



## Are digital aids really better?

# In search of new hearing aids

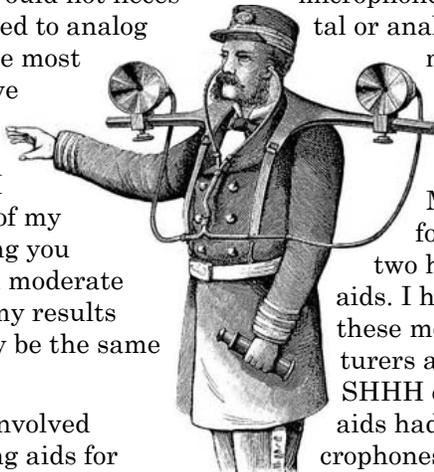
By Don Pickens, Redmond

I started the process of purchasing new hearing aids months before the actual purchase. I began with the feeling that I would not necessarily be predisposed to analog versus digital, since most of the studies I have seen indicate that there is no measurable difference. I should preface all of my comments by letting you know that I have a moderate hearing loss, and my results will not necessarily be the same for other users.

Each of my trials involved wearing the hearing aids for three to four weeks to allow me to make a reasonable assessment of each model. This is an excellent way to reach a confident decision on the best hearing aid most suitable to your hearing needs, working in conjunction with a professional audiologist with whom you're comfortable.

My first trial was with a pair of proven programmable analog aids. While the results seemed OK, I was not happy with a remote control. I moved to my second trial, which was a mid-range digital. It had controls on the hearing aid for T-Coil and directional microphone

settings, and they worked quite well. Before starting my third trial, I determined that directional microphones, whether on digital or analog aids, were the most important improvement over my old hearing aids.



My third and fourth trials were two high-end digital aids. I had tried both of these models and manufacturers at the Seattle SHHH convention. These aids had two or three microphones, depending on the model, and included adaptive microphones in the primary program setting. Each offered four programs controlled by a button on the back of the aid.

The outcome surprised me. I purchased the two-microphone high-end digital aid, the most expensive, because it was the one that worked best for me. I could not write the check fast enough. My aids have four programs. The first is the adaptive program, where the hearing aids adapt to my hearing environment and determine where the speech is that I

*(Continued on page 2)*

## A look at technology

**Pre-electronic horns, trumpets, etc. (1800s)** These became very popular in the 1800s and a few are made in Europe to this day.

**Electronic hearing aids - carbon (1899-1940s)** These were popular through the 1940s and most used a large 3-volt or 6-volt battery but did not have enough power for more than a moderate hearing loss.

**Electronic hearing aids - vacuum tube (1920s-1930s)** Vacuum tube aids required two batteries and had adequate power for severe hearing loss.

**Transistor hearing aids (1952-53)** Transistor aids needed only one battery, and the reduced size permitted development of a number of types of hearing aids: the body aid (now made smaller), eye-glass hearing aids, behind-the-ear aids, and in-the-ear aids.

**Hybrid hearing aids (1977)** These use a combined digital/analog circuitry.

**Digital hearing aids (1996-present)** Digital hearing aids utilize digital signal processing (DSP) chips. This technology allows a much greater degree of automatic adjustment.

## University Lions 32nd annual auction

Special Guest: Miss Washington 2002, Amanda Beers.

"Fund an Item" will support the Listen and Talk School in Bothell and the Northwest Lions Foundation for Sight and Hearing.

For reservations and information, Call Lion Bill Boyce 206-526-9030 or Lion John Cuneo 425-776-2084 for information. WA State Convention Center, Saturday, May 10th 2003, 5:00 pm.

## Telecommunications Access Service (TAS)

If you live in Washington State and have a hearing loss, you may be eligible for an amplified phone, Voice Carry-over phone, TTY, and/or telephone signaling equipment. Cost is based upon income. A contract trainer delivers the equipment and trains. For an application, contact Kelly Robison, Program Mgr: e-mail Robiskd@dshs.wa.gov or 1-800-422-7930/ V; 1-800-422-7941/TTY; or write Telecommunications Access Service, PO Box 45301, Olympia 98504. TAS representatives are also available to do presentations.

## Telephone Assistance Program (WTAP)

You may qualify for financial assistance with your phone service if you are low-income. Contact your local telephone company or call the Department of Social and Health Services at 1-800-543-9909. To request a fact sheet on WTAP, call 1-800-562-6150 or see <http://www.wutc.wa.gov>.

*(In search of ...Continued from page 1)* need to hear. The second program was set to help me handle situations in the car, when I have clients in the back seat and need to hear them. The third program is T-Coil, and the fourth is omnidirectional with no adaptive or filtering controls. This is useful in theaters and other events where I want a completely natural sound.

Are digital hearing aids better than analog? In my opinion, and in my case, absolutely. I reached the conclusion that the studies to date comparing analog and digital are in a controlled environment and not a dynamic one. This would be where you work and play every day and encounter all of the challenges that come with wearing hearing aids.

I believe that the high-end digitals give me added features that improve speech comprehension. If a mid-level digital offered equal performance to analog, I would still purchase the digital. In all of my trials, the digital aids seemed to eliminate the issues of EMF interference in cell phones, including the one I presently use. If you work in a setting with heavy machinery or electrical wiring, I would take extra care to make sure that digital aids will work for you. I noticed certain areas of interference that occur with digital aids, and your trials will determine if this might be an issue.

