



# connect.

CONNECTING VANCOUVER ISLAND & THE GULF ISLANDS

## HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERS



**JEAN  
CUTLER**



**JIM & MAE  
ROBINSON**



**MARY  
WARNER**

On June 23, 2021 at the 29th Annual General Meeting, Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre was proud to introduce three new Honorary Lifetime Members. **Jean Cutler, Jim & Mae Robinson, and Mary Warner** were all named as Honorary Lifetime Members for their extraordinary contributions, and their commitment to the promotion and embodiment of the Vision of IDHHC. We are ever grateful for their enduring support and acknowledge their remarkable dedication to our Mission.

**Learn about our Honorary Lifetime Members on page 4!**

### UPCOMING IDHHC EVENTS

**SEP 22:** CI Support Group

**MONDAYS, OCT - NOV:** ASL Coffee & Chat

**OCT 27:** Selling your Skills to Employers

**OCT 27:** All About Tinnitus

*SEE PAGES 7 - 9 FOR MORE*

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# INSIDE IDHHC

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT OUR CENTRES

## CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

### ***Building Inclusive Communities is our 30th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign.***

There are meaningful giving options to include participation from everyone in the community to help us achieve the goals for this Campaign.

- + 1000 people making a one-time gift
- + 100 donors each making a gift of \$100
- + 50 individuals signing up for monthly donations of \$30 a month
- + 30 donors making a \$300 donation
- + 10 individuals giving a \$3000 gift

There are many ways to give and every gift is important. We need the support of everyone in our community to continue our work. **Please join us today and make a donation.**

Send us an email, send us a letter, give us a call. We can help you set up your gift, today. **Help us to continue Building Inclusive Communities!**



**From all the people IDHHC will serve today, and for the next 30 years,  
*thank you* for your support and generosity!**

Click the links below to see the videos we have released in our Celebrating 30 Years video series!

- EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIE3xPqeSS8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIE3xPqeSS8)
- HEARING HEALTH SERVICES:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4r7\\_4C\\_y8Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4r7_4C_y8Y)

*For more information about the campaign or making gifts and donations please contact Denise Robertson at 250.592.8144 or via email at [denise@idhhc.ca](mailto:denise@idhhc.ca)*



## HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERS



**JEAN CUTLER** - Jean was the last born (surviving) of a large rural Saskatchewan family in November of 1923. She contracted scarlet fever at age 5, which left her with profound hearing loss, although this was not recognized immediately. When she started school it became evident, and concurrent with a family move to Vancouver at age 8 she was enrolled in Jericho Hill School for the Deaf where she remained until she was 18.

She married shortly after WW II and went on to have 5 children. She worked as a mother, farmer, care giver in a long-term care home, seamstress and upholsterer.

Jean was one of the founding volunteers at the original Nanaimo IDHHC office. Along with her friends she enjoyed volunteering her time and enthusiasm at Health Fairs, fund raisers and other special events. At Christmas time, Jean enjoyed helping to decorate the IDHHC Christmas tree at a local mall. With a staff person she would sit at an information table in the malls, answering questions from the public about living with deafness. Jean was adept at mastering the skills to use new technologies that surfaced to assist hard of hearing individuals and her favorite was clearly the telephone typewriter (TTY)!

Jean volunteered with IDHHC well into her 80's, always enjoying the opportunities to share with folks the excellent work done by this organization. For her dedication, we honor her as an Honorary Lifetime Member.



**JIM & MAE ROBINSON** - In 2001 Jim experienced a sudden and profound hearing loss. Knowing of no where else to go he reached out to IDHHC for support and was soon part of the Hearing Loss Support Group. Jim found great affiliation in the group as well as tremendous information and support from the staff. Jim was passionate about the fact that IDHHC was relatively unknown yet did so much for hard of hearing individuals.

Jim learned a great deal at the group sessions and became a force in the efforts to lobby for more cochlear implants in the province. Disappointed

to learn that the government did not financially support IDHHC and along with other participants, Jim wanted to start a fundraising campaign to assist in covering cost and expand service delivery. As a true pioneer Jim was to “put his money where his mouth was” and to encourage others to follow their lead, Jim and Mae Robinson became the first monthly donors to IDHHC.

