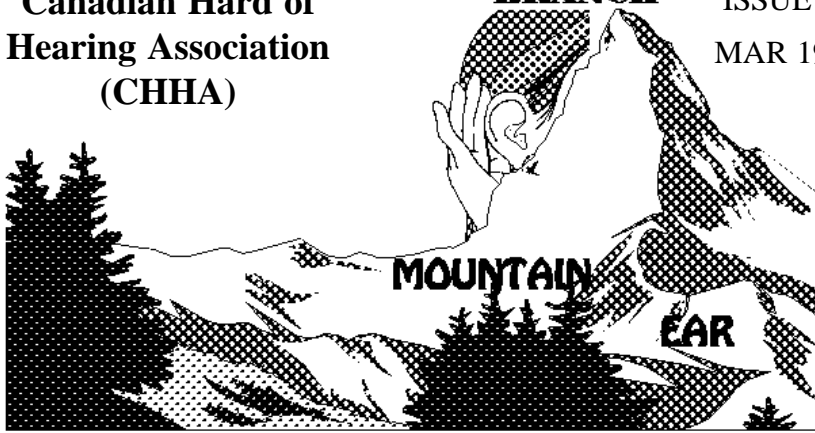


Publication of the
Canadian Hard of
Hearing Association
(CHHA)

**NORTH SHORE
BRANCH**

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MOUNTAIN EAR, formerly ((SPEAK)) is a publication of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - North Shore Branch. It is Published 5 times a year on the 15th of March, May, August, October and December.

Your submissions are always welcome. Please contact the Editor:

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Members' Meeting Held on February 16th at Delbrook Community Centre.



Clifford Fenner
handing out
name tags at
the door.

Thirty members' and guests attended the first North Shore Branch members' meeting of 1998. Our special guests for the evening were North Shore audiologists, Deborah Maloon of Island

Acoustics in West Vancouver, Georgia Pinkett of Island Acoustics in North Vancouver, and Neil Walton of Pacific Hearing Clinic in North Vancouver. Our guests kindly took the opportunity to answer a number of questions put to them by our



North Shore Branch Members

moderator, Alfred Kobbeltvedt and members of the audience. The resulting discussion centered around hearing aid issues and specifically the benefits of having telecoils fitted on hearing aids. We were also pleased to be able to show our North Shore Branch video, *Communication Ac-*

cess, which was produced last fall in conjunction with West Van Municipal Transit. Another video *Stop That Noise*, produced by the League for the Hard of Hearing, New York, was also shown. The evening ended with a social and refreshments. In all, it was a very pleasant and informative meeting and also served to acquaint our members with some of the audiological services available on the North Shore.

Lions Gate Hospital Display Access to Health.

The Lions Gate Education Services organize regular displays at the hospital. The North Shore Branch has been invited by the Community Health Promotion of North Shore Health to put on our display from March 30 to April 3. On Wednesday, April 1st between 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM, members will be available at the display to answer any questions and provide information. Our video, *Communication Access*, will also be shown at this time. **See also page 4, Promoting Awareness in Healthcare, Medical and Deaf.**

Are you having problems with communication at home?

Our next members' meeting will be held on 20 April at 7:00 P.M. This meeting will feature a special guest speaker, Jennifer Shifrin, a registered clinical counsellor and speech language pathologist. The topic for the evening will be *psychological and emotional aspects of commu-*

Continued from page 1.

nication difficulties between family members and hard of hearing people. We welcome you to bring along your family members and friends to the meeting. The venue for the meeting has yet to be decided, however, all members will be informed of the location by phone prior to the meeting date. Please mark your calendar now so that you don't miss this important meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spring has arrived early this year. The plants in our garden have been blooming since January and we have had a warm and crazy winter, so



unlike what our friends have experienced in the East. However our good weather does not change the problem of my Hearing Aid Batteries going dead. Why not recycle them? Bring your dead batteries, including any listening de-

vice batteries, to the meetings and we will take them to be recycled. This is one way we can help our environment.

Have you ordered your Lapel Pin? I find mine so very useful especially when I go to the various offices, dentist, doctor, bank, grocery store to name a few, This alerts them immediately about my communication problems. It costs less when the lapel pins are ordered in bulk. To order your lapel pin please phone or fax me at 980-6671.

