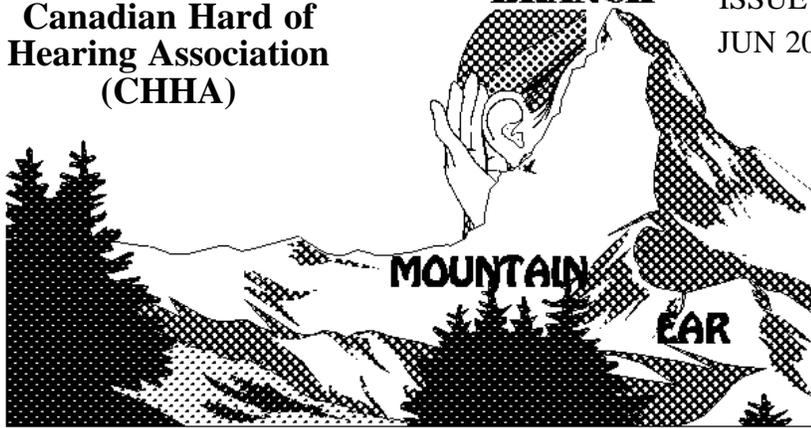


Publication of the
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(CHHA)

**NORTH SHORE
BRANCH**

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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.

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President's Message

What a beautiful time of the year, one almost feels they live in fairyland on the North Shore with all the beauty in the flowering trees, flowers and shrubs.

HEARING LOSS

It certainly is not beautiful when one loses their hearing. It matters not whether it happened from birth or you were late deafened. Maybe it was noise with construction work, loud music or not protecting your ears from harmful noise which was the cause.

International Noise Awareness Day on April 12 this year, and May, which is designated Hearing Awareness Month, draw attention to our precious sense of hearing. You will read in the statistics quoted later in the newsletter that hearing loss is the number one disability in our society. It is also the most preventable. The problem is that once you have a hearing loss you cannot change that fact. Taking responsibility and making your needs known are the answer. (see my article in Newsletter.) As well as the interesting statistics, we are also reprinting some articles on noise awareness that have been put out by the League for the Hard of Hearing, New York. This is especially important information in protecting the hearing you have left or for passing on to your younger family members and friends so that they can protect theirs.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be on September 18, 2000, 7 p.m. at St. John's Anglican Church, 220 West 8th, North Vancouver. The board invites all our members to take part in this event. Invite your friends, hearing and hard of hearing to hear our speaker on September 18th. The North Shore Branch needs your

support and volunteer effort. This is necessary to carry on the work for the hard of hearing population. As the number one disability in the world, we have a lot to accomplish.

MANAGING YOUR HEARING LOSS

This course will be taught once more in September by our own hearing member, Joan Bennett. If you have not taken this course, I highly recommend that you do. If you would like to register please phone the office at 988-7115.

COMMUNITY

Your North Shore Branch has been busy giving presentations in the community during April and May. Hugh Hetherington has been busy working with the North Vancouver District in getting the Municipal listening system to work. A member is also attending other community meetings. The communities of the North Shore are basically not accessible for the hard of hearing population and we have been working on that.

LISTENING DEVICES

Hugh also spends numerous volunteer hours in finding less expensive listening devices to make your life a lot less stressful. The inexpensive listening devices will help you to hear in many **LOCATIONS** and one should take advantage of these devices. When one cannot walk, they use a wheelchair. Our disability is **INVISIBLE** but there is no reason in this wide world why aids to hearing should not be just as **VISIBLE** as eyeglasses, the wheelchair or the white cane.

LISTENING DEVICES HAVE CHANGED MY WORLD.

See you at the ANNUAL, -

L. Erica Barrett

Members' Meeting April 17, 2000

Safety for the Hard of Hearing was the theme for the Members' Meeting held at St. John's Anglican Church. Alfred Kobbeltvedt, treasurer of the North Shore Branch moderated a panel discussion on Safety. The members of the panel were Captain Derick Dickson, North Vancouver Fire & Rescue Department, Constable Dan Guilfoyle, R.C.M.P. North Vancouver Detachment, and Brad Bice, Head of Communications Aid Department, Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The

available to help the HOH at home and while travelling. Included were such items as flashing strobe light smoke detectors, a flashing light portable door knocker unit, FM multi-purpose alarm detectors, and a bed shaker unit to help waken a sleeping HOH person. He also showed a unit called E.A.R.S. (Emergency Alert Response System), a unit