After 20 years the only change that Jim and Mae made to their monthly donations to IDHHC was to increase the amount they give each month! For their amazing twenty years of generosity and giving, their belief in our vision and mission and consistent sharing of our good work, we acknowledge their leadership with Honorary Lifetime Membership.



**MARY WARNER** - While she is a local Victoria native, Mary has lived in many places across Canada as a result of her late husbands' career with the Military. Though she was trained as a nurse, she gravitated to the Deaf community

in Ontario where she was mentored within the community and eventually became a Sign Language Interpreter. Mary and her family moved back to Victoria approximately 27 years ago where she quickly became a respected mentor, colleague and familiar face to many in the Deaf and interpreting communities.

Mary has had a positive impact on the countless



interpreting students that she has supervised during their practicum. She has been a mentor and confidant to many interpreters in British Columbia. She has always been a strong advocate ensuring that Deaf community members have access to communication through sign language in all aspects of their lives.

For 27 years Mary was a freelance interpreter with IDHHC, but also so much more. She had enormous support for the agency and would attend focus groups or meetings, provide

ideas and suggestions, volunteered her time at community events, and she is also a regular donor to the agency. In all that she does, Mary has always recommended IDHHC to those she comes across that may need assistance with employment or hearing aids or a family that has a child with a hearing loss. She promotes the agency and always speaks highly of the services we provide and we gratefully acknowledge this support by naming Mary an Honorary Lifetime Member.

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the new President at IDHHC, I am privileged to work with an amazing group of individuals who dedicate their time, energy, and efforts to making our agency the best it can be. As believers in the Vision and Mission of the agency, the Directors are an important part of the team committed to making our communities accessible and inclusive.

One example: As someone with a profound hearing loss, Board Director Suzanne Lang has spent the last 3 – 4 years working with management at the Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney advocating for a loop system in the theatre there. Her dedication to action and commitment to access paid off when she received this email in August:

*Hi Suzanne,*

*We have been very busy researching and updating the Charlie White Theatre over the past year. The good news: our Technical Director has researched, visited other venues, and based on new technology has found a hearing loop system that will work in the Charlie White Theatre. This system will be installed for our first shows in September.*

*We wish to thank you for your perseverance and patience as we worked out the technical challenges of installing a hearing loop system in the Charlie White Theatre. Your actions have improved the quality of life for Peninsula Residents by making the Charlie White Theatre more accessible to our community.*

*Once the loop is installed would you like to come and give it a test run so that you can experience the hearing loop system in full working order? If you have any questions or require assistance please contact me.*

*Take care and have a great day.*

*Philip Sutton  
Theatre Manager  
Mary Winspear Centre*

On behalf of the staff and the Board Members we thank Suzanne for her passion and dedication to enriching and improving the quality of life in our community.

If you are interested in joining the IDHHC Board please feel free to email [idhhc@idhhc.ca](mailto:idhhc@idhhc.ca) or call us at 250.592.8144.

**Chris Beresford**

BOARD PRESIDENT



## MEET OUR AUDIOLOGIST IN NANAIMO



**STEPHANIE RENAAS** was first diagnosed with a severe to profound hearing loss when she was 18 months old. Her family reached out to Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre (IDHHC) for support. The

family chose to learn American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate in a visual way and IDHHC provided the Deaf instructor to teach them.

Entering pre-school, Stephanie accessed her environment and learning through an ASL interpreter that was provided through her entire K-12 education.

After graduation Stephanie reached out to IDHHC for employment support. She secured a job in a group home and through the employment program IDHHC provided her with new hearing aids and assistive technical devices.

After a few years Stephanie began to consider longer term career options. After spending a day shadowing her audiologist she realized how much she loved the technical aspect of the equipment and technology as well as the opportunity to work with people, so she decided to enter Audiology.

Stephanie attended Vancouver Island University for her undergraduate degree then moved to

Vancouver to pursue her Master of Science in Audiology. While transitioning Stephanie wondered if she would be a candidate for a cochlear implant (CI). It had been a discussion within her family growing up, but Stephanie felt having a cochlear implant would just draw attention to the fact that she couldn't hear. Stephanie was indeed a CI candidate and in 2014, she received her cochlear implant and now wears a hearing aid in one ear and has a CI on the other. During her time at UBC, Stephanie learned to advocate for herself and what she needed to eliminate or reduce the barriers she was facing as a Deaf student. This sparked a passion to help others advocate for what they need so they can be successful and fully engaged in their surroundings.

