



**Canadian HARD of HEARING Association**

(CHHA-Hamilton)

## **HERE, HEAR!! Newsletter**

[www.chha-hamilton.ca](http://www.chha-hamilton.ca)

**Rob Diehl, President**

**March, 2015**



### **BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND**

CHHA received so many positive comments regarding last year's speaker, Mark Wafer, we're pleased to have him return and give you an update on his progress assisting people with disabilities.

**Mark will discuss employment and how to approach employers, . . . what works, what doesn't, and how to avoid the traps.**

**A disability did NOT stop Mark! He has only 20% hearing and struggled to keep working.**

**Listen to what he has to say. He can give you sound advice if you think a disability is holding you back.**

**All are welcome**

### **March Meeting**

## **CHHA *presents* EMPLOYMENT & DISABILITY for Hard of Hearing Individuals**

**Speaker:** Mark Wafer *of*  
Tim Hortons

**DATE:** Wednesday, **March 4th**

**Time:** 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

**Location:** South Gate Church,  
120 Clarendon Avenue,  
Hamilton L9A 3A5

**Registration & Contact info:**  
905-575-4964 or  
[chhahamilton2@gmail.com](mailto:chhahamilton2@gmail.com)

**Charge:** \* Members—no charge  
\* Guests - \$5.00 donation

**Parking:** free parking in rear

**Real Time Captioning** and  
infra red system available

Refreshments

## President's Message

Despite the current freezing cold temperatures this first edition of the CHHA-Hamilton newsletter always reminds me that spring is within reach. I am really looking forward to the upcoming year because there are so many great things already in the works for 2015 at both our Branch and the National level. The biggest event on the horizon is the 2015 CHHA National Conference, which is taking place May 21-23 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. If you have not attended a conference in the past, I highly recommend you consider attending this year. This will be my third conference, and I can honestly say that these events are always one of the highlights of my year. The National Conference brings Canadians with hearing loss together from all across the country, and it is an incredible opportunity to learn and to interact with the many great delegates.

I would also like to welcome our new board members, Jim Young and Levi Janosi, who have officially begun their terms. Jim has been a member for a little over a year and has jumped in with both feet, assisting with many of the branch initiatives. Jim has also agreed to take on the Secretary's role. Levi has also been a huge help over the past year with many branch items, and also currently sits on our Advocacy Committee.

Although we are only a couple months into the New Year, the board has been hard at work planning for 2015. Our fundraising efforts this year will see us host our annual **Golf Tournament on Saturday, September 12 at 4 p.m.** back at Oak Gables Golf Club in Ancaster. This is always a fun day with lots of laughs and

socializing. If you're interested in helping with logistics, playing, or just joining us for the BBQ dinner afterwards, please contact Bill Campbell by calling 905 628 6539 or email [wpc@netinc.ca](mailto:wpc@netinc.ca).

There are two other exciting events on our calendar in 2015. In place of our May 2015 meeting, we will be hosting a **Hearing Health Fair on Wednesday, May 6 at Southgate Church beginning at 6 p.m.** This event will bring many hearing related vendors from all across the Hamilton and surrounding areas. Another great event coming up this year is our annual **CI Reunion, which is taking place on Sunday, June 14 at Brant Hills Community Centre in Burlington;** please stay tuned for details as the event approaches. This is definitely a great opportunity for those who are CI recipients, considering the surgery, or are just curious to learn more about cochlear implants.

I would like to round out this message by commending CHHA-Hamilton Past-President, Linda Baine, and Treasurer, Craig Ellis, on taking the recent Speech Reading instructor's course offered by CHHA-National. Linda has been spearheading the **Speech Reading program** for a number of years, while Craig will be a brand new instructor. Please keep an eye on our website [www.chha-hamilton.ca](http://www.chha-hamilton.ca) for a listing of **upcoming classes as well as on page 7.** of this newsletter

If you are interested in being involved with one of the various committees or events within our branch, please feel free to speak to one of our board members at any time. I encourage you all to get involved as our branch continues to grow and evolve.

**Rob Diehl** CHHA-Hamilton President

## Ask Cathy . . .

Q: I've heard there are hearing aids that can be controlled by my cell phone.

