

Publication of the
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(CHHA)

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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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Seasons Greetings



President's Message

We have had a busy two months since our annual general meeting representing the Branch at various functions. Hugh Hetherington represented the Branch at the Vancouver International Airport *Barrier Free Access* lunch/tour. (see pages 2 and 3) Bill Tivy and I represented the Branch at a forum held at the North Shore Neighbourhood House, where the City of North Vancouver's Task Force on Affordable Housing presented their final recommendations to go before City Council. I attended the forum "Meeting the Needs of Hard of Hearing Persons: Towards a Common Vision". Members of IHEAR, British Columbia Audiologists and Speech Pathologists Association (BCASLPA) and CHHA - BC, including the Parent's Branch, discussed new directions for collaboration between Hard of Hearing people and audiologists. Bill Tivy attended the meeting of the North Vancouver City Council where the final recommendations of the City of North Vancouver's Task Force on Affordable Housing, which included incorporating adaptable design for persons with special needs, were presented to Council. I attended the November CHHA - BC Conference and A.G.M. and was joined on the second day by Alfred Kobbeltvedt. (see pages 4-6) At the end of November I attended the meeting of the City of North Vancouver's Task Force on Adaptable Housing Design, already endorsed by City Council prior to drafting a bylaw to ammend the City's Zoning Bylaw.

We were pleased to see our members and guests at our November Members' Meeting. Hugh Hetherington gave a wealth of information about many listening devices and accessories that are available in the market today. Alfred

Kobbeltvedt demonstrated with our sound meter, how a hair dryer and power tools can damage hearing. We were all amazed! (see page 6) It seems we always run out of time. There was so much interest shown and a lot of information to take in that we thought in future we would have a table at each meeting where some items are demonstrated during the refreshment period.

We try to have and work in the various ideas which you give us at YOUR MEETINGS. We are always open for ideas. Please let us know what you would like to have at future dates.

It is that time of the year when you will be busy with plans for the festive season. Your Board of Directors sends each of you the Compliments of the Season and best wishes for a Happy New Year. See you in 1999.

Lo. Erica Barrett

Next Members' Meeting

The next members' meeting will be held on Monday February 15th, 1999, 7:00 PM at St. John's Anglican Church, 220 West 8th Street, North Vancouver. Our guest speaker for February is unable to come so all members will be advised by phone of the change of program.

Please note that the meeting dates planned for 1999 are: February 15, April 19, and September 20. The June meeting date will be announced later.

We hope to see you all on February 15th.

Vancouver International Airport Barrier Free Access

On Monday October 19, 1998, the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) and Vancouver International Airport (YVR) hosted a luncheon and tour of the accessible areas of the Vancouver International Airport in order to launch two new products outlined in the press release on page 3. This luncheon, presentation and tour was attended by Hugh Hetherington, Editor Mountain Ear, who provides the following report.

On Monday morning, October 19th, over 100 people with varying disabilities attended a special presentation and tour at Vancouver International Airport. The Master of Ceremony for the presentation was Gavin N. Currie, Director General, AATB (Canadian Transportation Agency). The speakers included Larry Berg, President and CEO, Vancouver International Airport Authority; Marian Robson, Chairman, Canadian Transportation Agency; Barbara Feeser, Vice President, Vancouver Airport Operations, Canadian Airlines International; Daryl Smith, Senior Vice President, Operations, Air BC, Air Canada; Sharon Wagner, Executive Director, Canadian Council of the Blind - BC/Yukon Division. The Coordinator for the launch site activity was Laura Daley, Media Relations, YVR.

