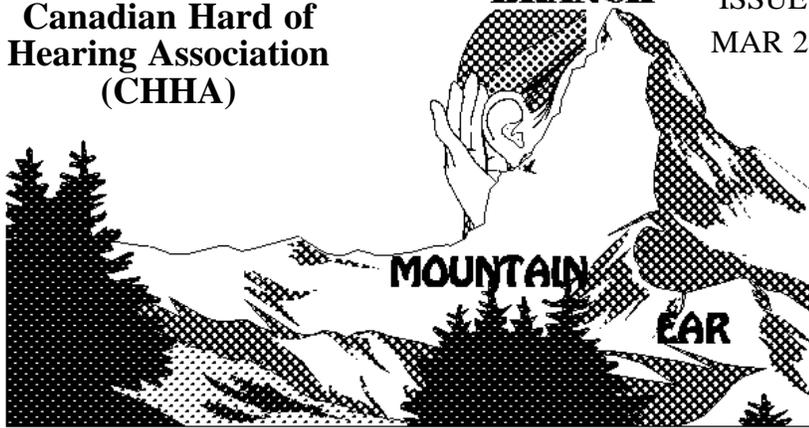


**Publication of the
Canadian Hard of
Hearing Association
(CHHA)**

**NORTH SHORE
BRANCH**

**ISSUE 32
MAR 2001**



MOUNTAIN EAR is a publication of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association North Shore Branch. It is Published 4 times a year on the 15th of March, June, September and December.

Your submissions are always welcome. Please contact the Editor:

Hugh Hetherington:

Telephone 604-926-8049

FAX 604-925-2286

e-mail: hughh@vcn.bc.ca

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We hope you are all enjoying our wonderful sunny winter. We are just so lucky to be living on the North Shore. We need to be thankful for all our blessings in the fact that we live in one of the best places in the world. We only need to travel out of Vancouver to realize just how lucky we are to live here.

THANK YOU THANK YOU

The board thanks the few members who responded to the charitable donation letter for the North Shore Branch of CHHA. Our branch has grown to the point that a part time coordinator is really needed, as well as, a part time treasurer. The Branch does many things other than just the members' meetings. We are making your community more hearing accessible. Our monies are needed for:

- λ Advertising in the Local Community Newspaper 3 or 4 times a year.
- λ Postering in the Community for International Noise Awareness Day and Hearing Awareness Month.
- λ Paying part time employees
- λ Presentations to various groups
- λ Loops for churches as an adjunct to their existing listening systems.
- λ Printing brochures
- λ Donating video's to Libraries for Awareness of Hearing Loss
- λ Printing Nomination and Annual General Meeting Notices
- λ Newsletter costs.
- λ The project "Noise Pollution on the North Shore"
- λ Rent of space to hold members meetings, 3 x \$75.00. 50% of the membership fees of \$7.50 goes just for this cause.
- λ Monthly rent for office, yearly \$300.00. You will now be able to come for appointments on a one to one basis.
- λ Managing Your Hearing Loss Courses.

These are just some of the things we do to create awareness and support for the hard of hearing in your community. The Branch part of the annual fee is \$7.50 and this does not cover the postage and cost of paper for newsletters, brochures, annual meeting notices or any of the expenses associated with the above mentioned projects. We are a charitable organization and your donation receipts can be claimed as a deduction on your income tax.

FEBRUARY MEETING

It was great to see so many out to the February meeting. For those who missed the meeting, I am sorry, as Virginia Andrews, an occupational audiologist from the Workmen's Compensation Board, gave a wonderful presentation which gave us much food for thought.

APRIL MEMBERS' MEETING

In April you will have a great opportunity to get together and hear another speaker to be announced later.

