



# THE LOOP

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
British Columbia Chapter

Issue 37

Fall/Winter 2008

## New Executive Director for CHHA National

**Carole Willans, president of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, has announced the appointment of Saralle (Snookie) Lomow to the position of Executive Director, effective October 20, 2008, and reporting to the National Board of Directors.**

Ms. Lomow will take on the operational and financial stewardship of Canada's only national, consumer-based organization for people who are hard of hearing and deafened.

She comes to CHHA from a successful career in Canada, the United States, and Italy, working in private industry, government, non-profit organizations, and as an independent meeting and marketing professional. Her strategic vision, innovative ideas and management skills will help steer CHHA in its drive to strengthen its national support network, and develop its advocacy and resource programs for Canadians with hearing loss.

Says Ms. Lomow, "Through my close family members and friends, I have experienced the profound impact of hearing loss on everyday life.

I am excited at this opportunity to work with CHHA to ensure Canadians who are hard of hearing, or deafened receive the support and understanding they need to contribute fully at all levels of society."



Saralle (Snookie)  
Lomow

## Thank-you Jessie for keeping us in the "Loop"

Have you ever wondered who was responsible for putting together all of the interesting articles and pictures that we all enjoy in the much anticipated and appreciated publication of *The Loop*? Her name is Jessie Ellis.

Jessie has served CHHA-BC for many years as editor and publisher of *The Loop* newsletter. *The Loop* has captured many special events over the years and kept us informed on hard of hearing issues and the happenings in our Branches throughout the province. It has kept us all connected.

*The Loop* has reached out to many hard of hearing people who are unable to be out and about, keeping them informed and feeling that they are still involved with things that are happening in the Hard of Hearing Community.

We want to say **THANK YOU!** to Jessie Ellis for all her hard work and dedication in making this newsletter a great success. Jessie will be greatly missed as she is now stepping down from this position.

We are hoping to find a person to take over the position of Editor, for future publications of *The Loop*.

If you are interested in this rewarding position or if you have questions, please send an email message to:

[chha-bc2@telus.net](mailto:chha-bc2@telus.net) Attn: Laurene McNaught

We also encourage you to send us a message to let us know how you feel about *The Loop*. What has *The Loop* meant to you? Would you like to see *The Loop* continue as it is, or would you like to see changes?

This is a great opportunity for you to share your ideas and suggestions.

We are also looking for additional volunteer correspondents for future publications.

If you like to write, please contact us at the Resource Centre. We gratefully appreciate all the help we get from our readers!

Laurene McNaught

**EDITOR OPPORTUNITY reporting to CHHA-BC Board. Position includes newsgathering, oversight of the newsletter team and allocation of work to the Correspondents. The Editor has the freedom to write (as desired) and to make decisions which benefit The Loop. This is a paid position. This position can be a one-person job or it could be shared or worked on as a team. Other duties include special events reporting, writing, re-writing and layout.**

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**NEXT COPY DEADLINE**  
**January 30, 2009**

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Membership in CHHA includes:

- *THE LOOP* (Provincial publication)
- *LISTEN/ÉCOUTE* (National publication)

CHHA Membership fee: \$25 p.a.

All donations towards publishing costs are greatly appreciated. A tax receipt will be issued for donations \$10 and over.

**Donations, Memorials, Bequests to the HARD OF HEARING/ LATE DEAFENED FUND, an arm of CHHA-BC, assists CHHA in its activities in this province**

Please send to the Vancouver Foundation, Suite 1200, 555 Hastings St., Box 12132, Harbour Centre, Vancouver, BC, V6B 4N6. The Vancouver Foundation will issue receipts for all gifts. **Interest from capital is used in perpetuity for CHHA-BC Chapter. The capital remains intact.**

## From the President . . .



*Leslee Scott*

We're now into another season for CHHA BC. By now people will have recovered from the Congress, but hopefully have not forgotten what they've learned and the friends they've made during the four days of activities and workshops.