The benefits I get from my new digital aids could be summarized as follows:

- Automatic feedback control – feedback is history.
- The ability to sit in a noisy restaurant and hear table conversation clearly.
- The ability to fly on an airplane and carry on a conversation with

the flight attendant or person next to me and not give up because I can't understand enough to even make basic communication possible.

- The surprise to be driving down the road and still understand speech when someone opens the sunroof.
- The ability to drive in a noisy jeep and still carry on a conversation with my passenger.
- The ability to go to a 250-person sit-down breakfast trade association meeting in a hotel ballroom and carry on a conversation confidently. I could comprehend what was being said by several people to either side of me and, in some cases, on the other side of the table.

•My best example is at a restaurant in a renovated house, where I recently went with my wife and another couple. We arrived early and were seated at a table in the middle of the center room. In the next small room was a table set for twelve people. I was in immediate fear that I would soon be next to a noisy party of twelve, so I suggested we move. My wife said confidently that I was doing so well with my new hearing aids it probably wouldn't be a problem. Our guests arrived and so did the twelve people at the table to the right of me. We had a lovely evening, and I enjoyed hearing the whole conversation in our party.

I vote for digital if you can afford it. Insist on trials. At the price of any hearing aids, you want to be confident that you are making the right decision for your hearing loss.

*Ed—You can e-mail Don at DPickens@wasa-shhh.org.*



## Cochlear implant corner

By Mary Steinmeyer, Bonney Lake

### **Thinking about getting an implant and need information?**

☞ Cochlear Americas (cochlear implant mfg.) [www.cochlear.com](http://www.cochlear.com)

☞ Cochlear Corporation  
400 Inverness Dr. S. Ste. 400  
Englewood, CO 80112  
Toll Free: 1-800-523-5798  
Ph: 1-303-790 9010  
Fax: 1-303-792-9025

☞ Advanced Bionics Corporation (cochlear implant mfg.)  
[www.bionicear.com](http://www.bionicear.com)

☞ Advanced Bionics Corporation  
12740 San Fernando Rd.  
Sylmar, CA 91342  
E-mail: [info@advancedbionics.com](mailto:info@advancedbionics.com)  
Ph: 1 661-362-1400  
Ph: 1 800-678-2575  
TTY: 1 800-678-3575  
Fax: 1 661-362-1500

☞ MED-EL Corporation (cochlear implant mfg.) – [www.medel.com](http://www.medel.com)

☞ MED-EL Corporation  
2222 E. NC Hwy 54, Ste B-180  
Durham, NC 27713  
Ph: 1-919-572-2222  
Fax: 1-919-484-9229  
[implants@medelus.com](mailto:implants@medelus.com)

### **Looking for additional support, or help in a decision to get an implant?**

☞ CIAI (Cochlear Implant Assn. Inc.) – [www.cici.org](http://www.cici.org) (an organization for cochlear implant recipients): Cochlear Implant Assn. Inc. 5335 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Ste 440, Washington, D.C. 20015-2052  
Ph: 202- 895-2781  
Fax: 202- 895-2782

CIAI also publishes *Contact*, the quarterly magazine, for \$30.

☞ Nucleus forum: sign up on [www.cochlear.com](http://www.cochlear.com)

☞ Bionic Ear Association: sign up on [www.bionicear.com](http://www.bionicear.com)

☞ SayWhatClub  
<http://www.saywhatclub.com/>

☞ Yahoo groups: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CI-Prelinguals/>  
[www.groups.yahoo.com/group/CIHear](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/CIHear)

☞ CI Circle (for parents of kids with cochlear implants and those researching cochlear implants for their kids: send an e-mail to [majordomo@mysql.maxbaud.net](mailto:majordomo@mysql.maxbaud.net))

☞ York U CI list ((send message to [listserv@yorku.ca](mailto:listserv@yorku.ca) and in the text put “subscribe ci first name last name” (without quotes and using your real name.) Don’t put anything in the subject line.))

### **When is the next CIAI convention?**

Per the President’s Column in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2002 issue of the CONTACT magazine, CIAI will conduct two Regional Conferences for up to 300 participants each. The first Conference will be held in the Washington, DC area in May, 2003; the second will be held in October at San Antonio. For more information go to [www.cici.org](http://www.cici.org).

*Ed—Implant questions? E-mail Mary Steinmeyer at [msteinmeyer@worldnet.att.net](mailto:msteinmeyer@worldnet.att.net)*

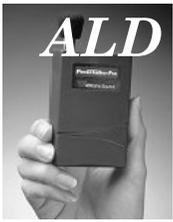
### **CI publication ends**

Pacific Northwest Cochlear Implant Newsletter editor, Dennis Clardy, is calling it quits after struggling to keep this informative publication going. In his decision to fold, Clardy cited lack of personal submissions as his main reason. Clardy took over the publication in 2001, after the death of former editor Gordon Nystedt. The newsletter, based upon personal experiences with implants, began publication in 1991 as a way to bring needed support to implantees. The final issue is posted on our website, along with past issues. See [wasa-shhh.org](http://wasa-shhh.org).