MALLS

I thank the volunteers who helped out at the malls on January 27th, This was for Access Awareness Day and it was a way to make ourselves known in the community. It took many volunteer hours to get this organized and the booths manned with very short notice.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Reaching hard of hearing people by phone is often difficult, so if any of you would like to share your e-mail address with us it would be most helpful. When things pop up very quickly like the Access Awareness Day did, we could send out a distress call for volunteers a lot quicker than trying to reach people by telephone. We will send a clip board around at the next meeting for you to register your e-mail address, if you so desire.

INFORMAL MEETINGS

We hold informal meetings in the afternoon 9 months of the year. Members meetings 3 times a year. Next Informal Meeting is Tuesday March 20, 1:30 p.m. at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre. This is an opportunity to meet others, talk about any problems one has with their hearing. Next members meeting is April 23rd at 7 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS

There is much work to be done in the community and if you would like to volunteer, do let us know. We will also send a clip board around for you to sign up at the next meeting. There are many small jobs, such as mail outs, delivering posters, making presentations, the treasurer's job, helping with set up for meetings to name a few. We would like to hear from anyone who would like to set up our library at CCSS and look after it. THANKS to all the volunteers who helped to set up the meeting on February 19th. This takes approximately one hour. The loop wiring has to be laid, the chairs and tables set out and various supplies taken. Then it all has to be put back in order, the rent paid and supplies taken back to our office. The old saying, that everything takes longer than you think, is so true.

RESOURCE AND INFORMATION CENTRE

You will soon be able to come to our office on an appointment basis to discuss any problems you might be experiencing with hearing loss. Our library will also be made available for you.

CLOSED CAPTIONING

National and Provincial would like your comments on the new format on CBC News Hour at 6 p.m. Do you like the format? Is it too fast for you to read? Please phone your comments to our office 988-7115. Thanks. If we take an interest in closed captioning then we just might have more programs with closed captions. We ask you to take responsibility for this issue. In closing we wish you all a Very Happy Easter.

See you at the April Meeting.

Erica Barrett Office 988-7115, Fax 980-6695

CHHA - North Shore Branch gratefully acknowledges a donation of \$500.00 from the Howe Sound Lion's Club. These donations from Community and Service Groups help us tremendously in our efforts to make the North Shore Communities more hearing accessible.

Managing Your Hearing Loss

A course sponsored by CHHA - North Shore Branch and made possible by municipal grants from the District of North Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver.

The next *Managing Your Hearing Loss* course is being presented at the West Vancouver Memorial Library at Marine Drive and 20th Street. This course covers speech reading and other techniques to help you cope with your hearing loss. Classes will be held on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon starting April 10 through May 29. The course fee is \$20.00 and includes a one year's membership in the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association.

For information or registration, please contact the West Van Seniors' Activity Centre at 925-7280.

Celebrating Independence - Access Awareness Day

Submitted by Keri Armstrong.

Thanks to the hard work and determination of our president, Erica Barrett, the North Shore Branch of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association was able to participate in Access Awareness Day. The theme 'Celebrating Independence' featured information displays and hands on events designed to help the general public appreciate some of the challenges persons with disabilities meet in day-to-day living. The sponsor of this event, The Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (ACDI), is a committee of volunteers representing the three North Shore municipalities who seek to advise the mayors, councils, and staff on municipal issues affecting people with disabilities. ACDI chairperson John Neumann noted that "whether it be on the job, shopping, attending school or community events, it is often difficult for persons who are not disabled to know how best to respond to the special needs of someone with a hearing, visual, or physical disability...We're hoping to help bring about a more informed insight into ways in which the community at large can contribute to the independence of persons with disabilities of any kind."

The North Shore Branch participated in the special displays and demonstrations at both Park Royal Mall and Capilano Mall on Saturday January 27th, 2001. Our volunteers included Peter Jones, Flo Spratt, Keri Armstrong, Marion Ladkin, Mae and Dermott McInnes, Alice Keating, Roy Duncan, and Erica Barrett. Both Malls had flyers, information on our next meeting and guest speaker, and videos that were available for the public to view. The response picked up as the day went by and it was an excellent opportunity to increase public awareness and interest

CHHA BC Annual Conference Part II

Submitted by Keri Armstrong
November 4th, 2000 Richmond Delta Airport Hotel.