After graduation, Stephanie spent 4 years in private practice on Vancouver Island. Then in 2020 Stephanie joined IDHHC as the Audiologist in Nanaimo. "IDHHC is a holistic organization – we can do everything to support someone – speech reading, employment, aural rehab as well as offer them full audiology services and hearing aids. Here I help people in the way each of them needs help, which is why I became an audiologist in the first place. The experience here for clients is one of trust and getting the help and support they need. Now I give back through the same organization that has supported me throughout my life".

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## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Lisa came to IDHHC Nanaimo for employment assistance in the Spring of 2021. New to BC from Ontario, Lisa was able to find part-time work at a grocery store in Nanaimo, but not receiving enough

hours. With only about 20% of her hearing and wearing masks through COVID, Lisa struggled as she could not read lips. Then she was let go.

Having worked with Lisa on her resume, Janet, our employment case manager, was aware of Lisa's years of commercial sewing experience, design background and enjoyment of that type of work. Janet reached out to an Adaptive Clothing Design company and introduced Lisa's relevant skills, experience and Divers-ability. The timing was perfect as business was ramping up and the employer needed additional sewers. Lisa had an interview within the week and was hired immediately. Lisa was set up in the Island Ops



Wage Subsidy Program which was a win-win for both employer and employee. IDHHC continues to provide valuable assistance with communication, problem-solving strategies and general support for both Lisa and her new employer.

Lisa states: “Janet has been wonderful and very helpful. I am (now) working for a company who makes Adaptive Clothing, and it is working out wonderfully. Coming from Ontario, I can without a doubt say the support I have received in BC has been unbelievable and I am extremely grateful.”

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## IDHHC IN THE NEWS

We were Capital Daily’s Partner in their email newsletter on Friday, August 27, 2021. Below is our feature article.

### **Together With Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre**

*It’s not just plug & go.  
You have to train your brain!*



Often, people assume hearing aids and cochlear implants are like glasses — you put them on and away you go. If you have hearing loss, hearing aids, and other devices will

amplify sounds to make it easier to hear, but the brain may continue to struggle to interpret and process what you’re hearing. Like riding a bike or getting back into the gym, if you haven’t done it for a while you need to get in shape!

Ultimately, hearing is a brain activity; your ears deliver sound as electrical impulses from the auditory nerve to the brain, where these electrical impulses are translated into sounds. With the onset of hearing loss, fewer sounds go to the brain, potentially slowing down the processing of auditory information.

Cognition plays a major role in communication, so it’s important to train your brain with active listening exercises. Like physical therapy, aural rehabilitation and auditory training focuses on teaching you to engage your brain and develop

listening skills to re-learn communication skills that may have been lost.

Aural rehabilitation and speechreading workshops and classes are now available at IDHHC (home of the Sound of Change Initiative). Visit our website at IDHHC.ca or call us at 250-592-8144.

*Pictured above, Audiologists Stephanie Renaas and Edward Storzer (photo by IDHHC)*

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### **OTHER NEWS APPEARANCES**

#### **Times Colonist Article - July 12, 2021**

Island non-profit leading the way to access vital hearing health care

[www.timescolonist.com/life/island-non-profit-leading-the-way-to-access-vital-hearing-health-care-1.24341129](http://www.timescolonist.com/life/island-non-profit-leading-the-way-to-access-vital-hearing-health-care-1.24341129)

#### **Capital Daily Podcast - July 16, 2021**

In the episode, we learn more about the centre and the story of Stephanie Renaas, an audiologist at the centre’s Nanaimo office.

