



www.chha-hamilton.ca
chhahamilton2@gmail.com
Founded 1984

Canadian **HARD** of **HEARING** Association **CHHA-Hamilton** **HERE, HEAR!! Newsletter**

Remember . . . You are not alone!

May, 2020

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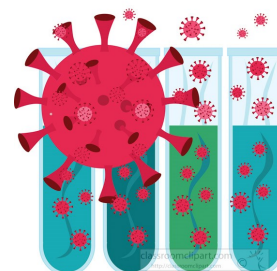
Refreshments

Committees

- **Advocacy**
- **Bylaw**
- **Cochlear Implants**
- **Golf**
- **Health Fair**
- **Newsletter**
- **Speech Reading**
- **Sponsors**

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

CHHA-Hamilton is taking directives from the government regarding meetings/gatherings and hoping that we will still be able to hold the CI meeting even if at a delayed time/date.



- ♦ May 28th meeting *postponed* to **September 24th**—panel discussion with manufacturers, The South Gate Church, 120 Clarendon Ave., Hamilton L9A 3A5 7—pm
- ♦ **June 28th**—Cochlear Implant meeting (with looped room) Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre, 1099 King St. E., Hamilton L8M 1E2 [details on page 6]
- ♦ **September 11th**—Nine & Dine FUNdraising Golf Tournament, Oak Gable Golf Club, 1505 Wilson St., Ancaster L0R 1R0 [details on page 6]

Registration & info meetings: chhahamilton@gmail.com or 905-575-4964

Charge: \$5 for non-members **Captioning** & Infra red system available

Registration for golf: robwdiehl@gmail.com or 289-208-4423

Charge: \$75 includes 9 holes, cart & dinner. \$25 dinner only

ALL WELCOME!

President's Message



Hello everyone,

As I'm writing this message, I am reminded about how much changed since writing my previous message. Our lives have been turned upside down and we have spent over 50 days in some form of social distancing or isolation. My last note talked about the upcoming meetings and I was hoping to provide some details and good news, but at the timing of me writing unfortunately we are still in a holding pattern.

I wanted to cover some topics that I picked up on a video conference held by our national office that I feel is important to remember in these trying times.

The corona virus requires us to wear masks in public. Unfortunately for us, hard of hearing folks, that is a huge issue because without conscious effort we've been reading lips and now all of a sudden we cannot. Asking people to remove their masks is really not an option so we have to be mindful of this additional challenge and go back to the basics. Instead of getting upset or frustrated (which I have to admit I'm guilty of at times) I have to remind myself to tell people to slow down in their speech, rephrase as needed and make sure they are aware that I have an invisible disability which now is further impeded by the lack of the ability to lip read.

The second item I wanted to cover is having lots of batteries on hand. I carry a spare set with me all the time and I make sure that I have a fresh set at home, so that I do not run out. Imagine going somewhere where the person talking to you is behind a glass/Plexiglas and they are wearing a mask and to top it all off, your batteries just died. Not the greatest scenario and although it cannot be totally helped, we can do some/all of these suggestions to help our ability in hearing the conversations.

Also remember that many of the video conference software may allow for captioning. Investigate the software you are using and if available turn on the captioning. If people are using still image instead of video, remind them to turn the video on if available so that you can read their lips.

This is it for now. Stay well, listen to the medical professionals and hope to see you soon.

As always please provide feedback on topics you are interested in, that we can consider for our future meetings. Hope to see you soon at one of our upcoming events (which is not cancelled 😊).

CHHA "Living with Hearing Loss Webinar Series"

presents:

Healthy Living With Hearing Loss

Wednesday May 13, 2020

3:00 - 4:00 pm EDT

In this unique webinar Amy and Markus de Domenico will share their unique life while living and coping with hearing loss in their family of seven.

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eh2rngi58bfd1ff9&oseq=&c=&ch=>

LOOKING FOR NEW CHHA BOARD MEMBERS

Why volunteer with the Hamilton Branch of the Canadian HARD of HEARING Association?

- ◆ Meet new people
- ◆ Receive satisfaction by helping others
- ◆ Build your confidence
- ◆ Stay active & healthy
- ◆ Make a difference to people in the hearing loss community.
- ◆ Help us shape the future
- ◆ Contact us at chhahamilton2@gmail.com

Ask Mark . . .

Mark not only wears hearing aids, he is also an Hearing Instrument Specialist.

Send *your* questions to Mark at chhahamilton2@gmail.com

Q How do I store my hearing aids if I am not going to wear them for a while?

A This is a great question during our current pandemic but it is also a great question for anyone storing any hearing aids for longer than a day.

Some people feel they do not need to wear their hearing aids all the time. This is usually not recommended by any hearing healthcare professional. Consistent and frequent usage is the best way for your brain to adapt to wearing hearing aids and you will benefit a lot more and have better speech understanding if you wear them as much as possible.