Constable Dan Guilfoyle and Brad Bice

meeting was attended by 23 members and 11 guests. It was a very informative evening and gave the members of the audience the opportunity to find out the plans and programs the emergency services had in place to deal with the hearing impaired. It also gave the audience the opportunity to present their safety concerns to the panel. Brad Bice brought along his arsenal of electronic gadgets to show what is

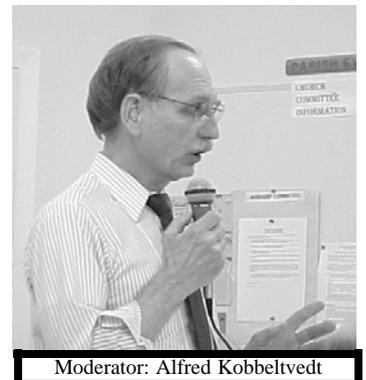


Audience Members at Members' Meeting

which can be equipped in automobiles to alert a HOH driver to the sound of the siren of an emergency vehicle approaching through flashing lights on the dash of the vehicle. It was emphasized that HOH persons have a responsibility to make others aware of their disability. If living in an apartment, let the department manager know that you will need special attention to alert you to an emergency. You can also register your name with the Fire Department so that on arrival they know that there is a HOH person in the building. Block Watch was also mentioned as an important way ensuring your safety in your neighbourhood. Let your neighbours know about your disability so that they can assist under emergency situations. While staying in Hotels, make sure that you let the front desk know about your situation. Ask if they have special rooms equipped for your disability. Make sure that you check out exit routes for yourself



The panel of Speakers at the Members' Meeting: from Left to Right: Capt. Derick Dickson, Alfred Kobbeltvedt, Const. Dan Guilfoyle and Brad Bice.



Moderator: Alfred Kobbeltvedt

before going to sleep. Try to stay in hotels that are equipped with sprinkler systems and favour hotels that are prepared to accommodate persons with a hearing impairment. Non emergency numbers for the Police Department are: North Vancouver - 985-1311

International Noise Awareness Day and May Hearing Awareness Month Presentations

April 12, 2000 was proclaimed International Noise



Awareness Day, sponsored by the League for the Hard of Hearing, New York. The North Shore Branch, once again, participated as a local sponsor with a poster campaign and

information package mailouts to the Secondary Schools on the North Shore.

Presentations were also made to various groups during April and May, Hearing Awareness Month.

A presentation on Inexpensive Listening Devices was given by Erica Barrett and Hugh Hetherington of the CHHA North Shore Branch at the "Otolaryngology Grand Rounds" at V.G.H. on April 10, 2000. The presentation, which was attended by about 40 E.N.T.'s and E.N.T.'s in training, was given in the ENT Conference Room in the Willow Pavilion, and was very well received. The presentation focused on lower cost items, such as, the neck loop, Radio Shack Listener, and various low cost FM products. Some time was also spent discussing some recent statistics on hearing loss. One of the goals of the North Shore Branch is to acquaint hearing professionals with information pertaining to lower cost items which may be of benefit to their clients.

Other presentations took place as follows:

West Vancouver Seniors' Centre on April 3, 2000.

Capilano Community Services Society - Seniors' Hub on May 2.

Keep Well Society at Kiwanis Lodge on May 26.

Keep Well at Parkgate Seniors' Centre on May 30.

USING A "VCO" PHONE

Submitted by: Audrey Kirkpatrick

Those of us with a hearing loss are familiar with the many difficult situations that we have to cope with as hard of hearing persons. One of the most difficult for me has been using the telephone. I do have a T-switch (telephone switch) on my hearing aid which certainly improves the sound, but because I depend so much on speech reading to augment whatever

