



Mountain Ear

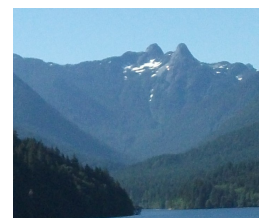
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From the Desk of the President

by Hugh Hetherington

As I sit down to write this article for the June newsletter, I realize that half a year has gone by already. If the second half goes by at the same speed we will be into 2026 before we know it and what I call the roller coaster of life will go on. There are ups and downs in life and this is very evident in the lives of people with hearing loss. Many people ride these waves with ease while others struggle. This is made evident to me at our monthly “Sound Advice” meetings as I talk to the attendees and listen to their issues.

In the March issue of our newsletter I talked largely about the advances in hearing aid technology. Sometimes I wonder, “Have they gone about as far as they can go?” as it was asked in the musical Oklahoma. I don’t think so. There was much more that I could have said in that article but I will leave that for a future article. That story is not complete and perhaps never will be.

At our Sound Advice on May 2nd a newcomer asked me how long we had been doing these sessions? I said that at that location for over 20 years. She replied that she wished she had found us long ago because she had been searching for a group like ours for a long time.

We have attendees who have been coming on and off for many of those 20 years. When asked why, the usual answer is because they learn something new at each meeting. Others come because of the companionship with people like themselves or they have a particular question or questions they want answered.

How do people find us? In many ways. To name a few:

- Referral from a friend,
- Advertising in Seniors’ magazine,
- Finding a copy of our newsletter,
- Referral from their hearing clinic.

If you have a friend or family member who you believe would benefit by attending our meetings be sure to let them know about us. They will not only learn about technology, but we also talk about many other needs for successful communication, such as, coping strategies, speechreading, and many other communication tools.

The last two Sound Advice meetings before we take our summer break in July and August are June 6th on Zoom only and June 30th at the Silver Harbour Seniors’ Centre in North Vancouver. The session at West Vancouver Seniors’ Centre on June 6th will be on Zoom only; we cannot have an in-person session because of the Seniors’ Health Fair taking place on that day.

There will also be an evening guest speaker Zoom meeting on June 16th at 7:00 PM. The speaker will be Ken Jones on the topic of “Tinnitus”. If you are unable to attend this meeting, the New Westminster Tinnitus Support group will also be hosting a Zoom meeting on the same topic on June 17th at 6:30 PM. To join this meeting and get a link, visit their website at nwtinn.ca.

Meetings will be starting up again in September at both of our meeting locations and on Zoom.

Til next time, Hugh ■

April Evening Meeting Recap

by Hugh Hetherington

On Monday, April 21st Ruth Warick, President of the CHHA BC Chapter gave us a Zoom presentation on “Hearing Your Health Care”. Ruth, as well as, her current position as president of the BC Chapter, was a founding member of CHHA National and served as its president from 1994 to 1996. Ruth is also a past president of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People and is treasurer for Cochlear Implant International Community of Action Technical Standards Committee, a BC Government advisory

committee. Currently, Ruth is senior director of Strategic Initiatives and Impact for the Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility.

CHHA-BC is a consumer-based organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of persons with hearing loss. They work with persons with hearing loss, their support networks, healthcare professionals and other partners to decrease isolation and remove barriers hindering their full participation in society.

Ruth opened her presentation talking about the impact of hearing loss on a person's life:

- Difficulty communicating with family, friends and colleagues.
- Isolation during personal and business activities.
- Missing vital information and the enjoyment of group activities.
- Fatigue, anxiety, social withdrawal, and increased risk of other mental health impacts.
- Untreated hearing loss has also been linked to higher risk of dementia.

She explained reasons why hearing healthcare matters. It is essential to our physical and cognitive health and overall quality of life. It enhances our connection in life and increases our ability to communicate.

Things that you can do to on your own behalf:

- Believe in your right to access.
- Be honest about your hearing loss.
- Seek professional hearing health care.
- Use a variety of strategies.
- Advocate for your needs.
- Involve your support networks.
- Join a CHHA Network in your area.

Key Communication Tips:

- Communication is a two-way street. If in doubt, ask the person with hearing loss what they need.

- Get the person's attention before starting to speak.
- Speak clearly: normal voice with no over-emphasis, and at a normal pace unless advised otherwise.
- If asked to repeat, try rewording the message.
- Check back to ensure message is received.
- The light should be on your face, with no obstructions to speechreading.

CHHA-BC makes a Hearing Access Health Kit available free of charge. It contains a Hearing Access Health Guide to help make healthcare accessible for people with hearing loss along with communication tips.

Hearing Access Health Kit Components to be used in a hospital stay:

- International symbol for hearing access stickers to add to your chart or wrist ID strap.
- Large laminated sign to be placed above your bed.
- Communication symbol card.
- Hearing Access button, pen and paper.
- Small plastic bag for your hearing aid or CI processor.
- Communication tips card and symbol placard.

