



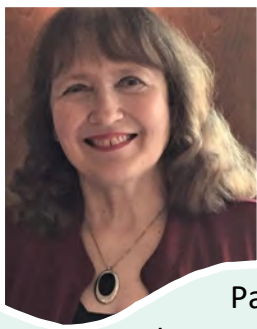
# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

ISSUE 21, June 2019

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## The Loop Newsletter



### Message from the President

*A message from Dr. Ruth Warick, President of the CHHA—BC Chapter*

It is my honor and pleasure to assume the mantle of President of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, BC Chapter, following in the footsteps of our immediate Past President Dr. Marilyn Dahl. It is daunting to follow in the footsteps of this highly decorated and esteemed colleague and friend, but Marilyn has created the pathway that makes it possible to attempt to do so.

I am also fortunate to be supported by a collegial and committed Board of Directors: Jerry Gosling, Vice-President; Gael Hannan, Secretary; Mike Phelan, Treasurer, and Jessica Niemela, Member at Large. We have already met as a Board and have exciting plans for the future.

I am also grateful to have the support of our three experienced staff members in the coming months: Viviana Chiorean, Stephanie Bryant and Courtney Walliser. Their dedication to CHHA BC was recognized at our Annual General meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Accessibility legislation was a dominant theme at the conference preceding our AGM in May. The Honourable Shane Simpson shared his Government's plans to bring in provincial accessibility legislation within a year. He also spoke about BC's Poverty Reduction Strategy, *TogetherBC*. He emphasized that equity and inclusion are at the heart of the foregoing two priorities of his Ministry. He entertained many questions from our members in a lively exchange and invited us to be in further contact with him.

CHHA National Executive Director Chris Sutton spoke about federal legislation at our AGM and urged us to join in a national petition to ensure that Bill C-81: An Accessible Canada Act sees the light of day. We are pleased that it received the necessary support from the Senate and House of Commons and is on its way to gaining Royal Assent to become part of the Canadian legal framework. **(Continued on page 2)**



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

**(Continued from page 1)** It will be a priority for CHHA BC to participate in the process of building accessibility legislation in BC. Thank you to Teresa Hemsing for representing us at a Forum held by Minister Simpson on June 3<sup>rd</sup>; her report is on page 4 of this issue. It is also a priority to keep abreast of the implementation of federal accessibility legislation and to support CHHA National in providing oversight of its impact on the hard of hearing community. I emphasized this goal several times when attending the CHHA National Conference in Montreal May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>.

At the CHHA National Conference, our Online Mentoring Program was awarded the Bette Moulton Award for the Branch or Chapter which contributes the most innovative idea, significant event or outstanding achievement which benefits hard of hearing persons. Well done to all of those involved in CHHA BC and CHHA Vancouver, and a special thanks to Dr. Marilyn Dahl for her leadership in establishing the program.

Major tasks ahead for your new Board will be to develop an operational strategic plan to guide actions in the coming two years of its mandate. We have discussed issues related to hearing aids, cochlear implants, assistive technology, and the importance of the telecoil. We want to grow our membership in creative ways by making it easier for hard of hearing persons to get together in different communities. And, we need to ensure for our financial stability and implement an effective transition to new facilities in Vancouver by the end of the year.

Please share with us your ideas and thoughts for our operational strategic plan by dropping a line to [president@chha-bc.org](mailto:president@chha-bc.org). We would love to hear from you before July 15<sup>th</sup> so that we have your feedback before our next board meeting.

With warmest wishes,

Dr. Ruth Warick  
President, CHHA BC



CHHA Vancouver sponsored several youth to attend the National Conference: (left to right) Rod McLeod, Rosalind Ho (Young Adult Rep), Ruth Warick (CHHA Vancouver Rep), Jessica Niemela and Clovis Chung.



Receiving the Award for the Online Mentoring Program from CHHA BC and CHHA Vancouver were (left to right) Ruth Warick, Rosalind Ho, Gael Hannan and Jessica Niemela.



