



Canadian HARD of HEARING Association  
(CHHA-Hamilton)

Linda Baine, President

September, 2011

You are not alone!

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

**CHHA-Hamilton invites YOU to our upcoming**

**“Annual General Meeting”**

and

**“A Major Special Announcement”**

**Wednesday, September 28th, 2011**

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

**Southgate Presbyterian Church  
120 Clarendon Ave., (free parking in the rear)  
Hamilton L9A 3A5**

**Real Time Captioning & Assistive Listening Devices available**

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**Visitors: \$5.00**

**To register**

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

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

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

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT, AUGUST 2011**

When I began my tenure as President in 2008, I thought I would never survive three years, but time has passed very quickly. Our branch is continuing to grow, we have accomplished much and look enthusiastically to the future. We are constantly being kept busy answering phone call and email enquiries for information and support regarding hearing loss issues. Our speech reading classes are well established, although our last spring class was cancelled due to low registration. Our fall classes are full and we now have a long waiting list for spring classes. It pays to register early to avoid disappointment. I am continually being invited by different organizations and trade shows providing information about hearing loss and prevention and CHHA.

Along with a few of our board members I attended this year's National Convention which was held in Yellowknife NWT and found it to be a great learning experience as always, as well as an opportunity to see a far away part of Canada and meet up with some old friends, networking with other CHHA branches and making new friends as well. More about Yellowknife further in the newsletter (page 4) so I won't say anymore for now, other than to say that the hospitality by the people in Yellowknife was outstanding.

I am very proud of our volunteer board and a few others who work diligently, whether at meetings, doing their own specific duties or work quietly behind the scenes. Without them I could not do my job properly and our branch would not exist. This is an election year and I am hoping that some of you will volunteer to be nominated to our board at the AGM on the September 28th.

In my role as Past President I will still be on the board and still involved with speech reading and anything else I am required to do. I am confident that Arthur will continue to lead us to greater success in achieving our goals for the future. I thank all of you for your continued help and support; it has been very much appreciated.

Linda Baine  
President CHHA-Hamilton



**Did you know...**

In our community many people who are unable to hear clearly, even with hearing aids, have never been made aware that they are eligible for an important tax credit that often includes a significant refund. It's time Hamiltonians learned about their legitimate entitlement under the Income Tax Act.

The Disability Tax Credit is a non-refundable credit up to \$1,400 per year. If you are eligible, this claim can be made retroactively for up to ten years!

For more information please contact my constituency office at 905.574.3331.



**Chris Charlton**  
Member of Parliament for  
Hamilton Mountain

[www.chrischarlton.ca](http://www.chrischarlton.ca)

## **This & That . . .**

- **Have you renewed your membership?** If you haven't had an opportunity, September 28th would be the perfect time. CHHA needs your support to continue bringing you the most up-to-date information on hearing loss.
- **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
- **Johnnie Ray the 1950s singer**—He became deaf in his right ear at age 13 after an accident during a Boy Scout event. He later performed his music wearing a hearing aid. Surgery performed in New York in 1958, left him almost completely deaf in both ears, although hearing aids helped his condition.
- The Fall **speech reading class** is completely booked and there is already a waiting list for the spring. Contact Linda Baine for more information at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca)

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*Hear now. And always.*



## In Memory of Someone Else...

We were saddened this week to learn of the loss of one of our members, "SOMEONE ELSE". SOMEONE ELSE'S leaving has created a vacancy that will be hard to fill. SOMEONE ELSE was with us for quite some time and did far more than a normal person's share of work.

Whenever there was a job to be done or a meeting to attend, one name was on everybody's list, let SOMEONE ELSE do it. It was common knowledge that SOMEONE ELSE was among the largest givers in our group. Whenever there was a need, everyone just assumed that SOMEONE ELSE would do it. SOMEONE ELSE was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing to be super-human, -- but a person can only do so much. Were the truth known, everyone expected too much of SOMEONE ELSE. Now ELSE is gone and we wonder what we are going to do. SOMEONE ELSE left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow with the many things that SOMEONE ELSE did? When help is called for, we cannot rely on SOMEONE ELSE any more?

Author Unknown

## DRUMS of HEARING North of 60— Memories of Yellowknife

The CHHA Conference was great! It was the annual National Conference of the Canadian HARD of HEARING Association and it was held in Yellowknife this year. Never having been that far north I wanted to see what the country was like.

Yellowknife is situated on Great Slave Lake and there are many little lakes surrounding the city as well. The population is roughly 19,000 and there is an influx of immigrants from Vietnam and China which is causing the population to grow slowly.

Because of the ethnically mixed population there are eleven official languages spoken in the North West Territories. In Yellowknife five are spoken: Dene Suline, Dogrib, South and North Slavey, English and French. The population is made up of Aborigines and Non-Aborigines. In Yellowknife people work together and live peacefully side by side.