I do hope you are saving those pennies and points for the next CHHA Conference being held on the other side of the country at St John, Newfoundland.

CHHA BC has a number of activities going on. We've hired Sharon Perry at the Resource Centre on a part time basis to help out with the numerous awareness ideas that keep cropping up and need to be addressed. With Stephanie Bryant, Laurene McNaught, and Sharon, more gets done on behalf of hard of hearing and deafened consumers. If you have concerns in your community, please get in touch with them. They would be happy to help you achieve your goals.

We have the upcoming Health and Wellness Fair in Vancouver. The Resource Centre is organizing the set-up of the booth for this event and welcomes volunteers to help them, and to man the booth. If you can give two hours of your time on February 6 or February 7, 2009, it would be gratefully appreciated.

I am sure other branches are involved in similar endeavours throughout the province. Hearing loss is a health concern that is increasing as people age, and as they continue to expose their ears to loud sounds. Having a presence at these fairs highlights our presence, and we can provide people with valuable information and resources that they can tap into.

We now have a new face at the National office with the hiring of Saralle (Snookie) Lomow as the new executive director. Janice McNamara gave her resignation and left her job of 16 years. We thank her so much for her dedication. Snookie comes with a marketing background, and we welcome her aboard. I look forward to working with her over the future years as all of us work to further the goals and purposes of CHHA and reach out to our hard of hearing consumers.

I wish all of you a coming Christmas season of joy and gratitude and anticipation for what 2009 will bring.

Sincerely

*Leslie Scott*

President, CHHA-BC

**CHHA, BC acknowledges  
with thanks  
the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.**

**You Are Invited to SUBMIT  
A WORKSHOP PROPOSAL  
for the 2009 CHHA Conference and Trade  
Show  
May 21-24, 2009, in St. John, Newfoundland.**

Suggested topics include, but are not limited to the Conference theme of Technology, The Gateway to Hearing Loss; New technical devices; Coping strategies and stress management; Education and employment issues for young adults; Health issues facing persons with a hearing loss.

For more information please visit the CHHA website [chha.ca/chha/conference\\_09.php](http://chha.ca/chha/conference_09.php) or contact the CHHA National Office at 1-800-263-8068.

**E-Mail or Snail-Mail ?**

**We can reduce mailing costs and our impact on the environment if we are able to send The Loop by e-mail.**

For those who can receive the newsletter electronically, please e-mail the Resource Centre at [chha-bc@telus.net](mailto:chha-bc@telus.net) with your name, street address, and e-mail address, and request that your copy of The Loop be sent by e-mail. All other copies will be sent through the Post Office.

**SAVE POSTAGE    SAVE HANDLING    SAVE PAPER**

**Court Ruling Means Airlines Must Make Room for Disabled**

In a decision released without comment November 20, the Supreme Court of Canada rejected an application by Air Canada and WestJet for permission to appeal the order issued by the Canadian Transportation Agency stating that a disabled person who needs additional room for a wheelchair, or an obese person who needs an additional seat, couldn't be charged extra. It would also mean that, if a disabled person has to be accompanied by an attendant, the attendant would ride for free.

The transportation agency's order technically applies only to Air Canada, Air Canada Jazz and WestJet, but their share of the domestic airline market is estimated at over 90 per cent. The ruling means that complaints against other airlines would be virtually certain to succeed. Bus, train and ferry companies have long made arrangements for free extra seats, but the airline industry has argued it would lose too much money by doing the same.

The Canadian Press, 2008

**Janet Les Wins  
the Governor General Silver Medal**



Janet Les

Janet Les, was awarded the Governor General's Silver Medal at the University of the Fraser Valley, an honour given to the top student in a four-year degree program. She gained an almost perfect 4.29 grade point average out of a possible 4.33 (an A+ average) over the course of her studies as she earned a Bachelor of General Studies degree .

Janet is Treasurer of CHHA-BC Board and a long-time supporter and advocate for people who are hard of hearing.

