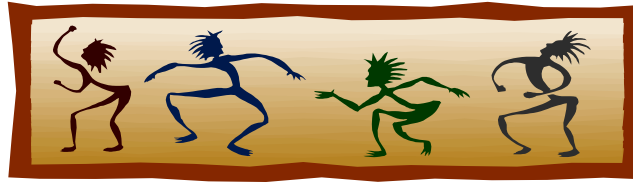




# Youth Vibrations



A Publication of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association-Newfoundland and Labrador (CHHA-NL)

It's time for a new edition of Youth Vibrations! We hope that you all enjoyed the last edition. If you have any questions about hearing loss, or ideas for information you would like to see in future Youth Vibrations please send us your ideas!

In this edition, you will find articles on "Growing up with Hearing Loss", this year's CHHA-NL scholarship winners, information on the CHHA National Young Adult Representative, and our regular "Ask Muddled Myrtle" feature!

Enjoy the snow and remember to keep warm during the winter! Feel free to share stories from youth vibrations with all of your friends or classmates.

Yours for Better Hearing,

CHHA-NL



## Stay Tuned.... for exciting things ahead

The 1st ever Youth Vibrations Workshop for Hard of Hearing Students will take place in the Spring. Information will be sent to all Itinerant teachers and more information will be in the next edition of Youth Vibrations!

We will also be having an essay contest for hard of hearing students. Information will be sent to your Itinerant teacher in the near future!

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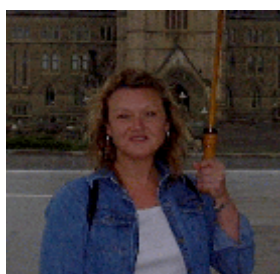
# *Hearing Your World*

## *Growing Up with Hearing Loss*

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*DR VALERIE PARROTT, AUDIOLOGIST*

Approximately one in every ten people is born with a significant hearing loss. Our hearing may become affected as we grow older due to different diseases, exposure to noise or even hereditary or genetic components. For some of us we begin to lose our hearing around thirty years of age with significant hearing loss as we reach our fifties or sixties. While the effects of hearing loss are significant on communication no matter what age we are, the complexities of hearing loss are more severe if we have a hearing loss prior to learning how to speak or if we acquire hearing loss prior to obtaining our education. This month's column has a little different emphasis than most of the previous articles. This month we will be focussing on a young women who was diagnosed with hearing loss at a very young age and some of the trials and tribulations she experienced growing up. This month, Kim Gladney, has offered to share some of her life's story.



### **How old were you when you were first diagnosed with hearing loss?**

I believe I was as young as four or five years old.

**What were some of the trials you had growing up with hearing loss?** I was limited to certain activities such as joining the Reserves due to my hearing loss. Forgetting where I placed my hearing aid when I took it out of my ear...which I still do to this day. I would have to sit in front of the classroom while attending school. Sometimes people would make fun of me because I wore a hearing aid but children can be cruel at the best of times. Answering Yes or No questions - I would respond either yes or no when I didn't really hear the question.

**What are some of the funny things you remember?** In school I would make my hearing aid whistle and it would drive the teachers crazy wondering where the sound was coming from. Some people believed that I had bionic hearing! Sometimes I could get away from chores, homework, etc. by claiming that I didn't hear the request. Misunderstanding what has been said. For example someone may ask me, "What kind is it?" and I will look at my watch and tell them what time it is. Telling people who didn't know I was hearing impaired that would ask, "Are you deaf?" if I misunderstood or didn't hear what they were saying that I was indeed hard of hearing and show them my hearing aid.

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They would be so embarrassed, humiliated and apologetic to me. This wasn't funny at the time but looking back it is...when I was 7 or 8 years old and Christmas was a few weeks away I took out my hearing aid and laid it on the coffee table. Minutes later I went outside sliding. After an hour, my mother was calling out for me to come home. When I arrived home I was in big trouble...the poodle we had got my hearing aid off the coffee table and chewed it up! Mom was so mad and I was told that all I was getting for Christmas was a new hearing aid.

**What do you remember about wearing hearing aids as a child?** My first hearing aid was awful. It was the size of a zippo lighter and had to be carried by wearing a harness on my chest with pockets to insert it and it had a long white wire with the ear-piece on one end which wasn't molded for my ear. As I grew older, I went into denial and was kind of ashamed of wearing my hearing aid. I grew my hair long and always wore my hair down to hide my ear. By the time I was in my twenties I realized how silly my thinking was and I had nothing to be ashamed of. I started putting my hair in a ponytail. I have even cut my hair short twice!