Early Saturday morning the attendees arrived back at the hotel to continue learning at the conference. The morning session, CHHA Branches in Action, provided insight as to what other activities the branches in BC were organizing, and was set up to collect and share new and innovative ideas with each other. Some suggestions that came out of this workshop included:

- λ Providing Close Captioning in Hospital TV's (Chilliwack)
- λ Raising funds for a portable ALD system for public use (Chilliwack)
- λ Raising funds towards a bursary for a hard of hearing student (Chilliwack)
- λ Mall displays (Kelowna, North Shore)
- λ Use of alternative therapies to aid in side effects of hearing loss (Kelowna)
- λ Guest speakers (New Westminster, Victoria, North Shore)
- λ Special Holiday gatherings and events (Vancouver)
- λ Advertise coming events in local paper (Comox, North Shore)
- λ TV/VCR display in malls (Comox)
- λ Reviewing environmentally safe enhanced ear (Kamloops)
- λ 911 TTY practice coordinated with 911-response team (Kamloops)
- λ Access workshops (Kamloops)
- λ Displays in grocery stores (Kamloops)
- λ Follow up via annual letters with buildings with access for check up and battery checks (Kamloops, North Shore)
- λ Casual meetings open to all members to discuss new or pertinent items, leaves member meetings for guest speaker and social only (Kamloops)
- λ Bring hearing dogs to branch meetings (Coquitlam)
- λ Presentations to Brownie/Scout packs to advocate hearing loss prevention (Victoria)
- λ Annual Barbeque (Victoria)
- λ MedicAlert discussion (Victoria)
- λ Provincial Community Employee Fund - monies collected from provincial government employees (Victoria)
- λ Advertising in seniors' directories (Victoria)
- λ Coffee and Newspaper mornings every three months (Victoria)
- λ Keep Well presentations in various locations in the

community (North Shore)

After hearing all the wonderful ideas and involvement of the various branches of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association going on around the province, Ken Cruise, Board of Hearing Aid Dispensers and Consultants, provided a presentation on some of the newest technologies available. He covered a wide range of hearing aids and gave all of the attendees a taste of what was to come in the near future for ALD's.

Again, the Delta Hotel catered a wonderful meal at which we had the opportunity to mix and mingle and to meet other members of CHHA-BC. The afternoon session consisted of a fantastic performance focusing on acting with a hearing loss. This presentation demonstrated how people with a hearing loss have to cope in situations that don't always "follow the script". Snippets from the shows, *Steel Magnolias* and *The Odd Couple* were used to identify how a hard of hearing actress manages. The presenters were Gael Hannan and Dalene Uveges. The presentation provided an insightful view as to how, not only actors, but also the general public deal with hearing loss in a hearing society.

Saturday concluded with the CHHA-BC Annual General Meeting. Minutes are available from the North Shore Branch Office.

Overall the conference was a great success with over 175 attendees, their largest turnout ever! The mood was enlightening with a keen sense of learning how each of us can advocate on behalf of the hard of hearing and give them a voice in the community. Many ideas were shared and compared and guest speakers rounded off the conference with plenty of

Next Members' Meeting.

The next members' meeting will be held on Monday, April 23rd at 7:00 PM at St. John's Anglican Church, 220 West 8th Street, North Vancouver.

Our Speaker for this meeting has not yet been confirmed, so we will be sending out a meeting notice closer to the date advising you what we have arranged.

The meeting will be followed by the usual social with refreshments. We will also have ALD's on display and available for demonstration.

Please mark April 23rd on your calendar

WHAT DOES NATIONAL DO?

2nd Instalment submitted by Erica Barrett.

National President's Agenda from June to December 2000.