A: Like just about everything else these days there's an app for that!

Most major manufacturers have a model of aids that have an app to control them by cell phone. Having your hearing aids controlled by your cell phone means you do not have to carry a separate device to control your aids, although some still require a neck piece as an intermediary device. The sound from your cell phone whether it is a phone call or music or a video is streamed directly into your aids with no background noise.

This feature works so well that some people without a hearing loss want to wear them so they can hear wirelessly on their cell phones. Since cellphones are equipped with GPS the cell phone knows where you are and what settings you like in that place – so if you always turn your aid up or put it in directional mode at your favorite restaurant when you go there again the app knows that and automatically adjusts your aids to your preferred setting. Some apps even remember the GPS co-ordinates of the last place the aid was used – very handy to locate lost aids.

Some apps can be used to carry out minor programming changes into the aid which results in fewer visits to your clinic – although for some of us who are not "tech savvy" these apps have so many options it can actually lead to more clinic visits until you master them.

Continued on next column . . .

Most aids need to be within 7 meters (or 22 feet) of the phone to work.

Some would say that controlling the volume and settings on your aids with the phone is an advantage because then no one knows you are wearing aids – I think not telling others you have a hearing loss is a mistake – when others know you have a loss they are much more likely to be supportive – for example getting your attention when they address you. Also, the more people who admit to a hearing loss the less stigma is attached to it. I am reminded of a story of a man who wore a black shirt button in his ear because when people saw it they would speak up and he did not have to ask them to repeat.

One disadvantage to controlling your aids with an app is that it tends to drain your battery faster – both the phone and your hearing aid- this can be quite drastic and reduce the battery life to less than a day. The other disadvantage is cost – these aids do not come cheap – but on the bright side the app is free.

Send questions to *Ask Cathy* at:

**[chha-hamilton.newsletter@shaw.ca](mailto:chha-hamilton.newsletter@shaw.ca)**

Cathy not only wears hearing aids herself, she is also the retired general manager of Connect Hearing (formerly Provincial Hearing).

Does this sound familiar . . .

**A** man was telling his neighbour, '

I just bought a new hearing aid.

It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state of the art.. It's perfect.'

'Really,' answered the neighbour .. 'What kind is it?'

' Twelve thirty.

## Nitty-Gritty Tips from a Hearing Aid User *By Gael Hannan*

I don't pretend to be a hearing care professional. But for anyone looking for non-biased, trial-and-error insider advice about hearing aids, I reckon that experience is worth at least a year or two of audiology courses. Maybe even a *degree*. Because after almost 40 years of hearing aid use, I've learned an important thing or two about hearing aids.

**#1:** After you have a shower, or go swimming, or after any activity where your ears have been underwater, wait half an hour before putting in your hearing aid. The ear canal and surrounding areas should be as

dry as possible to prevent moisture steaming up your technology. Wet stuff is simply *not good* for expensive aids and cochlear implants.

Should you, unfortunately, soak your head with your hearing aids *in* – being caught in a downpour, perhaps, or having your head submersed in the toilet (we won't ask) – you need to act quickly. The first step is remove your ears from the water as soon as possible. Then, remove the battery and place the aid in a dry-aid kit. Do not use a hot air dryer, oven or microwave. As you sit watching it dry out for a few hours, keep your fingers tightly crossed, as if in prayer.

**#2:** Do not believe your audiologist when she tells you not to put anything in your ear that's smaller than your elbow. She doesn't really mean it. After all, the hearing aid she sold me is *significantly* smaller than my elbow. Apart from that, you can believe everything else she says. Hang on...is that \$4000 latest hearing aid *marvel* really the

best and only one suitable for your hearing loss? Ask questions.

**#3:** While you're at it, ask about telecoils (t-switch), because your hearing instrument specialist may forget to mention it. If he says you don't need telecoils, ask why. He may say, "*Well, you should buy an accessibility kit designed to connect your aid to your TVs, phones and doorbells.*" Then you can say, "*Well, isn't that nice – but sometimes I like to leave the house and I've heard the t-switch will connect me in all sorts of places.*" And then add, "*Since I'm already paying a small fortune for this hearing aid, why not throw in that handy-dandy house kit for free?*"

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## WANTED. . . .