That being said if you are not going to wear your hearing aids there are a few things you need to do:

Step 1 - Take out the battery or if you have a rechargeable hearing aid; turn it off.

Step 2 - Clean them really well before you store them. Ear wax hardens quickly and is difficult to remove after it has been out of the ear for

more than a few hours.

Step 3 - Store it in a clean dry place like your bedside table. You do not want to store hearing aids in a kitchen or bathroom as the moisture from cooking or bathing can cause your hearing aids to corrode and not work anymore.

Step 4 - Before using the aids again check them for corrosion (white powdery residue in the battery compartment) and rust (orange/brown residue in the battery compartment) both of these need to be cleaned before you use your hearing aid again. To remove any residue you should use a cotton swab with a little bit of rubbing alcohol to wipe out the battery compartment.

These steps are a good idea even if you are only going to go a couple days without wearing your aids.

I would like you to keep in mind that the most important people in your life are the ones you live with and your neighbours. No one wants to hear your TV through the walls so wearing your hearing aids at home benefits everyone and as an added bonus you will be able to hear if there is a knock at the door or the phone rings even if the TV is on 😊

Stay home. Stay safe.

A guide to group video calling apps for hearing loss

As more areas are forced to shelter in place during the pandemic, our world is becoming increasingly virtual. This includes moving social interactions from in-person to online. What are the best group video calling apps for hearing loss?

Video conferencing platforms for hearing loss

A couple of my deaf friends and I tested out various video platforms in anticipation of a group hangout. Here are the pros and cons of each platform we tried.

Facetime

We all have iPhones, so we tried FaceTime, which now has group capability. The screens tend to move around, and simultaneous texting isn't possible. It was also hard to lipread people if blurry on a slower bandwidth.

Google Hangouts

Next, we tried Google Hangouts. The video was great, but difficult to lipread when one is on a smaller screen. Google Meet – the professional (paid) version – has captioning that a deaf friend deems “pretty good,” though we were unable to try it before this was published. According to Business Insider, the basic subscription is \$6/month.

Continued on page 4 . .

A Guide to group video calling apps for hearing loss

By Lisa A. Goldstein, HearingLikeMe.com

Continued from page 3 . . .

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Microsoft Teams

I’ve heard that [Microsoft Teams](#) is great, but it’s only for people who have a Microsoft account. Not all Microsoft licenses include Teams. A Microsoft account is necessary to see the live captions.

Zoom

Our favorite was [Zoom](#), which has exploded in popularity as meetings transition to the virtual space. **Now it’s not just businesses, non-profits, or schools utilizing the software, but families using it to play games remotely or even friends having Happy Hour.**

Zoom is free for 40-minute sessions, unless you have the paid version. There are two screen options: speaker view or gallery view. Gallery view looks like “The Brady Bunch” credits, whereas with screen view, the person who’s talking is automatically enlarged. There are pros and cons to each. I found myself going back and forth. There’s a delay as the screen enlarges, though. A text window is to the right of the screen, which is great for supplementing.

Zoom Captioning

Zoom allows for third-party captioning, which means you have to set up and pay for separately. The captions are incorporated into the Zoom interface. Zoom has automated captioning through artificial intelligence (AI) in beta through a partnership with OtterAi.

The captioning feature is only available with a few universities at the moment but will be released to the general audience in the near future, Zoom told [HearingLikeMe](#).

The company is currently trying to be prudent in allowing users to use this feature because of server capacity limitations.

“The captioning feature is only available with a few universities at the moment but will be released to the general audience in the near future, according to Zoom.”

However, because these are difficult times, Zoom understands that hiring professional captioners isn’t a feasible initiative for many smaller organizations. They’re huddling to see if they can expand their server capacity and enable the feature for certain customers.

Workarounds to get captions for video calls

If you don’t have access to live captions, there are workarounds. Use a speech-to-text app on a second device. Some of these apps include [Google Live Transcribe](#), [Otter.ai](#), and [Speechy](#).

[Ava](#) is also an option; they’ve extended the free trial time to 30 days.

Several friends have recommended [Web Captioner](#), which can only be used on a computer. It’s useful in a pinch, but is AI-based.

Of course, the standard disclaimer applies: automated captioning doesn’t always do a great job understanding deaf speech. However, if you’re using it to understand what hearing people are saying, you’ll have better luck.

Video conferencing tips

In the past week, I’ve watched and participated in many live and taped video streams. Here are some tips to keep in mind when using group video calling apps so those with hearing loss aren’t left out:

- *Fast bandwidth and strong video quality are essential
- *Keep your camera steady
- *Lighting is important: Avoid dark or too bright backgrounds. Shadows can also make lipreading difficult.

