



**Canadian HARD of HEARING Association**

(CHHA-Hamilton)

**HERE, HEAR!! Newsletter**

www.chha-hamilton.ca

**Rob Diehl, President**

**May, 2014**



**MAY IS HEARING AWARENESS Month**

Mark Wafer and his wife, Valerie, are the owners of seven Tim Hortons restaurants located in the Toronto Area.

In the past 18 years Mark and Valerie have hired 85 people with disabilities in meaningful and competitively paid positions.

They currently employ 36 people with disabilities in all aspects of the business, including entry level positions, logistics, customer service, production, administration and management.

You're invited to attend CHHA's meeting on May 14th. Mark will give you a great incentive whether you have hearing loss or are an employer.

This is an opportunity you don't want to miss.

All are welcome

**May Meeting**

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

**Speaker:** Mark Wafer of  
Tim Hortons

**DATE:** Wednesday, **May 14th**

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

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

**Parking:** free parking in rear

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

### President's Message

Spring is in the air and that can only mean one thing, the CHHA National Conference is just around the corner.

This year, Toronto plays host to over a hundred delegates, May 22-24 at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

This will be my second year attending this conference and I am very much looking forward to reconnecting with all of the people I met in Edmonton last year, and continuing to meet new people.

To me, this event is so inspirational because of the sheer number of people all coming together from across Canada to learn about and discuss an issue that is near and dear to all of us. This conference is the definition of community; a group of people with a common characteristic and passion coming together in one place to discuss the issues that come with being hard of hearing as well as celebrating our accomplishments.

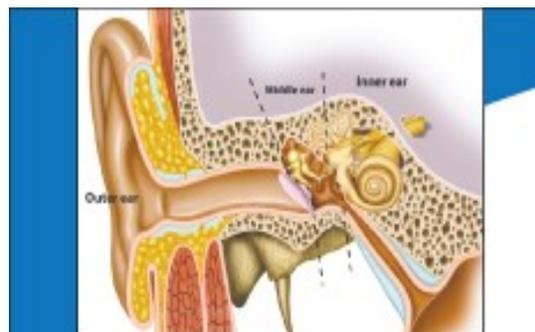
It is community that is key to an organization like CHHA. Like many of the people I have met over the years who suffer from hearing loss, I remember feeling isolated and alone. Personally, I quickly found myself as a teenager surrounded by peers who had no idea what I was going through, and I felt that I couldn't relate to anyone. I found CHHA over a decade later as a young adult, and quickly found comfort among people who shared the same struggles, concerns, and accomplishments that I had. I finally found a community! I hope that all of you also find this sense of community with CHHA-Hamilton. We are here for you, our members, to work together and share all of the pains and joys in our lives as hard of hearing individuals.

As many of you know, our Past President Arthur Rendall has put countless hours into the T-911 initiative. I am pleased to inform you that this project continues to progress, and mobile service providers are now taking registrations from those who are interested in obtaining the service. At this time in Ontario T-911 is currently available **only in the Region of Peel**.

"Every person is defined by the communities they belong to" – Orson Scott Card

*Rob Diehl*

CHHA-Hamilton President



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## Ask Cathy . . .

**Q:** How often should I go to see my hearing specialist?

**A:** If you are not currently wearing hearing aids a hearing test is recommended every third year. If you are wearing hearing aids then you should have a new hearing test every second year. This ensures that you are getting the maximum effectiveness from your current aids. Your aids only need to be replaced every three to five years but your hearing can change in that time period. If you have a hearing test every second year and there is a decrease in your hearing, most times the clinic can reprogram your current aids to deal with the increased loss. This allows you to hear better and still keep the same aids.

Even when you do not require a hearing test you should still visit your hearing clinic on a regular basis – at least twice a year. One of the most important reasons for these visits is to prolong the life of your hearing aids. The clinic will professionally clean your aids – what they do will vary with the type of aids that you wear. If you wear in-the-ear hearing aids they will vacuum out the wax and clean the outside of the aid and change the wax filter. If you wear behind-the-ear hearing aids they will re-tube the mold - the tubing can get hard and when it does the sound it carries will be distorted. The clinic will also clean and inspect the aid itself. If you wear open fit hearing aids they will often change the tip or at least change the wax filter in the tip and often they will change the whole tube if it seems to be compromised in any way. This is preventative maintenance will extend the life of your aid.

