



Curing mental illness has a lot to do with overcoming the stigma that comes with it. Thanks to the good folks at Stand Up for Mental Health (SMH), they're teaching people that laughter is the best medicine by turning patients into performers and empowering them through stand-up comedy. The self-healing, scene-stealing program is spreading like wildfire across both Canada and the U.S. and, last week, the group celebrated with a pre-show reception at Vancouver's lavish new Shangri-La Hotel. Afterwards, it was off to the Stanley Theatre stage for the 2009 Class Debut where, as they say at SMH, everyone got a chance to crack-up together.

cat's eye



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1 Vancouver Community Mental Health director Lorna Howes and hubby David enjoyed the pre-show reception. 2 Black Press' own Fiona Harris looks elegant in black silk as she proudly lends her support to this worthwhile cause. 3 Alumni comics like Alex Winstanley and Eufemia Fantetti are still strong supporters of the program and still perform.

4 Looking forward to the show is Anthony Baldo, Assistant Warden at Ferndale Institute. 5 Now a successful comic, Paul Decarie credits the program with taking him off alcohol, and off the streets of the downtown Eastside. 6 Program founder, counselor and performer David Granier prepares with son Jonathan, who, like dad, is also a stand-up comic. 7 Program coordinator Pat Bayes chats with UBC's Dr. Kerry Jang, who is also now a Vancouver City councillor.



Slideshow of Cat's photos at www.northshoreoutlook.com

CAT CALLS To send event information to Cat visit her website www.catherinebarr.com or fax 604-903-1001.

thursday, april 23 Sign up North Shore Community Resources offers a free three-day course, The Key Elements of Professional Nanny Care, designed to link child care providers with community resources and enhance the quality of care for children and families. Running May 23, 30 and June 6. Space is limited. Register at 604-985-7138.

friday, april 24 Chantal Kreviazuk The Kay Meek benefit concert starring the Chantal Kreviazuk is May 23, and tickets are selling fast. Proceeds from the event will support the Legacy Fund for Artistic Excellence and Youth Opportunity. Tickets: \$175 (\$100 tax receipt) and \$195 at door. Info: 604-913-3634.

saturday, april 25 Beauty and the Beast Sentinel secondary does the Disney Musical at the Kay Meek Centre, with over 70 Sentinel students as cast and crew. Shows running daily (April 23 to 25) at 7:30 p.m., also with a 2 p.m. matinee April 25. Tickets: \$12-\$15. For more info, go to our arts pages.

sunday, april 26 Green you scene St. Catherine's Anglican hosts an Eco-Fair and Green Weekend fest today and Saturday, featuring free bike tune-ups, toxin-free car wash and an info fair today from 12:30 to 4 p.m. Come with suggestions and questions about recycling, transit and household products. Info: 604-983-9554. 1058 Ridgewood Dr., N. Van.

monday, april 27 West Coast landscapes Lions Bay Art Gallery launches two downtown Vancouver shows, next month, the first at Terasen Centre (1111 West Georgia St.). Featuring West Coast landscapes in work by Michael Tickner, Chrissandra Unger, Don Varnals and others, the show runs to May 15, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Info at lionsbayartgallery.com.

tuesday, april 28 A Riot of Color Celebrate spring with an acrylic exhibition of floral colour by West Vancouver artists Ann Mitchell and Julie McDowell, opening today. Gallery hours: Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 p.m. Opening reception tonight at 6 p.m. Info: 604-925-7292 or silkpurse.ca.

wednesday, april 29 Thoughts on Cascadia Douglas Todd, award-winning religion journalist, launches his new book, Cascadia: The Elusive Utopia—Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest. At the North Shore Unitarian Church, 370 Mathers Ave., West Van, 7:30 p.m. Info: 604-926-1621 or nsuc.ca.

seven days