

September 30-October 4

DIRTY LAUNDRY

Mary Winspear Centre, Sidney

NOT EVERYONE “COMES DOWN” WITH A BOUT OF depression, but everyone has had contact with someone who is depressed, whether they know it or not. But for half the population, the term “mental illness” evokes fear and revulsion. Hundreds of thousands of Canadians carry this stigma, and suffer subsequent discrimination; hence, there is a great imperative to cultivate understanding and acceptance—to get depression “out of the closet.”

Marilyn Avient, who was hospitalized three times for mental illness, shares her experiences with depression and bipolar disorder as an author, motivational speaker, and, most recently, playwright of (and performer in) *Dirty Laundry*, which is having its world premiere at the Mary Winspear Centre this fall. Fully recovered now, the Nanoose resident and award-winning mental health promoter plans to take the play on tour through Canada and the US in 2010.



Marilyn Avient

A portion of the ticket proceeds will benefit the Vancouver Island Human Rights Coalition. The play’s producer Sean Krausert explains, “It’s our hope that through this production people will talk about this issue, and in doing so work towards removing the stigma associated with this all-too-common condition.”

The play is the true story of a wife and mother whose long, terrifying battle with depression began in childhood. Engaging, poignant, and at times hilarious, the piece was created to inspire audience members to talk more openly about this widespread illness by being utterly candid about the struggles so many try to keep secret, for fear of risking their relationships, employment, or reputation.

The play is a dramatization of one of Avient’s five books, *Free at Last*, which chronicles her journey into, through, and out of depression. It is not only those who have been personally challenged by depression or another mental illness who see themselves in this story—anyone who has felt overwhelmed at times by the day-to-day demands of life can find hope, laughter, and affirmation in Avient’s work.

8pm. 2243 Beacon Ave in Sidney. Tickets: \$25 for early birds, \$31.50 reg. Purchase three tickets, get one free (first 20 people who purchase three); 10% discount with the purchase of 10 or more tickets. 250-382-3012 or 250-656-0275, www.dirtylaundrytheatre.ca.

—Mollie Kaye