



www.chha-hamilton.ca
chhahamilton2@gmail.com
Founded 1986

Canadian **HARD** of **HEARING** Association **CHHA-Hamilton** **HERE, HEAR!! Newsletter**

Remember . . . You are not alone!

November, 2020

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Communicating in a Masked World with Hearing Loss



Speaker: Leila Hess, B.H.Sc., Hearing Instrument Specialist

**Join us for a virtual meeting
on Thursday, November 26th, **7:30—9:30** p.m.**

You are invited to join a captioned, virtual Zoom get-together for the hearing loss community. While we are physically separated, we are ready to socially connect. The captioned Zoom meeting will include time for questions from attendees.

Questions can be asked in advance when you register.

[Click Here to Register](https://communicating-in-a-masked-world-with-hearing-loss.lilregie.com/)

Or go to

<https://communicating-in-a-masked-world-with-hearing-loss.lilregie.com/>

Sponsored by **Association of Hearing Instrument
Practitioners of Ontario** **www.helpmehear.ca**

President's Message



Hello everyone,

Yet again I have to start out my message similar to my last one. I hope that my note finds everyone and their loved ones doing well. If you or your loved ones have been affected by the pandemic, our prayers are with you. God bless!

Unfortunately, as I write this note the number of COVID-19 cases worldwide and locally are rising with no clear remedy in sight. As this is the hand we have been dealt, we are learning to adapt to the situation. We will continue reaching out and delivering hearing related topics to our follower members and guests on Zoom. If you have questions that you would like to find answers to, or if you have an idea for a topic that you would like us to cover, please reach out to us and hopefully we will have a chance to accommodate your request.

The members of the board continue to advocate for the hard of hearing. For myself, I have been focusing my efforts in advocating the need of clear masks. I would encourage everyone reading this message to remember to tell the clerk, social worker, doctor, emergency personnel and many others in the service industry that while we must wear masks to stay safe and healthy, let us not forget the struggles of the hard of hearing folk and wear a clear mask if at all possible.

We presented the Mayor of Hamilton with a clear mask recently. Our goal is to increase awareness and encourage people to stop and think about inclusion of people who highly rely in being able to see and read lips. The more publicity we can have the better it is for the hard of hearing community. So, while we are doing whatever we can, I'm asking you for your help. Pick up a clear mask for the person you must talk to the most, so that you can read their lips. Also tell your supervisor, teacher,

and your best friend to join the cause.

If you're asking: "Where do I get my clear mask?" you are in luck. They are available for purchase through our website www.chha-hamilton.ca or by emailing JulieCHHA@gmail.com. Our national office has also partnered with the Como Foundation and are running a campaign called "ShareYourSmile". The campaign delivers masks that are approved for professional organizations across Ontario and they are working on getting Health Canada's approval so that they can be sold nationally.

We have another great meeting coming up on November 26th on Zoom. Our speaker, a local hearing instrument practitioner, Leila Hess, will be delivering her message and insight regarding hearing loss during the pandemic in a presentation titled "Communicating in a Masked World". Please come out and make it an evening of learning about our invisible disability challenges during this pandemic.

I'd like to finish by reminding everyone of our mission: - we are about empowering Canadians living with hearing loss through our 4 pillars of activities: Education, Public Awareness, Service and Advocacy. If you, or anyone you know, want to get involved, I'd love to arrange a meeting and discussion to share our vision and see if there is an opportunity for us to champion the cause together.

Keep well and stay safe.

CHHA for now!

Levi

EAR CLEANING DOS AND DO NOTS

Send *your* questions to Mark at chhahamilton2@gmail.com

I am often asked how to prevent wax build up in the ear canal. The short answer is you can't. Some people produce more wax than others; the same way some people sweat more than others. The trouble is you cannot see into your own ear canal and other people cannot see into your ear canal without some sort of light and even then, the vast majority of people don't really know what they are looking at when they look into your ear.

The Dos

Do wash your ears regularly with the same soap you use on your body just be sure to rinse your ears after washing them and also after you wash your hair as shampoos have heavy perfumes that can irritate the sensitive ear canal skin.

Do get your ears checked regularly when you visit your doctor or your hearing care practitioner. Always ask to have them looked in. It only takes a moment.