Continued on page 5

Advanced Bionics Mentorship Program

If all goes well, we're hoping to have our 11th annual meeting of the C.I. recipients of the Ontario South West Regional Cochlear Implant Club. [details on page 6]

Our speakers will be Amy Ng, M.Sc., Reg. CASLPO Audiologist, Cochlear Implant Program, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre AND Kim Dreifelds, Senior Cochlear Implant Specialist of Advanced Bionics.

Advanced Bionics has a mentorship program and Kim can discuss this further during her presentation on June 28th.

Anyone interested in connecting with a CI mentor can do so by reaching out to Kim directly and she will connect them with someone with similar backgrounds or lifestyle etc. The other option is for them to register for Hearing Journey.

HJ is the world's largest online CI community. This is a safe and welcoming place where someone considering a CI or those who already have them can read about other people's experiences or join the conversation to share stories, meet mentors, and make friends that completely understand all the joys and challenges that they're going through.

Here is the link: www.hearingjourney.com

Continued from page 4 . . .

- *Make sure your face is close to the camera
- *Smaller groups are easier
- *Have a buddy who can help fill in gaps when needed
- *Pick a simple background with no distractions
- *Only one person should talk at a time. This means:
 - *Raising your hand when you want to talk (if you're using a paid Zoom subscription, there's a virtual hand-raising feature)
 - *Having a meeting organizer determine who talks and when.
- *Muting your screen when you're not talking (since any noise will make you the primary speaker even if you're not). Some platforms allow the meeting host to have the ability to mute everyone.



*Utilizing the text feature for questions or other conversation while someone else is Talking, but everyone must remember to keep checking it!

Silver lining

The more we speak up about our accessibility needs, the more we educate others. With the increasing reliance on virtual technology, we can only hope that accessibility features will improve quickly as a result.

And don't forget the #1 tip, which applies to everyone: Make sure nothing embarrassing is in the background before you turn the camera on!

Provide Free Captions for People with Hearing Loss on Video Conferencing Platforms

<https://www.change.org/p/google-provide-free-captions-for-people-with-hearing-loss-on-video>

Cochlear Implant



You are invited to join us

The 11th annual Meeting

of the

**C.I. recipients of the Ontario South West
Regional**

Cochlear Implant Club

Sunday June 28th, 1:30– 3.30 pm

**Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre
1099 King St. E., Hamilton**

- ◆ Members—no charge
- ◆ \$5 for non-members
- ◆ Captioning available & room is looped
- ◆ Free parking
- ◆ Refreshments
- ◆ **ALL are welcome!**
- ◆ To register: chhahamilton2@gmail.com or (905) 575-4964



Golf Fun & Food

8th Annual FUNdraiser Golf Tournament

Friday, September 11, 2020

**\$75 includes 9 holes,
cart & dinner**

\$25 dinner only

Tee off – 4 pm

Dinner – 6 pm

Oak Gables Golf Club

1505 Wilson St., Ancaster, L0R 1R0

Rain or shine

Register online at www.chha-hamilton.ca

call 289-208-4423 or

E-mail robdiehl@gmail.com

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to help!***

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- 570 University Ave. E. Unit 905, Waterloo
888-907-1436
- 168 Barton St. Unit 3, Stoney Creek
289-203-3256
- 723 Rymal Rd. W. Unit 500, Hamilton
289-768-8971
- 350 Conestoga Blvd. Unit B3, Cambridge
888-737-9976
- 1144 Wilson St. W. Unit D203, Ancaster
289-203-3195

WHY JOIN CHHA?

- We offer Lip/speech reading classes to assist you in communicating
- We are advocates for those who suffer from hearing loss
- We host events that help build community amongst hard of hearing individuals
- We raise funds to assist the hard of hearing in our region

All of these projects help us to fulfill CHHA's mission to make the community a better place for the hard of hearing.
Please renew your membership *or* join us for the first time and find out what CHHA is all about.



To keep our association strong we have to know that *you* are supporting us by becoming a member.

Craig Ellis,

Membership Chair

CHHA-Hamilton Membership Application & Renewal Form

Your Membership is due effective ***now*** to – August 31, **2020**

Please mail this form with your payment to:

CHHA Membership, 762 Upper James, Box 122 Hamilton, ON L9C 3A2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ e-mail: _____

Age: 19—30 ____ 31—50 ____ 51+ ____

I hereby apply for one of the following memberships (please check one):

Individual Membership: \$35.00 / year

Family Membership: \$50.00 / year

Lifetime Membership: \$350.00 plus \$5.00 / year

Make cheques payable to: CHHA-Hamilton

Donations to CHHA-Hamilton may be made in memory of loved ones and friends.

Tax receipts will be issued and announcements sent to the family.

Charitable Reg. No. 89647 8419 RR0001

Remember . . . You are not alone!