as part of the Clubhouse project. The goal of this walking club is to enjoy light-hearted conversation with one another in a natural setting where the focus is not on mental illness, and to have a pleasant experience while improving one's health. "Walking," says Steve, "has many benefits such as breathing fresh air, enjoying social time, and physical health." At present, the group is small. It is hoped that as word gets around, numbers will increase.

Walking has many more health benefits, according to the *Mark's Daily Apple* website. Through walking, brain function is enhanced, stress is reduced, immunity increases, the body is strengthened, creativity improves, and it also aids in focusing on the present rather than life stressors. "Walking lifts your mood," says the Mayo Clinic, "strengthens bones, and aids in maintaining a healthy body weight."

Although this group was started for people with mental health concerns, all are welcome. The goal is to lift people's spirits while exercising the body and enjoying nature. The walking club meets in Wolfville behind Tim Horton's, near the railroad tracks, every Thursday evening, and walk from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

By Dena Walker

Sources:

Mark's Daily Apple: Primal Living in the Modern World. Low Level Aerobic Activity.

"17 Reasons to Walk More This Year." 2014. Web. Retrieved from

<http://www.marksdailyapple.com/17-reasons-to-walk-more-this-year/#axzz3DlijXLhO>

Mayo Clinic. Healthy Lifestyle: Fitness. "Walking: Trim your waistline, improve your health."

By Mayo Clinic Staff. 2013. Web. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20046261?pg=1>

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/fitness/in-depth/walking/art-20046261?pg=1>

Conn, Steve. Interview: September 18, 2014. Kings Clubhouse Walking Club.



Members of Kings Clubhouse Walking Club

Visiting the Clubhouse Music Jam Session

Music is good for the soul. Listening to and playing music helps me relax or if I am doing research, it helps me focus and write better.



The lyrics are especially important are the words. If the words in the music are special to you it can greatly affect your psychological and emotional state in a positive way. When I play the guitar it helps me express myself in ways that I can't verbalize. I sing the words with emotion and feeling and become engulfed in the music and lyrics. It elevates me into a special place only accessible through music.

The Music Jam Session, part of the Clubhouse project, is held every Wednesday from 10 am – 12 noon at the Louis Millett Community Complex in New Minas. I attended one of the sessions. There were nine people including a guitar player, bass player, and a drummer there. I socialized until the others arrived, talking about learning how to play the guitar.

Once everyone arrived, they started playing and singing. We were all from different walks of life but the music united us. The feeling in the air was ecstatic. Everyone was totally engulfed in the music. It was like a little vacation from life. The session benefited everyone. It was a wonderful experience.

By Tony Legere

Art Therapy: Kings Clubhouse Arts Program

Art is a simple, yet excellent form of therapy. Whether it be doodling on a sheet of paper or painting ambitiously on canvas, the effects are quite healing. There are many types of creative work that a person can benefit from, and absolutely no experience is needed to get enjoyment from it.

At its core, Art Therapy is used therapeutically and diagnostically. The purpose is to embrace the creative process and allow yourself to convey your inner feelings in a safe and positive fashion. Doing so allows you to relax, reflect on yourself and your experiences, and manage your behaviours and symptoms. It's been proven to assist many people across all age groups and with varying physical, mental, and emotional health issues.

I've found comfort and growth in drawing since I was a child. The form of expression and escapism it gave me eventually shaped into creating stories and making friends. I've learned a lot about myself via art, and it's helped me through plenty of tough times.

One project for participants is the Clubhouse Arts Program held at CMHA-Kings on Fridays from 1-4 pm has been painting on tiles. These tiles have been submitted to the Halifax-Dartmouth CMHA Mosaic for Mental Health event, a culmination of works produced in art therapy.

By Udell Graves



You are invited to the 15th Annual...
Mosaic for Mental Health!
Art Exhibition & Sale
October 17th - November 3rd, 2013
"Transformation & Triumph"

Save the Date:
Opening: Thursday, October 17th
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
(Advance Showing: 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.)
The Craig Gallery at Alderney Landing
2 Ochterloney St., Dartmouth
(Unframed Tiles: \$25 each - except auction tiles)

A Mental Health Perspective Mission Statement:

The purpose of this newsletter is to bring faith, hope and courage to members of the local mental health community of Kings County, Nova Scotia, as well as others who are involved with a mental, emotional or psychological condition.

Donations (cheque or money order) to support this newsletter and other important programs and services can be made to
CMHA-Kings, 11 Opportunity Lane Suite 3 Box 10 Coldbrook NS B4R 0A5



Staff & Volunteers

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