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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Lee Ramsdell, President

Happy New Year to all our members! I am looking forward to warmer temperatures and a few events this coming year. The National AGM will be virtual once again so anyone planning to attend will have to do so on their computer or other digital device.

Last August CHHA Edmonton held a 50-50 draw for the Blues Festival and this was a very successful event as it really raised our exposure as well as brought in some funds. We have been partnering up with the Leduc Rotary Club and this year we will be doing more events with them. Please watch for future emails to help volunteer- next Blues Festival will be Aug. 25-27th and the Air Show which we also hope to participate in will be, Aug. 5th and 6th. Please Mark your calendars now!!

As mentioned in the last newsletter, this will be my last year as President as I have been honored to hold this position for the past 9 years. I will still be involved with CHHA as I will serve as Past President to help guide the incoming president and will still provide technical support for barrier free hearing solutions. This is a wonderful opportunity for someone to step up and take on this challenge. The rewards are plenty! Please drop me a line if you are interested, I would be happy to discuss this with you.

I am pleased to inform everyone that we have installed a number of hearing loops into the City Garden Market in the Ice District, don't forget to drop by and thank them for providing communication access for you!! AND, if you know of a place that can benefit from loops...give them our number.

I look forward to seeing you all at our in-person AGM and social get together this May. Watch for invites to this "Special" event!

Lee

OFFICE NEWS

by Cindy Gordon Program Director

Its hard to believe that it is once again a New Year!

We have so much to look forward to this year...we can all affect change. Are you looking for a new commitment, do you have new ideas, want to become active, want to learn more ?? Then look no further.... CHHA-Ed is looking for help with many activities...and we have programs as well for you. Let this be the year to improve yourself, your hearing and maybe even help others in the hearing loss community.

Check out our website for programs, come out to a meeting or workshop, consider being on our board, share your ideas, help with the golf tournament, volunteer for the Casino, work at the Blues Festival or Air show selling 50/50's, gain understanding of hearing loss and acquire new friendships along the way... there is something here for you!!

For those of you with a CI or thinking about getting one...Check out our new Cochlear Implant group-meeting every second month. (Next one is March) This is the place to ask questions and help each other adjust and be better CI wearers- if you want on the mail list, please let me know!

We have also started an "Alberta Buddies Program"-pairing children with young adult mentors doing fun activities together and learning to understand hearing loss better, so they have a brighter future! If interested in this, please drop me a line.

I am excited to make 2023 the year to improve CHHA-Ed's presence in the community and impact change. Where do we start and who will help us?

I'd love to hear from you! Together we can make a difference!!

Send me an email at cindy@chha-ed.com

Cindy Gordon

Program Director



BEHIND THE SCENES AT CHHA-ED

Ryan Gordon is the unofficial marketing department, and integral to CHHA-Ed promotions.

Ryan has used his creative skills to help CHHA-Ed as needed with various marketing and promotional causes. He has aided CHHA-Ed in activities like, the look of the website, CHHA-Ed brochures, the Annual Golf Tournament, hospital kits, and most recently creating a banner for the loop system at Loblaw's Ice District.

Ryan started his involvement with CHHA-Ed in 2008 as a board member for 13 years, a position he held until 2021. It was soon realized that Ryan had skills he could offer to the organization that was desperately needed. In 2013, Ryan was awarded **The Winnifred C. Cory Award of Merit** that recognizes a hearing member of CHHA who has contributed outstanding service to the work of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association at the National, Chapter (provincial/territorial) or Branch level.

Ryan has been married to his wife Merrina for 10 years and has two beautiful daughters, age 6 and 3. He currently manages Pro Hockey Life at Mayfield Common. His store's dedication to raising donations for Jumpstart, easily eclipses all other stores nationally year after year for their contributions. Ryan has been recognized by Canadian Tire Corporation as well as Inclusion Alberta for his employment of persons with disabilities, a passion he has had his whole life.

Ryan, goes above and beyond his role as a volunteer, often making great suggestions and offering ideas. We could not manage without his expertise and devotion of time.

Thank you, Ryan!



CHHA Members Honored

Marilyn Kingdon

Athabasca University -2022 Alumni Award Winner

After experiencing hearing loss while attending college, Marilyn Kingdon was driven to support others experiencing the same. Her efforts have earned her the **2022 Volunteer Service Award**.

If you ask any dedicated volunteer what they get out of the experience, you're likely to hear that the volunteer gains more than the organization they're helping.

For Marilyn Kingdon ([Bachelor of Professional Arts '17](#)), Athabasca University's 2022 winner, this is especially true. Although she has volunteered with many different organizations, much of her work has been with the [Canadian Hard of Hearing Association](#) (CHHA)—a cause that hits close to home.