The communication tips card explains what others need to do when communicating with hard of hearing people:

- Have light on your face and keep your lips visible.
- Choose a quiet place to speak, if possible.
- Speak clearly, at a moderate rate.
- Rephrase when repeating a question or statement.
- Write your message if necessary.

Ruth ended her talk speaking about medical CART services (Communication Access Realtime Translation). This is a service that is available

throughout BC to assist with communication in medical settings. This can be for a visit to your doctor, specialist or hospital visit. This service generally requires about a week's notice to set up. Non-medical captioning is booked through the Wavefront Centre and private providers. Medical captioning is provided through Provincial Language Services and must be booked in advance. For general enquiries:

Phone: 604-297-8400

Toll free: 1-877-228-2557 (BC Talks),

Fax: 604-297-9304 or Email: pls@phsa.

To obtain a kit or for more information you can contact CHHA-BC:

2005 Quebec Street, Vancouver

Phone: 604-423-3247

Email: Info@chha-bc.org

Website: www.chha-bc.org

CHHA-North Shore Branch Evening Meeting

Monday, June 16, 2025

7:00 pm via Zoom

Guest Speaker: Ken Jones

Topic: "Love Your Tinnitus for Success"

Ken is the President of BC Tinnitus Association and facilitator for the Greater Vancouver Self-Help Group.

The meeting is open to the public and there are no restrictions on the number of people who attend. The meeting is expected to last one hour. Please note that "Live Transcription/Closed Captioning" will be enabled on the Zoom meeting.

For information call: 604-926-5222

To request an invitation to join this Zoom meeting, please email:

chhansb475@gmail.com

Mike's Musings

by Mike Hocevar,

Past President CHHA-NSB

Our branch president Hugh Hetherington often prefaces his responses to questions in our regular Sound Advice sessions with "Everyone's hearing is different..."

Having lived for almost two years in a large independent living seniors residence my interactions with tenants in the building definitely confirm Hugh's caveat virtually on a daily basis.

For sure, many do have splendid hearing. To be honest, I'm impressed by the many neighbours who still possess overall sharp conversational hearing. Others do wear hearing aids. It's very pleasing to observe the number of folks that have shown a willingness and good fortune to obtain hearing aids. They seem to be visible in comings and goings as well as attending the social happenings.

Then there are those who have poor hearing and don't have hearing aids. With those folks, you hear louder than normal speech in the hallways or when sharing the elevator— or you don't! Many a time when greeting someone they don't respond and further, in elevators some literally turn their backs away instead of responding. I've noticed these people are not often in attendance at our many social offerings, likely staying home most of the time and perhaps keeping to themselves due to their hearing loss. Imagine their difficulties watching TV, using the phone, and trying to carry out everyday activities. Imagine what the lack of social interactions is doing to their psyches. When you think about it, that's a real impact on lifestyle. It's also so sad.

There have been many studies about the consequences of not wearing hearing aids. The NDP established an independent Seniors' Advocate. Subsequent findings by Isabel MacKenzie, former Seniors' Advocate, confirmed the negative mental consequences for folks without hearing aids.

Along with a lot of personal difficulties, there are safety issues.

We've had some fires in my building. A central alarm goes off in the main hallways. It's loud, but not

necessarily so for those without hearing aids. I've noticed that not all tenants evacuate. Maybe they don't hear the alarm. Myself personally, I've realized that I'm at risk when listening to TV or music via Bluetooth. And most definitely at night when I take my hearing aids out to go to sleep- my level of hearing without the wonderful technology of today's hearing aids is just 20% of what is normal.

To address my concern, I got in touch with a local company called ALDS (acronym for Assistive Listening Devices) that supplies a myriad of assistive hearing devices and alerts. It is operated by Ted Clegg, a past guest presenter at our branch's evening meetings.

I'm pleased and eager to take up Ted's suggestion that he recommended to me for a supplemental alert system. And it's affordable too. It consists of a transmitter that can be connected to the central alarm system (to be attached by a professional electrician) for which my property manager has given me initial approval.

How it works: When the building central alarm goes off, the transmitter triggers two things: an in-suite extremely bright flashing strobe light, and a strong shaker device that's simply placed under the pillow for when asleep in bed. For hard of hearing folks, this could be life saving for sure. If such a thing interests you too, check out these devices on-line. For Ted's company, go to his website Alds Canada <https://alds.com/> to view his catalogue and to get in touch with him.

Just today, May 10th, the wisdom of pursuing such a supplemental alert system was really driven home. Just blocks away up here in Lynn Valley another seniors' home was badly hit by fire. The flames ripped through the complex incredibly quickly. It made me really realize how true the old saying "That seconds can save lives" holds.

