

# THE COMMUNICAIDER



SPRING 2015

## “Roll with it” Traveling with a Hearing Loss

### Have you registered for **TEXT T9-1-1** emergency service text messaging?

Check out the **NEW** pull out  
**CHIP Program Calendar**

Everything you need to know  
to register for our  
Spring programs  
**Space is limited**

**Register  
ASAP!**

Annual  
General Assembly  
May 27, 2015

Serving hard of  
hearing people for  
35 years



7000 Sherbrooke Street West  
Montreal, Quebec H4B 1R3  
Phone: 514 488-5552, Ext. 4500  
Fax: 514 489-3477 (attention: CHIP)  
Email: [info@hearhear.org](mailto:info@hearhear.org)  
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# UNDER CONSTRUCTION

**YES!** The *Communicaid* newsletter is undergoing some much needed renovation. We are excited to let our members, partners, professionals and readers know about some of the exciting changes that you will start seeing over the next several issues.

Our goal for this issue of the *Communicaid* is to introduce some specific columns that will give you

inspiration, guidance, resources, information and much more. All of the material published will address the specific needs, struggles, goals, desires and more of people with hearing loss along with their family, coworkers and friends.

One of the main goals of the newsletter is to inform our members, partners and the general public about the programs and services that we offer our members. New this issue, just for our valued members, you will notice that the

centre page is now a pull out calendar, that can be posted on your fridge or for our partners and professionals, on your community boards in bulletins.

We will start transitioning from the more traditional look of a newsletter format to a magazine style publication. We want to start freshening up the look, while still meeting the expectations of the over 800 readers who are used to our newsletter. As well, we will be starting to offer our partners and professionals advertising space. If you would be interested please contact Heidy Wager.

Thank you for taking the time to explore this renovated issue. We could not do this without your support. We encourage and look forward to receiving your suggestions, feedback, comments or constructive criticisms.

Please forward comments to Heidy Wager, Editor and Chief, at the CHIP office or through email at

[chip.heidywager@gmail.com](mailto:chip.heidywager@gmail.com)

## New Columns to look for in this issue:

### **“FYI” For Your Information**

General information that will help people living with hearing loss.

### **“BTW” By The Way**

What you need to know, what you should know, what is useful for you, did you know about...?

### **INSPIRATION**

People living with hearing loss share their personal stories of challenges and experiences.

### **PERSPECTIVE**

People with hearing loss share their point of view, opinion or attitude.

## CHIP SOCIAL MEDIA

*Follow us on Facebook*

**Join our Facebook group.** Share and connect with our CHIP members and volunteers. Get informed about news, creative ideas, CHIP program dates, changes in class/workshop schedules, current events that affect people coping and living with hearing loss. Family and friends are encouraged to follow us as well, so that they too may learn about different perspectives, tips and tricks, as well as communication strategies. As well, look to the near future for a special contest only available for our Facebook followers. Facebook: Communicaide Chip



# THE COMMUNICAIDER

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## CHIP Communicaid for Hearing Impaired Persons

CHIP, Communicaid for Hearing Impaired Persons, is a non-profit, registered charitable organization, which has been serving hearing-impaired people for over 35 years. CHIP is a grassroots, volunteer-based organization, having served hundreds of members. The vast majority of volunteers, including the board, are people who have hearing loss.

**CHIP believes in making the most of the hearing we have.**

### Communicaider Committee Members

Heidy Wager - CHIP Coordinator, Editor-in-Chief

Martha Perusse - Assistant Editor

Sheldon Kravitz - Graphic Design

Nina Chan - Chip Executive board member, Publication assistant

Dale Bonnycastle - CHIP Executive Secretary, Publication assistant

Richard Lubelsky - Interim Executive Director

### Communicaid for Hearing Impaired Persons (CHIP)

7000 Sherbrooke St West • Montreal, Quebec • H4B-1R3

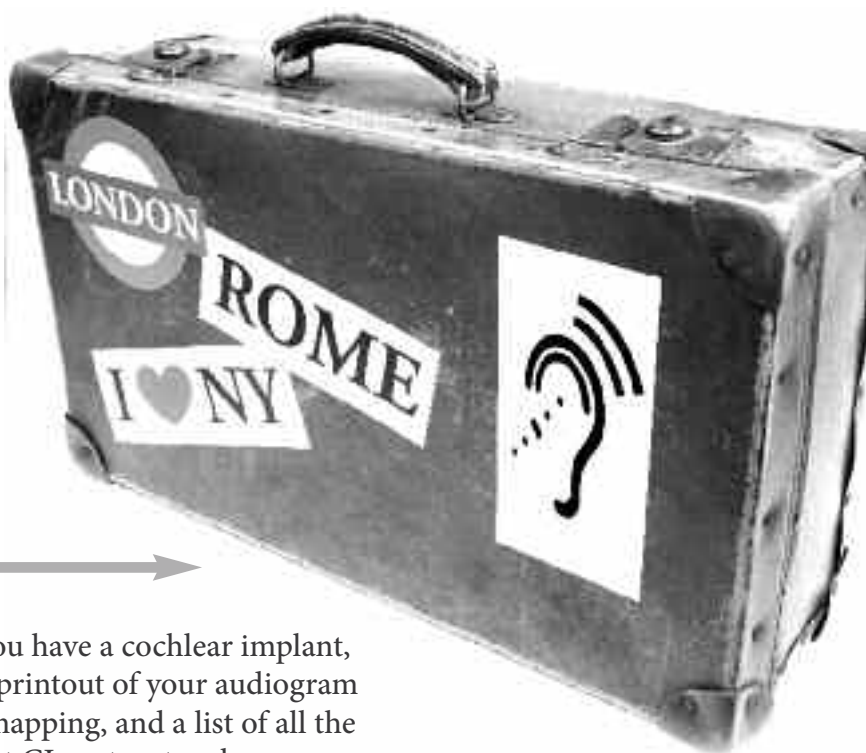
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Website: [www.hearhear.org](http://www.hearhear.org)



# Travelling with a Hearing Loss

by Chantal Basch-Tétreault



In many ways, having a hearing loss makes you a traveller in your own land. You're surrounded by people speaking a language that you barely understand, and communication takes time and effort. So, when you hit the road, in certain respects, it may not be all that different from being at home. It just takes a little extra planning to ensure a safer, more enjoyable trip.

