



Winter 2010

Happy New Year!

JOYCE'S VOICE

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Let's celebrate another successful year together at HLA-WA. Look at the names of all the people who volunteered last year to make our organization successful, and reflect on our excellent programs, and you'll see why we're such a strong, viable chapter. It takes all of us working together to make our chapter what it is today. I am thankful for each and every one of our members, presenters, volunteers and contributors for making our organization so rewarding.

Let's keep up the good work and continue to enjoy another wonderful year of fellowship as well as interesting, informative and engaging programs that are *captioned!* Together we make our hard of hearing lives better and more enjoyable.

Although I have missed a few meetings lately due to travel, a new grandson and prior commitments, I am thankful that everyone pitches in to help our meetings run smoothly. Thanks for your good wishes for the birth of our first grandchild. I will try not to miss too many more meetings visiting him! Thanks again to all of you fellow hard of hearing champions. I look forward to working with you again this year as your president.

Spring Programs

February 20 - "We Are Not Our Hearing Loss!"

Melanie Springer, MA, Counseling Psychologist. Rejoins us to reconsider and evaluate what our own view is about our hearing limitations and how it affects the way we live and relate to others.

March 20- "Let's Take a Look at the Big Picture"

Penny Allen, President, Hearing Loss Association of Washington. Visiting us from Port Orchard (on her own HLA chapter's meeting day) Penny will introduce us to the rest of our HLA family, personally connecting us to our state and national organization, including what happens in our annual national meeting -- this year in Wisconsin! We've got wonderful organizational relatives!

April 17 - "Good Things for Us in Our Own Back Yard"

Joel Bergsbaken, staff from the Bellingham Office of the Hearing Speech and Deafness Center. What's going on in our corner of the great Northwest that we should know? What's happening that could positively affect and improve our quality of life right here where we live? Joel will paint a picture which will inform and excite you!

CI SUPPORT GROUP FORMED IN BELLINGHAM

The Hearing Loss Association of Whatcom County (HLA-WC) is sponsoring a **Cochlear Implant Support Group** to serve CI recipients, candidates, friends, families, and the curious in northwest Washington. The first meeting on October 18, 2009 in Bellingham was an overwhelming success with 25 participants from as far south as Seattle to share their stories and engage in an interactive presentation by Linda Day of Cochlear Americas. Cochlear Americas co-hosted the meeting and provided open captioning.

The group plans to meet five or six times during 2010. The next meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m., Saturday, January 23rd, at Christ The Servant Lutheran Church, 2600 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham. The facility has excellent sound amplification, lighting and FM ALS. HLA-WC is working on plans to continue open captioning.

All are welcome! Please contact Bert Lederer, bertlederer@msn.com (preferred) or cell 360.319.4540 (V), if you did not sign up at the October meeting and are interested in receiving information about upcoming meetings and events. Spread the word!

January is Membership Month!

Our chapter's 2010 effort to count committed members will come to a close formally at the end of this month. \$12 per person indicates your belief in and support of our mutual effort to help one another reach and maintain a life quality unnecessarily restricted by limited hearing ability. Donations beyond that are needed, extremely helpful and most welcome! Thanks to all of you who have responded in such a timely and generous manner.

Many of us meet the expenses of our chapter by absorbing them: refreshments, coffee, tea, paper goods, office supplies, printing costs, sunshine cards, thank yous, postage, travel expenses, speakers, and more. Other expenses we work hard to cover such as captioning services (up to \$90/hour), publicity, mailings, newsletter and brochures. We also express our gratitude with token donations to our host facility and to out-of-town guests.

As a reminder, we are a non-profit 502(c)(3) organization and donations are tax deductible.

Commitment to our chapter is indicated not only by the money you can donate, but even more by your active participation. Each month's success depends on a multitude of volunteer help (we ALL are volunteers!) Our programs arise from our requests and expressed needs. Our silent auctions and occasional fundraisers happen because one or more of us comes up with such ideas and then invest ourselves in making them happen. It's that simple and significant!

As we look around us and see five years of highly valued friendships forming; more and more thoughtful dedication and generous participation; one another's growing ability to manage hearing loss more successfully; we can recognize the validity of our chapter's existence and celebrate our obvious success. (And, we are making a huge difference in people's lives.)

Thank you all as you reaffirm your 2010 membership through your financial help and personal involvement. Be sure to pick up the updated(!) program calendar and save the dates on yours at home. We and our hearing loss matter, where else can we find such information, support and fellowship?!

Charlene MacKenzie, membership chair
Robert Campbell, treasurer

Seniors' Communication Skills Adversely Affected By Hearing, Voice Problems

Hearing and vocal problems go hand-in-hand among the elderly more frequently than previously thought, according to researchers at Duke University Medical Center. Together, they pack a devastating double punch on communication skills and overall well-being.