sounds I hear, this does not help me in that regard. The added nervous stress of straining to hear seems to block out whatever hearing ability I still possess. Now, at last, I have found a solution to this dilemma. I recently acquired a new type of telephone which is made by Ameriphone and is named "Dialogue VCO". This technology allows the hard of hearing to communicate by reading the incoming message on a display screen that is built-in to the phone and replying by speaking normally through the handset of the phone, the same as a "hearing" person would. There is no need to type your message as is necessary on a TTY. A person with hearing loss who uses their voice can use voice carry over (VCO). Telus B.C. provides free relay service to communicate with a hearing person. In a VCO call, the hard of hearing person speaks directly to the other party - the Telus relay operator types the response from the other person, which shows up as text on your VCO screen. You just read and talk. The relay operator types every word as the other person is speaking, which allows you to read along and there is very little delay between each party's response. This phone also has a powerful hearing aid compatible handset amplifier which allows me to still enjoy a regular voice conversation with some family members where the VCO feature is not required. For the first time, I have been able to make inquiries, appointments and conduct business over the telephone free from stress. Along with my fax machine and e-mail connection, the VCO phone has added immeasurably to my ability to communicate with others. For further information and demonstration of the VCO phone, contact Western

Noise in the Home

Reprinted with permission from the League for the Hard of Hearing, 71 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010-4162

Home Sweet Home?

Home - the place where we retreat from the hustle and bustle of every day life. But, too often, the peace and quiet of this have is interrupted by noise from our neighbors, street traffic, music blaring in the next apartment, train whistles and planes flying overhead. And frequently, the noise is of our own making - the noise we create with the vacuum cleaners, air conditioners, television sets, hair dryers, dishwashers, washing machines, blenders and other home appliances. Many of these noises are not loud enough to pose a hearing risk, but they can increase stress

and affect our health and well-being. Other common household items, such as noisy toys, garden equipment and loud stereos, do pose a threat to our hearing, and it is important to limit their use.

How Loud is Too Loud?

To know if a sound is loud enough to cause damage to your ears, it is important to know both the level of intensity (measured in decibels, dBA) and the length of exposure to the sound. Continued exposure to noise above 85 decibels (dBA) over time, will eventually harm hearing. In general, the louder the sound, the less time required before damage occurs. Noise-induced hearing loss is cumulative across the life-span and though preventable, noise-induced hearing loss is permanent. If you notice a buzzing or ringing in your ears, or that speech is muffled after exposure to noise, then the noise is too loud. Have your hearing checked by a qualified audiologist.

Dangerous Noise Sources in the Home

The following are examples of noise sources and sound levels of commonly found items in the home:

- λ **Toys** Many toys designed to stimulate our children can be dangerously loud and pose a risk to our children's hearing. Rattles, squeaky toys, toy musical instruments and toy phones have been measured up to 140 dBA and beyond.
- λ **Personal Stereo Systems with Headphones** Measured at up to 112 dBA, if turned up to maximum levels, these systems pose a risk to hearing. Individuals who choose to listen to music this loud, for several hours a day, face an almost inevitable hearing loss.
- λ **Garden Equipment and Power Tools** Lawn mowers, leaf blowers, chain saws and other power tools can be as loud as 130 dBA and pose a serious risk to those who operate them. These loud sounds can create an environment that is not conducive to play, study, sleep or even carry on normal conversation.
- λ **Home Appliances** Blenders, electric mixers, dishwashers, washing machines, stove fans, hair dryers and vacuum cleaners can measure up to 90 dBA and beyond and with continued use add to the cumulative effect of noise in a person's life.

Steps to Preserve the Peace and Quiet in Your Home

Follow these steps to create a quieter and more peaceful home environment:

- λ Pay attention to the noises around you and whenever possible, turn down the volume.
- λ Limit exposure time to loud noise sources in the home.
- λ Wear adequate hearing protection such as foam ear plugs or ear muffs when using loud equipment.
- λ Buy quiet products. Contact the Consumer Products Safety Commission and the manufacturer of noisy products.
- λ Try not to run all appliances in your kitchen at the same time.

Make your home acoustically sound by following recommendations of the National Bureau of Standards:

- λ Place vibration mounts under major appliances and foam pads under small appliances.
- λ Use window drapes.
- λ Install padded carpeting, vinyl tile or thick linoleum to absorb sound.
- λ Seal holes or cracks in doors and windows with caulking or a minimum expansion foam sealant
- λ Replace metal garbage cans with plastic cans.

Question and Answer Feature

If you have a question on a hard of hearing issue that you would like answered in the newsletter, please submit it to the editor at the numbers listed on the first page.

We will try to answer your question or find someone who can and print it in the next issue of the newsletter, space permitting.