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

## Report on the CHHA-BC AGM

CHHA-BC's Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at the BC Family Hearing Resource Society in Surrey. As this was an election year for the Board of Directors, the Nominating Committee provided attendees with a list of candidates. The following candidates stood unopposed and were acclaimed as the new Board of Directors: Ruth Warick (President), Jerry Gosling (Vice-President), Mike Phelan (Treasurer), Gael Hannan (Secretary), and Jessica Niemela (Member-at-Large). Marilyn Dahl, who completed her second 3-year term as President, will act as Past-President.

It was also announced that the CHHA-BC Resource Centre, currently located in Chilliwack, will be moving to Vancouver by November of this year. Office space has been secured in the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's *Centre for Excellence* which is presently under construction. The Board of Directors thanked CHHA-BC staff for their work over the years and provided each with a gift of appreciation.

We were very pleased to have two guest speakers with us for the day: the Honorable Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and Christopher Sutton, National Executive Director of CHHA. Both speakers addressed the topic of accessibility legislation, with Minister Simpson bringing updates at the provincial level and Christopher sharing progress that had been made at the federal level.



CHHA-BC Staff receive gifts of appreciation. From left: Stephanie, Viviana, and Courtney.

Provincial accessibility legislation is in the beginning stages of development with preliminary discussions held in December 2018; CHHA-BC's Past-President, Marilyn Dahl, was a participant in these discussions.



Minister Shane Simpson speaks about BC accessibility legislation.

A working document is being prepared that will address objectives for the legislation, its development, and its implementation. Minister Simpson shared his belief that successful legislation requires input from individuals with lived experience; he referenced the principle of "nothing about us without us," meaning that the individuals whom the legislation seeks to support should have the opportunity to share ideas and be involved in its development. Consultations with disability communities will continue in the coming months and Minister Simpson welcomed the participation of the hard of hearing community.

Christopher Sutton shared CHHA National's efforts to ensure the passing of Bill C-81: The Accessible Canada Act. This Act aims to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility wherever Canadians interact with areas under federal jurisdiction. CHHA has been working closely with its partners in the disability community to provide recommendations on this legislation and to ensure the needs of the hard of hearing community are recognized. **(Continued on page 4)**





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**(Continued from page 3)** Christopher addressed the Senate Committee at the beginning of May, urging the government to swiftly pass Bill C-81 and to work with CHHA and the newly formed Hearing Health Alliance of Canada to develop a National Hearing Health Strategy. On May 29<sup>th</sup>, Bill C-81 passed in the House of Commons with unanimous support! There is still much work to be done in order to develop standards and implement the Act, but this is a great step towards increased accessibility for all Canadians.

We extend our thanks to Minister Simpson and to Christopher Sutton for taking the time to present, and to all those who attended the CHHA-BC AGM!



From left: Charles Laszlo, CHHA founding president; Rosalind Ho, National board member; Christopher Sutton, National Executive Director; & Ruth Warick, President of CHHA-BC.



## Accessibility Stakeholder Roundtable: Input towards Accessibility Legislation in BC

*Contributed by Teresa Hemsing, Member of CHHA-BC*

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, I attended an Accessibility Stakeholder Roundtable on behalf of Dr. Ruth Warick. Held at Vancouver's Creekside Community Recreation Centre, this event followed up on a Dec. 2018 roundtable (see Feb. 2019 issue of The Loop Newsletter).

A guest speaker at CHHA-BC's AGM in May, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction Shane Simpson, along with Deputy Minister Dan Galbraith, Accessibility Secretariat Executive Lead Sam Turcott and staff facilitated the roundtable.

Over 20 representatives of stakeholder organizations were invited. Groups included Disability Alliance BC, Inclusion BC, Community Living BC, Rick Hansen Foundation, CNIB, BC Aboriginal Network Disability Society (BCANDS), Spinal Cord Injury BC, Special Olympics BC, as well as UBCM, Chamber of Commerce, BC Fed, and other blind and deaf organizations.