"It's important to realize these disabilities often occur concurrently," says Seth Cohen, MD, an otolaryngologist at the Duke Voice Care Center. "And when they do, they can increase the likelihood of depression and social isolation."

Nearly half of people age 65 and older have some degree of hearing loss, according to previously published reports, and about one-third of elderly adults have vocal problems including dysphonia, more commonly known as hoarseness. Taken apart, the disabilities have been linked in the elderly to increased depression, anxiety and social isolation.

In a study presented at the American Laryngological, Rhinological and Otological Society, (aka the Triological Society) in Phoenix, Cohen found that nearly 11 percent of the 248 participants with a median age of 82.4 had both disabilities. And, those respondents had greater depression scores.

While Cohen's study did not prove a direct cause and effect link between hearing loss and dysphonia, he says there appears to be a causal relationship.

"When people have trouble hearing, they strain their voices to hear themselves. Likewise, people may strain their voices if their communication partners can't hear." Because there is effective treatment for both hearing loss and dysphonia, he says it's important that people with one disability be evaluated for the other.

"We need to take a more global view of communication function in the elderly," he stresses.

Source:

Debbe Geiger

Duke University Medical Center



"Things alter for the worse spontaneously, if they be not altered for the better designedly."

Sir Francis Bacon

Whatcom Chapter Volunteer Action Spells Success!

Yep, our chapter is one of, if not the largest and most influential chapter, in the state of Washington, and ranks very high in the nation. Well, HOW are we doing it? Just take a look at those to whom we owe our gratitude (and joy) for the 2009 "banner" year!

President: Joyce Moseley-Sweeney, full time school teacher, wife and now a grandma!

Vice President: Mike Sweeney, also a working man with a second career(!) and Joyce's husband

Secretary: Charlene MacKenzie (pro tem who lasted all year!)

Treasurer: Robert Campbell, our first full-year treasury system developer and record keeper

Program Coordinators: Bert Lederer and Charlene MacKenzie

Herald newspaper monthly publicity: Charlene MacKenzie

AND MORE UNSUNG HEROS!

Newcomer greeters: Joan Boschman and new partner, Janet Gilda

Sound system and program equipment manager: Matt Springer

Refreshment Coordinator: Barbara Oliver (who can turn down such a persuasive gal?)

Refreshment Providers: two+ very generous volunteers per month

Meeting Room Set-up/Clean-up: Mike Sweeney, Charlie Pilkey, with countless others

Kitchen Clean-up: Maureen Nelson, Charlene MacKenzie, Barbara Oliver, Joyce Moseley-Sweeney, and many kindly sympathizers!

Bellingham High School Jazz Band: the Springer/Lederer family connections

Jill of All Trades: (newsletter editor, name-tag maker, brochure designer & producer, silent auction catalyst) Kathy Mason!

Sunshine Card chair: Jean Richardson

Summer and Christmas Potluck main dish providers: Bert and Claydene Lederer

Seasonal potluck meetings table decorator supreme: BJ Sherwood

Program Reminders by e-mail and phone: Corky Pytel, Nat Vogt, Ruth Miller, Mike Sweeney

Membership roster manager: Wayne Godard

Secretary: Nat Vogt

Cochlear Implant Support Group Founder and Coordinator: Bert Lederer

Captioner: Sandra Sullivan! (Yes, she donated her services for three meetings!)

Recycler of Hearing Aid Batteries: Charlie Pilkey

Outdoor A-frame Billboard: Pam Spencer, participating member and audiologist

Talent Show Stars: Joan Baker, Tom Randall, Claydene Lederer, BJ Sherwood

Program Presenters: Joel Bergsbaken, HSDC; Pam Spencer: Guatemala Children's Hearing project and Information on Audiograms; Bert Lederer: Hearing Transformation Bio; Ranger Charles Beall, North Cascades National Park; Dr. Rieko Darling, Ph.D., WWU: Speech Reading; Linda Day, Cochlear Corporation: Help Beyond Hearing Aids; John Waldo, Legal Counsel for Wash-CAP: Advocacy & Access Success in our State.

BEYOND OUR DOORS:

State HLA Board of Trustees: Bert Lederer and Charlene MacKenzie

Washington Communications Access Project

(Wash-CAP): Bert Lederer, President;

Charlene MacKenzie, secretary

There are others! Thanks to so many of you with your words of encouragement; suggesting ways to improve our meetings; picking up a dish towel(!); making program suggestions; welcoming newcomers; making extra donations, and helping out in so many ways that strengthen our fellowship and increase our fun together.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST

All of you who are continuing to volunteer for 2010 (WOW)

Welcome Recent Newcomers	
Stay Awhile!	
Edith Amaral	Pat Heykamp
Dorothy Baker	Aly Johnson
Eleanor Blakeley	Pamela Kaczmarczyk
Doris Canup	Rob and Diane Mitchell
Karen Frye	Noel Newby
Sally Hansberry	Frances Shuler