

For VOP

Movie Monday has become an institution in Victoria, going on four years and over 200 shows . It happens Monday evenings at 6:30 A quality movie projected on a Big 15' screen, in a comfy theatre - FREE.

The idea to use the theatre at the Eric Martin Pavilion as a resource for people who have had direct experience with mental illness came from an ex-patient, Bruce Saunders, a 46 year old gardener who has manic-depression.

With mental illness often comes isolation, poverty, and a lack of opportunities to express oneself creatively. "I see the use of this facility as more than just a physical door opening. In partnership with the hospital, consumers of mental health services can have, not just some free entertainment, but can have a forum to express their abilities". The Movie Monday T-shirts Saunders has designed and produced say "Be a Producer!" - a challenge to people to go beyond their description as consumers of mental health services.

The project has been evolving. When not overwhelmed with movie goers, the mandate was broadened to include the general public with ads in calendars of all the local print media. "Any entertainment works best when it has a capacity audience. 10-20 people in a 100 seat theatre just doesn't cut it -- a full house, full of expectation and reaction, really makes you feel you're in "the right place at the right time". And a by-product of an integrated audience is a softening of the lines between "the mentally ill" and those who are "normal" and fostering a healthier attitude in all who come, toward the institution and the people who sometimes have to use it.

Pop, popcorn etc. are available at very reasonable prices. An eclectic selection of movies are shown and cartoons, video shorts and "consumer" art enrich the evenings. Many of the screenings are enhanced with special presentations and opportunities for discussion.

"I'm attempting to create a friendly, interactive, thriving weekly event. Movie Monday has been instrumental in my staying well and exploring new possibilities for myself and I hope it will be so for others."

Phone 595-FLIC for information directions and schedule.

M.M. now has a Home Page Address

<http://www.islandnet.com/~dsaunder/MM.html>