## Prepare, prepare, prepare

- When you pack, make a list and check it twice. Especially of all your hearing equipment. Every time you change locations, check the list again.
- Don't put all your spare batteries in one bag. If you lose it, what then? Make sure you have two sets of spares packed in two places, whenever possible. (This advice is useful for socks and underwear too, by the way.)
- If you are travelling outside North America, bring adaptors for your chargers.

- If you have a cochlear implant, get a printout of your audiogram and mapping, and a list of all the closest CI centres to where you

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**Let others know you have a hearing loss and what you need from them ... hotel personnel should be alerted ahead of time in case the building is evacuated in an emergency.**

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will be travelling. If anything happens to your CI while you're away, you'll have a chance to have it repaired on the spot.

- If you can choose seats on a train or plane ahead of time, book them as close to the front as possible, so you are more likely to

hear an announcement. Also, note that many airlines prohibit deaf or hard-of-hearing people from sitting in the exit rows, since this could hinder evacuation efforts in case of an emergency.

- Print out your itinerary, and sign up for email/phone alerts for any changes to gates, departure/arrival times, etc.
- Before any trip or side trip, no matter how small, check each detail of the route on a map. If the street name is announced on a bus ride for instance, you might miss it. But if you know how many blocks it is after X intersection, you'll be able to find your stop.
- If you take a guided tour, read up on the location you're visiting. That way, you'll have a frame of reference, and be less likely to be overwhelmed when the guide starts rattling off facts and stories.



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**Try to learn a few words ... just the fact that you made the effort to speak their language will make them more likely to want to help.**

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## Reach out to others

- If you can travel with a (patient) hearing companion, great! If not, well, no person is an island. You can still reach out to the locals, fellow tourists, and professionals around you for help.
- Let others know you have a hearing loss and what you need from them. For example, hotel personnel should be alerted ahead of time in case the building is evacuated in an emergency. But also, will you hear the phone for a wake-up call? If not, what is the best alternative? Gate agents can check that you heard your name when it's time to board the plane, and flight attendants may be able to switch you to a seat closer to the front. Let them know what you need.
- If you are travelling to a country with a different language, learn a few spoken and written words and phrases. Even if you don't understand what people are saying to you in reply, just the

fact that you made the effort to speak their language will make them more likely to want to help.

- Keep a pen and paper handy for communication. (You can also write things down on a phone or digital device, of course, but those are more cumbersome and likely to get stolen.)
- When in doubt, smile and point. It's possible to have conversations, ask for directions, and order entire meals without saying a word.



## Roll with it

- Don't sweat the small stuff. Yes, a hearing loss can make travel more stressful, but with the proper planning, you can still have a great time - or at the very least, a smooth travelling experience.
- Remember, you still have your other senses. You don't need perfect hearing to scent the breeze, feel the earth under your

feet, bite into a culinary treat and quaff a refreshing drink, or take in the sights.

- And lastly... Turning your hearing aids off when there's a screaming baby on the plane ... priceless. Deafness has its perks. Enjoy!

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**Remember, you still have your other senses. You don't need perfect hearing to scent the breeze, feel the earth under your feet, bite into a culinary treat and quaff a refreshing drink, or take in the sights.**



### About the Author

Chantal Basch-Tétreault is profoundly deaf and wears a hearing aid and cochlear implant. Last fall, she and her very patient hearing husband went on a three-week trip to Europe, where they amassed many of these travel tips.

# **CHIP/CAPA**

## **Communicaid for Hearing Impaired Persons**



# **Annual General Assembly & Public Meeting**

**May 27th 2015 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm**

**MAB - Mackay Rehabilitation Centre  
7010 Sherbrooke St West • Montreal, QC H4B-1R3  
Layton Hall Gym**

**RSVP with Heidy Wager: 514.488.5552 ext 4500 - voice mail  
Cell phone 514.797.2447 - Text messages**

**[chip.heidywager@gmail.com](mailto:chip.heidywager@gmail.com)  
[www.hearhear.com](http://www.hearhear.com)**

♪ *Celebrate good times,  
come on ...* ♪



CHIP would like to invite all past and present members, partners and professionals for an evening of memories and reflections.

Come and celebrate the special closing ceremony for our **35th Anniversary**. We will provide a complimentary buffet including wine.

Meet and greet members, partners and professionals from the last 35 years. Share your stories of how CHIP services have impacted you or a family member.

5:30 - Complimentary buffet and wine

- Video presentation
- Doreen Con's Gold Leaf Awards

6:30 - Annual General Assembly

7:00 - Open Meeting

7:30 - Special Guest Speaker from the Federal Government (TBC)

Discussion of Federal Programs and Services available to adults and seniors

8:00 - Door Prizes & Raffle

Captioning, ASL, Assistive Devices and Oral Interpreters provided.

All programs and discussion will be conducted in English.

# Thank Goodness...

## ... for Speech Reading Classes!

by Patricia Doughty

I am feeling thankful. Eva is clueing me in.

