

NEWS

Benefits of laughter

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Women, and some men, gathered together Mar. 6 to celebrate International Women's Day by watching a comedy act.

The comedian, Camilla Jones, found her comedic skills on a dare from a friend. She entered a comic contest in Calgary and ended up in the top three of 53 contestants. Since then she has been giving out a gift of laughter to anyone who wants it.

She is a divorcee, single mother of four, and a hockey mom. She comes from a family with divorced parents and has four sisters. She says there are few people she cannot relate to.

Her act was called "Different strokes for different folks," and she had many bowled over with laughter.

Jones related stories of her life and her hardships with the audience, not only making them laugh, but also making them realize the importance of laughter. She is an advocate of laughter being the best medicine and brought example studies of research done into the benefits of laughter.

"I can have people cough in my face and get snot all over me, and I will not get sick," said Jones. She attributed this to the amount of laughing she does.

She spoke about having a stroke. Her vivid explanation of how it happened had everyone sitting on the edge of their seats.

She spoke about how her sons found her and got her to the hospital. About her long wait in emergency as other, more serious, emergencies came in on a Friday night.

She also spoke about how it was staying in a hospital ward where many were not expecting to walk again. She said the experience was eye opening.

After doing many interviews with the elderly she has come to the conclusion that happiness is relatively easy to achieve. "The elderly use one word a lot when describing happiness. That word is perspective," said Jones.

She was honoured to be chosen as the main act for the celebration of women.

March 8 was the 97th year for International Women's Day and the United Nations theme for this year was "Women and men to end violence against women and girls."

Similarly the local program benefitting from the funds raised this year was the Hearts for Lushoto Foundation. The foundation's main focus is providing women in Lushoto with education about AIDS and things like sexual assault.

This is the third year that an event has been held in Drayton Valley. In 2008 a variety show was held, which boasted local talent on the stage. The funds from that event went toward the Pembina Crisis Connection Society. In 2007 a reading of Eve Ensler's Vagina Monologues was held, with local women reading excerpts. The money raised went toward the Nutritious Beginnings Program.