The Board of Directors would be most grateful if you could spare some time to help with various areas in the Branch work. An hour here, an hour there, would be appreciated. Phone Jean at 986-1835

We have an interesting year ahead of us with many activities and interesting members' meetings planned. CHHA - BC Chapter has declared May 9, 1998 as *Hearing and Noise Awareness Day.* (See Page 3) Our North Shore Branch will also be planning some activity for May 9 at our

board meeting this month. Just to remind you that one of our activities will be to participate in the Rotary Club of Vancouver Bike-A-Thon in support of their Hearing Foundation. They will be looking for riders and people to take pledges. We will be keeping our members posted on our plans.

I also want to draw your attention to our special members' meeting on April 20th. (**See item on page 1/2 "Are you having problems with communication at home?"**) I do recommend that you take this opportunity to bring along your family members or invite a friend to come along with you. I look forward to seeing a good turnout for this meeting.

You will also have received your ballots and a questionnaire from CHHA National Office. I urge you to take the time to vote for your choice of candidates and return the ballot by April 10th. I also hope that you took the opportunity to complete the questionnaire that was enclosed.

Communication Access.

The video, *Communication Access*, which was made jointly with CHHA - North Shore Branch and West Van Municipal Transit can now be purchased from the North Shore Branch. The cost is \$20.00 which includes packing and postage. Order your copy of the video by sending a cheque or money order to the Treasurer, CHHA - North Shore Branch, 1127 Lillooet Road, North Vancouver, BC, V7J 3H7.

CHHA National Elections.

All members should by now have received their ballots for the upcoming election of officers for the CHHA board. Eight of the board members have been elected by acclamation and there is a ballot on the last page of the letter to elect directors for Manitoba and Ontario where there are two candidates running for office. All ballots must be received by the CHHA National Office by April 10, 1998 and the results will be announced at the CHHA Annual General Meeting to be held on May 30, 1998 in Edmonton.

Guide Dog/Assistive Animal Act.

Draft legislation has been prepared by the Guide Animal Act Review Committee (a coalition of individuals and groups representing people who have visual, hearing or physical impairments.) This legislation is to replace the Guide Animal Act and is to be called Guide Dog/Assistive Animal Act. This draft was sent to the Attorney General, the Minister responsible for this proposed legislation by the B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities. Bill Conway is the BCCPD Board member to contact for information at 324-3611. A letter to them to assist in their lobbying efforts would be appreciated. Their address is #204 - 456 Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., V5Y 1R3. It is hoped that this legislation will be passed in the Spring.

Some of the main points are:

Separate from the Blind Person's Act.

Ensures equal access to public facilities, transportation and accommodations.

Contains deterrent penalties for violation of the Act.

W.I.D.H.H. SEMINAR

Prepared by Andrea Gauthier.

On February 28th, I attended a seminar presented by the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing entitled "Living as a Hard of Hearing Person - Can We Lessen the Struggle?" It was one of the most worthwhile events I have attended since I became hard of hearing ten years ago. I hope there will be more such events.

The content of the seminar was very rich and informative and the format was equally appreciated. All possible hearing devices were in place. In addition to this, we were seated at large round tables which facilitated communication among the participants.

The Hard of Hearing were acknowledged as 'the forgotten ones' and the complications of being able to 'pass' as a hearing person under certain circumstances were discussed.

The day was 'chockful' of information and ideas,

generating some fifteen pages of notes. Did you know that the Spanish language has 45,000 words and the English language has 450,000? The way the English language is structured, each word stands on its own so that, if you miss four words in a row, you've lost the whole sentence. This is not so for all languages. This is to say that it is a difficult language to cope with, for a hard of hearing person.

One point that came up, over and over, was the importance for us to advocate for ourselves and, at the same time, the difficulty of doing so. Even some who have suffered this handicap for decades still find it difficult to assert their needs and rights.

Another important aspect of the day was the time and space for the hard of hearing to SPEAK their experience and to be HEARD with interest, respect and attention.

All in all, it was a very valuable day. Thank you, WIDHH.

