



# HERE, HEAR!!

Canadian HARD of HEARING Association  
(CHHA-Hamilton)

Linda Baine, President

May, 2011

You are not alone!

**CHHA-Hamilton invites YOU to our upcoming  
Spring Meeting  
The Topic is  
“Are You Prepared for an Emergency?”**

*Gina Cliffe*

Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Hamilton

**Wednesday, May 11, 2011**

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

**The Scottish Rite (Round Room)  
Corner of King & Queen Streets (free parking at rear)  
Hamilton L8P 3R3**

**Real Time Captioning & Infra Red System available**

**Members - free**

**Visitors: \$5.00**

**To register**

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

**Call 905-659-7347 or 905-575-4964**

**Or email us at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca)**

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

## **President's Message**

This past month has been extremely busy with enquiries, and people wanting advice and information regarding their hearing loss. Also, I had two separate interviews from students. One interview was from two students at McMaster University in the Chronic Illness, Disability and Aging program. They wanted to know how hearing loss fitted into their plans to help the aged and the care givers deal with problems. The other interview was a student from Mohawk College who was studying Group Dynamics and wanted to know how we went about organizing our classes. Two very interesting afternoons.

We are planning some exciting events during the year. One is the hosting of the Sunnybrook South Region Cochlear Implant meeting in June. While this is not open to the general public, I would encourage anyone who might be thinking about cochlear implantation to contact me and you can be placed on a wait list to attend. ([info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca))

*Linda*

## **WHAT IS A COCHLEAR IMPLANT AND HOW DOES IT WORK?**

### **WHAT IS IT?**

A cochlear implant is a device made up of two parts. One component is worn externally behind the ear, like a hearing aid. It also has a coil and a circular pad containing a small magnet which is placed on the scalp above the ear. The other is surgically implanted just under the skin in the temporal area of the skull, just above the ear. It has an electrode which is threaded into the cochlea towards the auditory nerve. It also has a small magnet which is attracted to the magnet on the outer appliance allowing continued contact with the external part.

### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

Sound waves are picked up by the microphones in the external appliance. They travel along the coil, into the internal processor where they are changed into electrical energy, travelling along the electrode which stimulates the auditory nerve to send the messages directly to the brain allowing the person to hear sound. After the implant is in place and healing has taken place – about 4-6 weeks a visit to the cochlear clinic is necessary where the Audiologist will with the aid of the computer will turn on the implant processor. This is called mapping, and the implant will be programmed for different listening situation. The sound one hears with an implant is different from normal hearing. It should be understood that once hearing is lost it can never be returned to “normal” but with patience and perseverance and the help of the Audiologist, the brain gradually becomes accustomed to the new sound and hearing, and better understanding of speech can be achieved.

Not everyone is a candidate for a cochlear implant. Each person must be evaluated at the cochlear clinic to determine their best option. Benefits can vary from person to person but most people do well. It is important that anyone thinking about having an implant should do their homework and educate themselves about them. Talk to your audiologist and to other people who have had an implant to help you make your decision. Speech reading classes will also help you to cope and understand speech better.

Should anyone have an interest and want to know more about cochlear implants don't hesitate to speak with me. You can get in touch with me at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca) or 905 659-7347 or at the next CHHA meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Linda Baine , Cochlear Implant recipient  
CHHA-Hamilton President and Speech Reading Instructor

# Provincial Hearing Consultants is now Connect Hearing

Even though our name has changed, we still have the same great people offering the same outstanding service. Trust our professionals to continue recommending hearing aids that help you feel more confident in your conversations. **Call for a complimentary hearing screening today.**

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<b>Hamilton Main</b>	541 Main St. East	<b>905.522.8011</b>
<b>Hamilton Parkdale</b>	205 - 132 Parkdale Ave. South	<b>905.312.4703</b>
<b>Hamilton Wilson</b>	130 Wilson St.	<b>905.525.1032</b>
<b>St. Catharines</b>	3 Lowell Ave.	<b>905.685.6185</b>
<b>Stoney Creek</b>	308-15 Mountain Ave. South	<b>905.664.5310</b>

**connecthearing.ca** ADP, DVA, WSIB accepted



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## Research Project

Brian Gaber, a CHHA Manitoba board member, is working on using an 'off the shelf device' to help HOH people communicate better. This project was initiated by CHHA National. His present plan is to use a small laptop with a voice recognition system. "With the advent of new electronic devices this type of system may now be possible" says Gaber.

So far he has used his large Dell laptop with Dragon Speech Recognition software to have his wife's words converted into text. "This is particularly useful when she is in the kitchen and wants to convey some hard for me to comprehend information" says Gaber.

