

# The Blue Horse Chronicles



## Our Annual General Meeting

It's been another amazing year full of shareholder activity, membership building and new programs. We've had great pleasure in getting to know our new members and continuing to see our existing groups grow and strengthen, not only in capacity and skill but camaraderie.

This year at the AGM we highlighted our shareholders by having members of our Creative Writing Group and Speaker's Bureau share with us their stories and poetry. We also presented, for the first time, our Shareholder Recognition Award.

There were five new members nominated to the Board of Directors. They were Norm Brown, Philip Armitage, Leah MacDonald, Gerard Blum and Priscilla MacDonald. Welcome to all!

We began the evening with **Gerard Blum's** short story on *Imagination Goes Wild*. Gerard also read two poems entitled *A Better Road* and *We Belong*.

**Eddie Fong**, a member of the Writer's Group read five poems entitled *Spider, Space, Speak, Regret* and *Fleeting Ships*.

**Anna Quon**, facilitator of Writer's Group, read an excerpt from her novel entitled "*Migration Songs*"

**Wayne Schnare** presented on our most recent undertaking *Stand Up For Mental Health*. Led by David Granirer, a counselor and a stand-up comic, Stand Up For Mental Health aims to reduce public stigma around mental illness and spread a message of hope and empowerment.

The evening came to a close with the Shareholder Recognition Award being presented to Leah MacDonald.

***Thank you to everyone who helped make the night a success, those who participated, those who attended, and those behind the scenes!***

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# CLUB FRIDAY NEWS

**By: Leah MacDonald**

Here is a list of some of the events that took place for the months of June and July.

**June 12th:** This event was the Radio Station Visit. This visit let us learn about the programs and machinery used to provide radio. We enjoyed the event and we ended the afternoon with a hot coffee from Tim Hortons.

**June 19th:** This event took place at the church and we learned how to be better at creative writing. We did several writing exercises and enjoyed each others company. This

event was presented by Anna Quon. *Thank you Anna for a wonderful afternoon and presentation.*

**June 26th:** We met at the pool hall called Dooleys. We played pool, laughed and enjoyed the afternoon. This event seems to be very popular and we had a great time.

**July 3rd:** This event was held at the Bowlarama at Bayers Road. We bowled and had some snacks. We as a group enjoyed this activity and the group that attended seemed quite happy.

**July 10th:** This event was karaoke and we met at the church. This event was changed to enjoying a short walk to the coffee shop. The weather was pleasant and we enjoyed the afternoon very much.

Club Friday is a peer support group that meets at the All Nations Christian Church 2535 Robie Street from 1 – 3 pm.

**For more information please contact John Cox and Mickie Bowe at Healthy Minds Co-operative 404 – 3504**

## Shareholder Cafe

### Attention Healthy Minds Cooperative Shareholders

The Internet Café is available for your use from:

**10am to 3pm**  
(Monday to Friday)



Please call in advance to book your computer time at **404-3504**

**Would you like to get some computer assistance and find out about more computer resources available?**

Please visit or call Mickie at 404-3525 to book your ½ hour session!



# Introducing the Creativity Corner on ourhealthyminds.com

Ourhealthyminds.com introduces the **creativity corner**! It is the place on the web site where you can share your story about living with mental illness, caring for a loved one or exploring health and wellness. Or maybe you just want to share a good story!

You can share your personal story, a poem, a painting or a work of fiction. Every story or poem or painting is a way for us to connect with one another as artists and individuals who have something to say through our art. In this way, we begin to build a community of people who support one another.

We would love to feature some of your [poems](#) or stories or artwork on [www.ourhealthyminds.com](http://www.ourhealthyminds.com)

We will respect your privacy if you wish or include your name with a short bio if you prefer.

Visit:

[www.ourhealthyminds.com](http://www.ourhealthyminds.com)  
and check out the creativity corner.

Send your submissions or questions to Arlene Lahey at:

[ourhealthyminds@cdha.nshealth.ca](mailto:ourhealthyminds@cdha.nshealth.ca)

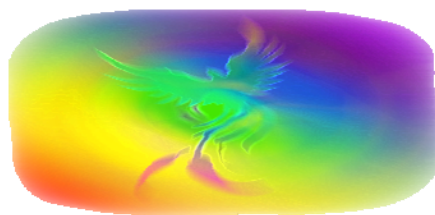
*Ourhealthyminds.com reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, style, and format. We cannot guarantee that writers submitting content for inclusion in the creativity corner will have final review before their work is published. If you read through our site, you will find that authors have been well-served in this editing process.*



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## Way to Wellness

*addressing body, mind and spirit ....promoting wellness, wholeness and a sense of well-being.*



Lavender essential oil is a natural sedative. It promotes relaxation in your nervous system. At times when you feel stressed or your confidence is low, place 3 drops of pure lavender oil on a soft cloth and inhale deeply

*Irene Skehen*

# 2009 Shareholder Recognition Award goes to...Leah

By: Anna Quon

Healthy Minds Cooperative Shareholder Leah MacDonald, loves her alone-time. Her cats are the centre of her life, and she enjoys puttering around her apartment, going out for exercise and grocery shopping. But in the past couple years, Leah has added volunteer work with the Healthy Minds Co-



Leah MacDonald

operative into her life. “I feel a lot better today than I did for the past ten years, because I’m with people who are pretty well on the same page,” she says.

Leah, who has lived with a head injury due to a car accident since 1985, received the first Shareholder Recognition Award from the Healthy Minds Cooperative at its Annual General Meeting this July. The award goes to a Healthy Minds Cooperative Shareholder who has demonstrated “authentic, active and meaningful input” into priority areas of the Cooperative, including: participating in the design, development, delivery, and evaluation of mental health services; improved access to mental health services and supports; peer support and advocacy for individuals with a mental illness and their families; education; and developing better connections to existing community services and organizations.

Leah is a committed volunteer at the Cooperative, attending a variety of Healthy Minds programs and wellness-

related activities. She is a regular at the writing group and Club Friday, and she writes a column for the Blue Horse Chronicles reporting on Club Friday activities. She has completed courses in Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), and two of the WEL-Systems Institute courses offered by the Co-op. Leah also participates on the Quality Care Team, which discusses how to improve mental health services, and is a member of the HMC board of directors. Despite all her contributions, Leah says, “I was kind of surprised [to receive the award] but I feel very happy and content. I like to do a lot of hard work and it gives me inspiration to do more.”

Leah says she is happier today than she has been for the last ten years because of increased involvement at Healthy Minds, and that her ever-supportive parents are glad to see how her life has improved. “I feel very stable and independent and successful that I’m out of the house and doing things in the community,” Leah says.

Leah hopes others living with mental illness will enhance their health and well-being with participation in their communities. “Get involved with programs and courses, go out for coffee. Sometimes it takes awhile,” she says but she encourages people to be active, “and to know they’re not alone.”

**Congratulations Leah!**





Are you a woman with a disability, and do you like to write?

**Please Join *Independent Living Nova Scotia* and *Healthy Minds Cooperative* this Fall for**

# WOMEN, Writing and Able

a four-week series of  
poetry workshops  
for women living with a disability

Facilitator Anna Quon is a creative writer and writing group/workshop facilitator who has self-published five collections of poetry and whose novel *Migration Songs* will be released by Invisible Publishing in October 2009

**For more information please contact: Anna Quon at 405-3445 or [anna.quon@gmail.com](mailto:anna.quon@gmail.com)**

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