Representatives gave verbal feedback on three general areas: Consultation, Standards, and Compliance.

- Minister Simpson raised the question of how do we engage other people in our disability community (in our case, hearing loss) with the process of accessibility legislation who are not involved in our organization. He also observed that there seemed to be a lack of response to the new federal accessibility legislation, the *Accessible Canada Act*.
- Feedback about the development of standards was shared. The minister commented that the standards board perhaps would have 6-7 people.
- Incentives, not punitive measures, are preferred to gain compliance to the legislation. Government experience with smoking legislation shows that a variety of different tools (e.g., policy, fines, education) are available. **(Continued on page 5)**



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**(Continued from page 4)** The roundtable ended with the Minister announcing the timeline for consultation would continue this year, followed by legislation next year, then the building of public awareness. The strategy will be like that of the Poverty Reduction strategy *TogetherBC* created by the Ministry. A framework document is being created by the Accessibility Secretariat staff.

## Building Accessibility in BC – Bit by Bit

BC recently held its second annual AccessAbility Week, May 26 to June 1, 2019. The event celebrates diversity and inclusion, and recognizes the importance of accessibility. To kick it off, on May 27<sup>th</sup>, the Hon. Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction announced \$500,000 in funding for community projects that improve accessibility.

This is the second year that these grants are being made available. Last year, 16 community projects received funding for projects that will be completed by the end of this year. The goal is to remove barriers to enable people with disabilities to participate fully in their communities. The funds will be distributed through grants administered by Disability Alliance BC (DABC) and a call for proposals will be posted on the DABC website in summer 2019; grants will be awarded by the end of the year.

Representatives from many disability groups took part in the event held on and near the steps of the legislature that included an ice cream social and wheelchair basketball. People with hearing loss were represented by Island Deaf & Hard of Hearing Centre, the Western Institute for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Gael Hannan of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - BC Chapter.



Gael Hannan and Minister Simpson.



Minister Simpson (middle) announces accessibility funding.

Gael and Shane Simpson are pictured here (left), with Gael holding her MiniMic2 transmitter that Minister Simpson and other speakers passed between them when speaking. Gael had requested captioning but was advised that a sign language interpreter would be present and hopefully that would meet her needs?

It wouldn't – and it was a positive learning experience for the Ministry's communications staff when they tried to book a captioner only to find that none were available. Gael received an apology and an invitation to sit in the front row to assist with speechreading, as well as assurance that the speakers were happy to use the MiniMic during the formal part of the event. Thank you, Minister Simpson, we look forward to improved accessibility laws and practices going forward.





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## Are You Too Tired to Hear Well?

*By Gael Hannan —writer, humorist, advocate, and Secretary on the CHHA-BC Board*

Boy, am I tired. In fact, I'm tired-er than tired. I just returned from a fabulous three-week trip to New Zealand with the Hearing Husband. The only downside was the trip home which involved three flights over 24 hours. And that kind of time and energy commitment is guaranteed to not only drain you of physical energy, but of the brain's ability to do what it's supposed to do. When I'm tired, I don't think as clearly or focus as well as I do when my energy is its normal zippety-doo-dah self.

In spite of good hearing technology, my brain was mucking up my conversations. It started at 4:30am when it was time to go to the airport; I insisted to the nice front desk fellow that we were checking out of room 102. Luckily, the Hearing Husband overhead and corrected me. Room 102 was our previous hotel in New Zealand. At the busy Sydney airport, a transit stop on our flights home, I had trouble ordering a coffee because I couldn't understand the server, even though she seemed to speak clearly, but she had an accent and the airport was vibrating with noise. There were no hearing issues on the 14-hour flight to Vancouver, because the Hearing Husband and I tried to sleep rather than speak, and I watched films with subtitling. I'm very good at imagining the sounds.