[www.capitaldaily.ca/news/from-patient-to-provider-stephanie-renaass-journey-to-audiology](http://www.capitaldaily.ca/news/from-patient-to-provider-stephanie-renaass-journey-to-audiology)

#### **Victoria Foundation Blog Post - August 20, 2021**

Island non-profit celebrating 30 years of leading the way

[www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca/island-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-centre-celebrating-30-years-of-leading-the-way/](http://www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca/island-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-centre-celebrating-30-years-of-leading-the-way/)





**Workshops and events will be delivered in-person or virtually with Zoom. Please read details and descriptions for each activity to determine the delivery method. To register and for further information, please email [indhc@indhc.ca](mailto:indhc@indhc.ca).**

*Captioning and ASL will be provided for all workshops unless otherwise stated.*

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY

### ASL COFFEE & CHAT

MONDAYS @ NOON - 1PM  
OCT 18, 25 & NOV 1, 8, 15, 22

Join ASL Instructor Jolene for guided, topic-focused ASL conversations. Foundational ASL skills are needed to participate. Dialoguing in a safe environment with peers can help to take your signing skills to the next level! Former participants are welcomed to join us again.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY OCT 12.

### DADS' ASL CHAT

TUESDAYS @ 6 - 7PM  
OCT 12, 19, 26 & NOV 2, 9

Join ASL Instructor James for guided, topic-focused chats with the guys. Foundational ASL skills are needed to participate.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY OCT 5.

### ASL GRAMMAR PART ONE

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS @ 6:30 - 7:30PM  
OCT 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21

Join ASL Instructor Jolene to learn about the underlying structure of ASL. Classes will take place in a small group with opportunities to practice and ask questions. Foundational ASL skills are needed to participate.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY SEP 28.

### ASL GRAMMAR PART TWO

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS @ 6:30 - 7:30PM  
NOV 2, 4, 9, 16, 18, 23

ASL Instructor Jolene will continue with more ASL grammar. Completion of ASL Grammar Part One is required as you will be building on those skills.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY OCT 26.

### UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE OF A COCHLEAR IMPLANT USER

WEDNESDAY, NOV 17 @ 5 - 6PM  
*Presented by Stephanie Renaas*

A workshop for parents, friends, and family members. Ever wondered what the experience of listening through a cochlear implant (CI) is like? Join IDHHC's Audiologist Stephanie Renaas to learn from her lived experiences as a hearing aid user and now a CI user, as well as through her professional understanding as an Audiologist of sound, the human ear, and technology.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY NOV 10.

### ASL CLASSES FOR YOUR FAMILY

For families with deaf or hard of hearing children - our staff can set up ASL classes specifically to address your family's communication needs! Please contact Alex in Nanaimo ([alex@indhc.ca](mailto:alex@indhc.ca)) or Susanne in Victoria ([susanne@indhc.ca](mailto:susanne@indhc.ca)) to discuss details. CAN BE DELIVERED ONLINE OR IN-PERSON.



## EMPLOYMENT

### ORIENTATION TO CAREERCruISING.COM

WED, SEP 22 @ 2:30 - 3:30PM

A brief orientation to CareerCruising.com. This one-stop-shop Career Exploration Website provides access to Career Interest/Skills Assessments, Labour Market Information, Educational programs, and much more!

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY SEP 16.

### SELLING YOUR SKILLS TO EMPLOYERS OVERVIEW

WED, OCT 27 @ 1:30 - 2:30PM

Learn how to promote your skills and attributes

and talk about your hearing difference in a positive way that will entice potential employers.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY OCT 20.

### SELLING YOUR SKILLS TO EMPLOYERS LIVE PRACTICE

HOH, Captioned: WED, NOV 24 @ 1:30 - 2:30PM

Deaf, ASL: THU, NOV 25 @ 1:30 - 2:30PM

Practice networking conversations and answering interview questions in a safe and fun environment.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY NOV 4.

## HEARING HEALTH

### ALL ABOUT TINNITUS

WED, OCT 27 @ 1 - 2PM

Presented by Calvin Staples

Please join us for a Zoom webinar with Calvin Staples, tinnitus specialist and audiologist. Calvin is a faculty member and audiologist at Conestoga College's Hearing Instrument Specialist program in Ontario. He has a background specializing in tinnitus and tinnitus management, as well as aural rehabilitation. He routinely guest lectures at Hearing Health Care conferences on the topics of hearing loss and tinnitus management.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY OCT 20.

