

**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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April Members' Meeting

The regular members' meeting of the North Shore Branch was held at St. Martin's Church in North Vancouver on Monday April 20, 1998. It was attended by 15 members and 14 visitors including some family members and other guests.

The guest speaker for the evening was Jennifer Shifrin, B.Sc., M. Ed., M.A., a registered clinical counsellor and speech language pathologist. Mrs. Shifrin entitled her workshop presentation "Enhancing Communication and Enriching Relationships Between Family Members and Hard of Hearing People". The evening presented an opportunity to explore how you feel, think and behave in relationships with your loved ones and friends, and to gain insight into what it's like for them to be in a relationship with you. Some of the questions addressed were: What's comfortable and what's uncomfortable in your relationship? Where do you get stuck and repeat patterns that result in frustration, hurt and withdrawal? What can you do to make this better.

The workshop involved audience participation where members and guests shared scenarios from their daily life and how they coped with the difficulties of either being hard of hearing or living with a hard of hearing individual. The evening was filled with lively discussion, humour and emotion. Those present undoubtedly came away with tools and knowledge to help promote and encourage loving and healthy relationships.

The evening ended with a social and a drawing for a 50/50 prize and other prizes.



Erica Barrett

President's Report

Your North Shore Branch has had a busy March and April, with a Hospital Display, three presentations, a members' meeting which was very educational in learning how to overcome family difficulties with hard of hearing persons.

The Display was set up in Lions Gate Hospital from March 30 to April 3. At lunch time on Wednesday, it was staffed by myself, Hugh Hetherington, Ahmad Rafiei, and Alice Keating with her hearing dog, Mindy. Our display was very well received including our documentation handouts. The hospital took photos of our display for their newsletter and suggested we might like to do a future display on "Access to Health" in one of the malls.

For your information, LGH now has a TTY installed which has proved to be of great benefit to deaf and hard of hearing people.

I would also like to remind you again to save your spent hearing aid batteries and any unused hearing aids. They can be brought to the meetings or my residence and I will see that they get recycled. A suggestion is to keep the spent batteries in a zip-lock bag.

Our treasurer, Alfred Kobbeltvedt will be representing us at the CHHA National Conference and Annual General Meeting to be held this year in Edmonton on the weekend of May 30th.

We hope to see all of you at the DESSERT PARTY.

Pacific Assistance Dogs Society.

Pacific Assistance Dogs Society (PADS) trains dogs to assist persons with a hearing disability so that they can achieve greater independence and an enhanced quality of life. Most people know about the invaluable service provided by guide dogs for the blind. What is not so widely known is that there are dogs trained to assist people with other special needs.

PADS, a local non-profit organization based in Burnaby trains three types of assistance dogs:



Hearing Dogs alert the deaf or hearing impaired to a variety of sounds within the home, including alarm clocks, smoke detectors, kettles, timers, doorbells, telephones/TTD's and even to a baby crying. Upon recognizing any of these sounds, a Hearing dog immediately alerts its hearing impaired partner and leads them to the sound. **Service dogs** are trained to assist people with physical disabilities or impairments in carrying out their daily activities. **Social dogs** have many of the skills of a Service dog but are restricted with their public access. These dogs are placed with individuals who are convalescing, autistic or developmentally delayed.

The program is funded by private foundations, individuals, service clubs and dog clubs. The society receives no government funding whatsoever. It costs approximately \$6000 to train a Hearing dog and \$12,000 to train a Service dog. PADS places these dogs with recipients for an

administration and placement fee of only \$200.00. The remainder is funded by donations.

The current waiting list for a Hearing dog is approximately one year and up to three years for a Service/Social dog. People with disabilities, other than blindness, who can demonstrate that an Assistance dog will further enhance their independence are invited to apply. Applicants are requested to send a letter requesting an application to the Pacific Assistance Dogs Society. Your letter should tell about yourself, including your age, disability, the effect your disability has on your life and how you feel an Assistance dog will help you. After receiving your letter, PADS will send an application packet to complete, if appropriate. Apply to:

PADS

9048 Stormont Avenue, Burnaby, BC V3N 4G6

Phone 527-0556 Fax 527-0556

www.wzone.com/showcase/pads

pads@skybus.com

Laura L. Watamanuk

Executive Director

527-0556

14th Annual Rotary Club Bike-a-Thon

“Donate in 98”

The North Shore Branch will again be looking for riders and pledges for the Rotary Club Bike-a-Thon which will take place on Sunday July 12, 1998. Funds raised will go to support the Rotary Hearing Centre at U.B.C., and, as well as, other hearing related purposes, they will also go towards establishing a Hearing Clinical Centre at St. Paul's Hospital.