These twice yearly visits are also an opportunity to discuss any problems or changing needs with your hearing special-

ist. Maybe you just started singing in a choir and your hearing aids may have a music program that can be activated. Maybe you have just gotten a new cell phone and the clinic can pair it to your aids so you can answer the phone with your aids and get the caller's voice sent directly to your aids. Or maybe you are having trouble hearing things you could previously hear and the clinic can increase the volume of your aids. Whatever problem you are having this is the time to discuss it.

Most of the time these visits are free – although some services like re-tubing a behind-the-ear mold might have a small fee associated with it – but the small fee is worth it to hear better and keep your aids functioning longer.

So if it has been longer than six months since your last check up call your clinic today for an appointment!

Send questions to *Ask Cathy* at:

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

## DONATIONS

CHHA-Hamilton & Area would like to give a great big **thank you** for the generous gifts from the following people & organizations:

- \* Robert Boose
- \* Craig Ellis
- \* Hamilton Police Retirees Association,
- \* Dr. D. Hitch
- \* Norma Martinez
- \* Marilyn Pearson

With their help CHHA will continue to be a strong entity.

Donations to CHHA-Hamilton may be made in memory of loved ones and friends. They can be made directly on our website [www.chha-hamilton.ca](http://www.chha-hamilton.ca) Tax receipts will be issued and announcements sent to the family. Charitable Reg. No. 89647 8419

## Hear, hear! Why Canada needs to be in the loop

System to aid hearing impaired is mandatory in U.K.

Hamilton Spectator By [Jeff Mahoney](#)

I'm going to get to something called the loop system in a minute — and it's almost perverse that so many seniors here have neither heard it nor even heard of it — but first let me introduce you to someone. Then I'll introduce you to someone else. I had a delightful, informative and distinctly audible conversation with Ron Archer recently, the success of which was not just an accident of compatibility. It was a foreseeable fringe benefit of comfortable ambience and acoustical clarity. We sat, by conscious choice (Ron's), in the fireplace area of the lovely Ancaster Public Library, on Wilson Street. We talked about all kinds of things and heard every word.

Continued on page 4 . . .

## NINE & DINE FUNdraiser Golf Tournament is back!

Mark your calendars for Saturday, **September 6th**, 4 p.m. at Oak Gables Golf Club, Ancaster.

Cost is \$65 for 9 holes, cart and dinner. If you're not interested in golfing, you can just join us for dinner only \$20.

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



## Noise Induced Hearing Loss...

....100% preventable  
 ....prevalent in workers  
 .... up to one-third of hearing loss in men 60-69 is due to noise exposure  
 ....early recognition is vital

- **Be aware!**
- **Reduce noise exposure!**
- **Take early action!**
- **Get help!**

**OHCOW Hamilton**  
 848 Main Street East  
 Hamilton, ON L8M 1L9

905.549.2552  
 877.817.0336



Occupational Health  
 Clinics for Ontario  
 Workers Inc.

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

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Ron is circumspect (or should that be "circum-aural"?) when it comes to matters of sound. He knows where to go to hear. He understands acoustics, viscerally.

Not just because he is a doctor of divinity and spent a career in pulpits, as a minister, in churches, where words must be made to carry around a room.

But also because Ron has, in his words, a "serious hearing disability."

With hearing aids, he functions fine. Almost perfectly. The exception is the theatre and concert hall, and for a culture lover like Ron that leaves a huge gap.

"More and more seniors — and seniors with money! — are refusing to attend theatre," says Ron. "They want to but the sound systems (and listening devices provided) are woeful."

The sad thing is, it has never had to be that way. When Ron took early retirement to live three years in Scotland, working for the Presbyterian Church, his ears were opened. By legislation, public buildings in the United Kingdom have to be equipped with something called a loop system to assist the hearing impaired. "A single wire surrounds the room," Ron explains, "and the hearing aids simply picks up the signal using the tele-coil. The sound is fantastic because it is direct to one's hearing aid." The concerts and plays he took in there, he heard perfectly. "Canada," he says, "lags."

**OK.** Now meet Bill Droogendyk. He's worked at Dofasco in Hamilton for 40 years but he also runs Better Hearing Solutions, his own loop system business.

He lays out a cable or wire around a room, sometimes along the floor, sometimes at a height. Sound from an audio source (microphone, TV, etc.) is fed, through an induction loop amplifier, into the wire in the form of a current.

"As the current passes through the wire, there's a magnetic field around it," says Bill.

When switched on, the tele-coil in the listener's hearing aid is sensitive to that field (in much the way a smartphone is to Wi-Fi). It 'hears' that field and turns it back into sound (in the listener's ear)."