### ASSISTIVE COMMUNICATION DEVICES

TUE, NOV 23 @ 11AM - 12PM

Presented by Ted Clegg, ALDS

Join us for a live (in-person or over Zoom) presentation with Ted Clegg from Assistive Listening Device Systems (ALDS). Ted will share with us the latest in communication devices including telephones, alerting systems, alarm clocks, and sound maskers. He will also be available to take any of your questions.

DELIVERED ONLINE AND IN-PERSON. REGISTER BY NOV 16 AND INDICATE WHETHER YOU'LL BE ATTENDING IN-PERSON OR ON ZOOM.

### AURAL REHABILITATION

WEDNESDAYS @ 10:30 - 11:30AM

OCT 13 TO NOV 10

The five classes delivered via Zoom will be facilitated by our Audiologists Edward Storzer and Stephanie Renaas. The primary goal of an aural rehabilitation program is to help individuals integrate or re-integrate into a world full of sound, assisting them in developing skills to hear their best and more confidently navigate various listening situations. \$75 for members, \$125 for non-members.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY OCT 6.



## **COCHLEAR IMPLANT (CI) SUPPORT GROUP**

*WED SEP 22 @ 7 - 8PM*

Join other CI users for an interactive get-together to connect and discuss, share challenges and knowledge. Help those with CI questions to understand your journey and benefit from your experience. Stay connected with IDHHC staff team as well as informed by special guest presenters. In September, we will meet virtually via Zoom and captioning will be provided.

DELIVERED ONLINE. REGISTER BY SEP 15.

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## **SPEECHREADING CLASSES**

*TUESDAYS @ 9:30 - 11:30AM*

*OCT 12 TO DEC 14 (10 CLASSES)*

Learn effective communication strategies, understand speech better, and overcome background noise. Leslee Scott, our Family & Community Services Manager, will be teaching Speechreading classes in the Board Room at IDHHC Victoria. The LET'S TALK Speechreading program was developed by the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA). Captioning will be provided at each class. \$100 for IDHHC members, \$125 for non-members. Registration is now open however seating is limited so don't delay. Register today by emailing [idhhc@idhhc.ca](mailto:idhhc@idhhc.ca) to secure your spot.

DELIVERED IN-PERSON. REGISTER BY OCT 5.

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## **HEARING HEALTH WORKSHOPS SURVEY, WE'D LOVE YOUR INPUT!**

Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre offers workshops and educational opportunities for members of our community to learn and connect with one another. As we look towards planning our Hearing Health workshops for 2022, we would love to get your feedback to help guide our planning. Some of the workshops and webinars we have offered include: Self Advocacy, All About Tinnitus (this October), Cochlear Implant Q&A, and Public Listening Systems for People with Hearing Loss.

Please click the link below to share your thoughts with us!  
Survey closes on October 15, 2021. We greatly appreciate your comments!

<https://forms.gle/Aey8NbKpMjK3vzhW6>





## SHOUTOUT TO...

We want to celebrate and acknowledge individuals, business, and groups working to ensure equitable access for Deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing individuals.



### Mary Winspear Centre

Mary Winspear Centre for adding a Loop System in the Charlie White Theatre.



### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Government Communications and Public Engagement for their partnership with IDHHC for interpreting services for all COVID-19 and provincial broadcasts.

## INTREPID THEATRE

Intrepid Theatre for all their efforts to set up captioning and interpreting services for their virtual events throughout the past year, and again this fall.



**Thank you for all you do and will continue to achieve to ensure accessibility for all!**

## ACCESSIBLE BC ACT

The Accessible British Columbia Act (ABCA) has received Royal Assent and is now law. The ABCA will make BC more inclusive for people with disabilities by identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility. The Act will create new rules to make government and organizations more accessible for everyone so that all British Columbians can take part in their communities through work, play, and other daily activities.

**Watch Overview of the Accessible BC Act in ASL**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=15XqePUGLe4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15XqePUGLe4)

**Accessibility Legislation Information**  
[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/accessibility/legislation](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/accessibility/legislation)

## SVIAD BOTTLE DRIVE

South Vancouver Island Association of the Deaf (SVIAD) would like to thank all those who have been supporting their bottle drives over the past few months. Your support is greatly appreciated and much needed for SVIAD's Annual Activities.