Ask almost any person with hearing loss and they will tell you (and if they don't, I'm telling you now):

1. It takes energy to hear.
2. Energy drains when you're focusing on hearing and speechreading and understanding for long periods of time. There's even a term for this: auditory fatigue.
3. Using hearing technology reduces the stress and energy commitment involved in listening and hearing.
4. At the end of a long day, many people with hearing loss tear off their hearing aid(s) or cochlear implant sound processor for some peace and (guaranteed) quiet. Others hang in to the bitter end, aka bedtime.

We need energy to start our hearing-day and we may not have much left at the end it. In [Chelle Wyatt's article](#) for [hearinghealthmatters.org](#), she writes: *Listening takes effort. We have to pull all the components together, including our hearing, to communicate properly. We must be able to understand language, generate an appropriate response and keep the conversation going back and forth. 'Hearing' people can do this while multitasking (washing the dishes, watching TV) but for people with hearing loss, listening requires more focus and effort, because we're also visually decoding the message with speechreading and quickly trying to fill in blank spots in words and conversations. (Continued on page 7)*



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**(Continued from page 6)** When we avoid some activities such as social events, it's often because we simply don't have the energy or the focus needed to hear when playing cards with friends or going out for a restaurant dinner. Noisy environments sap even more of our mental strength, as we try to speechread and follow conversations in a contest that we are doomed to lose. How do we deal with this? Classic advice to people with hearing loss has been to get sufficient sleep and be well rested, reduce stress, and to take breaks as needed in energy-sapping listening environments. To these general but not-always-achievable goals, let's add:

- Choose positive communication environments with adequate light and a minimum of noise, when possible. If you know a restaurant is dark and noisy, simply don't go there – choose a better venue.
- Limit dinners with friends/family to between two and six people, preferably seated at a round table for easier communication.
- Be open about your hearing loss needs – there is no substitute for this guideline. By being honest, you automatically reduce your listening efforts by sharing responsibility for good communication with the other person or people.
- It really does help to exercise your eyeballs to give them a break from so much staring. Here are four common ways to reduce eye strain that are taught in speechreading classes and are summarized in [this article from Yoga International](#): palming, eyeball rolling, focus shifting and distance gazing.

Do you have anything more to add to this list? Let me know. In the meantime, as you can see by the above picture, my eyes need to close for a while so I can get rid of jet lag.

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## Hard of Hearing/Late-Deafened Endowment Fund

**Please consider making a donation to CHHA-BC's Hard of Hearing/Late-Deafened Endowment Fund.** This fund provides steady income and enables us to advance our mission over the long-term. In years where donations are down or government funding is reduced, income from this fund will still arrive, enabling CHHA-BC to continue providing programs and services to hard of hearing individuals province-wide. To make a donation, please visit: <https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/chhabc>

*Thank you for your support!*



# Canadian Hard of Hearing Association British Columbia Chapter

## Upcoming Events

- **Saturday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019** — The CHHA Youth Peer Support Program will be hosting its first BC Buddies event of the summer at the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre in Surrey! The goal of the buddies program is to connect deaf and hard of hearing students ages 10-15 and build a sense of community. For details and to register, visit: <https://www.chha-bc.org/youthpsp/bc-buddies/>
- **July and August** — CHHA Abbotsford Branch will be offering a speechreading course in Abbotsford during the months of July and August. The first class will be on Wednesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10am. Classes will run about 90 minutes and be held each Wednesday. The cost for the complete course is \$50. For further information, please contact speechreading instructor Jerry Gosling at 604-864-2916.
- **Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019** — The CHHA Youth Peer Support Program will be hosting a Summer Fun Picnic Get-Together at Confederation Park in Burnaby! For details and to register, visit: <https://www.chha-bc.org/youthpsp/bc-buddies/>
- **Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019** — CHHA Vancouver's Annual Walk2Hear will be held at Jericho Beach Park in Vancouver at 1 pm. More details to come!
- **September 27<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019** — CHHA BC Youth Peer Support Program invites deaf and hard of hearing youth ages 5 to 17, along with their parents and siblings, to Camp Jubilee for their Family Weekend Camp! For details and to register by June 30<sup>th</sup>, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2W7ExLs>