Information on registration and pledge sheets can be obtained from Bill Tivy at 987-5239. Income tax receipts will be issued for all donations over \$10.00.

Last year over \$700.00 in pledges was raised by our membership.

Our thanks to Bob and Deb Sherwood for providing the following three reports on conferences recently attended: (1) Canadian Educators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CAE-DHH) - B.C. Branch annual conference; (2) Interdisciplinary Views of Classroom Hearing Accessibility: The Sum of the Parts; and (3) Living as a Hard of Hearing Person. Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood are the parents of two hard of hearing children living on the North Shore.

CAEDHH - B.C. CONFERENCE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1998

Our children's itinerant teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing invited us to the Canadian Educators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing - B.C. Branch annual conference. It was a two day affair and we were only able to attend Day 1. But what a day!

After the obligatory opening comments from politicians, Suzanne Bailey (who's in charge of FM equipment for the Ministry of Education among other roles) cautioned teachers and parents to keep informed of their School Board's decisions with respect to special education funds. The funds are now de-targeted so may be included in a Board's general revenues.

Dr. Janet Jamieson from IHEAR at UBC informed the teachers that an ASL curriculum guide has been prepared for Grades 5 through 12 and that ASL might soon be considered a second language for university entrance. ASL implementation will vary depending on school district.

After this piece of good news, Dr. Carol LaSasso from Gallaudet University reviewed her latest research that points out that deaf students are no more literate than they were 30 years ago. All the various reading programs developed to help deaf kids become literate (including my kids' favourite - "Reading Milestones") aren't really having the positive effects that were hoped. She quoted many disheartening statistics, including:

- λ the current average reading level of 18-year-old deaf students in the U.S. is 3rd - 4th grade

- λ only 10% of 18-year-old deaf students in the U.S. read above an 8th grade reading level
- λ the best predictors of reading achievement are world knowledge and English grammar, better than IQ, speech, or hearing status.

She described what is meant by reading comprehension, and discussed comprehension breakdowns and strategies to overcome these breakdowns. The bottom line for Carol's speech was the more a deaf student reads the better - at everything.

After coffee break, I heard Mary Deane Smith, author of "The Art of Itinerant Teaching" speak on "Orchestrating Success for Your Student in the Mainstreamed Classroom". I was hoping to glean some tips for our children (two HOH kids in Kindergarten and Grade 3), but mostly the topic concerned the role of the itinerant (not just a teacher!), organizing student files, finding office space and taking care of oneself. Self-help for the itinerant teacher.

Pat Holborn, SFU, spoke on processes and strategies for developing literacy and the importance of the early years. She echoed Carol's comments that life experiences (world knowledge), access to rich print environments and lots of reading practice are keys to learning literacy. She advocated a literacy program for all schools.

Bonnie Tucker, the keynote speaker, had to be the highlight of the day. After lunch, when most of us were a little drowsy, she had the audience laughing and crying as she described her life as a deaf person. Bonnie is an attorney, professor of law, author (her most recent book is "The Feel of Silence") and international speaker. She has been profoundly deaf since infancy, never worn hearing aids and currently has a cochlear implant. She lip reads and steadfastly refuses to sign.

Bonnie Tucker's eight commandments for deaf and hard of hearing persons:

1. Set your own goals
2. Be creative
3. Don't give up

4. Take the extra step
5. Keep a sense of humour
6. Be adaptable
7. Think positive - realize some obstacles are unchangeable
8. Let off steam (appropriately)

Bonnie's success seems to be fuelled by an underlying current of anger - anger at being different, at being deaf. I'd rather my children be less angry and more comfortable with their hearing loss, even if it means less career success.