Extraneous sounds are virtually eliminated. "When people were having trouble hearing in our church (Ebenezer Free Reformed), I installed it," says Bill, who lives in Troy. That was 30 years ago. It's catching on here more now but, still, slowly.

Bill is one of only two loop system installers in Canada, the other being in Victoria, B.C. In the United States, he says, it has really snowballed — but only in the past seven years.

The difference, Bill thinks, might have to do with "vanity," and with North Americans being slower to embrace aids with tele-coils, which weren't quite as invisible.

In recent years **Better Hearing Solutions** ([betterhearingsolutions.ca](http://betterhearingsolutions.ca) or **905-518-3780**) has installed the loop system in many churches; in the town hall, library and senior centre in Aurora, Ont. and in several other locations.

Loop system installation costs are in the \$400 range for a home TV room, and \$3,000 to \$7,000 for a church.

For Ron's part, he wishes arts groups and facilities such as Theatre Aquarius would invest in the loop. It would bring seniors back to the performing arts, he says.

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

Listening systems for people with hearing loss  
Hearing Loop Systems are the invisible solution for an invisible disability.

Article sponsored by Better Hearing Solutions and with permission by Jeff Mahoney, The Hamilton Spectator.

## Presbycusis

Did you know it's estimated up to 35% of people between the ages of 65 and 75 begin experiencing hearing loss for what they believe is no apparent reason? It's not until they visit their doctors do they hear the word Presbycusis. It's defined as a loss of hearing that gradually occurs in most people as they age. By the time we reach the age of 65, we stand that 35% chance of developing this disorder. For those age 75 or older, the odds increase to around 50%.

Most common in this disorder is the loss of the ability to hear higher pitched sounds, such as birds chirping or certain ring tones on our phones. What confuses us is we might often hear lower sounds, such as thunder or even conversations our neighbors are having in their yards that we can hear clearly, but others can't.

There are several causes of presbycusis and most often, they're due to natural aging and changes in our inner ears. Each person is different and everyone's experiences will vary, such as- how big the effect on our hearing is, when it begins, etc. Generally, it doesn't affect just one ear, but rather, both. Presbycusis is also believed to begin in the middle ear as it makes changes to not only what we hear but what that information is as it travels the nerve pathways to our brain.

The most common sign of presbycusis is the lost clarity in what we're hearing. It's a gradual process, so we often don't know we're losing that clarity until we realize things just "sound" different. According to National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, there are other signs too:

- The voices of others seem mumbled or slurred.
- High-pitched sounds such as "s" and "th" are difficult to hear and tell apart.

- Conversations are difficult to understand, especially when there is background noise.
- A man's voice is easier to hear than the higher pitches of a woman's voice.
- Certain sounds seem annoying or overly loud.

Tinnitus (a ringing, roaring, or hissing sound in one or both ears) can also be common in those with presbycusis.

As we mentioned, presbycusis is part of our aging process, but there are other culprits, as well. Medical experts believe presbycusis may be caused by changes in the blood supply to the ear because of heart disease, high blood pressure and other vascular (pertaining to blood vessels) conditions caused by diabetes, or other circulatory problems. The loss may be mild, moderate, or severe.

The good news is there are things we can do to prevent or minimize the effects of presbycusis. It's important to eliminate as many of damaging noises as possible – and it's never too early to start. Loud motors, such as race cars, jet skis, four wheelers and others – along with guns and even loud appliances – should be treated as potential damage to our hearing. Don't underestimate protecting your ears via ear plugs or the newer devices such as special fluid-filled ear muffs. They can provide protection and should be worn to help avoid the possibility of damage to hearing.

As always, keep your physician in the loop. Our doctors are only as good as the information they're provided.

### HOHYPF **Donna McGill**

Donna is a professional writer residing in south Mississippi. With this insight, she brings an interesting dynamic to the Hard of Hearing for Young People Foundation. [Donna on Google+](#)  
- See more at: <http://www.hohypf.org/2012/08/presbycusis-282/#sthash.RvdFmz73.dpuf>



## 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 just give us a call.



**Chris Charlton**  
Member of Parliament  
Hamilton Mountain  
905.574.3331

**David Christopherson**  
Member of Parliament  
Hamilton Centre  
905.526.0770

**Wayne Marston**  
Member of Parliament  
Hamilton East—Stoney Creek  
905.662.4763

## 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.

Ruth Watt, 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