Do moisturize your ears with unscented moisturizer if you feel that your ears are itchy or dry but do not put the moisturizer inside your ear especially if you have a hearing aid. Do not put anything on a cotton swab (Q-Tip) and stick it in your ears unless directed by a doctor.

The Don'ts (a much longer list)

Don't put anything in your ears. No cotton swabs, Q-Tips, pens, pencils, bobby pins, knitting needles, swizzle sticks, fingers, or car keys. In general if it can fit into your ear canal do not put it in there. Your ears are very sensitive and prone to infection so if you break the skin you might get a terrible infection or seriously injure your ear. You cannot see into your ear and so you cannot know if you got the wax out or just damaged your ear for no reason.

Don't flush your ears out regularly. They have bacteria that needs to live in there to keep your ears from getting infections and flushing them out kills both the good and the bad bacteria and usually the bad bacteria grows back faster and angrier as a result.

Don't think having ear wax means you are a dirty person. Everyone has ear wax; some just produce more than others and it is totally ok.

Don't buy expensive (or inexpensive) gadgets to clean out your ears. You can't see if you did a good job or not and you might damage your ear.

Don't do ear candling. It does not work. The wax inside the candle is the wax from the candle and there is a danger of hot wax dripping onto your ear drum causing permanent damage.

Don't assume because you can't hear it is caused by ear wax. Get your hearing checked regularly. Ear wax rarely causes both ears to have a problem. So if you're having trouble with your ears get them checked

Don't heat anything up on the stove and then put it into your ears. If you suspect you have an ear infection visit your doctor or go the pharmacy and they can help you with some medicated drops or a nasal spray for congestion.

Don't put cotton balls in your ears. If the wind bothers your ears use earmuffs. I can't tell you how many cotton balls I have pulled out of people's ears.

Don't panic if your ear is full of wax or you get something (like the rubber piece of a hearing aid) stuck in your ear. Your ear (most ears anyways) are enclosed spaces, and nothing is going to work its way into your head. DO get it looked at sooner rather than later but there is no need to panic.

Don't forget to be kind to your ears.

Mark

CLEAR MASKS AVAILABLE FOR YOU & THE MAYOR

The Hamilton & Area Branch of the Canadian HARD of HEARING Association is pleased to announce clear masks are now available for sale.

A talented, local crafter, Julie Ens, will be making these masks. They come in adult and child sizes in a variety of colours, selling for \$18. Julie calls them “smile masks”.

Included are soft adjustable straps, plus a Lanyard (around the neck mask holder for easy removal and accessibility).

As CHHA is a non-profit organization, Julie will be donating a portion of each sale to CHHA-Hamilton.

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CHHA-Hamilton President, Levi Janosi, presenting a clear mask to Hamilton Mayor, Fred Eisenberger, in front of the City Hall Hamilton sign.



At City Hall (from left) Jacquie Reid, Levi Janosi, Julie Ens, Craig Ellis

**To purchase
your clear
mask/s click
here:**

JulieCHHA@gmail.com

**... and be sure to
post your photo on
FB wearing your
mask and tag
#ShareYourSmile
and #CHHAHamilton**

Why I Don't Know Sign Language

By Karina Cotran

There have been countless moments growing up when I would tell someone that I have hearing loss, and then they would excitedly, "do you know how to sign as well?"

Every time my response would be an awkward, "... Well, actually no."

Each time I said no, I would get this lingering thought – I have hearing loss. Shouldn't I *know* how to sign?

When I used to work at a retail store when I was younger, I was helping a customer who was deaf. I was helping the customer out, with his interpreter translating for us, when all of a sudden, the customer started signing excitedly to me. He had noticed my cochlear implant and thought that I could sign too.

That was one moment where I felt terrible for not knowing how to sign. It was also then that I really felt the divide between being a part of the hearing community and a part of the deaf/Deaf community.

I was born into a hearing family and was completely immersed into the hearing lifestyle. I went to hearing schools, had hearing friends, and I had only met a small handful of people with hearing loss (two of them were in their 80s).

I actually didn't have any friends with hearing loss until the last year when I became more in touch with people in the deaf and hard of hearing community. Because I was fully immersed in mainstream culture, there was really no reason or need for me to learn sign language – other than for the sake of interest.