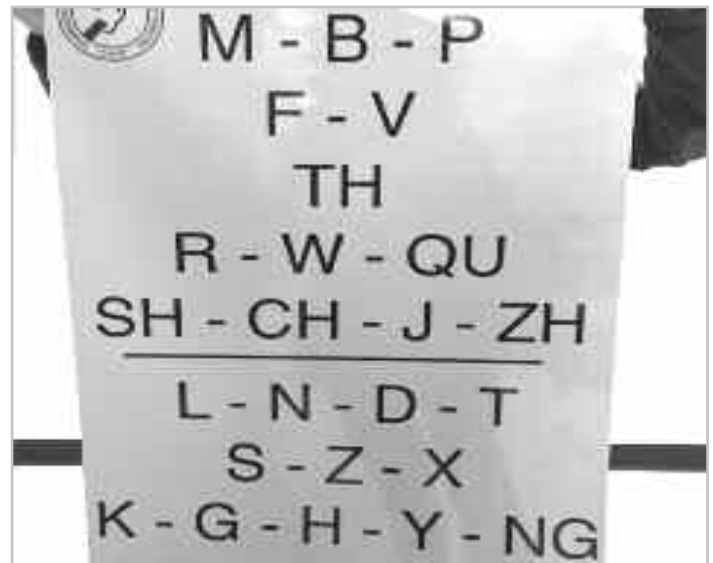
In early 2014, I went to a conference for Seniors of Dorval at the Dorval Community Centre where Dale Bonnycastle and Eva Basch gave a talk on speechreading and what it entailed. Several of us signed up to give it a try, and after an experimental six-week course to introduce the program, the course continued into a complete session. This course is not only about lip reading, but focuses on how to take advantage of every clue of sound or vision in order to make sense of everyday conversation.

**This course is not only about lip reading, but focuses on how to take advantage of every clue of sound or vision in order to make sense of everyday conversation.**

Everyday conversation is not an easy thing for late-deafened seniors. It is all too easy to decide that we are too sensitive to sit and chat with our peers when we don't grasp what the subject is. We can worry that when we ask, our friends will try so hard to speak louder or repeat so many times that our embarrassment makes us nod in agreement although we still haven't "got it." I have nodded yes, many times in wrong reply - as many of you have too, I am sure.

Thanks to Eva's frequent reassurance that "you are not stupid, far from it", we are developing strategies and confidence. Her writing of the difficult words up on her chart paper and her reference to our list vowels and sounds that lie above and below THE LINE (which

sounds have greater or less visibility on the lips) help us to understand the reasons for our confusions and misperceptions. With our intense concentration ("don't even blink!"), even during the refreshment break at half time, the ten of us are gaining confidence in our communication strategies. We have discussed how to ask and ask and ask again, politely, for a repetition of the relevant facts, such as: time to meet, where, why and how or, alternatively, to have the time and date written down for us to be sure we get it right. Giving gentle reminders to others to indicate that we are interested and being prepared to explain how we hear



best are two important strategies. I frequently point to my ears and ask clerks in stores to repeat the price and, at the doctor's office, to ask him or her to "face me please".

**We are developing strategies *and* confidence.**

In class at the Dorval Outreach of CHIP I have met some wonderful people who, like me, cannot hear well, and am so glad that I had the sense to try to get clued in. When out with others, I now ask for a seat near the wall, and arrange to have the light falling on the faces of my friends or family members. I thank the friends who have taken us with them to our speech reading classes. Hooray for April 8th, when we all meet again.



# CHIP • Spring 2015 Program



**REGISTRATION IS MANDATORY** for ALL students before attending any of the classes or workshops. Please register early, as places are limited. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

**To register for classes/workshops:** Complete registration form and return it by mail, fax, email (chip.heidywager@gmail.com), or in person at the CHIP office.

Registration forms are available at our office or on our website: [www.hearhear.org](http://www.hearhear.org)

**Please inform us if you would need an assistive listening device, or any other accommodations for classes/workshops**



**Lily Bernstein  
Technical Aids  
and Resource  
Centre**

We have a wide variety of Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) that you can try at your leisure. They are presented in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. We do not sell any device, but demonstrate and provide information about equipment such as amplified phones, TV listening devices, alerting systems, etc.

The Resource Centre is open to everyone. There is no charge for the service; however, it is by appointment only. Call 514-488-5552, Ext 6440 or email [richard.lubelsky@videotron.ca](mailto:richard.lubelsky@videotron.ca) for an appointment.



## Speechreading (Lip reading)

Without realizing that most hearing-impaired persons do speechread to a certain extent, most people may not know it is a skill that can be learned. We offer Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced classes.

**MAB site: 7000 Sherbrooke St. W.**  
(Free for CHIP members)

### Beginners

- ▶ 10 am - 12 noon (10 classes)
- ▶ Every Tuesday, March 24 – May 26

### Intermediate

- ▶ 1:15 pm - 3:15 pm (10 classes)
- ▶ Every Thursday, March 26 – May 28

### Advanced 1 & 2

- ▶ 10 am - 12 noon (10 classes)
- ▶ Every Thursday, March 26 – May 28

**West Island Satellite Sites**  
(\$25 for CHIP members)

### Beginners

- ▶ Centre Bayview (6th floor conference room)  
27 Lakeshore Dr., Pointe-Claire  
Fridays 10 am - 12 noon (8 classes)  
April 10 - May 29

### Intermediate

- ▶ Sarto Desnoyers Community Centre  
1335 Lakeshore Dr., Dorval (Room 202)  
Wednesdays 1 - 3 pm (8 classes) April 8 - May 27



## Signed English

Not sign language but simple hand/finger signs to fill in the blanks caused by hearing loss. Free for CHIP members.

