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Executive Director

The Communicator

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



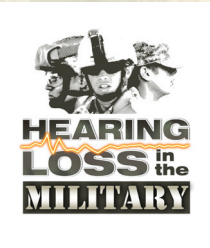
A newsletter surveying health, government and issues affecting Nebraskans.



HEARING LOSS in the MILITARY



On Sunday, April 10, 2011, a live broadcast on Hearing Loss in the Military was aired through NET Television. The first segment of the broadcast was an interactive session with Dr. Ron Lybarger, a disabled veteran himself and CEO of Resiliency Resources, Corporal Kyle Perez and his brother Derek. Corporal Perez, a Marine that was injured in Iraq, discussed how his injury happened and how he is coping with his hearing loss and tinnitus because of his injury.



More about Hearing Loss in the Military, Pg 4

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NCDHH Calendar of Upcoming Events

Additional information on the listed events can be found online at www.ncdhh.ne.gov/calendar.html

May

- 13, 1:00pm – 3:00pm, Sign Language Interpreter Review Board Meeting, Lincoln Medical Education Partnership, 4600 Valley Road, Classroom 4A, Traci Cooney, (800) 545-6244
- 14, 3:00pm – 5:00pm, Deaf for Equal Job Opportunity Forum, Heritage Presbyterian Church, 880 S. 35th street, Lincoln
- 17, 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Mental Health Advisory Meeting, Lincoln Medical Education Partnership, 4600 Valley Road, Classroom 4A, Peggy Williams, (800) 545-6244
- 19-20, Fifth Annual Brain Injury Conference, Ramada Kearney, 301 Second Ave., Kearney, Nancy Noha, (888) 806-6287
- 20-21, Introduction to Parent Leadership and Understanding Deaf-Blindness, Teresa Coonts, (402) 595-1810 or Teresa.coonts@nebraska.gov
- 21, Deaf for Equal Job Opportunity Forum, Omaha Association of the Deaf, 4050 Hillsdale Ave., Omaha
- 21, Pure Inspiration, Creations From the Hands of Children, Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, 724 S. 12th street, Omaha
- 24, 1:30pm - 2:30pm, North Platte Hearing Loss Support Group meeting, “Drugs and Hearing Loss”, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 5th and Willow, Donita Mains, (800) 545-6244
- 27, 10:30am - 11:30am, Omaha Hearing Loss Support Group meeting, “Drugs and Hearing Loss”, Dora Bingel Senior Center, 923 N. 38th, Beth Ellsworth, (800) 545-6244

June

- 7, Scottsbluff Hearing Loss Support Group meeting, “How the Brain Hears”, Scottsbluff State Office Complex, 4500 Ave. I, Donita Mains, (800) 545-6244
- 9, 5:00pm – 7:00pm NCDHH Town Hall meeting, Panhandle Office Complex, 4500 I, Scottsbluff, NE, Lori Burrage (800) 545-6244
- 10, 8:30am – 12:30pm, NCDHH Full Board Meeting, Panhandle Office Complex, 4500 I, Scottsbluff, NE, Lori Burrage (800) 545-6244
- 16, 1:30pm - 2:30 pm, Gothenburg Hearing Loss Support Group meeting, “How the Brain Hears”, Stone Hearth Estates, 110 20th Street, Donita Mains, (800) 545-6244
- 28, 1:30pm - 2:30pm, North Platte Hearing Loss Support Group meeting, “How the Brain Hears”, First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 5th and Willow, Donita Mains, (800) 545-6244
- 28 - 30, Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo Summer Day Camps for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children, to register, please call (402) 738-2092 or visit www.omahazoo.com

NCDHH Staff

Dr. Peter Seiler, Executive Director
Lori Burrage, Business Manager II
Traci Cooney, Staff Assistant II
Beth Ellsworth, Field Representative II
Janet Killam, Field Representative II
Donita Mains, Field Representative III
Ben Sparks, Public Information Officer
Norman Weverka, Field Representative III
Peggy Williams, Mental Health Specialist
Cindy Woldt, Staff Assistant II

SPRING



NCDHH Welcomes Two New Board Members



My name is Amy Kasch and I'm hard of hearing. I was born with the defect and was diagnosed at the age of seven. I went to Central Institute for the Deaf aka CID in St Louis, MO. for two years. I have two hearing children, Melissa and Jr. I work full time at Waterford at Miracle Hills where I'm a Food Service Director and manage the housekeeping dept. I've worked in Independent Living and Nursing Home fields for over 32 years.