The president of CHHA National, Colin Cantlie, attended many meetings on behalf of the Association. Listed below are just some of his activities in the last six months of 2000. As you can see, numerous volunteer hours are put in on your behalf.

June - December

- λ attended - June 2000, the American counterpart, the Self Help for Hard of Hearing (SHHH) National Conference
- λ July - an activity - a proposal to Health Canada on Children's Hearing Screening. This became a focus in August.
- λ September - Attended the CHHA Edmonton Meeting
- λ September- In Ottawa meeting with the Director of HRDC's (Human Resources Disabilities Concerns) office on disability issues.
- λ September - Attended the CHHA funding Committee.
- λ October - Workshop in Lethbridge
- λ October - The Canadian Transportation Agency (CIA) Accessibility Advisory Committee in Ottawa.
- λ November - Senate Partnership Day - one of the major items at the CIA meetings was sensitivity awareness and the fact that it seems to be a lower priority by service providers.
- λ Other activities were getting the by laws passed by Industry Canada. They approved them in October.
- λ Participating in support of the Quebec child who was refused a cochlear implant. The child had been assessed by a doctor in Quebec and was refused an implant due to the boy's knowledge of sign language and the doctors fear of damaging any hearing Ryan already possessed. The CHHA Board discussed this subject and decided to lend support to this family.
- λ December - Attended Victoria Branch, B.C. Annual Meeting.

Your National President is a very busy volunteer for CHHA. Many hours are just spent travelling back and forth to Ottawa where our National Office is located. We hope this gives you some idea what is going on behind the scenes. Next instalment will be on what others on the Board accomplish.

The Cosmetic Focus

The following article is an excerpt from a paper entitled "Why People Won't Wear Hearing Aids" written by Dr. Mark Ross, Ph.D. The full text and other writings by Dr. Ross may be viewed on his website at www.hearingresearch.org.

It is clear that without a change in public attitudes toward hearing impairment, our success in convincing people to acknowledge their hearing loss is always going to be limited. People with hearing losses are part of the larger public, with attitudes toward disability in general, and hearing-impairment in particular, that basically reflect the values of their society. What we need are more public educational programs regarding hearing loss and what can be done to alter its communicative and psychosocial consequences. In an era when sophisticated advertising in our media can "sell" anything from products to politicians, it should not be too difficult to minimize the denial phenomenon and the stigma associated with hearing aid usage. Unfortunately, it seems that much of the efforts of the hearing aid industry in this regard are basically counterproductive and schizophrenic.

For at least forty years that I know of, we have been getting mixed messages from the hearing aid industry. On the one hand, much of its advertising emphasizes the advantages of hearing aid usage in improving communication capabilities. On the other hand, different advertisements stress the miniature size of their hearing aids, or the fact that "no one need know you are wearing one." (Forty years ago, hearing aid companies advertised that they would send an inquirer information about their products in a plain brown envelope!). The more the industry focuses on cosmetics, on the fact that a hearing aid can be hidden, the more powerful the subliminal message that a hearing loss is a condition that should be hidden. I am convinced that for every person who succumbs to the cosmetic appeal and who purchases and wears an "invisible" hearing aid, there are several others whose feelings of shame and reluctance to acknowledge a hearing loss are being reinforced. At the least, the industry is perpetuating stereotypes it has an interest in changing, which is why I call many of its efforts counter-productive and schizophrenic. The professional community bears its share of responsibility for this situation. I know audiologists who would never think of recommending a large hearing aid, even if it embodies some desirable features (such as a telecoil). They assume that their clients share the public perception that a smaller, less visible hearing aid, is more likely to be worn (or purchased, an important consideration in a dispensing practice). Of course people have a right to select any size hearing aid they want, but they also have a right to be informed about different alternatives and the relative advantages and disadvantages of each. Some consumers will select function as their primary criterion in a hearing aid. It is this group that can help change public attitudes toward hearing loss. Simply by selecting hearing aids based on function and not cosmetics, by using visible assistive devices (such as infra-red receivers in a theater), these people

convey the message that a hearing loss is not a personal disgrace which must be camouflaged at all cost. Their lives demonstrate that they are not diminished in stature, in self-esteem or the esteem of their community, by virtue of their hearing loss. In the long run, it will be the example of those who publicly acknowledge their hearing loss when neces-