**Beginners • 10 am - 12 noon (10 classes)**  
▶ Every Friday, March 20 – May 29  
(No class April 3.)

**Intermediate • 1:00 - 3:00 pm (10 classes)**  
▶ Every Tuesday, March 24 – May 26



**Captioned  
Film  
Program**

Captioned feature films in a comfortable and enjoyable setting.  
▶ **Please note that this spring we will not have any film screenings.** Because of a current shortage of films suitable for our audience, the Film Committee has decided to postpone the Spring program. The screenings will return in the Fall of 2015 when we expect there will be a much better choice, and we will offer a longer series of 9 or 10 screenings instead of the customary 7.  
We look forward to seeing you again.

*The Film Committee*



## Relaxation Workshop

Mon Apr 20,  
1:45-3:45 pm

### **“Calm Body, Calm Mind”**

Often relaxation exercises with eyes closed make hard of hearing people anxious rather than relaxed. This workshop will be adapted to your needs. Your body and mind will benefit greatly, relationships will improve, and your happiness meter will rise.



## Coaching Workshop

Mon April 13,  
1:30-3:30 pm

### **“Challenge, Change and Coaching”**

Personal and professional issues relating to hearing loss will be discussed, including how coaching can help people reach their goals, move forward in challenging times and make a transition more smoothly.



# CHIP • Spring 2015 • Calendar

## MARCH

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
16	17	18	19	20 ▶ <b>Beginners Signed English</b> 10am-12pm
23 ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Signed English</b> 1-3pm	24	25	26 ▶ <b>Advanced Speechreading 1 &amp; 2</b> 10am -12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading</b> 1:15-3:15pm	27 ▶ <b>Beginners Signed English</b> 10am-12pm
30 ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Signed English</b> 1-3pm	31			

## APRIL

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1	2 ▶ <b>Advanced Speechreading 1 &amp; 2</b> 10am -12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading</b> 1:15-3:15pm	3 <b>Good Friday</b>
6 <b>Easter Monday</b>	7 ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Signed English</b> 1-3pm	8 ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading in Dorval*</b> 1-3pm	9 ▶ <b>Advanced Speechreading 1 &amp; 2</b> 10am -12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading</b> 1:15-3:15pm	10 ▶ <b>Beginners Signed English</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading at Bayview</b> 10am-12pm
13 ▶ <b>Challenge, Change and Coaching Working</b> 1:30—3:30pm Martha Perusse at MAB-Mackay	14 ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Signed English</b> 1-3pm	15 ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading in Dorval*</b> 1-3pm	16 ▶ <b>Advanced Speechreading 1 &amp; 2</b> 10am -12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading</b> 1:15-3:15pm	17 ▶ <b>Beginners Signed English</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading at Bayview</b> 10am-12pm
20 ▶ <b>Calm Body, Calm Mind</b> 1:45-3:45pm Andrea Pinto at MAB-Mackay	21 ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Signed English</b> 1-3pm	22 ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading in Dorval*</b> 1-3pm	23 ▶ <b>Advanced Speechreading 1 &amp; 2</b> 10am -12pm ▶ <b>Intermediate Speechreading</b> 1:15-3:15pm	24 ▶ <b>Beginners Signed English</b> 10am-12pm ▶ <b>Beginners Speechreading at Bayview</b> 10am-12pm
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PULL - OUT CALENDAR



# Could YOU Benefit from Working with a Coach?



by Martha Perusse, MSc(A), PCCC

People choose to work with a coach for many reasons -- often because they have a challenging transition to face or perhaps because they feel stuck and want to move forward. Others have a particular project to embark on or a skill they wish to master and they believe that a coach will help them see it through to completion. A professional coach can also help people move toward a new career or move up the ladder in their chosen field. For whatever reason, a coach can be a remarkable asset in helping you be the best you can be.

## Perhaps you can relate to these situations:

Marilyn began to lose hearing in her preteen years and it gradually worsened over time. She had always enjoyed her job as a nurse but eventually it became clear that it was becoming extremely challenging, given her decreasing hearing. Through coaching, Marilyn could examine her most deeply-held values, and thereby determine what steps she could take to achieve her goal of finding a position that fit her new reality.

Denny lost hearing suddenly and almost overnight, it felt to him as if he had become another person who no longer was able to do the things he loved the most. Certainly, significant adjustments were needed to adapt to his decreased hearing. Denny received great support from his audiologist about assistive technology. However Denny was not sure that he wanted or needed to embark on the process of discovery to figure out how he could improve his situation. Through coaching, Denny could determine what he was ready to do and perhaps what limiting beliefs were holding him back. Eventually Denny could be helped to realize the adaptations he needed to make to find enjoyment in his familiar pursuits and discover new ones as well.

## Challenges, change and coaching

For people with an acquired hearing loss or even for those who have lived with hearing loss for many years, it can sometimes be difficult to manoeuvre the realities that decreased hearing can impose: feeling comfortable using amplification, navigating social situations, dealing with noise, managing the workplace and family situations, not to mention the

physical toll (it's exhausting!). In addition, the stages of life can provide challenges: wanting to change careers, seeking to improve a social or work relationship, finding work/life balance, transitioning to retirement to name a few -- all can be areas where partnership with a coach can be beneficial.

## So how does coaching work?

Typically a coach and potential client meet to discuss the client's situation and what could be accomplished through coaching. Coaching sessions can be weekly or twice monthly and can be carried out in person or by phone (if hearing is sufficient). Fees can vary from coach to coach and some coaches have a sliding scale. It is important to note that coaching is not therapy. Coaching really helps people to identify big-picture goals, set strategy, stay focused and get results.