"The most important thing you have to give is your gift of time," said Marilyn.

Marilyn was CHHA National's President and CHHA-Ed's President for many years.



Cindy Gordon

Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal

On December 10, 2022, Cindy Gordon, CHHA-Ed's Executive Director, received the Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal. The medal recognizes outstanding service from Albertans, who like the Queen, dedicated themselves to family community and the country. It has only been presented in 1967, 1977, 1992, 2001, 2012 and now.

Cindy began her career in 1980 as a Rehabilitation Practitioner working in the field of multiple disabilities. After 10 years in this field, she has devoted the rest of her career, these past 30 years to those who have hearing loss. Having a hearing loss most of her life, she is fully aware of the discrimination and barriers to those with hearing challenges and has been fully committed to the well-being, safety, and health concerns for this group. Cindy has sat on many boards and maintains many relations with other agencies in the cross-disability field.



CHHA-ED HEARING ASSISTANCE FUND

The Hearing Assistance fund endeavors to assist disadvantaged people with hearing loss by making funds available to purchase hearing aids, implants, and devices, or to repair still-viable hearing aids. A strong set of criteria has been established to ensure financial need. Eligible candidates must:

- Require financial assistance
- Be of age 19 or over
- Live in Edmonton/North of Central Alberta



All donations to CHHA-Edmonton for the Hearing Assistance Fund are appreciated!

Please visit the CHHA-Ed Hearing Assistance Fund page for more information, at <https://www.chha-ed.com/assistance/hearing-aid-assistance-fund/>.

Download the application form at <https://www.chha-ed.com/wp-content/uploads/Forms/2020-HAF-BLANK-APPLICATION-FORM.pdf>

CHHA-Ed Programs and Events

- CHHA-Ed will reinstate our in-person programs this year. We have already had classes in **Speech reading**, **Conversational ASL** and the **Cochlear Support Group**.
- **Your Third Ear** sessions will start on March 14th look for all classes posted on our website at www.chha-ed.com
- CHHA-Ed Annual Golf Tournament June 13, 2023, at THE Links in Spruce Grove
- **CHHA National Conference** May 31-June 02, 2023...followed by **CHHA-Ed AGM**
- Come join us at the JFC Center to participate together.... Let's make a day of it!
- **50/50 Fundraisers in August**

Contact CHHA office for more information 780-428-6622 or info@chha-ed.com

Finally! Live Captions on iPhone

Apple's Live Captions Still in Beta

Like Android's Live Transcribe, Live Captions provides auto-captioning for any audio content. This includes FaceTime calls, streaming video, or in-person conversations. So far, it is only available in English.

When not in use, it retreats to the background, residing on the screen as a small circle you can move around with your finger to keep it out of the way. To use captioning, click on the circle and it will expand to a rectangle that displays a few lines of text. Expand it again to fill the full screen with text.

To caption sounds that originate outside the device, like for an in-person conversation, press the microphone button, or leave it off to caption sound that originates from the phone itself like streaming media or phone calls.

Live Captions can also be paused to preserve battery life.

***How to Activate Live Captions**

To [turn on Live Captions](#), go to *Settings*, then *Accessibility*. Under Hearing, click on Live Captions (Beta).

Here you have the option to turn on Live Captions for all audio content or to select it only for FaceTime calls and/or [RTT](#) (real-time-text).

If you select Live Captions generally, a small opaque circle will live on your home screen so you can pull up the captions as needed. This is what my son noticed on my screen. Under Appearance you can set the size and color of the captions as well as the opacity of the small circle on your home screen.

Will you give Live Captioning a try?

New Cochlear Center Will Test Whether Treating Age-Related Hearing Loss Can Delay Dementia

[Cochlear Center for Hearing and Public Health](#), this is a new Center planning to recruit some 850 seniors for the [Aging and Cognitive Health Evaluation in Elders \(ACHIEVE\) study](#), a three-year randomized control trial in which half of the participants will get hearing-loss care and the rest more generalized counseling on healthy aging.

Current thinking suggests multiple ways untreated hearing loss can contribute to dementia. One of the more straightforward ways is through social isolation, as those who find it challenging to follow conversations and participate in group activities begin to keep to themselves, forgoing book club meetings or bingo nights, for example. Not only are such people at risk for depression, but the reduced stimulation may lead to brain atrophy—the “use it or lose it” theory of brain health. Studies reveal that hearing loss was associated with an increased risk of institutionalization and hospitalization, an increased risk for dementia and increased health care costs.