The Opening Procession of the Conference was led by the NWT Pipe Band. Opening prayer led by the Dettah Dene Drummers was very impressive. There was a good Trade Show and excellent workshops. We tasted tea and bannock during our coffee breaks, renewed old acquaintances and made new friends. Friday night we enjoyed a fish fry on Back Bay.

There was a time change of two hours and after a pleasant flight we arrived, booked in and registered. The country is stark and beautiful, big rocks with lichen growing on them and many pine and birch trees. It was daylight all day and then for a few hours it was twilight.

It was interesting to note that the advertisement in the local newspaper the "Yellowknifer" published twice weekly told us that the Midnight Classic Golf Tournament was held on Friday June 17 with Tee-Off times at Noon, 6 pm, 11:30 pm and on Sat. the last one at 7 am.

Saturday we had a tour of the Old Town where Yellowknife was first settled by the Natives and later the miners. A four bedroom, two bathroom house sells for \$400,000. Some of the houses look much like what we have here. They are built up high on rocks. On the tour we drove through "Back Ass Alley." The story goes that in the old town the houses were built up high on the rocks and because there was no sewage and water at that time, the out houses were down the hill close to the street where holes could be dug and the privies could be placed on level ground.

The people in Yellowknife are great. They like living there. Some have been there all of their lives. Others are there because of their jobs. It was a great experience. Would I want to live there? No I don't think so. It would be OK in summer but I do not think I would want to live where it was dark almost all day in the winter.

The workshops I attended were excellent. One called "Embracing Change in Non-Profit Agencies" told about the challenges that non-profit organizations are facing in growth and development. I say that it was interesting because at the present time CHHA National is going through change and also the Hamilton Branch, of which I am a member, is undergoing change in order to survive. People do not want to attend meetings each month as they once did.

Another workshop that I found enlightening was Remote CART-How Can I Access it from Virtually Anywhere. CART stands for Communication Access Realtime Translation. We've come a long way with captioning and now you can receive CART on a Blackberry. I use captioning on the TV so that I can follow the dialogue. Nowadays you can have a CART captioner sitting in their home listening to a speaker, miles away, and by using the telephone lines, they do shorthand on their shorthand machine and laptop. The words go back, via phone lines, to meetings that are wired in so that people gathered in more than one room can read the words flashed up on screens. I say rooms, but now it is done for two or three cities at the same time. Fantastic! All in all, it was a wonder trip and experience.

Joan Miller  
Past President, Treasurer & Membership Chair

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## Hearing loss in teens linked to second-hand smoke

PAUL TAYLOR , *Globe and Mail*

Loud music isn't the only cause of hearing loss among teenagers. A U.S. study found that adolescents exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke also face an elevated risk of impaired hearing.

"Second-hand smoke is incredibly toxic," said lead researcher Anil Lalwani, a professor in the departments of otolaryngology and pediatrics at New York University's school of medicine.

Indeed, this new study adds one more reason to avoid other people's fumes. Living with a smoker increases the odds of dying from cancer and heart disease. And, in children, smoke exposure is also associated with developmental and behavioural problems.

The latest findings, published in the journal *Archives of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery*, are based on 1,533 people, aged 12 to 19, who participated in the U.S. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. The survey gathered information on children, teens and adults across the United States.

As part of the survey, the participants underwent extensive hearing tests and were given blood tests for cotinine, a byproduct of nicotine exposure.

The results revealed that those with the highest levels of smoke exposure were the ones most likely to show signs of hearing loss, both in low and high frequencies.

Based on earlier studies, the new results seem to make sense. Research has already shown that smokers suffer from premature hearing loss.

Dr. Lalwani speculated that second-hand smoke could lead to hearing loss by reducing the amount of oxygen-rich blood reaching the delicate structures of the inner ear. "Tobacco smoke is known to have a bad effect on blood vessels ... and the inner ear is incredibly sensitive to blood flow," he said. **continued . . .**

Hearing impairment could lead to other problems and may partly explain why second-hand smoke is also linked to behavioural issues, Dr. Lalwani said. For instance, if students can't hear properly, they may have a hard time learning their lessons and become easily distracted. As a consequence, they may be labelled as "troublemakers" or misdiagnosed with attention deficit disorder.

To complicate matters, more than 80 per cent of the affected teens didn't even know they had a hearing problem, according to the study. Dr. Lalwani noted that various health organizations recommend infants and young children be screened for hearing deficits. But there are currently no standardized procedures to check for problems later in childhood or adolescence. He thinks screening for hearing loss should be routinely done for older kids and teens.

### How to Recognize Hearing Loss

The following questions will help you determine if you need to have your hearing evaluated by a medical professional:

Do you have a problem hearing over the telephone?

Do you have trouble following the conversation when two or more people are talking at the same time?

Do people complain that you turn the TV volume up too high?

Do you have to strain to understand conversation?

Do you have trouble hearing in a noisy background?

Do you find yourself asking people to repeat themselves?

Do many people you talk to seem to mumble (or not speak clearly)?

Do you misunderstand what others are saying and respond inappropriately?