She took a Speech and Language Assistant diploma in 2005, and a Teaching English as a Second Language diploma in 2006.

Janet commented, "I currently teach a daily adult intermediate ESL class in Chilliwack. It is a great privilege to help facilitate English and Canadian cultural learning with these amazing individuals."



**MOUSE CLUE TO PROGRESSIVE HEARING LOSS**

Researchers have defined a mutation in the mouse genome that mimics progressive hearing loss in humans.

A team from the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute in Cambridge, UK, working with colleagues in Munich and Padua, found that mice carrying

a mutation displayed problems with the function of hair cells in the inner ear, occurring before physical effects are seen.

"When we mapped the mutation to the mouse genome, we quickly found a probable cause for hearing loss," explains senior author Professor Karen Steel. "We showed

that the mutant mice carried a change in one letter of their genetic code in a gene called *Atp2b2*, which stops it from producing a normal molecular pump that is needed to keep hair cells in the ear working efficiently by pumping excess calcium out of the cell."

*PloS Genetics*, Oct. 31, 2008

## Hard of Hearing People in Time of Crisis and Emergencies

The presenters of this workshop at the CHHA-IFHOH Congress offered valuable information from two very different perspectives.



Lise Hamelin explained that hard of hearing persons experience unique problems in crisis situations: lack of consumer preparation; lack of communication access; lack of understanding by responders about communication barriers experienced by the deaf and hard of hearing; and lack of understanding by consumers about responders' procedures.

Most people do not understand that we will need to self-rescue as responders' first priorities will be to care homes and schools.

In addition to keeping our basic emergency kit updated with food and water, Lise suggested putting an audiogram copy and extra hearing aid batteries into the kit. She also suggested we tell neighbours we're hard of hearing so someone looks out for us.



Ahiya Kamara is one of the founders and current executive director of BEKOL, the Israeli hard of hearing organization.

In Israel, because the conflict has been ongoing for years, most people seem prepared to act in case a missile lands on their doorstep.

In the US, events such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina have made the need for emergency preparedness more real.

In Canada, we are less prepared; our floods, ice storms, earthquakes and tornados have either been minor or confined to smaller areas. In Canada, many of us have been in denial.

Go to [http://getprepared.ca/kit/kit\\_e.asp](http://getprepared.ca/kit/kit_e.asp) to see how you can prepare for an emergency.

Dailaan Shaffer

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## The Ukraine - A National Perspective



Hard of hearing and deaf children and adults in the Ukraine are being helped jointly by the Grant MacEwan College at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Education, and the Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre (URDC) in Edmonton. Dr. Michael Rodda, researcher, teacher, and faculty member at MacEwan's Psychology Department, and Stuart Morris, Vice President (CHHA), told the CHHA-IFHOH Congress how hard of hearing students were helped in the past and what plans are for the future. Dr. Rodda talked about a possible relationship with CHHA and IFHOH.

The Ukrainian Community and International Development, and the URDC have arranged to have hearing aids and other listening devices sent to the Ukraine.

Dr. Rodda explained about getting over communist dogma, and about encouraging involvement of the parents in the students' hearing progress, which was not encouraged previously. Indeed, parents were never encouraged in any school activities. Dr. Rodda and Dr Roman Petryshyn, director of the URDC, have traveled to the Ukraine on several occasions to work with Ukrainian educators involved with hard of hearing students and adults.

Carol Suggitt

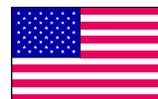
## The Impact of Technology

This workshop at the CHHA-IFHOH Congress was divided into three thirty-minute segments presented by three different speakers.



The first speaker, JoAnn Bentley, made a big impact when she illustrated her presentation by showing pictures from the past. One was a picture of her grandmother with a model of the first TTY telephone. It weighed several hundred pounds. An early alerting device for a deaf mother showed how a string tied to a sleeping infant alerted the mother when the child awoke.