### About the Author

Martha came to coaching through interest and need. She had read about it over the years and it resonated as something of interest. For 36 years she worked at the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf (MOSD). Working with children with hearing loss and their families was her passion and her mission. Work/life balance had always been a challenge but when her family's needs suddenly became much greater, and when she developed a hearing loss herself, she knew something had to change. She is now certified as a Professional and Personal Coach.

If you wonder whether coaching might be a good choice for you, please feel free to contact Martha at [martha@marthaperusse.com](mailto:martha@marthaperusse.com) or 514-804-5205, or come attend her coaching workshop at CHIP on April 13.



# How CHIP Programs Have Enhanced My Life!

by Yog Sachdeva

It wasn't until I retired in my late sixties that I felt I was missing parts of conversations in my daily life. I did not realize that I was having hearing problems until I went for a hearing test. I discovered that my left ear was only functioning at about 50% and, while my right ear was OK at that time, after a minor operation to fix a tiny hole in my eardrum, I unfortunately lost almost 70% of the hearing in that ear. My audiologist suggested that I get a hearing aid for my left ear, which I did--it was fantastic, except I was hearing every little noise around me, which was upsetting and annoying. I had no choice but to learn to adjust my brain to the new reality.

I was explaining to my dear old friend, Joyce Kramer, that I was having hearing difficulties and she laughingly said "welcome to my

world!" That is how I was introduced to CHIP. Joyce gave me lots of information regarding Speechreading courses and other services offered to people with hearing loss at CHIP. I met the most wonderful, dedicated ladies and gentlemen, whom I appreciate from the bottom of my heart every day. I have gone through the beginner's speechreading class with loving teacher Roz Wyse, followed by the intermediate class with very interesting and funny teacher, Joyce Kramer, and I took advanced Speechreading with two remarkably interesting teachers, Eva Basch and Dale Bonnycastle. I enjoyed a Sign language course with Sandra Urbanowitch and do hope to continue taking advantage of these courses to enhance my day-to-day life as much as possible in 2015.

During these three years I have learned how to handle my hearing difficulties and take charge of my daily life to enjoy it to the fullest. I would like to offer a few words of encouragement to my fellow hearing-impaired persons: please keep up to date with your knowledge and information regarding hearing aids and accessories, as digital technology is advancing at an extremely fast pace. Please do not buy old-model hearing aids to save money as these models are not compatible with all of the new accessories available to make your life more enjoyable in many ways. Ask your audiologist to provide you with information on the latest hearing aids and accessories, and make sure you try them out to see if these accessories suit your particular needs. CHIP has lots of information on these new hearing aids, so please do not hesitate to ask. Happy hearing and enjoy every moment in life!

I wish you all a very happy 2015.

## Technology Workshop Much Appreciated.

On Friday Jan 30th CHIP organized a workshop on FM systems and the new generation of accessories for hearing aids. The workshop was held at the CHSLD Bayview in Pointe Claire.

The presenter, Mr. Matthieu Paquette is an experienced hearing aid acoustician with Le Groupe Forget in Pointe Claire. Mr. Paquette's talk was excellent and informative, covering many aspects of hearing loss, its impact and challenges, and new technology, specifically FM systems that can help in difficult listening situations. FM systems consist of a wireless transmitter/microphone and a receiver. Speech is sent directly to the listener thus reducing the problem of hearing over distance and also significantly reducing the noise the listener hears. The microphone /transmitter can be worn by the speaker or the hearing aid user can point the device towards the speaker. In some situations the microphone can be put on a table thus enabling the hearing impaired person to follow a discussion with more ease. The hearing aid user wears a small receiver that



attaches to the hearing aid. Other configurations are possible and FM systems can be used by people without hearing aids. FM systems in the past have usually been used in classrooms, but today more adults are using them in a variety of challenging listening environments, for example, social situations, meetings, at work and other environments where listening can be problematic. These systems also work with cell phones, the GPS in your car, computers, and other devices.

Unfortunately FM systems are usually not covered by Medicare for adults and the cost varies. It is hoped that, as they gain popularity and increased usage among adults, the price will come down.

The feedback from participants was most positive and we look forward to organizing more workshops on these topics. CHIP is very grateful to the CHSLD Bayview for providing us with a terrific venue for the presentation and to Mr. Paquette and Le Groupe Forget.

Did you register yet? Find out how this can save your life!

## T9-1-1 text messaging for people with hearing loss

### How Does it Work?

T9-1-1 provides 9-1-1 call centres with the ability to converse with a deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or speech impaired (DHHSI) person during an emergency, using text messaging. When a DHHSI person requires 9-1-1 services, they dial 9-1-1 on their cell phone. There is no need for them to speak, as the 9-1-1 dispatcher will receive an indicator that tells them to communicate with the caller via text messaging. The 9-1-1 dispatcher then initiates text messaging with the caller to address the emergency. Information on cell phones that meet T9-1-1 requirements is available on your wireless service provider's Web site. T9-1-1 is considered a "best efforts" service due to the technology constraints associated with text messaging. As with any text messaging services, there is no guarantee a text message will be sent, delivered or received in a timely manner. In the unlikely event that this happens, the user will need to re-send the message. Providing location information and the nature of the emergency in the first message is imperative. The 9-1-1 call taker may receive an approximate location of your cell phone with your 9-1-1 call; however it is important for the caller to confirm the exact location of the emergency.