The author of the above article, Dr. Mark Ross, Ph.D. is Professor Emeritus of Audiology, University of Connecticut and has served as Vice President of the SHHH Board of Trustees. He writes a regular column for Hearing Loss - The Journal of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, called "Developments in Research and Technology." He has published and lectured extensively on topics dealing with hearing loss. As an individual who has worn a hearing aid for almost fifty years, Dr. Ross brings a special degree of credibility to his publications. We will try to feature other writings by Dr. Ross in future editions of Mountain Ear.

MEMBERS' MEETING FEBRUARY 19, 2000

Report by Keri Armstrong.

Erica Barrett welcomed the visitors and members of the North Shore Branch to the meeting and introduced the volunteers who helped with various aspects of the meeting, which included Flo Spratt, Joan Watson, Clarence Bleackley, Andrea Gauthier, Rod Cameron, Keri Armstrong, Dermott and Mae McInnes, Audrey Kirkpatrick, Peter Jones, Alice Keating, Hugh Hetherington, and Alfred Kobbeltveldt.

Update on the New Office

There is now a resource and information centre being set up in the office at Capilano Community Services Society for members to review material on hard of hearing issues and be able to discuss their problems. We will also have a library for members to sign out material on a loan basis.

Visitors to the Meeting

Erica asked new members and visitors to identify where they heard about the North Shore Branch meeting. Responses included receiving the brochures handed out during Access Awareness Day at Capilano Mall, reading about the meeting in the North Shore News, and participating in the Managing Your

Hearing Loss course sponsored by the North Shore Branch.

Guest Speaker's Presentation

Following our theme of prevention Alfred introduced our guest speaker for the evening. Virginia Andrews, M.Sc., Aud(C) is an occupational audiologist with the Worker's Compensation Board, Hearing Conservation Section Prevention Division. She has been with WCB for ten years and has obtained her Master of Science from UBC. She has worked as a clinical audiologist the various hospitals, rehabilitation centres and in private clinics in British Columbia and currently also teaches at the UBC School of Audiology. Her clinical focus is prevention activities and noise induced hearing loss as an occupational disease.

Hearing Conservation in British Columbia

Noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) is damage to the inner ear that affects both ears and causes certain sounds to be unclear. It is the most common industrial disease with over 3000 claims filed with the WCB per year. NIHL was discovered over 2000 years ago and has been identified as a painless, progressive, permanent but preventable condition. An example of NIHL can be seen with carpenters whose ability to hear clearly in the higher frequency ranges is greatly reduced over a 25-year period.

Noise is various sounds that cause hearing loss, but how do you know if noise is harmful or not? There

are three critical parameters that determine this. The first is frequency. The frequencies for speech are mainly in the 600-6000 Hz range. The second parameter is the intensity, or loudness. Any intensity over 85 decibels is considered potentially harmful. Finally the duration of the sound when it is heard for longer than eight hours per day, or the equivalent.

For example all of the following exposures have the same potential damaging effect on the ear: 85 dBA for 8 hours, 88 dBA for 4 hours, 91 dBA for 2 hours, 94 dBA for 1 hour, 97 dBA for 30 minutes, or 100 dBA for 15 minutes.

To understand the risk of noise exposure you need to know the potential damage based on the level of exposure. Some typical industrial exposures include BC Ferries Ramp Attendant (85.2 dBA), Auto

Hearing Conservation in Noisy Industry

What is NIHL?

What is "Noise"?

Regulation

Hearing Protection

Hearing Tests

Does HC work?