**One** or two people to provide refreshments for our general meetings. It is *only* four meetings a year. You can make, bake or buy cookies, squares or whatever you desire. Preparation of coffee & tea would be appreciated. Of course, you would be reimbursed.

Be part of CHHA. Feel good and contribute.

If curious, contact Jacquie at  
[chhahamilton2@gmail.com](mailto:chhahamilton2@gmail.com)

## Managing your hearing loss while dining out

Even if you don't dine out often, it's fun to celebrate friends' and family members' birthdays or your anniversary with a night out and some fabulous fare. If you're living with hearing loss, heading to a restaurant on a Friday or Saturday night is probably not ideal because the hustle and bustle – though they give the place a certain special ambience – can make it quite loud. People of any hearing ability can struggle to hear in the busiest restaurants during weekend dinner hours. Since you can't bring your captioned telephone with you, here are some device-free hearing loss solutions for managing your hearing loss while at a restaurant:

### **Dine early if possible**

If you don't mind eating a little earlier (but still within normal dinner hours), make reservations for an earlier time. On a Friday night, restaurants tend to be at their busiest around 7:00 p.m. If you're reservation is at 5:00 p.m. or timed so that your meal will be served at about 5:00, you'll likely be in the clear. Or if breakfast is your favorite meal anyway, plan a celebratory brunch complete with mimosas.

### **Location, location, location**

Where you sit in the restaurant is very important for how much you'll be able to hear.

Continued on next column . . .



Upon entering the restaurant, you can let the hostess or host know that you would prefer to sit away from the kitchen, the cashier and any other high traffic areas, like near restrooms or entryways, which typically tend to be much louder than other areas of the restaurant. If you let the host or hostess know that you have difficulty hearing, he or she is likely to also avoid placing you near particularly raucous groups. Ask for a small booth with some privacy or a table by the window where you won't have to deal with diners on all sides of your table.

### **Seating options**

Consider another locational element to help maximize the hearing you do have. If you use hearing aids with directional microphones, it might be best to try to sit where the majority of the noise is behind you. If you do not use hearing aids, try to sit in a booth or where a wall is to your back to eliminate or minimize noise from behind.

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**Nitty Gritty Tips . . . continued from page 4 . . .**

**#4:** When you take out your hearing aids or CI, always put them in a safe place, and preferably the same place.

The *safe* thing: I put my first-ever hearing aid on my bedside table, where it lay naked and open to the elements. One such element was a very large dog, who ate it. Most of it, anyway; I was able to retrieve bits of springs, screws and casing that clung from the curly hairs around his doggie-mouth. Since that night, my hearing aids sleep in a dry-aid jar.

Putting technology in the *same* place cuts down on the inevitable panic when you can't find it. I'm reminded of this every year when I watch a certain CI user, my friend and perennial roommate at hearing loss conferences, looking for her batteries in a cluttered hotel room. She eventually finds them, but the show is always entertaining.

**#5:** Every time you get new hearing aids, it will be like the first time. Everything will be loud. People chewing their food sound like pigs at a trough. A human nose whistles like a steam engine. The clattering of knives and forks will send you through the roof and you'll ask your family to eat with their hands. What I'm saying is – brace yourself. Things will be quieter in a month. But then, because sounds aren't as loud, you'll worry that the technology has destroyed a few more decibels of your hearing. Trust me, it hasn't.

**#6:** Show the love to your hearing aids and CIs, and they'll love you back. Or maybe it's the other way around. Regardless, a beautiful and mutually respectful relationship is definitely possible; like any relationship – there's good stuff and the not so great stuff. There will be days when you think, *I'm so done with this!* But persevere because, if you need them, life is .

better with hearing aids or cochlear implants

**#7:** When you see a stranger with hearing technology, pause a moment before commenting. Pointing to your own ears and saying, "*Hi there, harda-hearing too, eh?*" is to risk a negative reaction. He or she may be at a different stage of the hearing loss journey, and having their aids or implant pointed out might be embarrassing or grumpy-making. But if you feel comfortable in making the connection, your positive attitude may just make that person's day – and yours.