I am a native Nebraskan, and have resided in Kearney for many years. I have worked as a professional journalist throughout the state, later becoming a faculty member at the University of Nebraska at Kearney more than 25 years ago. Throughout the years I have taught many courses in reporting and writing. Six years ago, I became the associate dean for graduate studies and research while continuing to teach two courses, media law and the theory and research class. My research interests include First Amendment and public policy issues, journalism history--especially women's contributions--and the effects of new technology on social and educational phenomena.

I am looking forward to working with and for the Commission as a recently appointed hard of hearing representative.

-Carol S. Lomicky, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research

Lincoln Fire and Rescue Captain Hatcher Receives Award for Fire Safety Program



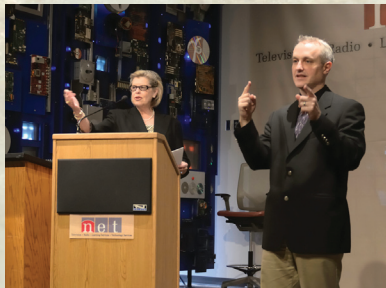
Captain Jeffrey Hatcher of Lincoln Fire and Rescue (LFR) received the Mayor's Award of Excellence for his work in providing accessible smoke alarms to deaf and hard of hearing citizens in Lincoln. Through his efforts nearly 200 homes now enjoy improved fire safety with specialized smoke alarm systems. Captain Hatcher researched programs and studies worldwide to select the most beneficial equipment available, submitted a grant and worked with his fire crews throughout Lincoln to install the new devices. Each home's structure is unique. With LFR's experience and training, each home was outfitted with the right amount of specialized equipment to meet any need or emergency.

Working in tandem with NCDHH's Norman Weverka and UNL's Dr. Ray, Captain Hatcher was able to identify and contact the deaf and hard of hearing communities. Through this program, LFR staff and Lincoln citizens were given the opportunity to interact in a non-emergency situation, learning how to adapt communication to reach a common goal, home fire safety.

Equipment is STILL available! For more information or to sign up, please call the Lincoln Fire and Rescue's Public Education line at (402) 441-8363 and leave a message.



HEARING LOSS in the MILITARY



Hearing Loss in the Military, one of the largest projects NCDHH has ever taken on, aired on April 10, 2011. The intent of the broadcast was to provide information to Armed Service Members and their families about agencies they can depend on for assistance here in Nebraska. The importance of the broadcast will be felt for years to come.

As Corporal Perez stated during the broadcast, "Marines are stubborn. We only like to depend on ourselves." Hopefully, through the broadcast, Service Members can feel they can depend on us as well. NCDHH understands the different levels of acceptance, from complete denial to acceptance of impacted hearing.

NCDHH was fortunate to have assistance in contacting Corporal Perez through the Veterans Administration and Transition Assistance. His level of acceptance is rare. He exemplifies the ability to understand what has happened to a person, physically and emotionally, and seek assistance.

Other Armed Service Members have different levels of acceptance of their hearing loss. Fifteen minutes before the broadcast was to begin, Corporal Perez skillfully noticed a fellow veteran arrive and leave anxiously. Corporal Perez followed him outside, recognizing a comrade who might need a little help. The young veteran was unable to attend the live broadcast because his experiences were too recent and anxiety overtook him. ...but he made the first step. We would like to encourage others to take that first step as well.

Yet other Armed Service Members are coping in silence and frustration, opting not to seek help.

Service induced hearing loss is common among all branches of the Services. You or your loved ones do not need to feel the isolation that can come with sudden changes in hearing.