**What is it like to be a young adult with hearing loss?** It's really not too bad. I have adjusted quite nicely. I have developed my lip-reading skills and have learned to ask people to repeat themselves however many times in order to hear what they are saying, as opposed to pretending I did or did not hear them. My family and friends have come to know what is expected of them when communicating with me, like speaking directly to me so I can read their lips, walking on the side that I hear the best, etc.

**What are some trials you experience at work or at home?** Background noise has to be the biggest trial no matter where I am. Usually, when there is too much background noise I take out my hearing aid in order to tune into what interests me the most.

**What do you think about hearing aids?** I think hearing aids are wonderful. I think about the great sounds that I am able to hear because I wear a hearing aid - sounds people with normal hearing take for granted. For example the sound of the tires on a car in traffic, the sound of squirrels chirping, the splash that fish make when they jump out of the water, etc. The best thing is that I can tune sounds out if they bother me too much just by taking out my hearing aid. I call it selective hearing.

**What improvements have you seen over the years?** I have seen a lot of improvements in both hearing aids and the public's attitude towards people with hearing impairments. I have gone from the "zippo" lighter hearing aid that was worn on the chest to a behind-the-ear hearing aid and to the in-the-canal digital hearing aid. Today's hearing aids are much more equipped to screen out background noises as well.

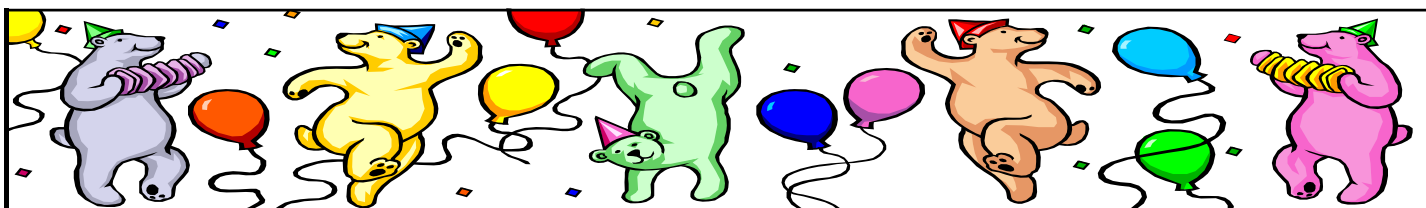
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## *Hearing Your World Continued...*

As for society, they are more educated about hearing impairment and they are more respecting towards individuals with impairments. The "deaf and dumb" stereotype is a thing of the past.

**What advice do you have for someone who is just getting hearing aids?** We are unique. We are able to hear things better than the average person when we want. We can tune people out when we want. So go ahead and show off that hearing aid. You will be surprised at the positive responses from people. My favourite saying is "I'm not deaf, I'm ignoring you".

Since we asked Kim to help us with this month's column she has been transferred to a new job in British Columbia. We appreciate the time she has taken out of her busy schedule while moving to give us some insight into Growing Up With Hearing Loss. *If you have any questions regarding hearing loss or hearing aids, please contact Dr. Parrott, Parrott's Hearing Clinic, 84 Thorburn Road, St. John's, NL, A1B 3M3, (709) 754-4884, or [info@parrottshearing.nf.ca](mailto:info@parrottshearing.nf.ca).*



### *An Exciting place just for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth*

[www.deafkids.com](http://www.deafkids.com)

**This is a place for people to chat! Remember to ask your parents for permission to use the chat room first.**

### *Youth Exchange!*

The Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a disability hosts an annual youth exchange. Check out [www.ala.ca](http://www.ala.ca) or contact CHHA-NL for a hard copy of the application. Deadline is March 1, 2006 and the exchange will take place in Ottawa during the summer. This is open to youth with a disability. There is also a need for group leaders and chaperones. Two CHHA-NL Youth Group members have attended in the past and had an awesome experience. Check it out or contact us for more information!



## ***CHHA-NL Scholarship Winners Announced***

We are very pleased to announce the winners of The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association—Newfoundland and Labrador (CHHA-NL) Glenna Stone Memorial Scholarship and Dr. Norah Browne Bursary. **Erika Breen** is the winner of the Glenna Stone Memorial Scholarship. Created in 2004 by CHHA-NL, **The Glenna Stone Memorial Scholarship** is awarded to a deserving post-secondary student to commemorate the memory of Glenna Stone, a former president of the association who passed away in 2002. Glenna was a strong advocate for the rights of hard of hearing people and disabled people in general and a strong leader for the association. This scholarship is an annual testimony to her work and dedication. The purpose of the **The Glenna Stone Memorial Scholarship** is to offer financial assistance and recognition to hard of hearing, late-deafened and oral deaf students registered in a full time program at a recognized Canadian college or university, in any area of study, with the ultimate goal of obtaining a diploma, certificate or degree. **Jenelle Fitzpatrick** is the winner of the **Dr. Norah Browne Bursary**. This bursary has been established to honour the founding President of the Association, who was instrumental in growing the association, creating greater public awareness of the hearing accessibility needs in public facilities and for being a strong and forthright advocate for the rights of all hard of hearing persons. The bursary, awarded annually, is a testament to her work and passion. The purpose of the **The Dr. Norah Browne Bursary** is to offer financial assistance and recognition to hard of hearing, late-deafened and oral deaf students who will be attending a recognized Canadian college or university for the first time, in any area of study, with the ultimate goal of obtaining a diploma or degree.