As the service becomes available in different municipalities, Canadians with hearing loss or speech impairments **must register** their mobile phone number with their wireless service provider, and ensure that they have a compatible mobile phone. In the event of an emergency,

**The more specific your message, the more quickly help can be sent. An appropriate emergency text messaging format might be:**

***POLICE: road accident, junction High Street and Bridge Street, City Name  
FIRE at 123 Main Street, City Name***

they must first dial 911, and the emergency call centre will automatically receive notification to initiate a conversation by text message. This service will only be available in Canada. The voice calling remains the only way to communicate with 9-1-1 services for a person that is not deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or has a speech impairment. Text with 9-1-1 for the public at large is expected to be deployed at a later date.

### Can I Text 911 with my Phone?

Yes, but only if you are part of the deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or speech impaired (DHHSI) community in Canada. You must have a compatible cell phone.

### Important Information for T9-1-1 Users

Text messages should be brief and concise. Text abbreviations and slang should never be used so that the intent of the dialog can be as clear as possible. If the DHHSI callers are outside or near the edge of the 9-1-1 service territory, the 9-1-1 call may not reach the appropriate 9-1-1 call centre. T9-1-1 should only be used for emergency situations that require a response from police, fire or emergency medical services. **BEFORE YOU CAN USE T9-1-1:** You must be registered for the T9-1-1 service and establish contact through a voice call to interact with emergency services via text message. A text message that is sent to 9-1-1 from an unregistered cell phone and/or without a voice call will not be received. Please contact your wireless service provider to register. Find out if T9-1-1 is available in your area.

### Interacting with a 9-1-1 Call Centre During a T9-1-1 Call

If you have registered for the T9-1-1 service but do not receive an initial

# for People with Hearing Loss

# T9-1-1



text message from the 9-1-1 call centre after calling 9-1-1: Ensure that you are using the cell phone with the telephone number that you have registered with the T9-1-1 service. Confirm that you are still in the coverage area. Check to make sure that you have adequate network coverage by looking at the signal strength indicated on your handset. Keep monitoring the cell phone display to ensure that the call is still connected. You could wait longer than one minute to receive the initial text message. If you do not receive the initial text message in two minutes, you may end the voice call and redial 9-1-1. If after two reattempts no response is received, then seek an alternate way to get assistance, such as ask someone else to dial 9-1-1 on your behalf. In instances where you do not receive replies to your text message, re-send the message. You will know that the T9-1-1 session has been concluded when you receive an “End of 9-1-1 Call” message.

## What to Put in Your Message

The more specific your message, the more quickly help can be sent. An appropriate emergency text messaging format might be:

*POLICE: road accident, junction High*

*Street and Bridge Street, City Name  
FIRE at 123 Main Street, City Name*

## Can I Expect to be Served in My Preferred Language When Using T9-1-1?

Local 9-1-1 centres, being the responsibility of the municipalities or provinces in which they operate, will attempt to honour your language choice (English or French) on a best effort basis, but there are areas where they may not always have the ability to provide bilingual service.

## Can Anyone Initiate Text Messaging with a 9-1-1 Call Centre by Sending a Text Message Directly to the Digits “9-1-1”?

NO. Text messages sent to the digits “9-1-1” do not reach emergency services.

## When and Where Will the T9-1-1 Service be Made Available?

It will be made available in specific areas when network upgrades have been completed. These will be announced at a later date. The service will only be available in areas that have received wireless and 9-1-1 network upgrades and that has been implemented by the municipality or the province and their emergency centres.

## How Can I Find Out Where T9-1-1 Will be Offered?

This information will be available in

the service availability section of the CHHA Website.

## Can I Use T9-1-1 When I Travel?

Yes, but T9-1-1 will only work within Canada and in areas that have implemented the required upgrades. T9-1-1 will not work outside of Canada.

## How Much Will it Cost?

The T9-1-1 service is free. However, an active wireless subscription is required.

## How Do I Register for the Service?

Contact your wireless service provider or review the instructions on your wireless service provider’s Web site. An active wireless subscription and supported cell phone are required to use T9- 1-1.

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**For more information you can contact:**  
**Canadian Hard of Hearing Association -**  
**Association des Malentendants Canadiens**  
2415 Holly Lane, Suite 205, Ottawa  
Ontario. K1V 7P2 Canada 1-800-263-8068  
Fax: 613-526-4718 TTY: 613-526-2692  
Email: [info@chha.ca](mailto:info@chha.ca)

**This article has been reprinted and edited from the Canadian Hearing Association website. To view the complete article please visit the Canadian Hearing Association website [www.chha.ca/documents/en/911.pdf](http://www.chha.ca/documents/en/911.pdf)**

# Living with Disability

by Nina Chen

I have lived with disability all my life. Given my hearing loss and minor speech impediment, I have always had some difficulty in communication. Asking others to talk slowly and using writing are strategies that work well for me.

For many years, I lived in Taiwan as a disabled person without any proper professional help. Although I have worn a hearing aid since I was in elementary school, I was not given any professional guidance about coping with communication. My speech problems were not treated until I was a teenager, since an operation I had at age three was not effective. I had a second operation as a teenager. My teachers spoke louder for me. I sat in the front as I was always a short kid. My mom asked the teachers to be nice to me, telling them how wonderful my siblings were—she hoped that maybe they would think I was smart too! I

don't think anyone understood what my communication problem really was at that time. People coped mainly by talking louder to me. Obviously I was very disabled but people around me just coped with it. However, I managed to learn both Chinese and English in my early years.

Fortunately, I feel more “normal” now, after many physical corrections and rehabilitations. I am not deaf but I had been in another world that no one has been to. I was disabled and alone in a normal-hearing world but my childhood was not that bad. On the contrary, somehow I feel I had a good childhood. Not knowing what normalcy is seemed to be a blessing. However, it is certainly better to get professional help as a child.