### **What’s new?**

Dr. Douglas Backous, Medical Director of the Listen for Life Center at Virginia Mason, recently spoke to the SHHH Tacoma Chapter. In the next five to ten years, Dr. Backous sees combinations of hearing aids and cochlear implants. Because hearing aids perform well at lower frequencies and implants at higher ones, this combination makes for more “natural” sounds and better success with music and telephone reception.

BAHA (bone anchored hearing aid), approved by the FDA in 1996, has been sold to another company, and the term now used for BAHA is “bone-anchored cochlear stimulator.” Cochlear stimulators are either fully implanted or semi-implanted and are for people with moderate hearing loss who can’t wear hearing aids but who still have a good cochlea.  
*Ed—next issue look for a personal account of the BAHA.*



## ALD resources

*Study catalogs to learn about assistive listening devices (ALDs)!*

**Audex:** 1-800-237-0716 (<http://www.audex.com>). 710 Standard St., Longview, TX 75604

**Centrum Sound:** 408-736-6500; Fax: 408-736-6552 (<http://www.centrumsound.com/>) 572 La Conner Dr., Sunnyvale, CA 94087

**General Technologies:** 1-800-328-6684 Voice/TTY (<http://www.devices4less.com>) 7417 Winding Way, Fair Oaks, CA 95628

**Harc:** 1-800-445-9968 Voice/TTY (<http://www.harcmercantile.com>) 1111 W. Centre Ave., Portage, MI 49024

**Harris:** 1-800-825-9187 TTY, 1-800-825-6758 Voice (<http://www.harriscomm.com>) 15155 Technology Dr., Eden Prairie, MN

**Hearing Speech & Deafness Center:** 206-328-6872 V/TTY; 1-888-328-2974 toll free; (<http://www.hsdc.org>) 1620 - 18th Ave., Seattle 98122

**Hearmore:** 1-800-881-4327 Voice; 1-800-281-3555 TTY (<http://www.hearmore.com>) 42 Executive Blvd., Farmingdale, NY 11735

**Hitec:** 1-800-288-8303 / 1-800-536-8890 TTY (<http://www.hitec.com>) 8160 Madison Ave., Burr Ridge, IL 60527

**LS&S:** 1-800-468-4789/Voice; 1-800-317-8533/TTY; (<http://www.lssgroup.com>) P.O. Box 673, Northbrook, IL 60065

**Oval Window:** Phone/TDD/Fax: 303-447-3607 (<http://www.ovalwindowaudio.com>) 33 Wildflower Ct., Nederland, CO 80466

## Better hearing

# Worth every penny

*By Lona Lea Jennings, Federal Way*

It happens every time I visit the family. I drive down to Portland, I knock on the door, and within an hour my sister is saying, "You need to fix this." Sometimes it's the TV; sometimes it's the computer. Thanks to my hearing loss and my lifelong hunt for better hearing, I've become my family's resident electronics specialist. I don't mind.

I started out young with hearing loss, growing up with it always lurking in the background. For me, a whole wide, wonderful world of activities like stage performances, evening classes and just eating out with friends is beyond the abilities of even the best hearing aids I can buy. I refuse to be DIS-abled, to be only what my hearing loss will make me, so I've turned to assistive listening devices (ALDs).

For me they've been worth every penny, and I recommend them to any hard of hearing person who wants to hear better. They've opened up my world like a can opener.

If you're intimidated by ALD technology, don't be. You probably know more than you think. Thanks to cable television, computers and stereos, the average American already knows two of the important ingredients of an assistive listening system: the wires and connections. For example, hooking up an infrared system on your TV is very much like hooking up a stereo speaker. I'll bet you've done that.

What you probably don't know is the system you need. Unfortunately, a lot of that kind of information only comes from study and experimentation. That can be tough, since hearing aid dispensers frequently do not carry even the simplest ALDs. Some good places to look for already-canned, heat'n'serve information include the SHHH Hearing Loss Journal, internet websites, and in Washington State the Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center in Seattle.

Experimentation is tougher. The closest places in the Greater Puget Sound area are the Hearing, Speech and Deafness Center, mentioned above, and the Listen for Life Center at Virginia Mason. Once a year the Virginia Bloedel Center at the UW holds an all-day conference (Ears, Hearing, and Beyond, April 5). Besides seminars, the exhibition hall has vendors who let you try their wares. The best place, however, is the annual national SHHH convention, held this year in Atlanta, Georgia, on June 26 to 29. It's an ALD addict's dream come true. In the exhibition hall, vendors display every type of device imaginable. And the seminars provide both the most basic and the most advanced information about ALDs. You can experiment and ask questions to your heart's content.

Don't let your quest for better hearing stop at what fits in your ears. A wide wonderful world is out there waiting for can-do hard of hearing people. Go out there and open up your world.