Please continue to save your recyclable cans, bottles and drink containers and come to the upper parking lot of IDHHC at 1555 McKenzie Avenue (if weather is too hot or rainy, meet in lower parking lot next to Fairway Market) to donate them on the following dates:

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 @ 11AM - 1PM**  
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6 @ 11AM - 1PM**

Check out their Facebook page at:  
[www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100012067141217](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100012067141217)





## INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF THE DEAF PEOPLE AND INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SIGN LANGUAGES

The International Week of the Deaf People (IWDP) is an initiative of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and was first launched in 1958 in Rome, Italy. It is celebrated annually by the global Deaf Community during the last full week of September to commemorate the same month the first World Congress of the WFD was held. The International Week of the Deaf People is celebrated through various activities by Deaf Communities all around the world. These activities and events welcome the participation of all members of deaf communities, which include families of deaf people, professional and accredited sign language interpreters, peers, as well as the involvement of various stakeholders such as national governments, national and international human rights organizations, and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities.



**INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF DEAF PEOPLE**

**September 20 - 26, 2021**

Celebrating Thriving Deaf Communities



**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SIGN LANGUAGES**

**September 23, 2021**

We Sign for Human Rights!

Date	Theme
Monday 20 September 2021	Cherishing Deaf History
Tuesday 21 September 2021	Sustainable Deaf Leadership
Wednesday 22 September 2021	Sign languages for All Deaf Learners
Thursday 23 September 2021	We Sign for Human Rights!
Friday 24 September 2021	Intersectional Deaf Communities
Saturday 25 September 2021	Deaf Culture and Arts
Sunday 26 September 2021	Human Rights in Times of Crisis

As of 2021, the International Week of the Deaf will now be known as the International Week of Deaf People (IWDP). This name change in name comes from the decision of the XVI WFD General Assembly, in which our Ordinary Members requested that:

- 1. The WFD work to establish an International Day of Sign Languages,**
- 2. Change the name of our annual celebration to the International Week of Deaf People.**

We accomplished the first goal in 2017, with the UN Resolution recognizing 23 September as the International Day of Sign Languages. From 2021, we celebrate the International Week of Deaf People!



## ALL DEAF REGINA CAST PRODUCING 'FIRST OF ITS KIND' SHORT FILM



AUGUST 1, 2021 - BY TAZ  
DHALIWAL, GLOBAL NEWS

<https://globalnews.ca/news/8078647/fable-deaf-film/>

There's no other film like it in all of western Canada, *Fable Deaf* is a short film comprised of an all deaf cast, consisting of four characters, however, the film is targeted towards hearing audiences.

The creators of the movie aim to provide insight into the isolating struggles deaf individuals face on an on-going basis.



DEAF CROWS COLLECTIVE

Deaf Crows Collective, a non-profit theater collective, is producing the film in partnership with Moxie Films.

According to its site, the mission of Deaf Crows Collective is to provide opportunities for theatre performance by deaf, hard of hearing, hearing, and late deafened actors of all ages to celebrate deaf culture, encourage self-expression, and foster relationships between hearing and deaf communities.

"The movie has many different themes, the most important goal of this movie is about the cultural and linguistic genocide for the deaf community," said Joanne Weber, artistic director for Deaf Crows Collective.

"How the deaf community is figuring out how to persevere, and continue passing along, language and our culture to the younger generations," she added.

Weber explains that sign language is being pushed aside as more focus is being targeted towards oralism, relying on cochlear implants and hearing aids.

The film, which is being shot in American Sign Language (ASL), strives to shine a light on this issue, that not only deaf people across Canada, but the world continue to struggle with.

"We're using surreal imagery and some kind of fairy tale, mythological approach to paint a metaphor of what's really happening in the deaf community," said Chrystene Ells, director of the film.

"Many movies and many performances are always led by a hearing director and there's a lot of hearing people making decisions and they don't understand anything about the culture, the language or the behaviour, and we have a very different experience in our lives," Weber said.

Fatima Nafisa, one of the characters in the film, hopes audiences will take away the message of inclusion, which is one of the central messages the film depicts. "You know a whole variety of things related to identity, you just have to accept and respect everything," said Nafisa. "Don't think that we are less than or that you are better than us or you know that, we are the same as everyone else in the world, and we just want that respect and that's very important," she added.