Congratulations to both of our scholarship winners! Stay tuned for further details on the call for nominations for our 2006 scholarships!

(L-R) **Myrtle Barrett**, President CHHA-NL, **Erika Breen**, winner of the Glenna Stone Memorial Scholarship, **Jenelle Fitzpatrick**, winner of the Dr. Norah Browne Bursary, **Leon Mills**, Executive Director, CHHA-NL. Front: **Dr. Norah Browne**.

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# CHHA NATIONAL YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVE

Hello Everyone,

My name is Phillip Rogers and I am the new CHHA National Young Adult (YA) Representative. I was born April 1981 to Harry and Judy Rogers with a genetic hearing loss; which is a mild to moderate loss. I was the third child of my parents, having two older brothers, Robert and Trent. Robert my oldest brother was also born with the same degree of hearing loss, and Trent was born with normal hearing.



I sought the Young Adult Representative position on the National Board mainly because I believe that young adults can do much to help better the quality of life for Hard of Hearing persons. I also always have been interested in taking a more active role and being involved, and felt that being a national board member would be a good step.



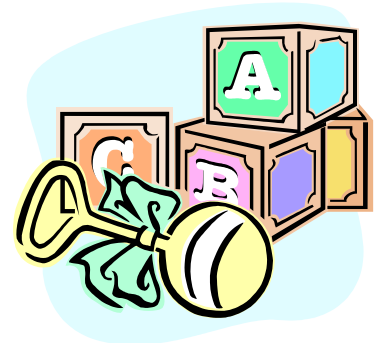
I am hoping that during my tenure as YA Rep, to establish the CHHA YA Network and also to help fundraise more to increase scholarships. Establishing a peer mentoring group is also a priority for me because hard of hearing youth should always have someone to talk to close to there own age who has “been there and done that”.

On that note, if you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail me at [chhayarep@gmail.com](mailto:chhayarep@gmail.com) and I will be glad to chat with you!

## ***Special Announcement***

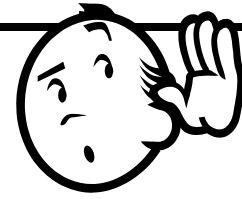
Some of you will know Andrea Augot, chair of the Youth Group here at CHHA-NL

We would like to announce that Andrea had a baby girl on April 26, 2005. Her name is Hilary! A big congratulations go out to Andrea and Jason!



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# Ask Muddled Myrtle



**Dear Muddled Myrtle:**

**I am a mom of a very outgoing hard of hearing teenager and this is her first time in school sports. I notice that she always gets nervous prior to the games. I don't want to ask her because that might make her more nervous, so what do you think it could be?**

Well that is an interesting question. I asked some of my young HOH friends and they all said the same thing. When they are running around in the gym it is hard to locate sound and they get the vibrations of sound, so they always get a bit nervous that they will miss something and the team will lose because of it. Muddled Myrtle says be open with your child and ask her if she is having any concerns. Suggest to her that she approach the coach and he/she can work out some team strategies. You can always contact CHHA-NL and get a copy of our tips on communicating with the hard of hearing!

**Dear Muddled Myrtle:**

**I am 15 years old and have a bilateral high frequency hearing loss. I have a problems in restaurants and stores. I cannot understand what the clerk or waitress is saying and they don't understand what I am saying. Can you help with my problem?**

I like your question. Muddled Myrtle does not know everything, so sometimes she has to reach out to others. In this case, I contacted Valerie Parrott, who is an audiologist. Here is her answer:

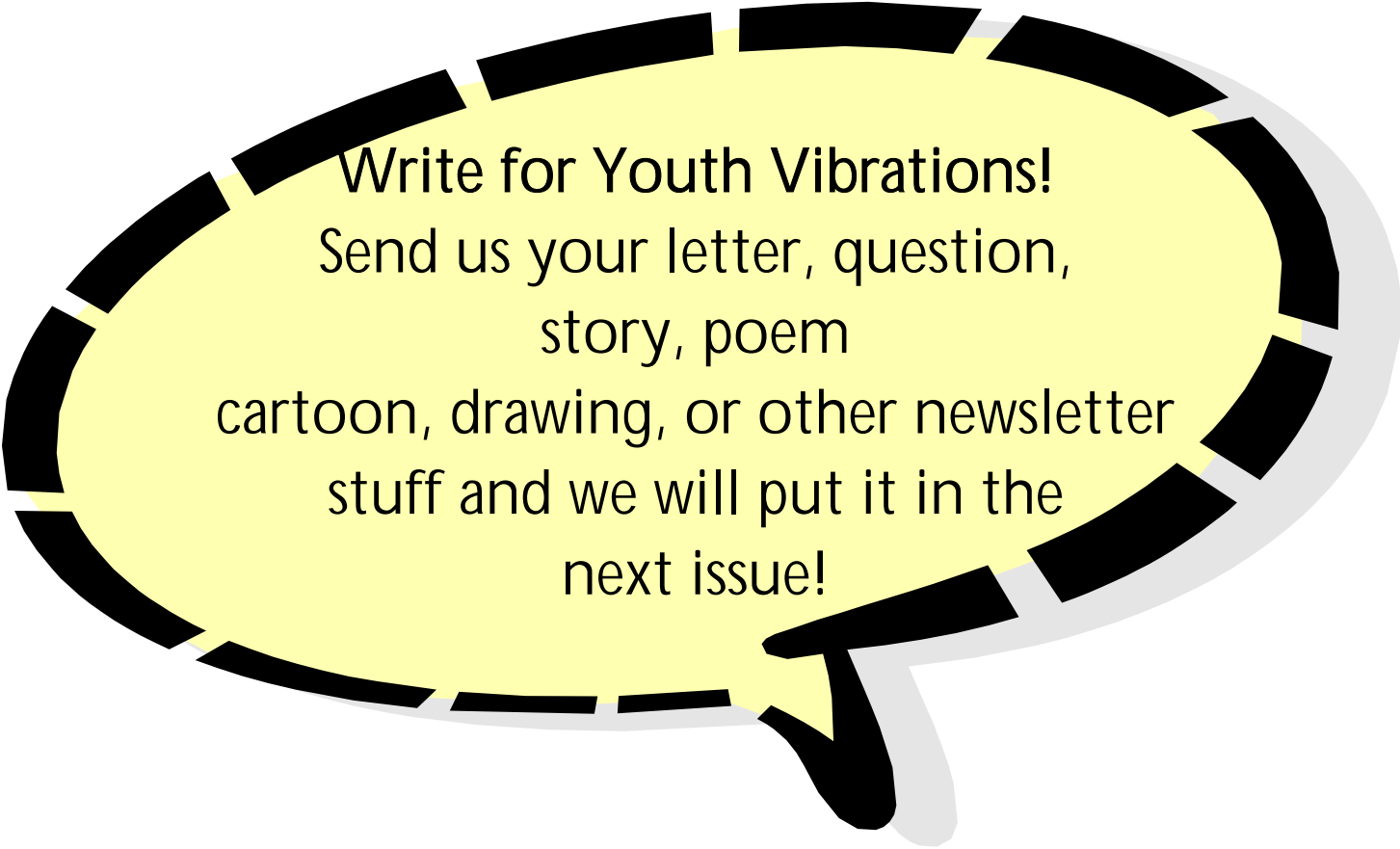
Firstly, most high-frequency hearing losses are best fitted with behind the ear instruments. Premium level digital would be better at filtering out some of the background noise. However, the nature of the hearing loss requires that we amplify sound right where the noise is. There are some coping strategies as well, which the person should try. Select restaurants where the music is not as loud, and sitting with your back to the wall so that the noise does not bombard you from all directions. Performance will depend on the severity of the hearing loss as well.

Muddled Myrtle understands your frustration! I get so fed up sometimes because I cannot hear myself talk and when I am in a crowded environment and talking no one answers me. It is because I am not talking loud enough and I feel like I am shouting!!! Does that happen to you? I try to self-identify as much as possible but most times waitresses and clerks are rushed. My motto is "the customer is always right". I always say that I am deaf and ask them to look directly at me. I also carry a notebook and paper just in case I cannot understand and they can write it down. I also ask my friends/family to help me out. Maybe this is a good time to have readers send us some of their tips for survival!!

CHHA to you!

Muddled Myrtle

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Write for Youth Vibrations!  
Send us your letter, question,  
story, poem  
cartoon, drawing, or other newsletter  
stuff and we will put it in the  
next issue!

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