That isolation typically stems from a lack of understanding in the changes in communication that need to take place. NCDHH understands these changes that you and your loved ones will face. Staff at NCDHH can help make daily life less stressful by offering communication suggestions and technology.



As of December 2010, 42% of the returning combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, that seek care at the VA, have experienced hearing problems or hearing loss. This is the third highest diagnosed problem of returning veterans.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) detonate at decibel levels of 140dBA+ which is loud enough to immediately leave soldiers with a painful – and constant – reminder of their service.

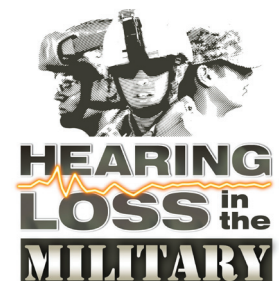
According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 2009 there were over 760,000 veterans receiving service-connected tinnitus disability.

At the current rate of increase, service-connected disability payments to veterans with tinnitus by the VA will increase to over \$2.26 billion by 2014.

At the current rate of increase, the number of veterans service-connected for tinnitus will increase to over 1.5 million by 2014.

Tinnitus is often a debilitating condition that may interfere with a patient's concentration, sleep, or sense of well-being. In some cases, tinnitus can cause a sense of hopelessness, stress, anxiety, or depression. While the cause of tinnitus is elusive, tinnitus can be treated by a variety of medical, audiological, and psychological methods.

"Tinnitus is like when someone leaves a speaker on with no noise, but you hear a tone. Constantly. It's all the time." -Corporal Kyle Perez



Delivery of Healthcare Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Medical and Behavioral Health Setting.



On Friday, April 22, 2011, three speakers presented information to nearly 100 healthcare professionals on the delivery of healthcare services to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Dianne DeLair, J.D., staff attorney with Nebraska Advocacy Services started by describing the legal obligations of public service providers under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Dr. Seiler, executive director for NCDHH, provided information about real-life situations of those trying to receive accessible healthcare. Dr. Seiler also demonstrated the importance of accessible communication through activities, highlighting where lack of accessible communication can be detrimental to the welfare of a patient. Barbara Woodhead, Assistant Director for UNL Services for Students with Disabilities, provided information about the role and expectations of a professional sign language interpreter.

This presentation was made possible by Bryan LGH Medical Center and a grant from the Region V CLAS Coalition. For information regarding this presentation, please contact Peggy Williams, (402) 471-4139.



Updating our Records

NCDHH needs your assistance in keeping our records up to date.

- Have you recently moved?
- Would you prefer to not receive this newsletter?
- Are you receiving more than one copy of this newsletter at your address?

If you answered yes to any of the above three questions, please contact the Lincoln office (contact information is listed on the back cover).

Get up to date Deaf/Hard of Hearing News in your Inbox!

Keep up with upcoming activities through the weekly E-Communicator. The E-Communicator is delivered to e-mail inboxes once a week. If you don't currently receive our weekly newsletter, visit <http://www.ncdhh.ne.gov/newsletter-subscription-page.html> to sign up today. There, you will have the option to sign up for our other updates as well, such as NCDHH mental health news.

Spread the word about your events & activities!



Interpreter News

QAST
Quality Assurance Screening Test

The Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing would like to remind licensed sign language interpreters of the upcoming Sign Language Interpreter/Transliterators license renewal date, June 30th, 2011. Renewal applications will be subject to additional fees if received on or after July 1, 2011. We recommend interpreters review our applications for licensure renewal. They can be found online at www.ncdhh.ne.gov. Click on the Interpreter Development tab and follow the Sign Language Interpreter Licensing link. For those interpreters renewing their licenses, you will need:

Form B: Renewal Application - Interpreter/Transliterators
Form J: Continuing Education Affidavit
US Citizenship Attestation Form

One requirement for license renewal is proof of 20 contact hours of approved Continuing Education. Section six in the Rules and Regulations Relating to Sign Language Interpreters defines the Continuing Education requirements. In this section it requires all license renewal applications:

Have completed 20 clock hours of approved continuing education during the preceding 24 month period. A minimum of 15 clock hours must be completed in the area of Professional Studies. Professional Studies contains content that directly affects the field of interpreting or transcribing. A maximum of 5 clock hours may be completed in General Studies. General Studies includes topics that enhance the interpreter/transcriber's critical thinking skills and general ideas typically understood within the mainstream American culture.