So those are some of my observations and thoughts. Once I get my supplementary alert system installed, I'll share this information with my neighbours through the building's regular newsletter and I will update here in The Mountain Ear. ■

Living Successfully with Hearing Loss

by Lisa Dillon Edgett

Do you want to live more successfully with hearing loss? Living Successfully with Hearing Loss courses are offered through Vancouver Community College. They provide essential knowledge, strategies, and resources to help those with hearing loss and their communication partners to manage the challenges related to hearing loss.

It's a challenge to think about fall when we are still waiting for summer, but we are already preparing for the fall term at VCC. We will be running all three levels of the Living Successfully with Hearing Loss (LSWHL) course, beginning in September, in an online format.

Online courses for LSWHL run for 12 weeks. Each week, you will receive material to review (through an online site and an emailed PDF). We meet once per week on Zoom for 90-minutes to review, discuss, and practice. Provided we have enough students, we will have both an afternoon (1pm PT) and evening (7pm PT) session for each level. Classes are small, with a maximum of 8 students.

If you haven't used Zoom, it can be quite accessible. You control your own sound/volume, you can easily see everyone's faces, and there is automatic captioning. If you haven't used Zoom before, but would like to test it out, let me know. You also benefit by not having to deal with travel and parking and can attend from anywhere. This term, I even had a student participate from Peru while on vacation!

See more details about the courses:

Level 1: <https://www.vcc.ca/courses/dhhe-0618/>

Level 2: <https://www.vcc.ca/courses/dhhe-0619/>

Level 3: <https://www.vcc.ca/courses/dhhe-0621/>

The cost is currently around \$315. If you are low income, and qualify for the Adult Upgrading Grant, these courses qualify. See more at <https://studentaidbc.ca/explore/grants-scholarships/adult-upgrading-grant-application>

I recognize this is a significant amount to many. However, I also know the worth of these courses and the benefit they provide. As one of my students

recently told me, "It's an investment in my health and my relationships."

The Fall schedule:

Level 1: 2 Zoom options 90 minutes

Tuesday afternoon: 1pm PT from Sept. 9 to Nov. 25

Tuesday evening: 7pm PT from Sept. 9 to Nov. 25

Level 2: 2 Zoom options 90 minutes

Wed afternoon: 1pm PT from Sept. 10 to Nov. 26

Wed evening: 7 pm PT from Sept. 10 to Nov. 26

Level 3: 2 Zoom options 90 minutes

Thursday afternoon: 1pm PT from Sept. 11 to Nov. 27

Thursday evening: 7pm PT from Sept. 11 to Nov. 27

Registration is now open. If you would like more information or would like to reserve a spot, please email me. ldillonedgett@vcc.ca or dh@vcc.ca

Lisa Dillon Edgett, Ph.D., RAUD, Aud(C)
604-871-7348

To link to Lisa's info, you can use the following QR code.



Sound Advice

Presented by:

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
North Shore Branch

When we meet, we discuss topics and issues dealing with hearing loss.

Subjects to be addressed include:

Technology;
Speech Reading;
Coping Strategies
Improving Hearing Environments

We have 2 locations:

West Vancouver Seniors' Centre at 695 21st St, West Vancouver. These sessions will be held as **Hybrid** meetings to accommodate both in-person and Zoom attendees on the first Friday of each month at 10am.

In-person attendees must register at the front desk of the centre or by phone at 604-925-7280

To receive an invitation to join the Zoom meetings, please send an email to chhansb475@gmail.com to be added to the list.

Silver Harbour sessions at 144 East 22nd St, North Vancouver. These sessions will be held as **in-person** meetings on the last Monday of each month at 10am.

There are no meetings in July & August

For Information call:
604-926-5222

We look forward to seeing you.

**North Shore
Seniors' Health Expo**



FRIDAY, JUNE 6, 2025 | 9 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.
WEST VANCOUVER COMMUNITY CENTRE & SENIORS' ACTIVITY CENTRE

All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association or CHHA-North Shore Branch.

Participants Wanted for Online Survey

Are you 50 years of age or older?

You may be eligible to participate in our study!

Participation involves completing an online questionnaire concerning your hearing abilities, memory and general cognitive abilities, demographic information, and experiences with hearing aids and hearing healthcare (if applicable).

The questionnaire will take between
20–45 minutes to complete.

Participants will be entered
into a **draw** to win one of
five **\$100** mailed cheques.

Participants must:

- be **50+** years old
- be proficient **English** speakers
- be **Canadian residents**

Follow the **link below**
to participate:

https://rotman.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_25GERdbtdEKSaP4

Baycrest

Rotman Research Institute

For more information, please email:
sbobbitt@research.baycrest.org