Following the presentations by the speakers, the guests were invited to take part in a luncheon in the Oriental Tea Garden Restaurant in the Airport. After the luncheon, the group broke up into smaller groups and was given a guided tour of the accessible areas of the airport during which the various accessible features of the airport were pointed out. There were also some areas of the airport with accessibility problems which were discussed and which hopefully will be improved when changes are made. A copy of the CD-ROM which was introduced at the presentation was obtained and will be available in our Branch Library, as well as copies of "Moving Ahead" a special issue for 1998 from the C.T.A. and "Taking Charge of the Air Travel Experience", a guide for Persons with Disabilities. The CD can be viewed on a computer with operating system Windows 95 or greater. If you would like

your own copy of the CD, the information to obtain it is included in the press release on page 3. The following extracts explain *Barrier Free Access*:

In 1992, the Vancouver International Airport Authority was in the process of designing its new International Terminal Building. The Board decided that facilities at YVR would be a model of accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Board knew not only was this the right thing to do -- it was a sound business decision. Barriers for people with disabilities would mean excluding a large and growing market segment from the shops, restaurants, and air travel services at YVR.



The Authority recognised, however, that being "Barrier Free" was not simply about adding a few additional features to a building. To be truly "Barrier Free" meant creating a corporate culture "from the top down" where issues of accessibility are just part of doing business. It was not just about building design but also about training staff to think

in broader terms.

Our CD is not just a story but a resource. Accessible itself, the CD is equipped with special audio, video and text to allow persons with various disabilities to use it.

The above extracts explain the CD which includes a segment on "Breaking the Barriers" which gets into building features designed to help remove barriers not just for people with mobility impairments but also for people with hearing, vision or cognitive disabilities. This section also includes a game for children about how to communicate with people with disabilities.

Other segments on the CD include "Why be Accessible?", "Making the Change", "Access into the Future", and "Resources".

During the tour, I took particular note of features included for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. These included Visual Fire Alarms; Closed captioned monitors and visual paging systems; TDD/TTY (Telephone Device for the Deaf) pay telephones and TTY general airport information phone service; and Microphone/volume controlled handsets at check-in, service and rental counters.

I also noted that certified service dogs are welcome in both terminals and one of the brochures states that a dog relief station will be introduced in the near future. You can contact the Customer Service Counters for further details.

More information can be obtained by contacting the Vancouver International Airport Authority, Marketing and Strategic Planning at (604) 717-1800 or FAX (604)-717-1818. (Also see Press Release Below)



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Vancouver, BC (October 19,1998): Today at Vancouver International Airport (YVR), the Canadian Transportation Agency and the Airport Authority launched two innovative products designed to make it easier for persons with disabilities to travel by air:

The Agency's travel guide entitled Taking Charge of the Air Travel Experience - A Guide for Persons with Disabilities; and

YVR's CD-ROM entitled Barrier Free Access.

The Agency's travel guide will be of particular benefit to persons with disabilities and senior citizens with little or no air travel experience. The Guide offers information on accessibility features and services available to travellers with disabilities. The booklet was developed jointly by the airline industry, the travel industry, the community of persons with disabilities and the Canadian Transportation Agency.

"Whether you are an experienced air traveller or taking a first trip, information provided in the Agency's new publication will help smooth the way when booking a flight, getting to the airport, moving from check-in to boarding, or when arriving at the airport of destination. We all want to travel with confidence," explained Mrs. Marian Robson, Chairman of the Agency.

The Agency Chairman complimented YVR on their efforts to enhance accessibility at the Vancouver International Airport. Mrs. Robson also pointed out that the joint launch of these the two products illustrates the co-operation that exists between the private and the public sectors to facilitate air travel for all Canadians.

In 1992, while the Vancouver International Airport Authority was in the process of designing its new international terminal, the Board of Directors decided the facility would be a model of accessibility for people with disabilities. They realised that being truly 'barrier free' was not simply about adding a few additional features to a building - it meant creating a whole new corporate culture.

"Adopting a barrier free policy in all that we do is a sound business decision," said Larry Berg, YVR's President and CEO. "Barriers to people with disabilities exclude this large and growing market segment from YVR and air travel - that equates to a barrier to doing business. Our CD ROM is designed to help all businesses, not just airports, realize the importance of barrier free initiatives and attitudes. It just makes sense."