**License Renewal Applications can be received by
NCDHH starting June 1st, 2011.**

Official Nebraska Government Website

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NEBRASKA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

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Sign Language Interpreter Licensing

List of Licensed Interpreters

- Licensed Interpreters Report - current 4/1/2011
- ~~Sign Language Interpreter License Expiration Policy~~
- **US Citizenship Attestation Form** - This must be filled out and submitted with each License

Applications/Forms

- Initial Application - Interpreter/Transliterators License
- **Renewal Application - Interpreter / Transliterators License**
- Initial Application - Speciality License
- Renewal Application - Speciality License
- Initial Application - Provisional License
- Extension Application - Provisional License
- Initial Application - Limited Practice License
- Renewal Application - Limited Practice License
- Application for Reinstatement License
- **Continuing Education Affidavit**
- Application for Renewal of Continuing Education

Your call for **NEBRASKA FAMILY HELP LINE** is answered.

1-888-866-8660

Call 24/7/365 to speak with a trained, caring counselor.

- Children's behavioral issues
- Parent/child conflict resolution
- Juvenile mental health

A statewide Help-Line supported by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

MEDIA CENTER STAFF PICKS

By: Ben Sparks



Springtime brings to mind renewal and growth. NCDHH is no exception. We are updating our Media Center, bringing new and current topics to Nebraskans. Whether you're a seasoned interpreter, a person interested in picking up a few signs, or someone wanting to learn more about hearing loss issues, NCDHH will have something new for you. Some of the classics like *Summer's Story* and *Sound and Fury* will now be available in DVD format.

The cost? They're FREE for Nebraska residents to check out. All you need to do is set up an account, which only takes a minute or two. Media Center materials can even be mailed, with the understanding that the borrower is responsible for the return postage and has to follow the same guidelines as any other borrower.

Deaf Culture: 'The Week the World Heard Gallaudet'

Since the uprisings in Egypt and Libya, the Western world has gained new appreciation for the vision and power of organized student protests. One year before the cataclysm in China's Tiananmen Square, another student movement, sprung from equally cherished rights and hopes, focused world attention in a breathtaking week of peaceful struggle. On March 6, 1988, Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, was shut down by its own

students while an astonishingly insensitive Board of Trustees passed over qualified deaf candidates to appoint yet another hearing president. Jack R. Gannon chronicles the triumphant story of that drama in *The Week the World Heard Gallaudet*. Gannon has packaged a moment-by-moment narration of events alongside extensive color and black-and-white photographs. Political cartoons and noteworthy quotes from supportive sources are highlighted as well. The reader of this volume not only relives those historic days, but also learns far more about the world of the deaf and the sociopolitical struggles they must still face in our culture.

Hearing Loss: 'Summer's Story - Coming of Age with the Cochlear Implant'

Summer's story is a 27 minute videotape about a teenager's experience growing up with a Cochlear Implant. Born as a hearing child in a world filled with music. Summer lost her hearing due to spinal meningitis at the age of three. The story traces her use of hearing aids, tactile aides, speech therapy, and auditory training and the final decision for a cochlear implant.

Interpreting: 'So You Want To Be An Interpreter'

If you're interested in becoming a sign language interpreter, this is the most popular interpreting textbook in the US and Canada. Enhance your knowledge of American Sign Language and interpreting with this reader-friendly resource. It explains the interpreting process, ethics, the job market and much more. For beginners to seasoned interpreters, for in-class use or independent study. Includes thoughtful questions and practice activities.

Parents: The Complete I.E.P. Guide

If you are a parent of one of the six million special education children in the United States, you want to make the best possible choices for your child. The Individualized Education Program, or IEP, is the process that determines the nuts and bolts of your child's special education, including the specific classroom and program, educational goals and objectives, and curricula and support services. Whether your child has a learning disability, emotional difficulties, a hearing or vision loss or any of a number of other physical or health conditions, you want to understand every aspect of the IEP process to avoid surprises along the way.