She emphasised that technology has brought us enormous benefits, but that we need to use it. We are not yet enjoying all the potential benefits. Also, we need more support for people with hearing loss, more education about the strategies for living with hearing loss, and more information about the devices that can help. Public buildings need to be made more accessible.



Marcia Dugan, from the United States, spoke about the interactions between consumers and their hearing aid providers. She stressed the importance of being well informed and assertive as well as having realistic expectations.



Rolf Erdmann, from Germany, spoke of the problems faced by seniors, and in particular how lack of awareness about hearing loss can lead to a wrong diagnoses by healthcare professionals.

Hearing loss can even be mistaken for dementia. Individuals unable to understand what is asked of them will look confused, may not understand even when questions are repeated, and will not be able to respond appropriately. Health care professionals need more training to understand their client's condition and needs.

Helga Enns

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN Outreach Throughout BC



*Bright Futures  
for Children*

The BC Family Hearing Resource Centre (BCFHRC) Outreach Program offers contact with families of deaf and hard of hearing children outside the lower mainland of British Columbia who share similar experiences, and with professionals who specialize in working with these families.

The team consultants, who include Speech and Language Pathologists and Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, work together with community service providers (CSPs) to provide continuity of services.

A visit from the BCFHRC consultant might include community support and education through workshops, in-services, professional training, and resources. It also includes family support and education through monitoring and follow-up with the CSPs.

These services are additional to the services available at the BCFHRC Centre in Surrey to all families and their CSPs, including, Advanced Professional Training for Speech and Language Pathologists and Audiologists; Cochlear Implant Training; Parent-to-Parent Support Network; Reaching Out Newsletter; Sign Language Instruction; Virtual Hearing Resource Centre (webcam services); and coordination with other agencies. The BCFHRC Outreach team covers seven areas: North Coast, Cariboo, Vancouver Island, Kootenays, Coast Garibaldi, Kamloops, Prince George, Northern BC, and the Okanagan. In addition, a Family Support Parent is available for province-wide Outreach.

### Help With Employment

CHHA National has obtained a grant from Human Resources and Social Development Canada under the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities program.

The Project entitled, Creating Successful Partnerships (CSP), will provide employment enhancement assistance, and employer training to ensure successful integration of hard of hearing persons into the workplace.

Four Employment Facilitators will be located in **Ottawa, Kelowna, St. John's (NF), and Edmonton** to provide employment counselling, facilitate workshops, and co-produce written materials for the 12-month project, which will begin in September 2009.

CSP will provide job coaching, networking, technical resource training, and will provide a series of

three 2-week workshops for hard of hearing participants between September 2009 and January 2010.

Employers will also receive Hearing Awareness training to help them prepare for hard of hearing interviewees, and to meet their obligations under disability and human rights legislation.

Together, we can inform Canadians about hearing disabilities, and help those who are hard of hearing to have a better quality of life.

For further information contact Michel David, MSW, National Project Officer, Creating Successful Partnerships, Canadian Hard of Hearing Assn., 2415 Holly Lane, Suite 205, Ottawa, ON, K1V 7P2.  
E-mail: [mdavid@chha.ca](mailto:mdavid@chha.ca),  
Tel. 1-800-263-8068

**CHHA Vancouver Branch Programs  
December 2008 – June 2009  
7:00-9:00 p.m.  
3575 Kaslo Street, Vancouver  
Vancouver Oral Centre auditorium**

#### December 11

Dan Pacioretto, Phonak - demonstration of group Fm system and IN-SPIRO System (fm-in-hearing-aid technology).

#### January 15

Brad Ingrao, Canadian Sensory Institute

#### February 19

Eileen Reppenhagen, "The Tax Detective" - Review of the Disability Tax Credit with special attention to the hard of hearing definition.

#### March 19

Sharon Miller, WIDHH, Safety and Security Devices for the Hard of Hearing.

#### April 16

Charles Laszlo - V-IHEAR

#### May 21

Dr. Lorienne Jenstad, Assist. Professor, School of Audiology and Speech Sciences, UBC - current projects.