HEARING AND NOISE AWARENESS DAY

Saturday, May 9 has been declared *Hearing and Noise Awareness Day* in Vancouver. The North Shore Branch will be planning a local activity at the next board meeting later this month, and we will be advising members by a flyer or phone call. In Vancouver, the event planned is called *The Walk, The Talk and then the Silence*. You may wish to take part in this activity and will have received a poster, registration information and a pledge sheet for the walk. This activity includes a walk of 20 blocks (or you can join in at any point along the walk). There will also be displays in the outdoor plaza at Robson square where the walk will end. At 1:30 P.M. there will be talks by Dr. Graham Bryce, Otology and Neurotology, on 'Hearing Loss', by Linda Tobias, President of of VLHH Branch on 'Managing Hearing Loss', and Lloyd Dahl, President, CHHA - BC Chapter, 'Noise and then the Silence'. At 2:15 P.M. there will be 90 seconds of silence to bring attention to noise awareness. The event will end at 3:00 P.M. giving plenty of time to look over the displays.

Promoting Awareness in Healthcare, Medical and Deaf (PAH, MD).

The following text is reprinted from the webpage of the University of Rochester School of Medicine, Rochester, NY.

OVERVIEW

Communication is the most important aspect of the doctor/patient relationship. Beyond the clear exchange of ideas and information, good communication requires the recognition of different cultural norms and mutual respect between patient and physician.

Although hearing loss is a common occurrence (an estimated 22M people in the US are affected), few healthcare providers have a good understanding of hearing loss, Deaf culture, sign language, or the many problems that can occur when a deaf or **hard of hearing** (d/hoh) patient and an unprepared healthcare provider try to form a productive working relationship.

Too often d/hoh individuals are forced to receive healthcare from individuals with whom they cannot communicate, in situations that violate even the most basic interpretation of patient confidentiality, legal requirements, and ethical standards. Under such circumstances, patients are unable to provide "informed consent," and the physician cannot provide appropriate, ethical care.

This problem is particularly acute in Rochester, NY. We have the largest per capita population of deaf and hard of hearing people in the world -- roughly 1 out of every 25 Rochesterians uses sign language as their preferred means of communication. It is critical for our local healthcare providers -- including medical students -- to have a basic understanding of hearing loss and how it can affect healthcare delivery.

In addition, many healthcare providers hold negative stereotypes of physical disabilities and disabled individuals, including people affected by hearing loss. These stereotypes can affect the doctor/patient relationship, the quality of care delivered to these patients, and the expectations of both doctor and patient.

All of these factors -- **communication barriers**, lack of mutual understanding, and prejudice --

significantly reduce the quality of care offered to deaf and hard of hearing people.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

PAH, MD (Promoting Awareness in Healthcare, Medical and Deaf) was created to lessen the current void between deaf and hard of hearing individuals and the medical community. Medical students, hearing and deaf healthcare providers, deaf healthcare recipients, interpreters, and advocates have become involved in the PAH chapters.

Started in 1995 at The Medical College of Virginia, chapters now exist at MCY, Tufts University, the University of Virginia, and the University of Rochester.

It is the aim of PAH, MD to:

Educate the medical community about the unique issues and responsibilities in providing effective health care to deaf and hard of hearing people, and to promote a basic understanding of Deaf culture, sign language and hearing loss.

Engage medical students and healthcare providers in cooperative projects with members of the local Deaf and hard of hearing communities to disseminate healthcare information and increase the awareness of d/hoh individuals' rights and responsibilities in healthcare settings.

Encourage deaf and hard of hearing individuals to consider careers in medicine and other healthcare professions through career awareness programs and other efforts.

WHAT'S IN OUR NAME?

The acronym PAH, MD (Promoting Awareness in Healthcare, Medical and Deaf) was selected because it has relevant meanings in both English and American Sign Language (ASL). PAH! is an ASL expression which means "success", "at last", "finally" and other similar thoughts. MD signifies the project's involvement with the medical community.

Questions? Comments? Please write to the PAH, MD at the UR Webpage Author. Email:PAHMD@aol.com

<http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/smd/pahmd/pah-md1.htm>.