INTERDISCIPLINARY VIEWS OF CLASSROOM HEARING ACCESSIBILITY:

THE SUM OF THE PARTS

FEBRUARY 21 AND 22, 1998

It was an intense Saturday and Sunday at the IHEAR (Institute of Hearing Accessibility Research at UBC) Conference.

This was an intensive two-day conference with lots of great speakers from across Canada. It was very gratifying to see all these experts from differing fields - acoustical engineering, electrical engineering, architecture, educational audiology, speech therapy, to mention but a few - come together to help our kids!

I can't possibly provide all the highlights - so I'll give one or two (well, eleven) key "take-home messages":

1. Hard of hearing persons have a three second processing delay; normal hearing persons have a .8 second delay. Therefore, conversations often fly by HOH children before they can participate.
2. Hearing is developmental. Children and seniors can tolerate less background noise than teenagers and adults. Therefore, our classrooms are backwards acoustically - terrible for elementary years (portables being the worst) but better acoustics in universities.
3. All classrooms are acoustically inadequate for

hearing and hard of hearing persons - gyms and cafeterias are worse. Therefore, all children would benefit from quieter classrooms.

4. Parents need to lobby for better classroom acoustics. Reference to published research should be used to support your request (Contact IHEAR, UBC).

5. Sometimes simple modifications help. Can't afford carpets? Recycle and slash tennis balls and put them on the bottom of desks and chairs. (There is a company in Toronto that now sells pre-slashed tennis balls!)

6. We need to lobby to have acoustic considerations part of the building code.

7. We need to lobby to have hearing aids covered by MSP.

8. The Incredible Hulk was deaf. (Just checking to see if you're still reading!)

9. A lot of critical listening and language development is learnt by osmosis - but not for deaf and HOH kids.

10. Try to make classroom accommodations for the HOH child universal to avoid preferential treatment, e.g., write instructions on blackboards, give notes to all students.

11. Success should be measured in social competence rather than 10.

LIVING AS A HARD OF HEARING PERSON

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1998

This seminar was geared for hard of hearing individuals - focussing more on the psychological effects of hearing loss than on technical remedies.

Dr. Michael Harvey, a clinical psychologist and professor at Gallaudet, recanted many heart-warming tales from his hard of hearing patients. Tales of being pulled between the deaf and hearing worlds, of being misunderstood by parents and friends, tales of loneliness, isolation and frustration. But tales of triumph too, of those who have accepted their hearing loss and learned to deal with it on a daily basis.

Dr. Harvey's talk was followed by a panel of hard

of hearing persons who discussed their hearing loss and what it means to them and their families. They offered various coping strategies that worked for them.

Dr. Lorna Hruby and Dr. Fred Kozak, a spousal tag team, discussed the role of the family physician and otolaryngologist. Essentially these doctors provide diagnosis and probable cause of the hearing loss, but not much help otherwise.

Maryalyce McDonald, an audiologist with WIDHH discussed the role of the audiologist and all the wonderful technical devices available to help manage hearing loss.

Dr. Jane Hastings from Victoria discussed the early years of language learning. Be glad if you were late-deafened! She talked about the differences between language and speech, normal language acquisition and the implications for children with a hearing loss. These children miss out on the "trivia", the huge amount of learning that is by osmosis. She explained the difficulty of learning English and the "gapiness" in language that is inevitable if a child has a hearing loss - she had a frightening term for this, "cognitive impoverishment". Her remedies? Early diagnosis, be over-explicit, and never take any learning for granted; always check up. There is so much more, phone or e-mail if you'd like to discuss any of the conferences. Deb Sherwood 604-984-8448 or e-mail sherwood@bc.sympatico.ca

MEDICAL SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER SERVICES INTRODUCED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The following is taken from a press release by the B.C. Government April 8, 1998.

VICTORIA - British Columbians who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing will be able to access interpreter and intervenor services in emergency medical situations beginning in April.

Health Minister Penny Priddy said today, "We are introducing a new service in British Columbia that will help people with hearing disabilities better communicate with their health care providers," said Priddy. "This new service will ensure equal access to medical services for people who are deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing."

Publicly funded medical interpreter and intervenor services in British Columbia will be implemented in two phases. Beginning on April 14 at 8 a.m., people who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing will be able to access interpreters and intervenors in emergencies and urgent health situations, including consent for surgery, prenatal physician care and childbirth.