Do you have trouble understanding the speech of women and children?

Do people get annoyed because you misunderstand what they say?

If you answered "yes" to three or more of these questions, you may want to see an [otolaryngologist](#) (an ear, nose, and throat specialist) or an [audiologist](#) for a [hearing](#) evaluation.

The material on this page is for general information only and is not intended for diagnostic or treatment purposes. A doctor or other health care professional must be consulted for diagnostic information and advice regarding treatment

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<b>Hamilton Parkdale</b>	<b>202-132 Parkdale Ave. S.</b>	<b>905.312.4703</b>
<b>Hamilton Wilson</b>	<b>130 Wilson St., 2nd Floor</b>	<b>905.525.1032</b>
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## The Sounds of Silence

My hearing loss was very gradual. I guess I started to notice it after I had my third child, when I was 34. It started with my left ear, which is my telephone ear, so I accommodated the loss by just switching sides, which made it somewhat difficult to write with my right hand, however, I adapted and hardly anyone noticed.

Looking back it wasn't all that bad at the beginning. I just very discreetly turned my right ear to the direction of the person speaking, or the radio or television I was listening to – except for those times when I wasn't expecting to hear anything. Although my family and close friends knew, I didn't broadcast it and I later discovered that some people thought I was just "stuck-up" when I didn't respond. There is a definite social stigma about being deaf, even today, one, which I have experienced first hand and I was still in the denial stage.

I wore a hearing aid for a while but it was such a terrible adjustment. Not only do you have to get used to having a foreign object in your ear all day, but also eating something crunchy like carrots was a no-no. The noise is so loud that you can't hear anything else (like a phone ringing), let alone carry a conversation anyone, and besides which you're sure that the other person can hear you crunching that carrot as loud as you do!

After a year with the aid, I explored the option of surgery. I had a condition called otosclerosis, which blocks the vibrating bone in the middle ear and is either genetic or can affect women who have had multiple pregnancies. I decided to opt for surgery, which is called a stapedectomy, whereby the stapes bone is removed and prosthesis is put in its place. The specialist quoted me a success rate of only 60%, however I was optimistic and decided to go for it.

The morning after the operation I remember waking up and feeling a bit light-headed, which was normal, but I had an awful sense of taste in my mouth. Everything tasted metallic or fishy. When the surgeon came to see me that day, he off-handedly said that he must have forgotten to mention this side effect. He explained that the nerves relating to my taste buds had been stretched, but the loss was temporary and my taste buds should return within three months, maybe longer. My husband thought this would be an ideal time for me to lose weight, as he thought there would be no point in eating. I proved him wrong by trying everything in sight, every day hoping that my taste might return,

My sense of smell heightened dramatically during that period. I remember feeling almost high as the smell of freshly brewed coffee, or freshly baked apple pie, lingering the sensation as long as possible.

Although my hearing improved during the first six months after the surgery, it started deteriorating again along with that of my right ear. With a new advanced hearing aid back in my left ear, I was not favouring my left ear, which returned as my telephone ear and really confusing my friends, who were used to talking to me on my right side.

The scariest moment that I can recall happened while I was watching my youngest daughter's soccer game. It was a hot muggy summer's evening about ten years ago and the local high school field was packed with different soccer games going on at the same time. Parents were cheering, kids were playing and laughing, coaches were yelling, whistles were blowing and then – DEAD SILENCE. I could hear nothing except some muffled sounds as if I were swimming under water. My hearing aid battery had died and I hadn't brought my purse with me that night. I could no longer rely on my right ear any longer. I panicked. What if my daughter called me, or got hurt? I was not able to read lips and I felt totally helpless and vulnerable. That was a turning point for me. I accepted the loss for what it was, a disability, one that I had to deal with, for my own safety as well as that of my family.

I was fitted for an aid for my right ear within a week and although it was another huge adjustment that placed some restrictions in my life, I felt more secure wearing both aids. It doesn't matter how advanced the aid is, nothing can replace the human ear, which naturally phases out background noises (and as we all know, **selectively** tunes out some people). Hearing aids have come along way since then, but with my first initial hearing aid every sound seemed magnified about ten times and I just learned to live with it.

If you know anyone who has an aid and won't wear it or does so only occasionally, have some sympathy for them. Speak louder and face them directly, don't mutter and whatever you do, don't yell – it's very demeaning.

Mary Guyatt, CHHA-Hamilton Secretary

Will we see *you* at the AGM on Wednesday, September 28th, 7 pm at South Gate Church? **We've got some exciting news. Curious?**

Please drop us a line to register at [info@chha-hamilton.ca](mailto:info@chha-hamilton.ca) OR call us at 905-575-4964 or 905-659-7347

## 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.

*Craig Ellis*, 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 September 1st, 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 now due effective September 1st, 2011 – August 31, 2012

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

CHHA, c/o Craig Ellis, Membership, 111 Empress Ave., Hamilton, ON L9A 1M5

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*