Noise Levels in Our Environment

Reprinted with permission from the League for the Hard of Hearing, 71 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010-4162

How Loud is Too Loud?

Experts agree that continued exposure to noise above 85 dBA over time, will cause hearing loss. To know if a sound is loud enough to damage your ears, it is important to know both the loudness level (measured in decibels, dBA) and the length of exposure to the sound. In general, the louder the noise, the less time required before hearing loss will occur. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (1998), the maximum exposure time at 85 dBA is 8 hours. At 110 dBA, the maximum exposure time is one minute and 29 seconds. If you must be exposed to noise, it is recommended that you limit the exposure time and/or wear hearing protection.

Measure Up and Turn it Down:

Decibel Levels Around Us. The table on the next page gives decibel levels of common noise sources around us. These are typical levels, however, noise levels may vary depending on the particular item. Remember noise levels above 85 dBA will harm hearing over time. Noise levels above 140 dBA can cause damage to hearing after just one exposure.

Points of Reference		Home	Work	Recreation
0 dBA	the softest sound a person can hear with normal hearing	50 dBA refrigerator	40 dBA quiet office, library	40 quiet residential area
		50-60 electric toothbrush	50 large office	
		50-75 washing machine	65-95 power lawnmower	70 freeway traffic
		50-75 air conditioner	80 manual machine, tools at close range	85 heavy traffic, noisy restaurant
10	normal breathing	50-80 electric razor	85 handsaw	90 truck, shouted conversation
		55 coffee percolator	90 tractor	
20	whispering at 5 feet	55-70 dishwasher	90-115 subway	95-110 motorcycle
		60 sewing machine	95 electric drill	100 snowmobile
		60-85 vacuum cleaner	100 factory machinery	100 school dance, boom box
30	soft whisper	60-95 hair dryer	100 woodworking class	110 disco
		65-80 alarm clock	105 snow blower	110 busy video arcade
50	rainfall	70 TV audio	110 power saw	110 symphony concert
		70-80 coffee grinder	110 leaf blower	110 car horn
60	normal conversation	70-95 garbage disposal	120 chain saw, hammer on nail	110-120 rock concert
		75-85 toilet flush	120 pneumatic drill	112 personal cassette player on high
110	shouting in ear	80 pop-up toaster	120 jet plane at ramp	117 football game (stadium)
		80 doorbell	125 chain saw	120 band concert
		80 ringing telephone	130 jackhammer, power drill	125 auto stereo (factory installed)
120	thunder	80 whistling kettle	130 air raid	130 stock car races
		80-90 food mixer/processor	130 percussion section at a symphony or orchestra	143 bicycle horn
		80-90 blender	140 airplane taking off	150 fire cracker
		80-95 garbage disposal	150 jet plane take-off	156 cap gun
		110 baby crying	150 artillery fire at 500 feet	157 balloon pop
		110 squeaky toy held close to the ear	180 rocket launching from pad	162 fire works (at 3 feet)
		135 noisy squeeze toys		163 rifle
				166 handgun
				170 shotgun

BEING INDEPENDENT

By Erica Barrett.

MAKE SURE YOUR NEEDS ARE MET.

I may sound like a broken record and I know you have heard it all before. For you to have your independence you need to have your needs met. Be informed about the advantages of hearing aids, TELEPHONE SWITCHES and LISTENING DEVICES. Go to an audiologist and be tested. Make sure the audiologist tells you about the advantages of a TELEPHONE SWITCH. Without a Telephone switch you will not be able to use many listening devices. It is our right TO HEAR in public places, theatres, municipal halls, community meetings. When one has a hearing loss, IT IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT to hear in NOISY places, such as a restaurant, family table, gatherings and small meetings. Listening devices are the answer.

LISTENING DEVICES HAVE changed my world.

The result is my stress level has been lowered. Stress can cause many other health problems for people with hearing loss. Frustration, isolation, and the emotional strain of hearing loss can also cause depression. You may need a hearing aid because you

are missing too much. You may blame people by saying they just mumble and are not speaking distinctly. Let your audiologist know all the details of your hearing loss and lifestyle. Telephone switches are not just for the telephone. They are necessary in order to use the inexpensive listening devices your branch has promoted. Listening devices help you to hear much better in restaurants, small meetings, banquets, and in my case, my husband who has a speech range I have great difficulty in hearing. You may need two hearing aids in order to get the proper balance. This can be a costly exercise, but the hearing faculties function much better when sound can be directionalized.