His thoughts are that a small laptop computer with voice recognition software be used with a selection of stored voices. Mr. Gaber is looking for your comments as to whether or not this would work for you or if you have any alternatives that might work. You can contact him at 'bgaber2@shaw.ca'

CHHA-Hamilton would like to thank the following sponsors for their support: **Connect Hearing** and **Terry Anderson**, Hamilton Mountain Conservative

### People with hearing loss still succeed

A reminder for all of us that just because people are hard of hearing or deaf, doesn't mean that can't succeed in life. A few examples are:

- Pete Townshend, English rock guitarist, singer & song writer
- Thomas Edison, inventor
- Lou Ferrigno, body builder & actor
- Helen Keller, the first deaf/blind person to graduate from college

### IF you missed our March meeting...

At our March general meeting we had an opportunity to hear Michelle Tew, R.N. from OHCOW (Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers). She discussed a very enlightening topic - work-related hearing loss (Noise Induced Hearing Loss or NIHL). Unfortunately, this is common if you have worked in noisy environments (indoors or outdoors).

For further information [www.ohcow.on.ca](http://www.ohcow.on.ca)

## THIS & THAT . . .

- **Wednesday, May 11th is your opportunity to learn about emergency situations and how to handle them. Bring your questions. Location and time is on page 1.**
- Upcoming fall meeting is on Wednesday, October 12th, 7 pm, Scottish Rite,
- For information on speech reading classes or to be added to the list for the fall classes, contact Linda Baine at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca) or phone 905-659-7347.
- For a listing of public buildings and churches that have assistive listening devices (ALD) check out our website [www.chha-hamilton.ca](http://www.chha-hamilton.ca). If you are aware of other locations, please let us know at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca)
- 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

**This just in:**

**Folate, that enriching B vitamin,  
can help slow age-related hearing loss.**

According to a study in the Journal of Nutrition, subjects over age 50 who had low folate levels were 39% much more likely to experience hearing loss.

Researchers have theorized that elevated levels of homocysteine, which folate has been shown to lower in the body, cause the hearing loss. Homocysteine is an amino acid in the blood that can cause vascular disease. The daily value for folate is 400 micrograms.

Three ounces of beef liver at 45% of the daily value is among the highest in folate. Also very high in folate are leafy green vegetables, dried beans, sunflower seeds, peas and lentils.

Folate is important for pregnant women because it helps grow cells during rapid cell division. Also, it's a nutrient needed to prevent anemia.

by Sam McManis  
McClatchy-Tribune Newspapers

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## COCHLEAR IMPLANT NEWS

Braydy Noelle Abbott went instantly from wide-eyed wonder to teary-eyed screams. It was magic to the ears of her parents, Jamie and Danielle of Whitby, Ontario.

A cochlear implant allowed the 14-month-old girl to hear the sounds of her parents' voices for the very first time Monday. Danielle said she has been waiting since her daughter's birth for this day, preparing their older daughter, Faith, 3, for the arrival of Braydy's "magic ear" that will allow them to listen to music and dance together.

"We've waited for this day for 14 months so it's been a long road but we're very anxious and happy for her," Danielle said, her own tears flowing. "These implants will give her so much more than we could ever have hoped for if we weren't able to get them. It's just been a great journey."

**Ontario Health Minister Deb Matthews announced Monday the provincial government will provide an extra \$5.9 million to perform an additional 184 cochlear implants, reducing the number of adults and children on the wait list by half.**

"We're going to pay for them anyway, so let's get them as soon as we can," Matthews said, shortly after viewing Braydy's reaction to hearing. "We know that the longer you wait, the harder it is to catch up and sometimes you can never catch up."

Five hospitals in Ontario — The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, London Health Sciences Centre, the Ottawa Hospital and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre — perform about 190 implants each year.

Gurvinder Toor, 20, who received an implant at SickKids after going losing his hearing at age eight, said the procedure set him on his path to become a medical doctor. Toor works after school as a research student at the SickKids Cochlear Implant Program. "So I see this happen every day," he said. "It really is amazing."

Cochlear implants are used on individuals, like Braydy, who have severe or profound hearing loss. Electrodes are attached to a microphone behind the ear which is wired to an external speech processor.

Dr. Blake Papsin, director of SickKids Cochlear Implant Program, said the program allows Ontarians with hearing loss to remain or become contributing members of society. "And that, frankly, is miraculous," Papsin said.