*My mom asked the teachers to be nice to me, telling them how wonderful my siblings were—she hoped that maybe they would think I was smart too!*

During a trip in June, 2014, my husband and I went to Baddeck, Nova Scotia where Alexander Graham Bell and Mabel Bell lived (see photo)\*. We visited the Alexander Graham Bell Natural Historic Site. Bell was a teacher of the deaf and Mabel's father, Gardiner Hubbard, hired him to



tutor Mabel. Bell's experience as a teacher of the deaf was a major inspiration for him to invent the telephone.

Mabel Bell lost her hearing due to scarlet fever when she was five and it progressively worsened over time, leaving her deaf by the age of fifty. However, she learned to deal with her deafness and was strong and self-assured. As a daughter of a lawyer and having been educated in both USA and Europe, she was able to talk and lip-read with great skill and she knew many languages as well. In her old age, Mrs. Bell became blind and lived in silent darkness with her daughter.



Bell also started a school for the deaf (School of Vocal Physiology and Mechanics of Speech, 1872) which incorporated the techniques he had developed.

At that time, it was felt that deaf people should be assimilated without any “special” aid—to be as similar to hearing people as possible. As a result, many deaf children suffered harsh treatment, being forced to try to speak and not allowed to use sign language. This further isolated deaf people, and prevented them from having alternatives to oral language.

Some people today share this idea of trying to avoid specialised help. For example, many people would say hearing loss is just a medical problem, so get the hearing aids and don't tell people



\* A.G. Bell and Mabel Bell

*Naturally no one wants to be different, but the only way to deal with it is really to face it head on ... the feedback of other deaf or hard-of-hearing people is especially important.*

you are hard-of-hearing. Cover your hearing aid with your hair and hide it. Naturally no one wants to be different, but the only way to deal with it, is really to face it head on. Getting help from normal hearing people is great but the feedback of other deaf or hard-of-hearing people is especially important. Hearing loss is a disability that requires the use of many communication tools and skills. This does not mean that we dwell on our disabilities and feel sorry for ourselves.

CHIP supports people with hearing loss. CHIP has helped me boost my confidence. By working with people who understand hearing loss at CHIP, I am blessed with tolerance and understanding. We cannot live 24/7 within the speechreading classes, but the skills we learn help us deal with the real world. We are not hiding our disability by going to CHIP but we are facing the issue and dealing with it upfront!

Sometimes we may still feel that we are alone struggling with this. I feel it helps me to find some religious or spiritual support. Things like love and forgiveness. Everyone has a different way to cope. Sometimes the family also needs outside help to make it easier. We see many self-help books in the bookstores and it does not mean that we have some terrible, serious issues. Being part of a support group does not put you down; it helps to bring your spirits up. We may not stay in the group forever, but remember, the help you receive and give will always stay with you in your heart.



*CHIP has helped me boost my confidence. By working with people who understand hearing loss at CHIP, I am blessed with tolerance and understanding.*



## What's Wrong with this Picture? The Portrayal of Deaf People in Movies

by Daniel Basch-Tétreault

I recently watched *Knowing*, an awful disaster movie starring Nicolas Cage. There was a moment early on when the movie lost me due to sheer absurdity. Nicolas Cage and his precocious kid were having a conversation, when the father said something to his son behind his back from a distance of maybe 2-3 metres, and the kid turned around and said something in response. One scene change later, we find out this child has been wearing a hearing aid all this time. Then Nicolas Cage starts using sign language in front of him, saying how much he loves him. Can you tell what's wrong with this picture?

For all the effort that Hollywood makes in being sure the details of their backgrounds and the wardrobe of their characters are

accurate right down to the rivet, there are still little niggling things that drive obsessive types like me nuts. In this case, it's the portrayal of deafness in the movies.

If you want to communicate effectively with deaf people, it's important that you face them head on, so they can understand you. It's also best if you use gestures to emphasize certain key words, so they'll understand what you're talking about. Nicolas Cage does none of this with his son. Every other scene of the two of them together or apart, has them talking normally, side by side, as if he's a hearing kid. If you are talking to a child with a minimal hearing loss (never mind one deaf enough to benefit from sign language), every little bit helps. No attempt is made to illustrate what

Cage is talking about in order to make his message clearer to his son.

In real life, even when speakers are told to emphasize their words when talking to a deaf person, chances are they'll very quickly revert back to normal speech when talking to somebody else. When that second guy is standing

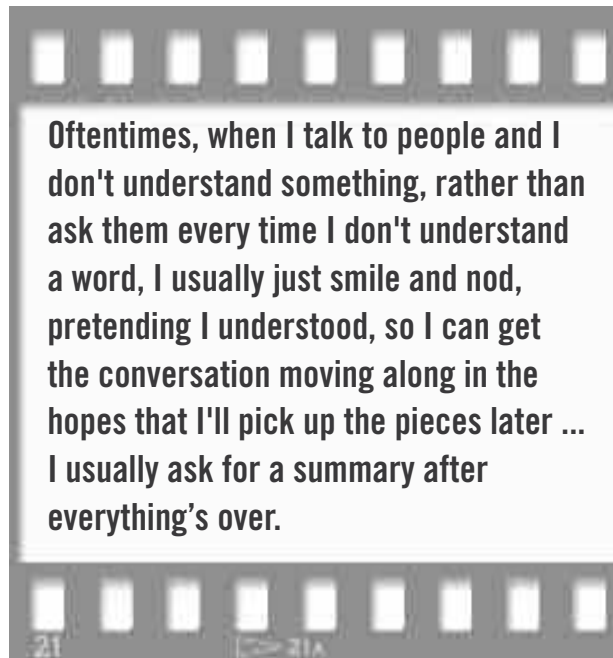
**Even with an implant ...  
you've got to learn how to  
sort out all the normal  
noise from the background  
noise as well as other  
annoying sounds that can't  
be filtered out.**

right next to the deaf person, the deaf person will have immense trouble understanding, since the speaker is no longer taking the time to talk clearly. Even more aggravating is when they turn away, since people are so accustomed to hearing conversations in the background that they completely forget that hearing isn't as easy for some of us.