## ADA on CD Rom

A CD-ROM containing a complete collection of ADA regulations, architectural design standards, and technical assistance publications is available free from the Justice Department. To order, call the ADA Information Line 800-514-0301 (Voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY) or see <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2001/July/351cr.htm>

## NW ADA & IT Center

Confused about the law? The Northwest Americans with Disabilities Act and Information Technology Center is the federally designated Disability and Technical Assistance Center for Region X, serving Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. It provides technical assistance and training about the ADA to individuals with

disabilities, employers, businesses, state and local governments, educators, non-profit organizations, and others. Questions or to schedule training: contact the Northwest ADA & IT Center at 1-800-949-4ADA, voice/TTY; 503-418-0296, TTY; website: [www.nwada.org](http://www.nwada.org); or e-mail [nwada@ohsu.edu](mailto:nwada@ohsu.edu)

## Travel

The Transportation Security Administration, newly created by Congress in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, has issued written guidelines for air travelers about the new security screening procedures. Besides informing passengers with disabilities of their rights, it clarifies that the limit of one carry-on bag and one

personal item per traveler does not apply to passengers with disabilities, who may need to take medical supplies or equipment, mobility aids, or assistive devices. For more information, check the website ([http://www.tsa.dot.gov/trav\\_consumers/ips\\_disabilities.shtm](http://www.tsa.dot.gov/trav_consumers/ips_disabilities.shtm)) or write TSA, 400 7th St. SW, Washington, DC 20590

## Emergency information

*By Donna Platt, Manager  
WA State 9-1-1/TTY Education Program*

Washington State is considered one of few states that are at high risk for both natural and man-made disasters. Many Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing people are concerned about their safety, especially access to emergency warnings and information. Washington State 9-1-1/TTY Education Program is offering a free workshop to Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing people anywhere in our

state. The workshop will include information on rights to emergency information and resources to get emergency warning and information for free or at cost.

If you are interested in a workshop set up in your area and/or you want more information, please contact us at (206) 322-4996 TTY/V, (206) 720-3251 FAX or email: [WA911TTY@aol.com](mailto:WA911TTY@aol.com)

## Captioning

You should soon be seeing more TV programs captioned, including some of your old favorites. Per Section 305 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as of January 1, 2003, 30% of the pre-rule (first exhibited before January 1, 1998) nonexempt video programming shown on each channel, during each calendar quarter, must be closed captioned. Beginning January 1, 2008, 75% of all pre-rule nonexempt programming must be captioned. See the FCC website for more detailed information ([www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/headlines.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/headlines.html)) or call toll free: 1-888-CALL-FCC (Voice).

Having trouble with local stations not captioning? Contact them and let them know you're unhappy!

### Channel 13 - Fox

Ph: 206-674-1313; e-mail: [programming@kcpq.com](mailto:programming@kcpq.com)

### Channel 9 - PBS

e-mail: [viewer@kcts.org](mailto:viewer@kcts.org); Ph: 206-728-6463; Fax: 206-443-6691

### Channel 5 - NBC

Ph: 206-448-5555; e-mail: [kingtv@king5.com](mailto:kingtv@king5.com)

### Channel 7 - CBS

Ph: 206-728-7777; e-mail: [programming@kirotv.com](mailto:programming@kirotv.com)

### Channel 4 - ABC

Ph: 818-460-7477; e-mail: [tano@fishcomm.com](mailto:tano@fishcomm.com)

### Channel 11 - PSN

Ph: 206-441-1111; FAX 206-441-1116; e-mail: <http://upn11.com/feedback/>

**Discovery Channel** (not local, but one of the worst offenders)

Ph: 1-888-404-5969; e-mail: [Viewer\\_relations@discovery.com](mailto:Viewer_relations@discovery.com)



*The Scream, Edvard Munch 1893*

**T**innitus is the perception of ringing, hissing, roaring, clicking, chimes, or other sounds in the ears when there is no external sound present.

According to the American Tinnitus Association (ATA), about twelve million Americans seek medical attention for this disorder; as many as one million are affected to the point of disability.

#### **Possible causes**

- Hearing loss
- Loud noise
- Some medications
- Other health problems: allergies, tumors, problems in the heart and blood vessels, jaws, and neck

#### **Possible treatments**

- Alternative medicine
- Amplification (helps while wearing hearing aids)
- Biofeedback
- Cochlear implants
- Cognitive therapy
- Drug therapy
- Masking
- Tinnitus retraining therapy
- TMJ treatment

Is it **TIN**-it-us or ti-**NIGHT**-us?  
Either pronunciation is correct.

## *A personal account of Tinnitus*

# Honey, I need you to snore

*By Jean Lester, Port Orchard*

Tinnitus entered my life intrusively and without warning one morning two years ago, when I awakened with incessant noise in my head. Since I suffer from congenital nerve deafness, I previously had experienced, on infrequent occasion, temporary ringing in my right ear, but this lasted, without fail, for only a few seconds. I never paid any attention to it, as I was aware that such ringing is common in individuals with nerve deafness.

The new tinnitus, however, not only filled my head, but also manifested itself in various forms, including ringing, buzzing, repetitive musical tunes, chords, and what I call “electrical transformer” noise—all occurring simultaneously and unceasingly. Needless to say, I was both concerned and extremely distressed, and I immediately brought my symptoms to the attention of my physician.