"We're proud to be able to share information with the Canadian Transportation Agency and will continue to develop initiatives which remove barriers for all travellers," added Berg.

Persons with disabilities, seniors and the public can get a copy of the air travel guide Taking Charge of the Air Travel Experience - A Guide for Persons with Disabilities, by calling 1-800-883-1813. The publication is also available in alternative formats.

YVR's CD-ROM Barrier Free Access is available from the Community Relations Group. Please call (604) 276-6308 to receive a complimentary copy. The CD itself is barrier free and can be modified at your computer terminal to accommodate users with varying disabilities.

Information:

Laura Daley

Vancouver International Airport Authority

(604) 880-9815

France Gauthier

Canadian Transportation Agency

(819) 994-0775

This communique is available in alternative formats and on the Internet, in both official languages, at:

www.cta-otc.gc.ca (Canadian Transportation Agency Website)

www.yvr.ca (Vancouver International Airport Authority Website)

CHHA B.C. Conference November 1998

The CHHA B.C. Conference, held in Chilliwack November 6th and 7th was attended by Erica Barrett who gives us the following report on some of the activities:

The conference took place over two days and there was a wealth of information given. I was unable to record all that took place but took down the following points. It was very gratifying to see so many parents come and with their children who are hard of hearing. These children are our members for tomorrow. Even though this conference had a lot to do with students and parents, we can take some helpful information and apply it to ourselves.

Plenary Session #1 "How Hearing Loss Affects Peoples' Lives" Presenter Dr. Roger Freeman, Psychiatrist Consultant to W.I.D.H.H.

Dr. Freeman worked with the deaf from 1972 - 1973. Some of the points I noted from his presentation were as follows:

There are many books for the deaf but only a few for the hard of hearing. Hard of hearing people seem to be "second class" and less together.

The Education Committee seem to loose sight of the children who are hard of hearing.

There is a huge amount to be done in studies or research, but long term funding is difficult and so far no government has been willing to fund a study. The arguments seem to be that technological changes are limited and will not happen.

When Dr. Freeman was in the North he saw among the students, isolation, poor self esteem, guessing, sensitivity, stress, and the attitude that "we" are annoying and not fun. "We" do not listen. Teachers may not understand the struggle with listening and that hard of hearing students tire more quickly than a hearing student. It is helpful for a hard of hearing child to meet another hard of hearing person. Hard of hearing children are often teased or bullied.

If a child has had meningitis follow-up hearing tests should be mandatory.

Plenary Session #2: "Teams That Work! And Bright Ideas" Moderator: Susan Lanes, Director E.F.H.R.C.

This was a panel of hearing parents and students who were hard of hearing. They made many good points which are useful to any hard of hearing person. The following came from one of the handouts.

Get organized with the information on your child's hearing loss.

It was suggested to Purchase a 3 ring binder to keep all your information regarding hearing aids and visits to the audiologist with other pertinent information. When you first visit the audiologist consider taking a hearing person with you as there is a lot to take in at one time.

On Communicating with Professionals one needs to learn to communicate assertively. Be willing to listen without interruption. There are times when the most effective form of communication is a formal letter.

In Team Meetings (teacher, professional, student), it is important to list any questions and concerns you would like discussed at the meeting. Other things to list are your child's strengths and the things you would like your child to be able to do. Be realistic and specific. (Apply this to any meetings and substitute "yourself" for "your child").

Plenary Session #3 "B.C. Human Rights Code and How It Affects People Who Are Hard of Hearing" Presenter Mary-Woo Sims, Chief Commissioner of the B.C. Human Rights Commission.

This was a very interesting session. The phone numbers for information are voice: 604-660-1764, TDD: 604-660-2252 or 1-800-663-0876. There is also a web site at: www.bchrc.gov.bc.ca.

The Human Rights Commission investigates complaints. Physical discrimination is in the code, but psychological is not defined in the code.

An example was given about a Hard of Hearing person who worked for a restaurant and was let go as the restaurant was downsizing. The person applied at another restaurant and was not hired. The person thought it was because they were hard of hearing, which was not the reason. By all reports his work was good where he had worked.