#### June 18

Report from the CHHA National Conference.

#### DEAF KNITTER

*A highway patrolman pulled alongside a speeding car and was astounded to see that the woman behind the wheel was knitting!*

*Realizing that she was oblivious to his flashing lights and siren, the trooper cranked down his window, turned on his bullhorn and yelled, "PULL OVER!"*

*"NO!" the woman yelled back, "IT'S A SCARF!"*

John Martin

# CHHA Task Force on Electoral Reform and Governance Review

by Marilyn Dahl

Following feedback received from National Board Members, the Executive Director, various financial reports from the Treasurer, and from the membership at Townhall meetings, it is clear that a review of CHHA's electoral process is needed and changes made to the National Board structure and reporting methods. Electoral Reform, governance, improving operations and reporting back to our membership are items that need action. A Task Force was struck to address this issue and report back to the Bylaws Committee, the Board, and the membership at the 2009 AGM.

## Part I

**Issue:** *Presently we have 14 places on the CHHA Board which includes the Youth Rep and the President. Expenses for Board Members just for the Conference (and we presently have three empty spots) is hiking up towards the \$30,000-\$40,000 range. Our by-laws say that all geographic areas need to be represented, but, does that mean each province? Some provinces have a stronger representation than others and some are more active than others, but CHHA cannot afford to continue spending such exorbitant sums for the Board to attend an annual Board and AGM and conference.*

## GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

### Suggestion 1:

Total membership would be seven (7), plus the president. If the Member at Large position was not filled, the president would be the tie breaker.

1. BC
2. The Prairies (AB, SK, MB)
3. ON, QC
4. Atlantic Canada (NB, NS, PE, NL)
5. Territorial (Northern) Canada (YK, NW, NU)
6. Member at Large (1) – this would be a place for a **skill set individual** such as a treasurer, lawyer, fundraiser, etc. who is not already on the Board.
7. Young Adults

### Suggestion 2:

Total membership would be eight (8), plus the president.

1. BC
2. Alberta;
3. Prairies: (SK, MB)
4. Central (ON, QC)
5. Maritime (PEI, NB, NS)
6. Newfoundland/Labrador
7. Territories
8. Youth

Some amendments to these two models is presently being discussed to give Quebec its own regional representation.

### Suggestion 3:

Each province should be represented to be a true national board (this is what it is now, and it is expensive to keep up).

### Suggestion 4

That board members be selected in regard to the particular skills which are needed to run CHHA, and which they can bring to the board, without regard to regional representation, although an effort could be made to include regional representation.

We need to decide which one is most appropriate and the rationale behind the decision – eg: cost, representation level, activity level etc.

**Issue:** *Members from other provinces voting for candidates in other provinces: for example in the last election everyone across Canada was able to vote for all candidates in the 3 provinces where there were elections*

Many questions have come about during this discussion. Suggestions are varied and depend upon the final decision on geographical areas. Should representatives be voted in from their own region/geographical area? Should we continue as we do now and allow all members to vote

for all regions/geographical areas? Should the President continue to be elected by all the membership? Should the Vice-President be elected across the country? Presently the Vice-President is chosen by the National Board.

## Part II

**Issue:** *Presently nominees submit a bio and a bit of background information – full resumes are not required. Also, present Board Members can continuously renew their terms if re-elected.*

## LENGTH OF TERM AND OVERALL REQUIREMENTS.

It was suggested that resumes be mandatory when submitting nominations to the Board of Directors, as well as short biographies and statements of why they want to serve on the national Board. Members of the Board are expected to work on specific issues designed to result in the growth and development of the national CHHA.

Most are of the opinion that 2 three-year terms are quite enough – that is six years! Then they would have to be off the Board for at least a year before again becoming eligible for election. Given the likelihood of more competition, with reduced numbers on the board there may be others waiting to have their turn .