Over the course of the next few weeks, as the tinnitus continued, I was evaluated by both my family provider and an ear, nose and throat specialist. They identified no organic cause, advising me that there was nothing that could be done and that I would have to learn to live with tinnitus. However, they could not tell me how to do this and offered virtually no coping strategy. Unrelenting tinnitus affects the ability to sleep, creates emotional distress and can cause great anxiety. I experienced all of these. Mostly, I was exhausted from lack of sleep, and this of course, impacted my emo-

tional status. I fought the tinnitus constantly.

In the absence of any useful assistance or information from my physicians, I researched tinnitus on my own. I sought information via the Internet, the American Tinnitus Association (ATA) and I talked to specialists who are authorities on tinnitus. I learned that there are, in fact, ways to cope with tinnitus. The ATA advised me of the helpfulness of Tinnitus Retraining Therapy (TRT). I eventually underwent TRT through the Oregon Health Sciences University Tinnitus Center. TRT involves using sounds in the environment and/or white noise to mask the tinnitus. I learned biofeedback techniques through another provider to help myself relax in the midst of tinnitus noise.

Dr. Stephen Nagler, a nationally known physician and tinnitus expert who suffers from tinnitus himself, told me about the sound pillow – a pillow with built-in microphones that can be attached to any CD player or radio with a microphone outlet. The sound pillow is a godsend for getting to sleep at night, and there are many soothing and non-intrusive environmental sound CDs available. Dr. Nagler suggested having sound in my environment at all times. He also warned me of the importance of protecting what little hearing I have left—I now wear earplugs in excessively noisy environments or avoid those environments altogether. I also

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Tinnitus...continued from page 6)

learned which medications exacerbate tinnitus (there are many common ones that do), and that I should avoid caffeine and aspartame in my diet.

Admittedly, tinnitus is not fun. However, there is no drug or medical technique that will make it go away, except in the rare case where a physical cause can be identified. Nonetheless, I am happy to report that I have learned to live with tinnitus, through TRT techniques and through the natural accommodat-

ing ability of my brain. The adjustments that I have had to make in my life are significant, and it is true that tinnitus is still with me—I can still “hear” it if I purposely listen for it. But I have made it unimportant in my life, I no longer fight it, and I do not allow it to be intrusive. On occasion, tinnitus still wakes me at night, but I simply turn over and whisper to my husband, “Honey, I need you to snore.”

*Ed—You can e-mail Jean at celticisle254@cs.com. For more information on resources, contact:*

ATA National Headquarters  
PO Box 5  
Portland, OR 97207-0005  
Phone: (800) 634-8978 Toll Free  
E-mail: tinnitus@ata.org  
Web: www.ata.org



Tinnitus Clinic, NRC04  
Oregon Health Sciences University, 3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Rd., Portland, OR 97239-3098  
Phone: 503-494-7954; TTY: 503-494-0910; e-mail: ohrc@ohsu.edu or see website: <http://www.ohsu.edu/ohrc/tinnitusclinic>

## Are you a veteran with severe tinnitus?

If so, you may qualify for treatment at no cost as part of a research project. You must be willing to participate in a twelve-month program with five visits to the Seattle or Tacoma VA Medical Center. Interested? Contact Melissa Montero, Research Coordinator, Audiology; VA Medical Center, Seattle; 206-764-2338 or 1-800-329-8387 ext. 62338; e-mail: [melissa.montero@med.va.gov](mailto:melissa.montero@med.va.gov)



### Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Research Center

*Find out what you've been missing! Meet other SHHH members, and enjoy a free all-day seminar. April 5, HUB Auditorium, University of Washington, Seattle campus. FM, amplification, real-time captioning.*

**9:30 Exhibits open, rooms 106B and 108**

**9:30 An overview: the ear, hearing and auditory disorders.** *George A. Gates, MD, Director, Bloedel Hearing Research Center; Otolologist & Professor, UW, Otolaryngology-HNS*

**10:00 Advances in Hearing Evaluation.** *Patrick Feeney, PhD, UW, Dept. of Otolaryngology-HNS*

**10:30 Amplification for Hearing Loss.** *Patrick Feeney, PhD, UW, Dept. of Otolaryngology-HNS*

**11:00 Break**

**11:30 Coping with Hearing Loss.** *Amanda Beers, Miss Washington 2002*

**12:00 Lunch & Exhibits**

*Ed—Pack your lunch or use the school cafeteria. Directions: call 206-616-4105 or see website: <http://depts.washington.edu/hearing/ehb.html>*

**1:30 Current Status of Hair Cell Regeneration**  
*Olivia Bermingham-McDonogh, Research Assistant Professor, UW, Otolaryngology-HNS*

**2:00 Genetics of Hearing Loss**  
*Valerie Street, PhD, Acting Instructor UW, Otolaryngology-HNS*

**2:30 Meniett Device for Meniere's Disease**  
*George A. Gates, MD, Director, Bloedel Hearing Research Center*

**3:00 Questions and Answers**

**3:30 Exhibits**

**4:30 Exhibits Close**

## Chapter Highlights

### A+ for Advocacy

The East Jefferson County chapter has done five training sessions for hospital staff at the Jefferson General Hospital to teach them how to use assistive devices and communicate with hard-of-hearing people. The hospital is working hard on all aspects of accessibility, which includes signage and information for hard-of-hearing patients. During the training sessions SHHH members reminded staff members that some hard-of-hearing people don't want to admit they have difficulty understanding. Misunderstanding is especially dangerous in medical settings. The hospital has also purchased PockeTalkers and an assistive listening system.