The team is currently on an intense 15-day shooting schedule, Ells says they've been working long 12-18 hour days.

But, despite the long hours, a very tight film budget and skeleton crew, both the artistic and film directors are elated to see members come to the set, day after day with smiles on their faces.

The film is slated to be released next fall as the group still has six months of post-production work ahead of them.

Ells also says the team hopes to showcase the movie at a number of different festivals, possibly even some international ones.

Deaf Crows Collective performance and art projects are made possible by generous donations of public and private donors. For information about sponsorship, you can email [deafcrowscollective@gmail.com](mailto:deafcrowscollective@gmail.com).





## SELF-CARE AS PART OF MENTAL HEALTH

**BY NATIONAL DEAF CENTER** <https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/resource/self-care-part-mental-health>

Not only do deaf people experience mental health risks more frequently than their hearing counterparts, access to services that can support their mental health and wellness are also often limited. Services and resources such as role models, counseling, and even family support all make major impacts on mental health. Alongside these invaluable resources, these five simple self-care tips can make a difference in mental health and wellness.

**BREATHE.** In stressful times, diaphragmatic breathing—deep breathing that contracts the diaphragm and expands the belly—can help lower cortisol levels. A few seconds of this breathwork done anytime, anywhere, can have an impact on your nervous system. Inhale deeply into your abdomen and feel it expand for at least 5 seconds. Then, exhale and contract the abdomen for an equal length of time or longer.

**STAY MINDFUL.** If you find yourself worrying or becoming overwhelmed with strong feelings such as anxiety, fear, or depression, redirect your brain. Many helpful mindfulness techniques can help you refocus on the here and now, rather than the past or future worries. One technique to try: Identify one thing you can picture in your mind, one thing you can hear or sense in vibrations, one thing you can smell, one thing you can feel, and one thing you can taste. By refocusing your energy and your thoughts, you may be able to find a moment of calm.

**CONNECT.** Loneliness can have serious impacts on mental health. Invest time in connecting with others via Zoom or FaceTime, in person with proper social distancing measures, or on the phone. Vary conversation topics to avoid stressful triggers. Though connecting with others

has benefits, time to connect with yourself is equally important. Taking a morning walk, meditating for a few minutes, and engaging in a favorite hobby are all ways to connect within and decrease loneliness and stress.

**VISUALIZE.** Envisioning yourself responding to potential stressful situations can be an empowering experience. Take a few minutes to visualize yourself responding—rather than reacting—to possible scenarios. As you visualize, focus on your breath, maintain calm, and feel strong and empowered. During this visualization, give yourself permission to react strongly, so if or when the situation occurs, you can focus on responding in the moment.

**REMIND YOURSELF.** If you are struggling in a stressful moment, think back to a time when you felt at peace. Reliving moments where you felt calm and remembering what you were doing is an effective strategy for shifting your thoughts and feelings. These moments of peace may give you the mental distance you need to feel calm.

Caring for mental health takes practice. Take measures to remind yourself of these tips for self-care and mental health maintenance by placing sticky notes in visible areas, doing accountability checks with those close to you, or seeking the support of a licensed professional such as a counselor.

If you stumble, try again. Just like physical exercise, these tips are exercises that support mental health. With time and persistence, they may become habits to rely on in moments of need.

Coping skills may change over time. However, the foundation of these tips involve being present, being mindful, and redirecting energy. Find what works for you and be willing to adapt as things change.



# LOUD NOISE CAN CAUSE HEARING LOSS

**WRITTEN BY OUR NANAIMO OFFICE  
AUDIOLOGIST, STEPHANIE RENAAS**

As the pandemic begins to wind down and society becomes less isolated, more gatherings and events are starting up again. With these events typically come noise – crowds at sporting events, loud concerts, or busy restaurants. Noise is a significant source of hearing loss, but there are steps one can take to protect hearing.