Mental Health: Alcoholics Anonymous, Volume 1

This video series contain the twelve steps and twelve traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Volume 1 - Foreword, Steps 1-4. This video series can be used with The Alcoholics Anonymous-Big Book which has served as a lifeline to millions worldwide. First published in 1939, Alcoholics Anonymous sets forth cornerstone concepts of recovery from alcoholism and tells the stories of men and women who have overcome the disease.

Continued on page 15

Report on Mental Health in Nebraska



Peggy Williams,
NCDHH Mental Health
Specialist

I hope by the time this newsletter reaches your home you are as happy as I am that winter is over and we are now able to enjoy the beautiful Spring weather that we are so blessed to have in Nebraska.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to update you on the programs I have been working on scheduled for 2011 that pertain to my goals and objectives established for 2011 and 2012 to improve mental health services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Nebraska.

On Sunday, April 10, 2011 from 2:00 – 3:00 PM “Hearing Loss and the Military” aired live on NET. The purpose for this broadcast was to address the impact of hearing loss and how it crosses over to signs and symptoms of PTSD and brain injury. Dr. Ron Lybarger, Psychologist in the Kansas City area offered a roundtable discussion with veterans and the challenges faced when returning home from war with a hearing loss. Veterans and their families were invited to be a part of the audience for this live broadcast and speak with a panel of experts about hearing loss. The panel consisted of Dr. Pete Seiler, Executive Director for NCDHH, Dr. Lybarger, Corporal Kyle Perez and brother and Dr. Dan Chadwell with the Veterans Administration. A special thanks to the Eastern Nebraska District Sertoma Clubs and Hamilton Relay for contributions they made to help fund of this program. As the host for this broadcast, I am pleased that the Commission has identified the need in educating and promoting services to veterans that return from war with a hearing loss. Very special thanks to Dr. Pete Seiler and the NCDHH Board for approving this project, Thank You!

In June, 2010 NCDHH received a grant from Region 5 CLAS Coalition in an effort to provide a 3-hour training on “Delivery of Health Care Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Medical Setting”. This training was held on April 22, 2011 in Lincoln at the BryanLGH Medical Plaza from 9:00 AM – 12:15 PM. Dianne DeLair, attorney for the Nebraska Advocacy Services addressed federal laws on access to effective communication; Barbara Woodhead, a nationally certified/licensed sign language interpreter presented information on linguistic issues that impact Deaf people in the medical and behavioral health settings; and Dr. Peter Seiler, Executive Director for the Commission discussed culturally appropriate services for people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Commission thanks BryanLGH Medical Center for their efforts in co-sponsoring this workshop.

NCDHH is proud to announce, that NCDHH, in collaboration with the LIED Learning and Technology Center and the Women’s Center for Advancement, WCA, a project to have various program area topics on the WCA website scripted for signing and videotaped that will be completed in May. Having various programs on WCA’s web site interpreted into ASL will be the first of its kind in the state. WCA was previously known as YWCA, Omaha. Funding for the project is made possible from carry-over funds



**Donita Mains,
Field Representative III**

Psst.....KEEP THIS QUIET!

April 27 was International Noise Awareness Day. Continued exposure to loud noise will cause hearing loss. And noise is all around. Open windows, being outdoors and many springtime activities like TV, radio, lawn mowers, traffic, construction, tractors, motorcycles, and even vacuum cleaners can be too loud.

More than 35 Million Americans have hearing loss and noise is one of the leading causes. Health statistics suggest a trend that the incidence of hearing loss is occurring at younger and younger ages. Noise induced hearing loss, although preventable, is permanent.

Loud noise assaults the delicate hair cells of the inner ear. Noise induced hearing loss typically occurs gradually and without pain. After exposure to loud noise, a person may experience ringing in the ears or difficulty hearing. This is called a “temporary threshold shift”. After a few hours (or sometimes days), this shift returns to normal. But with repeated exposure to noise, this shift can become permanent.