### New chapters

#### Camano Island

Camano Senior and Community Center, located at 606 Arrowhead Rd, Camano. Contact Lilia Smith at 360-387-6415; email 5678@tgi.net for time and day.

#### Puyallup

First Tuesday from 7-8:30 pm; Puyallup City Library, North Meeting Room, 324 S. Meridian, Puyallup; Contact Lisa Hough, Phone: 253-770-4710 or email: SHHHPuyallup@wwdb.org.

#### Sequim

Starting in May; 2nd Tuesday, 10:00 am, Sequim Senior Center, 921 E. Hammond St. Contact Ginger Nichols at 360-681-2055 or dalenann@olympus.net.

## Chapters

### Support and education

*Chapters normally meet from September through June, with a summer picnic. Since meetings sometimes change, check first with contact person. See our website (<http://www.wasa-shhh.org>) for program listings.*

**Downtown Seattle**—3rd Tues. 6:00 pm; Virginia Mason Med. Ctr., Hospital Building, Seneca & 9th. Park in Lindeman underground garage on Seneca or on street. Meeting rooms are to the left of the reception desk behind Tully's Coffee Stand. Look for signs. Amplification, FM, real-time captioning. Focus is on issues and access in the workplace. Judi Carr: 206-935-6637 or jstarbright@wasa-shhh.org.

**East Jefferson County** — 4th Mon. afternoon (time varies); Auditorium, Jefferson Gen. Hosp., 834 Sheridan, Pt. Townsend; amplification, FM. Emily Mandelbaum at mandelbaum@olympus.net or 360-379-4978 or Sandy MacNair: smacnair@olympus.net or 360-385-1347.

**Everett Area**— 2nd Sat. 11:00 am; Snohomish Co. PUD Commission Rm., 2320 California, Everett; amplification, FM, real-time captioning. Myrna Kain: 425-438-0432/TTY (via relay: 711) mkain1@wasa-shhh.org; Dave Pearson: 360-659-9438 or DCPearson@wasa-shhh.org or see <http://eac-shhh.tripod.com>.

**Four Freedoms**—1st Thurs. 1:30 pm; Four Freedoms House, Rm. 9, 747 N. 135th St., Seattle; Mary Kahle, Social Worker: 206-364-2440 or kahleflour@aol.com.

**The Hearthstone**—2nd Tues. 10:30 am; 6720 E. Greenlake Way N., Seattle; amplification, infra-red; Shelleyrae Murphy: 206-525-9666 or cheile-murphy@juno.com.

**Kitsap**—3rd Sat. 1:00 pm; Givens Community Center, Cascade Rm., 1026 Sidney Ave., Port Orchard; amplification, FM, real-time captioning; Evelyn Busick: 360-697-3884 Voice/TTY; 360-697-7890 FAX; e-mail: embusick@juno.com or call Linda Nopp at 360-307-8358.

**Lake Washington**—3rd Thurs. 7:00 pm; 3rd Thurs. 7:00 pm; Bellevue Regional Library, large conference room, first floor, 1111 - 110th Ave. NE, Bellevue; amplification, FM, real-time captioning. Diane Jandl: 425-643-7713 or SHHHLakeWash@webtv.net.

**Orcas Island**—2nd Wed. 10:00 am, Orcas Senior Ctr., 62 Henry Rd., Eastsound; personal FM systems available to use. Contact Susan Kosior: 360-376-5746 or e-mail: swkosior@aol.com.

**Pt. Angeles**—1st Tues. 10:00 am; Pt. Angeles Senior Ctr., 328 E. 7th, Pt. Angeles; amplification, FM. Gerry Smith: 360-417-0523 or e-mail gerrysmith2001@hotmail.com.

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(Chapters...continued from Page 8)

**Shoreline**—1st Wed. 10:00 am; Shoreline Sr. Ctr., 18560 1st Ave. NE, Shoreline; amplification, FM. Mr. Laurel Martinson: 206-525-3389 or e-mail Penny Allen: PAllen@wasa-shhh.org.

**Skagit**—2nd Tues. 1:00 pm; Fidalgo Ctr., 1701- 22nd St., Anacortes; amplification, FM. Charlene MacKenzie: 360-738-3756 or CharMacKenzie@cs.com.

**South King County**—2nd Fri. 6:45 pm; Auburn Regional Med. Ctr., Rm. 327, 202 N. Division, Auburn; amplification, FM, real-time captioning. Sandra Bunning: Sandrab@wasa-shhh.org or 425-255-2992.

**Spokane**—Meetings are moved to the second Sat., 9:30 am at Rock Pointe - East, 1313 N. Atlantic, Spokane in the DVR conference room; amplification, FM, computer captioning. Contact Margaret Mortz, mmortz@wsu.edu, 509-893-1472 (H)/358-7935 (Wk) or Bob Bourke at bourkr@hotmail.com.

**Tacoma**—2nd Sat. 10:00 am at TACID, 6315 S. 19th St., Tacoma. Amplification, infra-red, real-time captioning. Ben Gilbert: 253-272-6158 or bengilbert@wasa-shhh.org or Marcee Widland at mwidland@msn.com.