**#8:** Here's what a cranky spouse-parent-friend should not say to a person with hearing loss who's struggling in a conversation: "*Have you got your hearing aids in?!*" Because we usually *do*, and when we say, "*Uh, yes*", what's your next line going to be?

**#9:** Don't try to repair your own hearing devices unless you have taken a course. You can change batteries and wax guards, and use that little brush to clean the outside. But do not, under any circumstances, open it up and use tweezers to remove what looks to you like simple debris. There's a high probability the gunk is attached to a trip wire that will destroy the whole damn thing. Another no-no is putting the bottom of an in-the-ear aid between your lips and trying to suck out the ear-wax. You may get more than you expected.

**#10:** If you don't yet use any technology, learn about your hearing loss. Learn about hearing aids and other technology. Get some. And then, read this again or call me,

Gael Hannan, Editor,

**Better Hearing Consumer**

@ Hearing Health & Technology Matters!

**Hear Well, Live Well**

<http://hearinghealthmatters.org/betterhearingconsumer/>

## Managing your Hearing Loss While Dining Out

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### Lighting

To create a cozy ambience, many fancy restaurants have dim lighting and use candle-light at the tables. If you rely on speechreading, this might be problematic for you. One quick fix is to ask the waiter for more candles. The ambience will still be nice and you will now be able to see your partner or guests more easily.

### Call ahead

Some restaurants play music during dinner or have live music. Check in with restaurants before you dine to make sure they do not have live music, or ask to be seated away from a speaker. It's good to know ahead of time so you can plan to choose a different venue. Dining with a group can additionally be difficult. However, enjoy the company of the people nearest you and move around to chat if you wish.

If being able to enjoy a nice meal out is important for your wellbeing, follow the above tips to ensure that your experience is a great one.

<http://www.captel.com/news/hearing-loss/managing-your-hearing-loss-while-dining-out/>



## IMPROVE your speech reading with COPING SKILLS

### WE CAN HELP . . .

10 weekly speech reading classes—\$30

#### **START: Thursday, March 5th**

Both afternoon **1:30—3:30 pm** and evening **7—9 pm** classes are available. at

The South Gate Church  
120 Clarendon Ave.  
Hamilton, ON L9A 3A5

Registration & payment must be made by Friday, February 27th.

You may register on-line at

[www.chha-hamilton.ca](http://www.chha-hamilton.ca)

Or mail to CHHA-Hamilton, 762 Upper James, Suite 122, Hamilton, ON L9C 3A2

- ◆ Learn about assistive listening devices
- ◆ *Hear* from audiologist & hearing aid specialists
- ◆ Have fun & socialize with others who experience the same difficulties you have

**Questions?** - phone 905-659-7347 or [chhamilton2@gmail.com](mailto:chhamilton2@gmail.com)

## **WHY JOIN CHHA?**

- We offer speech reading classes to assist you in communicating
- We are advocates for those who suffer from hearing loss
- We host events that help build community amongst hard of hearing individuals
- We raise funds to assist the hard of hearing in our region

All of these projects help us to fulfill CHHA's mission to make the community a better place for the hard of hearing. Please renew your membership or join us for the first time and find out what CHHA is all about.

To keep our association strong we have to know that *you* are supporting us by becoming a member.

*Craig Ellis*, Membership Chair

## **CHHA-Hamilton Membership Application & Renewal Form**

Your Membership is due effective *now* to – August 31, **2015**

**Please mail this form with your payment to:**

CHHA Membership, 762 Upper James, Suite 122 Hamilton, ON L9C 3A2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: 19—30 \_\_\_\_ 31—50 \_\_\_\_ 51+ \_\_\_\_

**I hereby apply for one of the following memberships (please check one):**

Individual Membership: \$35.00 / year                      Family Membership: \$50.00 / year

Lifetime Membership: \$300.00 plus \$5.00 / year

*Make cheques payable to: CHHA-Hamilton*

***Remember . . . You are not alone!***

**Donations to CHHA-Hamilton** may be made in memory of loved ones and friends. Tax receipts will be issued and announcements sent to the family. Charitable Reg. No. 89647 8419 RR0001