To avoid noise induced hearing loss, pay attention to the noises around. Turn down the volume, limit time around noise and wear adequate hearing protection.

One spring presentation that I enjoy is participating in the Lincoln County Extension Office’s Farm Safety Day. Over 400 third-graders come to learn about safety and hearing protection is one of the topics.

So, just like sun screen and sun glasses, wear you hearing protective ear plugs and get out and enjoy Spring.





**Norman Weverka,
Field Representative III**

This spring arrived rather slow this year, having snowfall even in March! I have been in Scottsbluff to visit the Deaf community in February. It was good to be out West and be able to meet some new faces. I met the County Sheriff and had an opportunity to talk about setting up training in that area for Law Enforcement. Speaking of law enforcement, I did training for the Lincoln Police Department and the Lincoln/Lancaster Corrections.

I spent some time with the sign language classes at Southeast Community college. I gave a presentation to several classes there. I am hopeful that some of these students will become interpreters someday. I and Dr. Seiler did a presentation for the Special Education class at UNL. There were over 65 students in the class. The presentation was about the deaf community, history of education for deaf, followed by a discussion of American Sign Language.

The Spring conference for the Nebraska Hearing Society was in Lincoln and NCDHH had a booth at the event. NHS is a professional, non-profit organization representing and promoting the interests of hearing care professionals and the hearing instrument consumers of Nebraska. I gave a fifteen minute presentation to all 60 participants about NCDHH and our services.

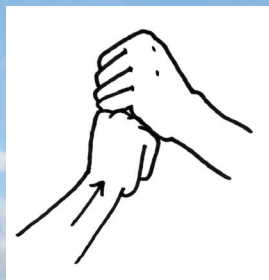
The Nebraska Supreme Court asked me to provide consultation for establishing a system so interpreters could be provided through video technology. The two systems that we tested were Polycom and Tandberg. One of the reasons for setting up this technology was to provide much quicker interpreting service in the courtroom in the rural areas where it is difficult to find a live interpreter. The system will have some restrictions and basically will be used for simple court proceedings. The Supreme Court received a grant so they will go forward in getting a system set up soon.

The Assistive Technology Project has a sub-committee that I am involved with. This committee is developing a video for the public to view about making housing more accessible for people with disabilities.

As summer approaches I will be doing county fairs at Saunders, Pawnee and Nemaha. I am currently working with the sheriff and police at North Platte setting up training. I am sure that I will be working again with the State Law Enforcement Training at Grand Island this summer.

In the area of Advocacy, I continue to get calls about the medical field not providing interpreters. NCDHH continues to educate the medical field as often as we can. The deaf and hard of hearing community are becoming better self-advocates which leads medical offices to contact the Commission for more information on increasing the accessibility of the services they provide.

Have a great and safe Spring!





Students from Nebraska Regional Programs experience Close-Up, a hands-on learning event in Washington D.C.

-Natasha Kraft

Twenty –Two students and four chaperons from the Nebraska Regional Programs for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing spent a week in Washington, D.C. with the Close Up program. Close Up uses the nation’s capitol as a living classroom giving the students an up-close and personal experience with democracy and our nations’ history. Everyone is kept busy from early in the morning till late in the night. Students attended lectures and participated in workshops. One of the highlights of the Close Up week is the mock congress the night before going to Capitol Hill. The mock congress allows the students to have experience firsthand on the voting process and how the Legislative, Judicial and Executive government branches all work together. This prepares the students for their day at Capitol Hill meeting their representatives.

The Nebraska Regional Programs decided to go out a day early to visit some places that Close Up does not have time to get to during their program. We flew out on Saturday – very early in the morning – we landed and were checked into the hotel about 1:00pm – after a quick lunch we were off – headed to Arlington National Cemetery. While at the cemetery students visited the burial site of John F. Kennedy, learned about and walked around Arlington House (Custis-Lee Mansion) before going to the changing of the guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns. After the ceremony we visited the Air Force Memorial. This was also where we were able to see where the plane hit the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Our last stop for the day was the Abraham Lincoln Memorial where the students were able to see the “A” and “L” on his hands. After many pictures we went back to the hotel for dinner and bed. Everyone was exhausted.