**Tri-Cities**—3rd Tues. 7:00 pm; Richland Community Ctr., 500 Amon Park Dr., Richland; amplification, FM. Robin Traveller at toll-free 1-888-543-6598 or RTraveller@wasa-shhh.org.

**West Seattle**—3rd Wed., 1:30 pm; Fauntleroy Church, UCC Lounge, 9260 California Ave. SW, Seattle; amplification, induction loop. Elaine Maros: elainemaros1@juno.com or Doug Gray at 206-932-6427.

**Make someone happy!**



Give the gift of membership in SHHH—only \$25! Regular features include:

- "Developments in Research and Technology"
  - "Ask the Doctor"
  - "SHHH National Action"
  - "This News Is For You"
- Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, 7910 Woodmont Ave, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248/V; 301-657-2249/TTY or join online: www.shhh.org.

**18th International SHHH Convention Atlanta—June 26-29**



**Keynote speaker Heather Whitestone McCallum**

Over 80 exhibitors of assistive devices, products, and service; workshops on hearing loss and coping skills...all that and more. And you won't miss a thing, because it's all hearing accessible. You'll be glad you went! For information, contact the national office.



**SHHH Kids**

This chapter in the South King County area is just for hard of hearing children and their families. Some meeting agendas will be geared for parents looking for all types of resources, educational info, insurance issues, support group, advocacy, etc. There will be outings, and activities planned for the children and their families.

Times and places are subject to change due to planned activities, so the meetings may be in other areas. Contact Ms. Sidney Weldele-Wallace: 253-833-9111, ext. 4705 or sweldele@grcc.ctc.edu.

## HAIL *Hearing Aid Insurance Legislation*

By Penny Allen, Hail Committee Chair

What's taking so long? Nobody ever said getting hearing aid insurance was going to be easy. Most of the legislators who were contacted have been supportive, but nobody has been willing to sponsor a bill. Some have alluded to the downturn in our economy and the state of our health care system. Additionally, we're told that insurance companies are looking at cuts in other benefits, such as dental and eye care.

To add more work to the process, a law enacted in 1997 (Chapter 48.47 RCW Mandated Health Benefits) requires any bill with a mandate to first be reviewed by the health care committees to assess "the social impact, financial impact, and evidence of health care service efficacy of the benefit in strict adherence to the criteria enumerated in RCW 48.47.030." The request must be made no later than 90 days prior to a subsequent regular legislative session....meaning more red tape.

We still need your help. Please contact your legislators and let them know you want hearing aid insurance. Tell them your personal story and how expensive hearing aids are. We especially need to get through to members of the health care committees, so we're looking for people whose legislators are on those committees. If you have Internet access you can find your legislators by going to <http://www.leg.wa.gov>. You can write a letter or e-mail; but if you're not a registered voter, nobody is going to read it.

I'm setting up an advocacy list where I'll blind-copy everyone to send out information about HAIL. In the months to come, it will be especially important that we develop a strong coalition. This will succeed if we have a broad group of people and organizations supporting us. If you'd like to help, contact [PAllen@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:PAllen@wasa-shhh.org). You'll need e-mail.

## WASA-SHHH meetings

WASA-SHHH meetings are open to SHHH members and the public, and guests may observe board meetings.

✓ Saturday, April 26, Hearing, Speech & Deafness Ctr., 1620 18th Ave., Seattle; Board meeting 9:00 am. Lunch provided by HSDC 12:00-1:00 pm. General meeting 1:00-2:00 pm; tour of new facility and visit ALD store 2:00-5:00 pm. (RSVP for lunch to Judi Carr: [jstarbright@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:jstarbright@wasa-shhh.org)).

✓ Saturday, August 23 (Eastern WA)\*

✓ Saturday, November 22, annual meeting and election of new board. (Western WA)\*

\*Contact Judi Carr for times & directions.

## Interested in being on the board?

Elections are coming up. Contact George Cooper, Nominations Committee Chair for more information: [sargeo@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:sargeo@wasa-shhh.org).

## WASA-SHHH Board

- President: Rick Faunt, Auburn; [RFaunt@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:RFaunt@wasa-shhh.org); Ph: 253-833-9147
- Vice President: Beverly Ziarko, Kent; [bevziarko@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:bevziarko@wasa-shhh.org) (Database)
- Secretary: Michael Bower, Auburn; [MABower@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:MABower@wasa-shhh.org)
- Treasurer: Sue Campbell, Seattle; [SueCampbell@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:SueCampbell@wasa-shhh.org) (Newsletter Chair)
- Acting Past President: Don Pickens, Redmond; [DPickens@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:DPickens@wasa-shhh.org)
- Sandra Bunning, Renton; [Sandrab@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:Sandrab@wasa-shhh.org) (Correspondence Coordinator)
- John Allen, Port Orchard; [JCallen@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:JCallen@wasa-shhh.org)
- Ben Gilbert, Tacoma; [bengilbert@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:bengilbert@wasa-shhh.org);
- Sidney Weldele-Wallace, Auburn; [sweldele-wallace@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:sweldele-wallace@wasa-shhh.org)
- Robin Traveller, Pasco; [RTraveller@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:RTraveller@wasa-shhh.org); or toll free 1-888-543-6598 (E. WA Chapter Coordinator)
- Erla Musser, Auburn; [erlamusser@juno.com](mailto:erlamusser@juno.com)
- George Cooper, College Place; [sargeo@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:sargeo@wasa-shhh.org) (Nominations Chair)
- Linda Nopp, Bremerton; [lnopp@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:lnopp@wasa-shhh.org)
- Denise Jones, Spokane; [mdj@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:mdj@wasa-shhh.org) (E WA Outreach/Access Chair)
- Judi Carr, Seattle; [jstarbright@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:jstarbright@wasa-shhh.org) (Meeting Coordinator)
- Dave Berrian, Bothell; [DBerrian@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:DBerrian@wasa-shhh.org)
- Penny Allen, Port Orchard; [PAllen@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:PAllen@wasa-shhh.org) (Western WA Chapter Coordinator, Access Chair, Sound Waves Newsletter Editor); Ph: 360-871-0997