Just like learning other languages, I was briefly interested in learning sign language. I learned a couple of phrases back when I was in school. I didn't have to apply the language, so naturally, my interest fizzled out and I stopped.

Learning sign language is just like learning any other language. You need to constantly apply yourself in learning it or you will lose it. Other than that brief stint of interest back when I was in school, I didn't pick up learning sign language again...until last week.

I had the opportunity to coordinate sign language classes for my work in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). I got in touch with [Canadian Hearing Services](#), and had the pleasure of connecting with the sign language instructor, who was Deaf and fully immersed in the Deaf community.



He did a presentation that gave an overview of the Deaf community and their values, as well as teaching us some handy phrases in sign language!

That workshop ended with me being just like every other hearing participant in the audience, enamored and left with a huge respect for the Deaf community and their culture.

I've long realized that due to my upbringing and the values I've developed as a result of that upbringing, I am not a part of the Deaf community. I was brought up in the hearing world, and with the help of my cochlear implant, I'm able to get by with just minor bumps in the road.

However, after seeing a more in-depth demonstration on Deaf culture and sign language, I learned *how* to be accommodating and understanding to a Deaf person as they would for me, as they have had to accommodate for me not knowing their language.

About Me, Personal / By Karina / November 1, 2020
<https://hearingdifferently.com/>



WARNING

Buying Hearing Aids from the Internet?

Serious Health Risks

In Ontario, a prescription is required by law prior to a hearing aid being dispensed.

- Without obtaining the assistance of qualified hearing healthcare professionals, you will not have obtained proper testing, selection, counseling and dispensing.
- Hearing Aids are a Class II Medical Device which must be approved by Health Canada to ensure they are safe and effective.
- Hearing aids over the internet may be counterfeit, cause serious infections, be recalled due to safety concerns or have missing parts.



Be Safe. Love Your Ears !



Apps for tinnitus: My top picks

Contributed by [Glenn Schweitzer](#)

When you live with bothersome [tinnitus](#), having the right coping tools close at hand can make a big difference in the quality of your day.



But if you have a smartphone, you already own one of the most powerful tinnitus coping toolkits ever created.

There are many apps that can help you to better manage tinnitus in a variety of different ways. The only problem is that there are quite a lot of apps to choose from, and not all of them are created equal.

So I'm here to help. I've put together a list of my favorite tinnitus-related apps across many different categories, all to help you find relief from the ringing in your ears.

From sound masking, guided meditation and breathing techniques, to educational content, habituation assistance, and sensorineural [hearing loss](#) improvement, there is an app for every need.

Despite what your doctor might have told you or what you might have read online, if you suffer from tinnitus, you do not "just have to live with it." There are many ways to find [tinnitus relief](#), and these apps are just one more toolset available to every tinnitus patient.

I hope you find them helpful!

Best apps for sound masking [myNoise](#) ([Android](#) and [iOS](#))
[NatureSpace](#) ([Android](#) and [iOS](#))

Best apps for comprehensive tinnitus relief & habituation [habituation](#)

Best paid app for meditation [Waking Up](#) ([Android](#) and [iOS](#))

Best free app for meditation [Insight Timer](#) ([Android](#) and [iOS](#))

Best apps for breathing techniques [Breathwrk](#) ([iOS only](#))

[Prana Breath: Calm & Meditate](#) ([Android only](#))

Best app for improving hearing loss ([Android](#) and [iOS](#))

For full article: <https://www.healthyhearing.com/report/53142-Best-apps-for-tinnitus>

Glenn Schweitzer is an entrepreneur, blogger, and the author of *Rewiring Tinnitus* and *Mind over Meniere's*. He is passionate about helping others who suffer from tinnitus and vestibular disorders and volunteers as an Ambassador Board Member for the Vestibular Disorders Association (VEDA). Through his blogs, he continues to raise awareness for tinnitus, Meniere's disease, and other vestibular disorders, spreading his message of hope to those in need. [Read more about Glenn.](#)

WHY JOIN CHHA?

- We offer Lip/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, **2021**

Please mail this form with your payment to:

CHHA Membership, 762 Upper James, Box 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: \$350.00 plus \$5.00 / year

Make cheques payable to: CHHA-Hamilton

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

Remember . . . You are not alone!