Result: The first restaurant was fined because they had hired other people after saying they were downsizing. The judgement was a slap in the face, a mere \$1500.00. This person has been without work for some time and the matter is still being looked into.

Human rights are covered in public and private schools. For any problems, one can contact the Commission and they will direct you. There is a need for definition of physical disability and what constitutes a disability. One needs to know their rights.

Plenary Session #4 "Social Concerns and Social Skills: The Hard of Hearing Child at School" Presenter Doctor Janet Jamieson, U.B.C.

Some of the points noted were:

The necessity of a conference microphone for High School students.

Keep information on how the child is adjusting to using a hearing aid.

When FM is being used, have a signal that the FM is turned on.

Know your rights as a parent and also speak up for the child.

A hard of hearing person trying to absorb information will tire more quickly than a hearing person.

**Workshop #1 “With a Red Hat and Purple Dress”
Presenter: Dr. Marilyn Dahl, Executive Director,
W.I.D.H.H.**

Older people take longer to access information. Hard of hearing people have a 3 second delay in assimilating information, whereas hearing people have a delay of only 0.8 seconds.

Common hard of hearing difficulties are loneliness, maintenance of independence, and social safety net. Suicide is more common than you think. In nursing homes, one tends to become depressed and hard of hearing persons become withdrawn and are commonly mislabeled.

So often, when talking with the elderly people tend to use baby tones, this is called elderspeak. This is demeaning.

Respectfulness is necessary. So often the person is told what to do by family and well meaning people.

Independence and safety in the home is a priority.

It is a good idea for hard of hearing people to take a course in Managing your Hearing Loss, practice efficient communication, and to learn to use the computer and e-mail.

**Workshop #3 “A Parent and Youth Panel”
Moderator: Karin Rennert, Chief Audiologist,
Sunny Hill Health Centre.**

This was an interesting session on Large Vestibular Aqueduct (L.V.A.) with the related issues of fluctuating and progressive hearing loss. Head protection and current management options in audiology are relevant to all. My understanding is that this is a tiny part in the inner ear and fluid flows from one part of the ear to another causing audiograms to differ according to the condition. One can experience dizziness, confusion, inconsistent and unpredictable actions, depression and discouragement. This condition can be extreme at times, resulting in injury with falls. One needs to know the facts. See a specialist or



contact Sunny Hill Health Centre if you have this condition.

Workshop #6 “The Ministry of Education and the Hard of Hearing Child” Presenter Suzanne Bailey, Special Programs Branch, B.C. Ministry of Education.

This session dealt with what services are available and a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of the various partners in the education process, as well as, funding issues. Some of the points I noted were:

Service is based on population and number of children and is not linked to the individual child.

Depending upon where you live, the same services may not be available.

Funds are given to each School Board and it lies with the Board to allot funds to special services.

Some hints on the responsibilities of the various partners in the education process:

The Hard of Hearing do not like surprises, (ie. for gym class) Tell the class what you will be doing, even for the whole day would be a good idea, so the person knows what will be happening.

Give instructions both visually and verbally.

Incorporate wait time. Hard of hearing people need more time to take in what is being said.

There was too much given in this session to report here. If you have any problems in education, please contact the following telephone numbers: Special Programs Telephone 250-356-2333 Fax 250-356-7767.

CHHA B.C. Annual General Meeting.

Maggie Dodd reported that she had travelled to many places in B.C., Kamloops, Clearwater, Prince George, Smithers, and Kitimat where there is a great need for services for those who are hard of hearing. In the North the situation is especially critical.

In Chilliwack's report, they said they entered a float in the annual community parade. The theme they used was “Noise”. Victoria, Coquitlam and Vancouver also gave a report. Your president gave a report on the year's activities for the North Shore Branch.

It was reported that 107 people joined under the CHHA - B.C. free membership drive.