Phase I will be operated by the Vancouver Catholic Health Care Group and will include a 24-hour, toll-free line (voice and TTY) to link patients throughout the province with interpreters and intervenors. Program co-ordinators will work closely with existing agencies already providing these services.

By August, Phase II will be initiated, and medical interpreter and intervenor services will be available for physician and non-emergency hospital services. Strategies to increase the availability of assistive devices for the hard of hearing will also be part of phase two.

Since the Oct. 9, 1997, decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, the Ministry of Health has been consulting with consumers and health care providers on the development and implementation of this new service. The court ruled that the Medical Services Commission and hospitals of British Columbia must provide interpretation services for the deaf when they are receiving medical care and when interpretive services are necessary for effective communication between a deaf patient and their physician.

To access the first phase of the program, the following numbers are in place:

TTY line (hearing impaired): 1-888-604-8884

Voice line: 1-888-386-9996 (outside Vancouver)

Peer Support Women's Discussion Group of Seniors Hub.

By Erica Barrett.

On Thursday, April 23rd, a presentation was given at Delbrook Community Centre, to the "Peer Support Women's Discussion Group of Seniors Hub".

As only one person present had a T-Switch, others were unable to try the Neck Loop and personal amplifier which I have been using. The usual complaints of background noise in meetings and in restaurants were given, which can be helped with a T-Switch, a loop and amplifier.

The group comprised hearing and hard of hearing seniors. Questions were raised about the difficulties of communication between hearing and hard of hearing people. We were able to give suggestions on coping with this problem.

We displayed our speechreading poster explaining the benefits of taking a speechreading course. The Branch will be starting another course in September.

We also spoke about hearing aids, listening devices, and "Closed Captioning", which I have found very beneficial to my quality of life. Other helpful hints, such as, the Dry Aid Container which removes moisture from your hearing prolonging its life, were given.

We showed our "Communication Access" Video and talked about the cost of hearing aids and repairs.

On display were our Branch brochures, along with a variety of educational pamphlets, our recent newsletter, a poster on "How to Talk with a Hard of Hearing Person" and a "Listen" magazine from the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association. Also, handed out to participants was a copy of an article on Senior's Self Help (Listen December 1997) by Norah Browne, Chair Senior's Committee CHHA, and an article on what

our Branch does in the Community.

I wish to thank Ahmad Rafiei for his assistance at this presentation.

Other Presentations

On April 22nd, a presentation on Hearing aid history was given at the West Vancouver Jewish Community Centre by Hugh Hetherington. Many of the instruments in Hugh's collection were put on display.

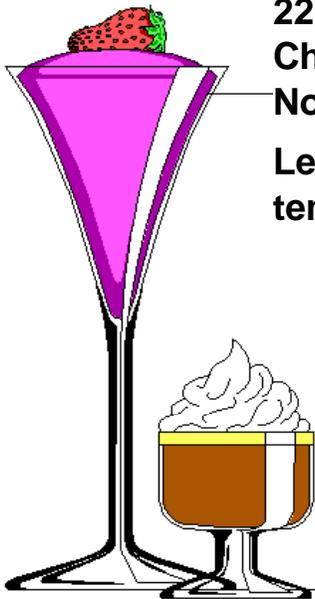
On May 6th, Alfred Kobbeltvedt and Hugh Hetherington gave a presentation before the North Shore Shrine Club. The group were very interested in a look at a few older hearing instruments and comparing them to what is available today. The video "Stop That Noise" from the League for the Hard of Hearing, New York was shown and discussed. Brochures from CHHA and the North Shore Branch were on display and picked up by many of the 35 or so attending. The meeting ended with a question and answer period which had to be cut short because of time and

Members' Meeting Monday June 22nd at 7:00 PM

A Social Evening and Dessert Party will be held Monday June 22nd at 7:00 PM at St. Martin's Church, 195 East Windsor Road, North Vancouver.

Leave some room after dinner to tempt yourself with some deli-

Family members and friends are also invited to come along and enjoy the evening and get acquainted with our members. There will be a 50/50 draw plus other door



SEE YOU ON JUNE