Source: <http://www.torontosun.com/news/canada/2011/03/07/17527636.html>

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**Rush Limbaugh continues to "hear" & "talk" with his cochlear implant**

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1571/is\\_3\\_18/ai\\_82554117/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1571/is_3_18/ai_82554117/)

**Do YOU want to become part of the CHHA team?**

CHHA is looking for new members who would like to volunteer, and assist at various meetings and health shows.

If you are interested in fulfilling this position, please contact us at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca).

## Budget Misses on Childhood Hearing

Ottawa / CASLP / - the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) expressed its disappointment at the absence of dedicated funding in the federal budget for universal newborn hearing screening programs (UNHS) to detect permanent childhood hearing loss (PCHL). "By not providing dedicated funding for a universal newborn hearing screening program, they are missing a real opportunity to improve care while saving money," said CASLPA audiology board director, Dr. Sean Kinden.

Approximately three to five per 1,000 babies born each year in Canada have some degree of hearing loss. UNHS programs use an inexpensive and non-invasive test that can quickly and accurately screen for hearing loss in newborns. The screening process is simple and should ideally be performed before a newborn leaves the hospital. At about \$35 per test, such screening is less expensive than a number of other current newborn screening tests.

Historically, only those babies with high-risk factors have been screened for PCHL, but studies estimate that nearly 50 per cent of infants with hearing loss have no high risk factors. Relying on risk assessment alone means as many as half of children with PCHL are missed. Because it is very difficult to detect PCHL based on observation alone, the absence of UNHS programs inevitably delays the identification of affected children.

"Undetected PCHL has been described by some researchers as a neurologic emergency," said Dr. Kinden. "Extended periods of auditory deprivation have a significant impact on a child's overall brain development and sensory integration.

Deficits in speech, language, cognitive, academic, social and emotional development are expected results of untreated hearing loss.

The most direct and effective way of limiting the impact of these factors is to reduce the age at which hearing loss is identified and to start intervention as early as possible." UNHS is increasingly becoming the standard of care in many developed countries, including the United States, where 95 per cent of newborns are screened with UNHS programs. While Ontario and New Brunswick were the first to mandate UNHS programs in 2002, they remain non-existent in many areas of Canada.

WWHN March 2011, Vol. 4

## Ear Wax and Hearing Aids

If you wear a hearing aid or use an earmold with a cochlear implant, you may have noticed ear wax (earwax). A buildup of [ear wax](#) in an earmold user can: damage a hearing aid, cause hearing aid feedback, reduce the effectiveness of the hearing aid by blocking sound and possibly cause (further) hearing loss.

Hearing aid users are at especially high risk for ear wax buildup. When a parent said that she had been told by her child's doctor that the more her child wore his hearing aids, the more his ear wax would build up. She wanted to know if it was true. Unfortunately, it is true. *This deep ear wax should be removed professionally if softening drops and rinsing does not remove them at home.* The current guidelines from the American Academy of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery Foundation recommend that people who wear hearing aids get professional [ear cleaning](#) once or twice a year. Nobody should try to remove ear wax by themselves. The best thing to do is leave the ear wax alone and let the ear clean itself out naturally. If you try to clean it out yourself, you risk pushing the wax in more deeply, making it impacted. At the same time, an earmold prevents the ear from being able to clean itself out naturally. Therefore, a hearing aid user will have to make regular trips to a healthcare professional to have the wax professionally removed.

## WHY JOIN CHHA?

### This is what your CHHA membership is doing for you

For speech reading class information contact Linda at 905-659-7347 or [lbaine@cogeco.ca](mailto:lbaine@cogeco.ca). CHHA has representatives at CRTC for Text Emergency Services for those of us who have trouble hearing on the phone. We have representatives at the local City Committee for barrier free accessibility in public buildings. This year we also held a cochlear implant reunion as well as a Hearing Health Fair.

CHHA meetings are held with excellent guest speakers presenting information to help the hard of hearing. As well, we provide Real Time Captioning and Infrared Hearing System at the meetings to help us hear what is being said.

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.

Joan Miller, Membership Chair

Below you will see an application to renew *or* become a new member of CHHA. We ask that you fill it out and send it to the address printed on the form. **Memberships for the year 2011 to August 31, 2012 are now due.** To keep our association strong we have to know that *you* are supporting us by becoming a member.

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

Your Membership is due effective now through to – August 31, 2012

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

CHHA, c/o Joan Miller, Membership, 90 Stirling Street, Caledonia, ON N3W 1J5

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

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

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

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

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

Individual Membership: \$30.00 / year

Family Membership: \$50.00 / year

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

*Make cheques payable to: CHHA-Hamilton*