

SPRING 2019

## Through My Lens

by VDM

I first want to start with a story that will be remembered by me forever.  
It was when I was a child and it goes like this:

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I came across a toy, what I thought was a toy, it was a rocket. An unusual rocket. It had a camera built into it and it used 110 film. I'm sure you all remember film? I would fill the rocket up with water, pump it up and launch it. It would rocket up pretty high in the sky and when it reached it's maximum height the parachute was displayed. The jolt would trigger the camera and snap an aerial photo.

After many launches, the rocket broke but it sparked an interest for me in photography.

Some years passed before I picked up a 35mm camera in my teens. I never thought about the power of photography and what could be captured by the camera.

A few more years passed before I found what I would like to photograph and

now it was the digital age. I had a 1.3 mp camera and practiced until I got comfortable with it. I would photograph flora and what I would find interesting in my journeys.

It wasn't until three years ago that I became more serious about photography through the "Photography as a Wellness Tool" program at The Royal. I have been able to hone my skills, go on photo shoots and do original projects. I carry my camera with me at all times as it is part of me now.

I am now with the recently formed, social enterprising club named: "Art in Focus", of which I manage. It has been a wonderful experience for me as they have taught me all aspects of the social enterprise. I have a better focus on the

*continued on page 2*



photos by  
VDM

*Through the Lens continued*

subject now and wish the club to continue. I also work in certain departments at The Royal as well as having a catalogue of photos with 'Art in Focus'. I am proof that it's never too late to focus on and do well, in the subject of your choice. It can be this way for many. Just take that step. It has brought me a wealth of health and happiness.

I would like to thank Lori McGuire and Dania Pourr for all of their work in the club. I would also like to thank all of those who made this club possible. Please look for more of my photos in the Winter Garden display or on a sale table. Watch for VDM Bloom Collection: A popular and pleasing display of photos for sale. There have been great reviews from those that have purchased from VDM.

2019 With confidence VDM



# Local artist and inpatients create new mural at The Royal



Ashley McGuinty  
and CJ Fleury

What was once a small white wall at the end of a long hallway is now alive with colour and a heart that seems to pulse with love and gratitude. It's the result of collaboration between therapeutic recreation at The Royal and local artist CJ Fleury, and it lights up a long hall in our Mood & Crisis Inpatient Unit.

"There's a certain effect when you first notice the art from the main desk, and then a sense of being drawn closer to the heart; needing to walk right up," says Fleury. "Over and over people expressed how they felt drawn to the heart centre only to discover other elements of the composition – the changing scale of human beside sky-universe and giant heart, the gentle texts, the soft cloud edges, the deep summer forest."

Some patients participated in the painting, learning new skills and making their brushstrokes a lasting part of their environment. Many others simply watched as the new mural developed from the faintly drawn outline to a vibrantly painted heart emerging from a backdrop of nature with

the word "love" in many languages scattered throughout the painting, blended into the background in a way that makes them seem part of nature itself.

"Whether people were participating or watching, it was therapeutic. Watching the process was mesmerizing and peaceful, and a good chance for social connection. It's often a lot easier to talk to each other shoulder-to-shoulder, while sharing an experience, than face-to-face," says Ashleigh McGuinty, the recreation therapist who coordinated the project.

The painting took place over the course of five mornings. Many patients came and went, checking in during the process and chatting with other onlookers. Some, like Dianne, pulled up a chair and observed practically the whole time.

"Every morning I would wake up hoping it was a day for working on the mural," says Dianne. "I was amazed when I'd see them start something. I'd look at it and wonder how it could be a tree or a sky. But, at the end, it all blended so well." ● 3

# Those who sleep under a quilt sleep under a blanket of love

## Blankets of Love History

Sheila Ethier, registered nurse, founded the program in 1996 for patients with a mental illness at the University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta.

In 2004 the Blankets of Love Foundation for Mental Health was incorporated and began providing quilts to hospitals

across Canada. Since its inception, over 3500 quilts have been donated to patients who are in need of comfort and hope.