Epidemiology Professor Emeritus [Michel Ibrahim, MD, PhD, MPH](#), experienced this “withdrawing” phenomenon firsthand. He experienced hearing loss in his mid-50s, but before he fully acknowledged and understood his condition—which was ultimately successfully treated with a cochlear implant—he modified his behavior. “For a period of several years, I was afraid to engage in social occasions because I had a hard time following conversations in groups,” he says. “I really started isolating myself.” Dementia, arguably for the next 50 years dementia is the biggest problem facing public health.

The cognitive load theory offers another explanation for the connection between hearing loss and dementia, suggesting that the brain can be overworked by the demands of understanding poor aural input, to the detriment of other mental activities. “When sound goes in to the ear, it’s encoded into a signal that goes up to the brain where it’s decoded—into a word, for example,” explains Jennifer Anne Deal, PhD ’13, MHS ’07, an assistant scientist in Epidemiology and at the School of Medicine who studies aging and cognitive decline. “So, typically, what happens when someone has hearing loss is that the sound isn’t accurately encoded and the ear sends a garbled signal to the brain. And because the brain has to work harder to process the signal, we think that means there are fewer brain resources for other functions, such as making a memory.

Reasons hearing aids are not worn by more older adults include a lack of awareness of how helpful they can be, the hassles of the multiple audiologist visits that can be required to acquire them, and the social stigma associated with wearing them. Low-income, minority seniors have some of the lowest rates of hearing aid use.

By Brennen Jensen

Why assistive technology should become a household term

As we age, it is common to experience functional limitations and changes in hearing, vision, mobility, or memory. Technology can be instrumental in helping us deal with these changes by supporting independent living, aging in place, and ultimately, health and longevity. Yet, something known as *assistive technology* (AT) is far from a household term in Canada.

AT encompasses everything from low-tech tools to complex digital devices and products that may be used at home, in the workplace, and in the community to provide solutions that reduce barriers and empower personal abilities. Examples include hearing aids, medication management systems, health/wellness devices, voice interfaces, specialized software, home, or vehicle modifications, and much more. I prefer to call it - *enabling technology* and even *tools of independence*. Inevitably, as we either get older or experience disabilities, many of us will need one or more assistive technology products or services.

It's also important to note that assistive technology also refers to the awareness, training, information, and technical support that is needed for the safe, effective provision and use of assistive products. It is an entire ecosystem.

An aging population creates a compelling argument for making assistive technology a priority. The World Health Organization (WHO) is drawing attention to the need. In its first ever Global Report on Assistive Technology, released in May 2022, the WHO states the issue “deserves greater attention now than ever before.” The report outlines recommendations to expand availability and access, raise awareness, and implement inclusion policies and an enabling environment.

During the launch of this historic report, the WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said:

“Assistive technology is a life changer ... Denying people access to these life-changing tools is not only an infringement of human rights, it's economically short-sighted. We call on all countries to fund and prioritize access to assistive technology and give everyone a chance to live up to their potential.”

While there are many gaps and barriers to the acquisition, provision, and information access to assistive technology in Canada, we must not lose sight of the fact that it is not a luxury. It has been shown to have a transformative impact on end users. And so, it is time to shed a brighter spotlight on this space and make AT a household term.

What we really need is holistically designed assistive technology programs that can serve both our aging populations and persons with disabilities. Recognizing this need and its tenfold return on investment will progressively propel us forward to support daily living needs, aging in place, reduce health care costs and hospital re-admissions, improve caregiver support, and contribute towards a better quality of life and wellbeing of users and their families. AT must not be viewed through a cost lens, it must be considered as a smart and sound socio-economic investment by all stakeholders, including funders and all levels of government.

Author Sheena Jaffer

**Check out CHHA National's website "E-Store" for assistive technology- 10% off for CHHA Members*

HEARING AIDS AVAILABLE

CHHA-Ed has graciously been gifted Hearing Aids over the years from generous donors. We have a large variety of types of hearing aids ready for the taking. If you're looking at getting a new aid or someone you know is looking for a replacement.

We still have a variety of **PHONES** and **HEARING ASSISTIVE DEVICES** should you need these items. Once again please contact the office for more information.

Contact the CHHA-Ed office for more information.

----- BECOME A MEMBER! ----- CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION – EDMONTON BRANCH

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*Membership is open to anyone who
is hard-of-hearing or interested in supporting
those who are hard-of-hearing!*

To become a member of the
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) and
**Canadian Hard of Hearing Association – Edmonton
(CHHA-ED)**, visit the CHHA website at:
www.chha.ca, or our website at www.chha-ed.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We appreciate and value the support of volunteers.
Please contact us if interested in volunteering for:

- Casinos
- Annual Golf Tournament committee
- Fundraisers
- Serving as a Board Member and/or on a committee