

Show to give back to mental health groups

KEN KELLEY
TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

There was a time in the not too distant past mental health issues were not something commonly talked about in the open. Over the course of the last few years, the subject has become far less taboo as people from all walks of life have come forward and shared details of their personal battles with depression, anxiety and other illnesses.

Sunday afternoon Moncton Press Club is hosting a fundraising concert from 10 local acts. Funds raised by the show will be donated to two Moncton-area organizations dedicated to assisting those needing mental health-care: Riverview's Atlantic Wellness Community Centre and the Salvus Clinic, which is located in downtown Moncton.

Concert organizer Travis Furlong said the idea to stage a benefit show for these organizations stemmed from a personal episode for which he had to seek assistance.

"I've been living with anxiety and depression for a number of years," Furlong said. "For a long time, I was lucky in the respect that I had a family doctor that helped me understand my illnesses better, and aided in the treatment. It was after my doctor retired that things kind of unravelled for me."

After securing a new family doctor, a

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Show facts

What: Elephant in the Room: Mental Health Community Fundraiser featuring Travis Furlong, Jared Lutes, Hone The Craft, The Cauldron Project, Bruised Orange, The Push, The Matt Landry Band, Kat & The Red Hat, The Mud River Rockers and the Blabbermouth Blues Band

When: Sunday May 21, 2 p.m.

Where: Moncton Press Club, 150 Assumption Blvd., Moncton

Tickets are \$10, available at the door

Show to raise funds for pair of Moncton-area mental health organizations

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feat that Furlong admits wasn't an easy thing in itself, he says the physician "fell short" in assisting his continued treatment. Furlong unsuccessfully visited local after-hours clinics, pharmacies and even local hospital outpatient services in hopes that he would find a doctor willing to help.

"For the first time in my life, I felt like I had nowhere to go, and that I couldn't get the help I felt I needed. It was a horrible feeling."

In discussing his health issues with a friend, Furlong was turned onto the Salvus Clinic. Located in the Peace Centre on Church Street, the facility bills itself as an option for those battling mental illness who do not have a family physician. They also assist the homeless and those whose lives have been disrupted by substance abuse.

According to its website, Salvus provides health care to individuals of all ages, regardless of gender. Services offered by the organization include counselling, addiction management, screening and prevention of illness, among other specialties.

Across the Petitcodiac in Riverview, The Atlantic Wellness Community



Travis Furlong will be performing at Elephant in the Room on Sunday. PHOTO SUBMITTED

Centre was established in 2012, dedicated to serving those between the ages of 12 and 21. Its mission is to

ensure youth have easy access to quality mental health care services, regardless of their ability to pay. Since

opening, they have treated more than 1,000 patients.

Furlong credits Salvus as stepping in

to help when it appeared that no one else would. He is quick to point out he is not pointing a finger of blame at anyone who was previously not able to assist, but is calling for a greater understanding of mental health issues among the health community.

"Salvus took me in and helped put me back on the right path. The work that both they and the Atlantic Wellness Community Centre do is so vital to the community. The people working inside these organizations helping others are not only amazing individuals for doing what they do, they are providing a much-needed service to the community. I'm one of the lucky ones that was able to get help, but I worry there are a lot of people falling through the cracks otherwise in the city," Furlong says.

"The show on Sunday is my way of wanting to give something back to these organizations."

Ken Kelley

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