Sunday morning we were up and out the door bright and early. Our first stop was the Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Memorial. It was a beautiful morning and the memorial was not crowded at all yet. The students were able to walk through and read FDR’s quotes, see his statue – and learn a little about the virus Polio. After many photos we began our day of museums. First stop was the National Museum of the American Indian. “Look at all those clothes and the gold” was a comment I vividly remember from the day. Choosing to take the cultural experience further we all ate in the museum’s cafeteria. We asked the students to try something they have never had before and everyone tried something new (the most popular was the buffalo burger – but one student did try the fish – head and tail still on- he said it was good). After lunch we went to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. We were lucky enough to have two personal guided tours of the museum. One of our guides, Margit Meissner, is a survivor. One of my most touching memories of the day was when one of our girls thanked Margit, wished that she did not have to have experienced the awful things that happened to her growing up “but because you told your story, I understand this part of history now, thank you for sharing it with us.” The same student when asked later in the week what was the most meaningful memory she had said the personal tour of the Holocaust Museum.

After the Holocaust Memorial Museum we needed a bit of joy – so the students humored me and we had our picture taken with Albert Einstein. I guess I didn’t do a good enough job of explaining how big this statue was before going – this is a larger than life statue of Einstein – I look like a small child when I sit on his lap. We arrived back at the hotel in time for the students to meet their roommates for the week, have dinner and start their



evening workshops.

Wednesday was Capitol Hill day – the students and staff from the Regional Programs were able to meet with staffers from our representatives offices and tour the Capitol building. We started our day on The Hill at the Library of Congress where we met with a member of the staff who is Deaf. He took us, via the underground tunnels, to the Library of Congress -Jefferson building. He told our group about the history of the building and the symbolism of the main lobby then we went to one of the smaller rooms and we were able to see Gallaudet’s name on the ceiling made out of mosaic tiles. After this stop we were guided to the House buildings via the underground tunnels. The students really wished they could have met with the representatives personally instead of the staffers. But that did not stop them from asking the really hard questions they had. More than once our students were complimented on their question and their follow up questions. They were not going to let the staffer not answer their questions!

Thursday with Close Up is a day for teachers to take their students to places that are of a specific interest to them. A campus tour of Gallaudet University was in store for us today. We went to Gallaudet for an in-depth campus tour, time to shop at the bookstore, and lunch in the cafeteria. We were fortunate enough to see a few former Nebraska students who are currently attending Gallaudet. On the tour the students learned that Daniel Chester French – the individual who sculpted the Lincoln Memorial - also sculpted the Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell statue on Gallaudet’s campus.

After lunch at Gallaudet we drove up “Embassy Row” on our way to the National Cathedral. The students learned that the National Cathedral was made entirely out of limestone. Our last stop in the Cathedral was the Chapel of St. Joseph. Off of this chapel is the columbarium where Helen Keller’s and Annie Sullivan’s ashes are interred. We finished our tour in time to get back to the hotel for our closing workshops, banquet and the dance.

Friday morning we had some time before we needed to leave for the airport. Not wanting to miss an opportunity we decided to experience the DC Metro (subway) for a short ride from Silver Spring to Wheaton for some last minute shopping before heading home.

The week was busy, fun, overwhelming and exhausting at times but it is a trip where the memories for many will last a life time.



After a Hearing Test, What's Next?

By Donita K. Mains, PhD, CSW

The frustration and lack of information that accompanies the confirmation of a hearing loss can be overwhelming and may have a significant impact on one's life. Hearing loss is not the same for any two individuals. How it affects one's life greatly depends on one's self esteem, adaptability, support system and available information.

One's first task may be to decide what technology to use (hearing aids, assistive listening devices, specialized telephones and/or other gadgets). With or without the use of technology, one needs to become more vigilant in communicating. Learning to be an active communicator may take patience, practice and persistence.



This article is the third in Dr. Mains' series discussing hearing loss and its impact on individuals and their families.