Your Treasurer, Alfred Kobbetvedt attended the second day of the conference and had questions on the CHHA - B.C. Treasurer's report. Alfred attended Workshop #5, Conflict Resolution. These workshops are given by Colleen Walker, Director, Walker and Associates and Honoured Fellow, Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution, Ottawa, Ontario. Alfred's report follows.

Report by Erica Barrett.

Workshop #5 "Conflict Resolution Certificate" Training Presented by Janice McNamara.

The Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution of St. Paul University, Ottawa, started the program in 1986. The program takes 160 hours for 4 weeks over 4 months, and is presented by Colleen Walker who could not be here to present this information session.

The program is for "Third Party Neutral" and is funded by the Opportunities Fund for multi-disability and multi accessibility people whereby some qualified CHHA members can take the course and can save the \$4,000 tuition fee. Candidates must be unemployed, or underemployed, and have a disability. Those taking the course are expected to seek meaningful employment in the field of conflict resolution as an employee or self-employed.

The training objectives include several stages: complete training for 4 weeks for 160 hours for selected candidates, assist these candidates in their job searches, gives training manual in French and English and graphics.

The Third Party Neutral (TPN) training includes mediation, arbitration, conciliation, resolution, facilitation, negotiation and stress management, similar to ADR, Alternate Dispute Resolution.

The training can be used with different gatherings, such as 2 people, small groups or large groups.

The next course will be given at the RCMP headquarters in North Vancouver starting January 4, 1999.

If you qualify, application forms may be obtained from:

Colleen Walker, Honoured Fellow
Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution
St. Paul University, Ottawa, ON, K1S 1G4.
Telephone: 613-837-2528 FAX: 613-837-0234, or
email: cwalker3@compuserve.com

Report by Alfred Kobbeltvedt.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The North Shore Branch is always looking for volunteers willing to serve the Branch in a number of capacities:

- λ Fundraising committee member
- λ Assisting with presentations in the community
- λ Distribution of brochures and posters
- λ Outreach for new members
- λ Serving as a future Board member

If you would like to serve in any of these areas, please contact Erica Barrett at 980-6671 or FAX 980-6695.

RECYCLING OF USED HEARING AIDS

If you have any old hearing aids that you would like recycled to needy people or third world countries, please bring them along to our meetings.

November Members' Meeting

Coping With Your Hearing Loss was the theme for the November Members' Meeting held at St. John's Anglican Church on November 9th. The meeting was moderated by Hugh Hetherington, North Shore Branch Board Member and newsletter editor. The purpose of the meeting was to acquaint people with the many assistive devices now available on the market to help the hard of hearing cope in their daily life. Hugh, with the assistance of other Board members, was able to bring to the meeting a large number of devices to talk about or demonstrate their use. Some of the devices that were shown at the meeting were:

- λ Infrared Headphones for Television and Stereo
- λ 900 Megahertz (FM) Headphones for Television and Stereo
- λ Personal FM systems
- λ Personal amplified listeners
- λ Personal neck loops
- λ Amplified telephones
- λ Telephone amplifiers and equalizers
- λ Wireless Doorbells
- λ Flasher signalling systems for recognizing sound
- λ Telephone Flasher
- λ Noise cancelling headsets
- λ Bed shaker alarm clock
- λ Closed Caption decoder

Alfred Kobbeltvedt took the opportunity to demonstrate the Branch's newly purchased noise meter by measuring the sound levels produced by a number of items used around the home. ie. hair dryer, electric drill, power saw, etc.

Catalogues from ALDS Inc., W.I.D.H.H. and other information from CHS and Radio Shack were also made available to interested persons. Refreshments were served and during the break those present were able to ask questions and try out the personal loop systems. 30 people attended the meeting, 14 members and 16 visitors. The meeting was advertised in the North Shore News and a number of the visitors came in response to the advertisement. The meeting was so well received by those who attended, the Board has decided to put on a similar meeting in the near future for those who missed it. Many people are not aware of the multitude of items available to assist the hard of hearing person. This type of meeting is your opportunity to find out.