"I created the Blankets of Love project in the summer of 1996. I was a patient on the psychiatric ward at the University of Alberta Hospital several times for the treatment of major depression.

I remember how lonely and isolated I had felt from the rest of the world. I was always cold and looking for more blankets.

"One afternoon while at home I came across a quilt my grandmother had made for me when I was a young girl. I looked at the worn, bright yellow and orange patchwork quilt and I remembered the day my grandmother had given it to me. In reliving memories of my grandmother and of the love expressed in making a quilt just for me I immediately felt a peace wash over me. I covered myself with my quilt made of love and let the warmth soothe my cold, achy body. In those quiet comforting moments I knew 'Blankets of Love' would help other people. And so the program began." says Sheila Ethier.

## Mission Statement from Blankets of Love

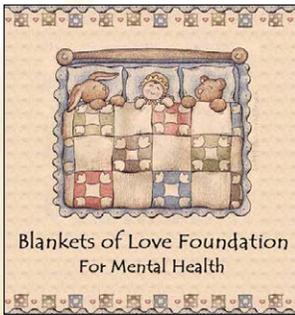
The Blankets of Love Foundation for Mental Health is a national charitable organization that provides quilts to patients who are in hospital for the treatment of a mental illness.



Lucie with her  
Blanket of Love

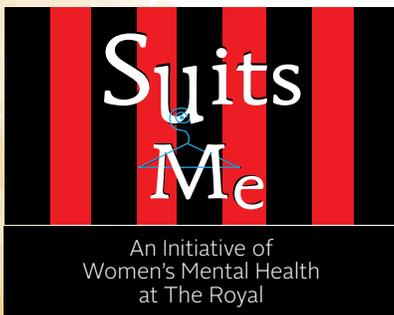
## Sleep under a quilt continued

By doing this we aim to help patients in their time of need. Quilts are handcrafted by people in the community and then generously donated to hospitals that offer mental health services across Canada.



To donate a *Blanket of Love* at a hospital near you contact:  
[info@blanketsoflove.ca](mailto:info@blanketsoflove.ca)

Our very own Lucie was the winner of the *Blanket of Love*. It was such a pleasure to see Lucie with that great smile and that beautiful new quilt. Thank you to everyone who worked to make this possible.



Suits Me is an initiative of the Women's Mental Health at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre (The Royal) that provides women, including clients of The Royal, with professional clothing and personal development opportunities.

The Suits Me series of workshops help women build confidence in their abilities, and support their transition to the workplace or volunteer sector. The clothes are available at the Suits Me Boutique at The Royal and at workshops hosted throughout the year such as meditation, dressing up for the holidays, vision boards, getting out of debt, BodyArt, and sewing/mending. Funds raised provide women with educational bursaries to refresh or learn new skills. Each workshop is followed by a visit to the clothing boutique for something that suits our women clients.

For more information or if you would like to donate women's clothing to Suits Me, please contact Debbie McFarlane at [debbie.mcfarlane@theroyal.ca](mailto:debbie.mcfarlane@theroyal.ca).



## message from the editor

I would like to introduce myself to you. My name is Alexis Milne and I am a fellow client at The Royal. I also have the greatest pleasure of being a volunteer and couldn't wait to be your new editor. I really want to thank Glenda for her expertise and for passing the torch on to me. What an honour for me to arrange your art, photography, poetry and stories of hope. I will strive to continue in Glenda's successful shadow and look forward to giving the newsletter a new look. With a lot of help from Communications, and client input, we give you, the new *Client's Voice*.