While facing the challenges of hearing loss, one should remain flexible, trying new communication techniques, different technology or listening strategies. Think about how much time and energy is spent apologizing for something misheard or asking others to repeat what they are saying. Life will not be easier with a hearing loss, but making these adaptations is worth it.



Do you have difficulty hearing a one-on-one conversation? Do you have your television volume up too high?



If so, you may benefit from the use of an Assistive Listening Device (ALD). Equipment has been designed to not only increase the *volume* of the sounds in your vicinity, but you can also adjust the *pitch*. Contact a Field Representative at one of our offices. They can prepare a 90-day loan to ensure a device will meet your needs.



Transportation news for people living in the Omaha, Bellevue, LaVista, Papillion and Council Bluffs areas.

Spring is here!

RIDER GUIDE

- How to Ride
- FAQ
- Passenger Rules
- Transfers
- Fares & Passes
- Purchase Tickets
- Park & Ride
- Bike & Ride
- Savings Calculator
- MOBY/ADA

It's time to start taking advantage of the bus. Metro is a great transportation option!

Is your budget affected by higher gas prices? Take advantage of the opportunity to save money by riding on the bus. The Omaha Metro is adding more bus routes west of Omaha. Locate the Rider Guide section at the bottom of www.ometro.com for information about fares and passes. Under the MOBY/ADA tab you will be able to find ADA Accessible Services and a Half Fare Application for Senior Citizens, Medicare Card holders and disabled individuals. For assistance in accessing this information, please contact Janet Killam (866) 680-9459.

**NCDHH Full Board Meeting
June 10th, 2011**

Time: 8:30 am
Panhandle Office Complex
4500 Ave I, Conference Room
Scottsbluff, NE

For more information, please contact Lori Burrage by phone at (800) 545-6244 v/tty or by email at lori.burrage@nebraska.gov.

The meeting is open to the public. NCDHH encourages anyone to attend who wants to know more about our agency.



Continued from page 8, Media Center

Sign Language: Beginner: ASL/PSE GRAMMAR & SENTENCE STRUCTURES

View sentences in ASL and Pidgin Sign English. Grammatical features are explained then clearly demonstrated with several examples.

Intermediate: ASL Storytime Volumes 1-8

This eight volume set consists of entertaining short stories signed by deaf individuals, providing an excellent opportunity to practice receptive abilities and voicing skills. Volume 1 includes A Camping Experience, June's Dinner, A Bus Ride, At the Beach, Miss Gallaudet Pageant, A War, and House.

Continued from page 9, Mental Health

from the 2010 Omaha Enrichment Foundation.

Thanks to the Omaha Enrichment Foundation, the Commission received funding for 2011 to offer training to behavioral health professionals in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. The goal for this training is to provide this group of specialized professionals an opportunity to expand their skills and knowledge in treating Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, late deafened, and deaf-blind individuals then thereby creating a broader access to appropriate and quality mental health services that are needed in the Omaha metropolitan area. The workshop has been scheduled for September 22, 2011 from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at the LIED Learning and Technology Center in Omaha. For further information about this workshop please contact me at the Commission.

At this time the NCDHH Mental Health Advisory Committee has 2 counselor positions vacant on the committee. If you know a counselor that is interested in mental health services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and would be interested in serving on the advisory committee please contact me at the Commission. Having accessible mental health services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Nebraska is very important to NCDHH. Please contact me at the Commission for information on access to services, advocacy or a wide variety of training that I can provide your agency or organization.



**Nebraska
Commission
for the Deaf and
Hard of Hearing**

4600 Valley Road, Suite 420, Lincoln, NE 68510-4844

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NEWSLETTER — Spring 2011

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Submit an Article Idea!

NCDHH welcomes ideas and articles for consideration and insertion into future issues of the newsletter.

Please submit articles to:

**NCDHH Newsletter Ideas
4600 Valley Road, Suite 420
Lincoln, NE 68510-4844**

or e-mail them to:
ncdhh@nebraska.gov

Articles submitted are not necessarily the views of NCDHH. The NCDHH newsletter is published four times annually.

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