Trying to lipread a conversation between two or more people is like watching two movies on opposite sides of the wall. You have no idea which one to look at first, or when they're going to pass their next turn, and no idea if something important was said. It helps to use gestures to illustrate your points and to replace difficult words with easier words ( i.e. more common words or words easier to lipread).

Another movie that gets the details all wrong is *Tin Man*. In this film, the main character is born deaf, gets a cochlear implant and when he wakes up in the hospital after his surgery, he can hear the IV tube dripping. This is "impressive", because in realty, it would take a month to heal and then he would need a speech processor and go through rehab first. Shortly after getting a bit of speech therapy, he speaks as well as a hearing person. Again, this is impossible since he was born deaf, and most deaf people have a certain accent to their speech. Later, he makes a phone call and says he got his "ears fixed." Just

because you can "hear" doesn't mean you can correctly decipher everything properly. You've got to learn how to sort out all the normal noise from the background noise as well as other annoying sounds that can't be filtered out.



As one movie critic noticed, having a disability seems to give Hollywood writers license to give their characters natural superpowers. Blind Samurai can detect the whereabouts of an assassin from creaking floorboards and shallow breathing. Autistic Savants can calculate Pi up to a million decimal points. Deaf people can lipread from a distance of 5 miles.

However, the truth is far from the reality. It's actually harder to lipread than it looks. Sue Thomas, FB Eye is able to easily understand what people are saying just by looking at them carefully. But

even though she's based on a real person, the producers have taken a lot of liberties with the concept. Oftentimes, the speaker will mumble, or there'll be facial hair blocking the lips, making it harder to make out what speakers are saying. Even the most experienced lipreader will encounter difficulty, since so many words look alike (carpet / armpit), or the mouth doesn't move much in relation to certain words. Watching a tobacco executive talking about "Nicotine statistics" is equivalent to seeing somebody talking with lockjaw. This isn't because they're lying through clenched teeth, but because the mouth moves so little. Equally hard are suffixes, such as words ending in "ing" or "s". With such few visual cues, I often need the input of slight sounds in order to fill in the gaps.

Oftentimes, when I talk to people and I don't understand something, rather than ask them every time I don't understand a word, I usually just smile and nod, pretending I understood, so I can get the conversation moving along in the hopes that I'll pick up the pieces later. It's usually a struggle to put everything together, and I usually ask for a summary after everything's over. Maybe that's why movies and television shows with deaf people are so unrealistic - the conversation would grind to an absolute standstill if everybody had to slow down, repeat and rephrase everything. Even I would be annoyed at how slowly the plot was moving along.





Technical Aids/Library



Speechreading



Signed English Classes



Captioned Film Screenings



Out Reach Program

## Communicaid for Hearing Impaired Persons (CHIP)

7000 Sherbrooke St West  
Montreal, Quebec, H4B-1R3

Office: 514-488-5552 ext: 4500

Fax: 514-489-3477

Cell: 514-797- chip (2447)

Website: [www.hearhear.org](http://www.hearhear.org)



**April 12-18, 2015 National Volunteer Appreciation Week**  
This issue of the Communicader is dedicated to the tireless efforts of all of the amazing volunteers that have supported and helped to build CHIP. For the last 35 years this has been a volunteer - run organization. In the last 3 months alone, volunteers have given **over 1500 hours** to the CHIP organization.  
**WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU AND WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!**  
Check out our Facebook page for upcoming special event to celebrate the passionate and devoted volunteers of CHIP

Welcome to our newest  
Volunteer: Crystal

## Volunteering at CHIP

by Crystal Gruber



When I first started volunteering, I worked with kindergarten through second-grade children at a kids' club at my church. I was still in high school, naive enough to think it would be an easy age group. The next year, I worked with third through fifth graders. Surely they would be easier, right?

Only in college did I realize junior high students were more my speed. I got to work with the same group of girls for nearly two years, and leaving them once I graduated was difficult. Sure, they squealed louder than I thought possible about boys and haircuts, talked endlessly about bands even I had never heard of (a confession that must have dated me in their eyes) and used "like" at least, like, five times in, like, every sentence -- but they were still my girls, eager to learn and have fun.

In the summers, I worked as a counsellor at a camp with children aged six through seventeen. I had my hair sculpted with shaving cream and could recognize dehydration almost immediately. I knew a song for every occasion and could also get a dozen kids to breakfast on time every morning... usually.

After graduation from college, I decided to take a year off to come to Montreal for an internship program. I wanted to volunteer somewhere, so after a bit of research, I decided CHIP made the most sense. In college, I had studied American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture, and I participated in the small Deaf community there. Although CHIP is an association for hard of hearing adults, I decided that, while in Montreal, I wanted to grow my knowledge of the differences and similarities between the two groups, and preferably not just through books.

In retrospect, choosing to volunteer in an office with adults was a rather large leap for me. Instead of making sure I am wearing clothes that could get stained with paintballs and dirt, I'm actually able to wear nice things. The people I'm working with won't, without my knowledge, hide candy in my hair as a snack for later—at least I hope not. Volunteering at CHIP is certainly different from what I'm used to, but the challenge has been refreshing.

The Communicader is published twice yearly, in the spring and fall. Your contributions and suggestions are welcome and may be submitted in writing, by fax or email. The opinions expressed in the articles appearing in the Communicader are those of the authors.