IGNORING your hearing loss does not ease the STRESS of trying to hear. It does not give you your INDEPENDENCE, nor does it help the hearing people around you. Assistive Listening Devices really help on a one to one basis. Remember that it takes a hard of hearing person 30 seconds longer to absorb what is being said. The following are your NEEDS to be communicated to hearing people.

- λ GET MY ATTENTION
- λ HAVE LIGHT ON YOUR FACE SO I CAN SPEECHREAD YOU
- λ CHOOSE A QUIETER PLACE

Being Independent (Continued from Page 5)

- λ COMMUNICATE WITH ME FACE TO FACE
- λ ASK TO RE-PHRASE, TELL THEM THAT SOME WORDS ARE HARDER TO HEAR THAN OTHERS
- λ ASK THEM TO SPEAK SLIGHTLY SLOWER AND DISTINCTLY

HUMOUR - If you can use humour, such as if a person is not facing you and looking out the window, ask, "Are you talking to the window?" If the person walks away from you, ask, "Who are you talking to?" If the radio is on and the person tries talking to you, ask, "What is the person saying on the radio?" This brings their attention to the fact that they are in error in communicating with you and gives them the opportunity to change their ways. Do not expect the hearing person to remember how to communicate with you as our disability is unseen. They may have

to be reminded over and over again on how to communicate with you.

RESPONSIBILITY AND NEEDS. Stop and think how much easier it is for your friends, and family when you let them know what your needs are. When people cannot walk they use a wheelchair and their needs are being met with accessibility such as ramps, parking, buses, sloping sidewalks. We need accessibility also. By making your needs known, you will be helping yourself and regaining the independence you really want. Remember a hearing loss is nothing to be ashamed of. Do you really think people notice that much? Do you really notice how many people are using cell phone or walkmans? Think about it, do you want your needs met, have independence, less stress, or not?

Hearing Trivia & Facts

(Courtesy of the Central Institute for the Deaf, by Cathy Sarli.)

CID pages: <http://www.cid.wustl.edu>

- λ Hearing loss is the number one disability in the world.
- λ Hearing loss is the most preventable disability in the world.
- λ Number of people who need hearing aids: 25 million
- λ Number of people who own hearing aids: 5 million
- λ 15 of every 1000 people under age 18 have a hearing loss.
- λ Nearly 90% of people over age 80 have a hearing loss.
- λ The hearing aid is the second most widely used assistive technological device after the walking cane.
- λ 3 out of 100 school children are affected by hearing impairment.
- λ Percentage of inductees into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame who are hearing-impaired: 60%
- λ Former President Ronald Reagan incurred a noise-induced hearing loss from firing pistols in the movies.

Etiology of Hearing Loss

- λ Noise: 33.7%
- λ Age: 28%
- λ Infection or injury: 17.1%
- λ Birth: 4.4%
- λ The famous Siamese twins, Cheng and Eng, who toured the U.S. in the 1950's, had a

"trilateral" (3 out of 4 ears) hearing loss due to noise exposure during hunting.

- λ Percentage of people who lose their hearing before age 3: 5.4%
- λ Percentage of people who lose their hearing between 3 and 18: 14.2%
- λ Percentage of people who lose their hearing at age 19 and over: 76.3%
- λ Every seven seconds, a baby boomer turns 50.
- λ As a result of the aging population, between 1990 and 2050 the number of hearing-impaired Americans will increase at a faster rate than the total U.S. population.

The information for the hearing trivia and facts was located at the following:

League for the Hard of Hearing: <http://www.lhh.org/research/stats.htm>

U.S. Government: <http://www.fedstats.gov>

National Center for Health Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww/default.htm>

Audiologists' Desk Reference, Vol. 1: Diagnostic Audiology Principles, Procedures and Practices, James Hall and H. Gustav Mueller. San Diego, California : Singular, 1998.

Audiologists' Desk Reference, Vol II: Etiologic Management, Rehabilitation, and Terminology, James Hall and H. Gustav Mueller. San Diego, California : Singular, 1998.

Hearing Health Magazine, January 1999 (taken from Sonic Innovations' compilation of statistics supplied by the National Institutes of Health and the Better Hearing Institute).

For further information, contact CID Professional