# I am not worthy

i am not worthy life  
quit pouncing on my bed  
my head now fills with concrete  
my feet have filled with lead  
i am forever slower  
my mind plays tricks for free  
one day i am the shooting range  
the next, a family tree  
i am not worthy life  
stop knocking on my door  
you scare me with your mystery  
i'm crawling on the floor  
i'm feeling so invisible  
and my eyes just do not see  
a cloak of darkness tightening  
it just won't let me be  
i am not worthy life  
stop calling on the phone  
i need a little freedom  
please, leave me alone  
i'm not sure of my standing  
not knowing who are good  
i know there is some that love me  
and ones who think they should  
i am not worthy life  
quit pouncing on my bed  
my head is filled with concrete  
my heart is filled with dread

09-21-2018 AGM

# What Transforming Care at The Royal means to us

Coming June 11, 2019, the new Electronic Health Record (EHR) system will bring exciting new changes to The Royal. I have had the opportunity to be part of the team that is guiding this change and to bring our perspective as clients to this initiative.

I would like to share the reasons why we are implementing this new system and how it will ensure better care for us, the clients of The Royal. Greater safety, accuracy, standardization, and efficiency are some of the improvements that the new EHR will bring to provide us with excellent care. The new EHR will support the use of evidence based practices. This means that no matter which mental health hospital you visit in Ontario, your treatment will be the same. This is what we mean by standardized care. Your medication will also be entered into the EHR, ensuring that all care providers see your medication list and are aware of interactions.

As we bring in this system, we ask that you remember that change comes with adjustments for staff, clients and families. For a period of time, you may notice that your care provider will be

paying more attention to their computer than before. This is because they will be entering notes directly into the system and referring to your plan of care. But, in time, this will be of benefit to you as these notes are recorded for future care providers, meaning that you will not need to repeat your story as often as before.

Your records will continue to be safe and your privacy is, as always, a priority. As clients, I hope we can all be patient and understanding as staff adjust to the new system. Be confident that these changes will bring about greater safety for you, which includes standardized, evidence-based therapy. If you have any questions, ask your care provider.

**Afshin Shayanpour**

The Royal  
Client Advisory Council  
Transforming Care Adviser



# we want to hear from you!



**Show your artwork**

**Share your poems**

**Tell a funny story**

**Show your photos**

**Share your wellness journey**

**Tell us your favourite quote**

**Contact Us** We would love to hear what you have to say about *The Client's Voice* or if you would like to become a member of the Client Advisory Council, feel free to call, write or email your questions and comments to:

## **Client Advisory Council**

The Royal,  
1145 Carling Avenue, Room 1349, Ottawa ON K1Z 7K4  
613.722.6521, ext. 6767

Email:  
[cac@theroyal.ca](mailto:cac@theroyal.ca)



Send your submissions to:

**Alexis Milne**

[alexis.milne@theroyal.ca](mailto:alexis.milne@theroyal.ca)

**HOPE:** People who experience mental health difficulties get well, stay well, and go on to meet their life dreams and goals.

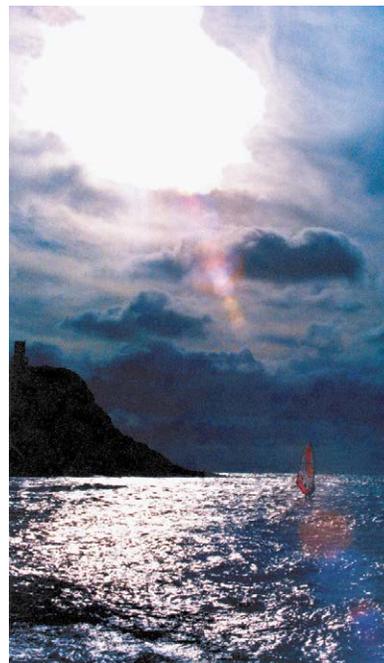
**PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:** It's up to you, with the assistance of others, to take action and do what needs to be done to keep yourself well.

**EDUCATION:** Learning all you can about what you are experiencing so you can make good decisions about all aspects of your life.

**SELF ADVOCACY:** Effectively reaching out to others so that you can get what you need, want and deserve to support your wellness and recovery.

**SUPPORT:** While working toward your wellness is up to you, receiving support from others, and giving support to others will help you feel better and enhance the quality of your life.

## **WRAP** Key Recovery Concepts



Five KEY Recovery Concepts provide the foundation of effective recovery work.

Alexis Milne