An alternate suggestion was that there should be a limit of two three-year terms. Then, one must stand back for one term (3 years) before one can be elected again. This would ensure a variety of interests and ideas, and that "new blood" is continually infused into the organization.

It should be noted that these suggestions are still under discussion and consultations are being sought with the membership.

*See p.7, MEMBERSHIP*

## WHAT DOES THE MEMBERSHIP HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THESE ISSUES?

*Please let us know your opinion.*

The CHHA Bylaws Task Force members are:

Chair, Louise Normand (QC)

[lnormand@justice.gc.ca](mailto:lnormand@justice.gc.ca)

Colin Cantlie (AB), Michael Currie (BC),  
Marilyn Dahl (BC), Michael Devine (Nfld),  
Ian Hamilton (NB), Reno Peloso (ON),  
George Thomas (SK), Ruth Warick (BC)

## Have a Good Life



Lotte Rømer, from Denmark, a trained musician, singer and composer, started to lose her hearing in her early 30s, and now has lost over 80%. But Lotte focuses on how to have a good life despite hearing loss.

In a CHHA/IFHOH workshop, she pointed out that it is critical to find strategies to live a meaningful life with hearing loss. It is about managing the challenge of living with hearing loss.

The difficulties are multifaceted and include how hearing loss affects the psyche, how we perceive ourselves, and how others perceive us.

Lotte identified a psychological process that people with hearing loss experience. We feel alone in the world; our hearing loss prevents us from engaging and communicating with others and yet our human nature is to belong, be with others and socialize. Research shows that on average, it takes about seven years to acknowledge a hearing loss.

The journey is even longer to learn how to create a good life.

Lotte has written two books, *WHAT?* and *WHAT THEN?* Both books are written in Danish, though she expects soon to have them translated into English. She also has a website, again in Danish, called [www.earvision.dk](http://www.earvision.dk).

How do we have a good life with a hearing loss? Lotte's strategies include, self development and exploration; develop communication strategies; build self-confidence in order to talk about our needs; demonstrate to others that we can have a good life with a hearing loss; and find ways to normalize hearing loss.

Talking about our experiences and needs is the first step. Make it normal to have a hearing loss!

Margaret Homer

## Finding A Cellphone That You Can Use

Brenda Battat (Hearing Loss Association of America), and Scott Kelly (Engineer with Motorola) conducted a workshop on cellphones at the CHHA/IFHOH Congress. It reflected work done in the United States, so the technical information and standards (ANSI C63.19) may be applicable to Canada, but not to European or other countries.



Cell phones that are compliant with the U.S. Hearing Aid Compatibility Act (HAC) are marked on the package with "M" or "T" ratings to reflect how the wireless device will work with the hearing aid in microphone mode ("M") and in telecoil mode ("T"). Only phones that are tested and meet the minimum rating for HAC, "M3" or "T3," and higher will be labeled. If you see an "M3," "M4," "T3" or "T4" on the box, then the phone has been designated as HAC-compliant. The higher the "M" rating on the phone, the more likely it is you will be able to use the phone with your hearing aid on the microphone setting. The higher the "T" rating, the more likely you will be able to use the phone with your hearing aid on the telecoil setting.

Flip-open cellphones have less interference than the flat cellphones, due to the greater distance from the microphone and speaker. Backlighting in the cellphone can also be a source of interference with the T-coil. Bigger screens and the casing of the phones also presents challenges for the engineers to reduce interference. The Motorola website has different examples of interference you would hear in your hearing aid with different systems.