# Thanks!

*We appreciate your donations to help fund this newsletter. These contributions are through February.*

- Sandra Bunning, Renton
- Prudence Clem, Redmond
- Pearl Ebert, Seattle
- Janis Eastman, Seattle
- Lise Evans, Port Townsend
- Evergreen Speech & Hearing, Tom Norwood, Kirkland
- Rick Faunt, Auburn
- Dolores & Rudy Gahler, Anacortes
- Ben Gilbert, Tacoma
- Patricia Gouge, Renton
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- Mary Thomas, Bremerton
- Joan L. Walston, Steilacoom
- Sidney Weldele-Wallace, Auburn
- West Seattle Chapter SHHH
- Trudy Wilson, Issaquah
- Jeradell De Zarn-Young, Fairbanks, AK

*These readers have made a special effort to support this newsletter throughout the year through their United Way contributions!*

- Erlene Little, Seattle
- Dave Pearson, Marysville
- John C. Robbins, Renton
- Lilia Smith, Camano Island

## **Gordon Nystedt Memorial Fund**

This is an ongoing fund established in memory of former SHHH leader, Gordon Nystedt, to enable us to continue our outreach efforts and help fund assistive technology in our state. Contributions may be made at any time. Please specify if you want your donation to go towards this fund.

### **Newsletter information**

We welcome your articles, letters, and notices of coming events. Submissions may be abbreviated due to space constraints. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of WASA-SHHH or of SHHH. Mention of goods or services does not mean endorsement, nor does exclusion suggest disapproval. Any portion of this newsletter may be reprinted or disseminated, as long as credit is given to the individual author or to this publication.

To receive this newsletter by US mail, please enclose a check or money order for \$10 and mail to WASA-SHHH, PO Box 4025, Kent, WA 98032. This newsletter is posted on our website, along with back issues, and we encourage reprints: <http://www.wasa-shhh.org>.



Self Help for Hard of Hearing People

# Sound Waves

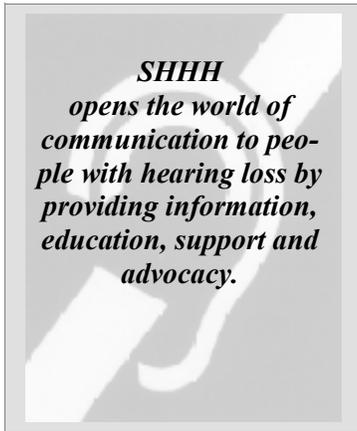
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### *New subscription information inside this issue*

WASA-SHHH, Washington State Association of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, is affiliated with the national organization of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc., headquartered in Bethesda, MD. SHHH is an educational organization devoted to the welfare and interests of hard of hearing people. Visit our state website at <http://wasa-shhh.org>.

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# Newsletter subscription

Dear Readers:

We're proud of *Sound Waves* and the information it provides about hearing loss. To our knowledge, there isn't another publication in the State of Washington that does this. From your many letters, we know that you have found new independence and help through SHHH.

Many of you have financially supported our newsletter over the years, and we appreciate your contributions. However, the decreased donations and reduced funding we have experienced in the past year no longer allow us to provide free mailing to everyone. We regret this, because it has always been our wish to do so.

If you would like to receive a newsletter in the mail, there will now be an annual subscription fee of ten dollars to cover our expenses. *Sound Waves* is still free if you download it from our website at

Sincerely,  
WASA-SHHH Board of Trustees

PS. If you'd like to receive an e-mail notification when a new issue of *Sound Waves* is posted, please contact the editor at [Pallen@wasa-shhh.org](mailto:Pallen@wasa-shhh.org).

<http://www.wasa-shhh.org>. We especially encourage hearing health care providers to spread the word about SHHH by making copies for their clients, because we know there is no better way to manage hearing loss than through the support of others who live with it.

If you support WASA-SHHH through your United Way contributions, you will continue to receive a copy of *Sound Waves* in the mail. If you have sent us a donation since January 1, you will continue to receive issues in the mail this year. Each January we will include a subscription reminder in our newsletter so you won't miss an issue.

Other donations are always appreciated, and your support helps us to do more for people with hearing loss.

I would like to subscribe to *Sound Waves*. Enclosed is my check for \$10 (do not send cash) for January through December of 2003.

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