Want to stay up-to-date on events happening near you?  
**Follow CHHA-BC on Facebook and Twitter!**  
(Click the icons to visit our pages)

## *Connect with a local branch!*

<b>Abbotsford Branch</b> Email: <a href="mailto:abbotsfordretiree@gmail.com">abbotsfordretiree@gmail.com</a>	<b>HEAR Branch (Coquitlam)</b> Email: <a href="mailto:anna.r.bernard@gmail.com">anna.r.bernard@gmail.com</a>
<b>CHHA BC Youth Peer Support Program</b> Email: <a href="mailto:chhabcypsp@gmail.com">chhabcypsp@gmail.com</a> Website: <a href="http://www.chha-bc.org/youthpsp/">http://www.chha-bc.org/youthpsp/</a>	<b>North Shore Branch</b> Email: <a href="mailto:chha_nsb@telus.net">chha_nsb@telus.net</a> Website: <a href="http://www.chha-nsb.com/">http://www.chha-nsb.com/</a>
<b>Comox Valley Branch</b> Email: <a href="mailto:cvhardofhearing@gmail.com">cvhardofhearing@gmail.com</a>	<b>Vancouver Branch</b> Email: <a href="mailto:chhavancouver@gmail.com">chhavancouver@gmail.com</a>





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## Articles & Resources

### Hearing Loss with Rheumatoid Arthritis

by Marianna Paulson (originally appearing on HealthCentral.com )

*“Does rheumatoid arthritis (RA) affect hearing? The data is contradictory. A review of studies on hearing loss in people with RA found that they are at a higher risk of hearing impairment. ‘In spite of wide diversity regarding published results, it is obvious that hearing impairment in RA is a multifactorial disease, since it can be affected by environmental factors (e.g. smoking), and disease characteristics (e.g. rheumatoid nodule), as well as patients’ characteristic (e.g. age)’...”*

**READ MORE:** <https://bit.ly/2W4RUba>

### An Uneasy Truce with Tinnitus

by Gael Hannan (taken from Hearing Health Matters: The Better Hearing Consumer)

*“We blame IT on our hearing loss. On stress. On overexposure to loud noise. On medications. On illness or disease. On the treatments for illness. On pregnancy. On getting older. On we-haven’t-got-a-clue! The IT is Tinnitus, or “T” as many sufferers call it, not wanting to legitimize it by giving it a name. There are many causes of “T”, but mostly it seems that scientists aren’t quite sure how it works, and therefore can’t give us a cure. Like the common cold, only much worse...”*

**READ MORE:** <https://bit.ly/2lqh6Ga>

### The Next Best Thing in Speech to Text Apps

by Shari Eberts (taken from LivingWithHearingLoss.com)

*“I love captions and look for them everywhere I go — even when they are not there. Last week at my daughter’s high school play, my eyes would involuntarily slide to the side looking for the caption screen anytime I missed some of the dialogue. The play was not captioned, but my reflex to look for the text anyway made me laugh. So when I read about the new Google Live Transcribe app (available only on Android so far) I was eager to try it...”* **READ MORE:** <https://bit.ly/2IUDl6g>

### The Relationship Between Hearing Loss and Dementia

by Max Gottlieb (taken from Hearing Health Matters)

*“Over the past few years, multiple studies have found a link between hearing loss and an increased risk for dementia. Whether it’s a causational or correlational relationship is still being researched, but the relationship is there. Across all studies, people with hearing loss showed greater signs of cognitive decline. There are three main reasons hearing loss could be linked to dementia—social isolation, an uneven strain on the brain’s cognitive resources, and a change in the brain’s natural function...”*

**READ MORE:** <https://bit.ly/2lF5u1M>