Tips for buying a phone:

- 1) Test in the store. Visit a full-service store owned and operated by a service provider and ask for a live phone to try. Test for interference and volume. If you normally use T-Switch, try the microphone setting, and vice versa. You may be surprised at the results.
- 2) Find out the length of trial period at home and in different situations you normally find yourself in. Really put the phone through its paces.
- 3) Know the conditions of the return policy. Keep all packaging and inserts.
- 4) Check the manufacturer's websites, and carrier's website for ratings, features and information.
- 5) Check 3<sup>rd</sup> party websites:
  1. [www.accesswireless.org](http://www.accesswireless.org) (good detailed information about hearing aid accessibility)
  2. [www.phonescoop.com](http://www.phonescoop.com) (good reviews and ratings of all cell phones listed by manufacturer)



Information in this article was supplemented with concise information provided by [AccessWireless.org](http://AccessWireless.org)

Terri Walker

# ***Unleash your Potential in the Workplace***

from a CHHA/IFHOH Congress Workshop, by Margaret Homer

## **Become a Hero, by Michael Currie**

Michael was born with a bilateral profound hearing loss and wears a cochlear implant. He has a Bachelor of Arts Degree and is presently attending the University of British Columbia to obtain prerequisites for a Master of Audiology. He works full-time on the trading floor of Powerex as a desktop and network specialist, and is a member of CHHA-BC Board and CHHA, Vancouver Branch.

Michael attributes his success from inspiring stories of other's with disabilities. A friend, Nora, is a young woman who completed her

Bachelor of Social Work despite her hearing loss and being born without elbows; and Stephen O'Keefe, a well-known Canadian lawyer and stand-up comic who is deaf.

As Michael says, "They have inspired me to accomplish great things."

There is a lot to overcome with a handicap, and there are plenty of negative beliefs about people with disabilities. He spoke about how he became a lifeguard despite his hearing loss, "90% of people who are drowning are under water and can't call for help!" For him it was a

matter of using creativity to achieve his goal. He found an instructor who became his mentor and helped him present his case for becoming a lifeguard.

Michael also advocates for taking advantage of communication systems and technology, such as computers and assistive listening devices.

We all have the potential to achieve great things; dream and set goals; find inspiration in other's achievements and use mentors!

## **The Workplace – 2008 and Beyond, by Dean Olson**

Dean uses a cochlear implant in his left ear and a hearing aid in his right. He has worked in telecommunications, health, computer systems training, and space manufacturing. He has completed a Bachelor's Degree in English, an MBA in Management Information Systems, and has a teaching certificate in high school language arts.

Dean attributes his success in the workplace to self-knowledge:

know what you can (and can't) do.

He points out that there are many workplace challenges, such as phones and conference calls; and dynamics, such as cubicles, multitasking and alarm systems, that affect our ability to perform.

However, he also notes that with today's technology, people with hearing loss can adapt and excel in the workplace.

Some suggestions include: adapt the workplace to meet your needs;

make phone calls in the morning when you are more alert and energized; get meeting agendas ahead of time; organize CART for a large meeting; utilize assistive listening devices; ensure that the environment is favourable for hearing; make use of education and training; coach others on your needs; and be prepared to ask and advocate for your needs.

## **Improving Communication Outcomes, by Debbie**

Debbie experienced progressive hearing loss from the age of 18. In her late 30's she received a cochlear implant. She has worked 27 years for the City of Ottawa and is the supervisor of administrative support for transit operations.

Debbie said it is important to learn how to make the most use of your listening devices, whether a cochlear implant or hearing aids, and she gave some strategies to make the most use of communication.

Instruct the speaker to what you need (look at me, get their attention,

repeat, talk slower, speak louder but don't yell).

Change how the message is delivered (rephrase rather than repeat, identify key words, repeat what you heard then ask for the rest that you missed, be specific – don't just say "what?").

Be aware of the communication environment (lighting so that you can see faces, remove obstruction, avoid noisy areas/high traffic areas, sit against a wall in a restaurant, use a round table, ask for a quiet area.)

Focus your efforts to succeed in

order to obtain the message being communicated (know the context, topic, key words, and then fill in the blanks.)

Remember the rules of conversation (share interests, take turns, be relevant to the topic, and provide information to the conversation.)

To help improve one's enunciation and listening skills, Debbie suggested the website [www.hearingjourney.com](http://www.hearingjourney.com) (the listening room), and to read out loud and listen to music.