Mechanics (87dBA), Carpenters (90dBA), Millwright (93dBA), and Faller (103dBA).

There are seven elements of a hearing conservation program under the occupational health and safety regulations. They are noise measurements, education



A most attentive Audience listens to Virginia

and training, noise control, provision of hearing protection devices, posting of noisy areas, annual hearing tests, and annual program reviews. The workers in noisy environments must understand these regulations so they are aware of the potential danger and have options for prevention. The primary means of prevention is noise control and secondary is the use of hearing protection devices.

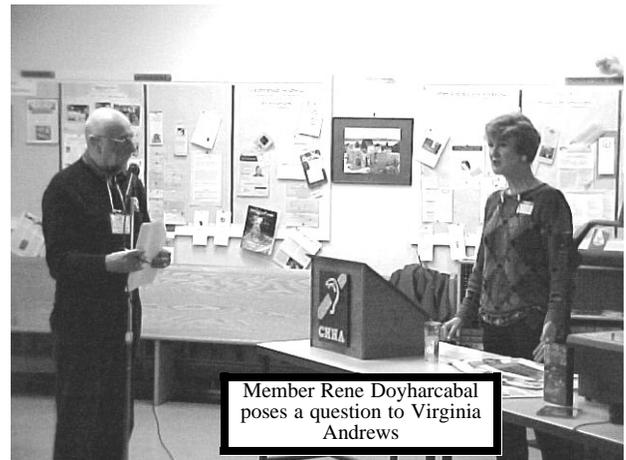
Hearing Protection Devices (HPD) also follow a set of regulations to ensure the products being used are effective in preventing noise induced hearing loss. The employer must address all regulation criteria with all employees. The degree to which a worker is exposed is critical in the selection of HPD's. The current hearing level of the individual is assessed to determine the degree to which HPD's are required as well as communication demands, temperature and climate, physical constraints of the worker or work activity and the use of other personal protective equipment. There are several classes of HPD's that are available through suppliers throughout British Columbia. Some cut out specific frequencies others reduce the sound heard by the same amount at all frequencies and allow intermittent noises to be dampened.

An important factor in NIHL is that additional noise may enhance the current hearing loss and may cause more damage with less exposure. Annual hearing tests are an essential asset to determine any type of hearing prevention program in order to monitor the degree of damage to the ear and to reassess the use of hearing protection devices. The WCB trains and certifies Industrial Audiometric Technicians with high standards to test facilities and technicians throughout the

year.

Some general statistics from 1999 on hearing loss show that 145,113 workers were tested for their hearing abilities. There were 293 active Industrial Audiometric Technicians and 107 in-house programs at industrial work places. In addition there were 23 mobile contractors and 23 fixed contractors to service the employees of British Columbia in helping to ensure hearing loss prevention programs were in place. Over the past twenty years the initiation of WCB prevention programs in the workplace have seen the rate of significant hearing loss drop dramatically from 45% to 30% in the age category of 51-65 years. Individuals comprising this age category are most prone to hearing loss because it is a disease that takes many years to develop and become significant.

The WCB prevention division has been developing their hearing conservation program since 1978. They have continued to monitor and evaluate the hearing conservation programs in industry and also assist in training specialists to implement and run the programs. The WCB is also active in upholding regulatory standards and publish articles, pamphlets, and handouts to increase public awareness of NIHL and to advocate their hearing conservation programs. The WCB is structured such that the claims and prevention division are handled within the same department; therefore, results are tracked and recorded with beneficial results.



Member Rene Doyharcabal poses a question to Virginia Andrews

Meeting Conclusions

A brief discussion was held at the conclusion of the presentation. Peter Jones thanked Virginia Andrews for providing us with a wonderful and informative presentation. Ms. Andrews was available after the meeting to answer questions and to provide further information on specific topics to those who were interested in discussing the topic further.

The door prize drawings were made with the winners