**LOUD NOISE CAN CAUSE HEARING LOSS QUICKLY OR OVER TIME** + A single loud sound (such as firecrackers or a gunshot) near your ear can cause immediate damage. More often, hearing loss can result from damage caused by repeated exposures to loud noise. Generally, the louder the sound is, the shorter the amount of time it takes for hearing damage to occur. The average person has around 16,000 hair cells within their cochlea. Changes in hearing can be noticed when 30% - 50% of hair cells become damaged or destroyed. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that noise exposure levels should not exceed over 70 dB over a 24-hour period, and 85 dB over a 1-hour period to avoid damage to hearing.

**HEARING LOSS CAN BE TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT** + Loud noise is especially harmful to the inner ear. Loud noise damages cells and membranes in the cochlea; listening to loud noise for a long time can overwork hair cells in the ear, which can cause these cells to die. Harmful effects can continue even after noise exposure has stopped. Damage to the inner ear or auditory neural system is typically permanent. However, sometimes hearing loss can be temporary. After leaving a very loud event, you might notice that you don't hear as well as before. You may not hear whispers, sounds might seem more muffled, or you might hear ringing in your ears. This is due to a temporary threshold shift. Hair cells bend more if sound is louder, but they will straighten up again after a recovery period. However, if loud noise is repeated, these hair cells often will not straighten, and the damage becomes permanent.

**HOW DO I PREVENT HEARING LOSS FROM LOUD NOISE?** + A general rule to follow is: if you need to shout, the sound is too loud. If you do need to shout, and cannot avoid the noise, then noise protection should be utilized. Hearing protective devices reduce the level of sound entering your ear. They do not block out sound completely and must be fit properly.

Looking at Noise Reduction Ratings (NRR), typically labeled on device containers for universal hearing protective devices, indicates the amount of potential protection the device provides. Most have a NRR ranging from 0 to 35, with 35 offering the best protection.

**CHOOSING THE RIGHT HEARING PROTECTION** + Insert-type earplugs and earmuffs are universal hearing protective devices. They are both easy to use and are generally inexpensive. However, they must be used and inserted properly in order to achieve maximum protection. Poorly fit protective devices do not block harmful noise effectively.

Specially made (custom) devices are molded to fit your ear exactly and can also have special features like frequency filters that allow the intensity of sound to be reduced, but not the quality. Recent developments in custom hearing protectors allow for customizations for music, shooting, motorsports, work, or everyday comfort.

**WHAT IF I ALREADY HAVE HEARING LOSS?** + Damaged hair cells do not grow back. You should try to protect your hearing as much as possible. Here are some steps you can take to prevent further damage.

- + Avoid noisy places whenever possible.
- + Use earplugs, protective earmuffs, or custom hearing protective devices when around loud noise.
- + Keep the volume down when listening through earbuds or headphones.
- + Get your hearing tested on a regular basis (biannually at minimum).





# THINGS WE LOVE

THESE COME HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

## FILMS

### CODA (2021)



Seventeen-year-old Ruby (Emilia Jones) is the sole hearing member of a Deaf family -- a CODA, child of Deaf adults. Her life revolves around acting as interpreter for her parents (Marlee Matlin, Troy Kotsur) and working on the family's struggling fishing boat every

day before school with her father and older brother (Daniel Durant). But when Ruby joins her high school's choir club, she discovers a gift for singing and soon finds herself drawn to her duet partner Miles (Ferdia Walsh-Peelo). Encouraged by her enthusiastic, tough-love choirmaster (Eugenio Derbez) to apply to a prestigious music school, Ruby finds herself torn between the obligations she feels to her family and the pursuit of her own dreams. *(Watch it on AppleTV+.)*

### A Quiet Place II (2021)

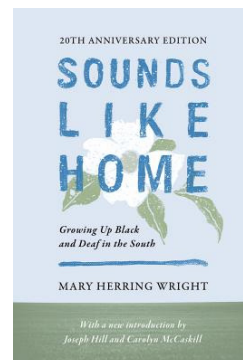


Following the deadly events at home, the Abbott family (Emily Blunt, Millicent Simmonds, Noah Jupe) must now face the terrors of the outside world as they continue their fight for survival in silence. Forced to venture into the unknown, they quickly

realize that the creatures that hunt by sound are not the only threats that lurk beyond the sand path in this terrifyingly suspenseful thriller written and directed by John Krasinski. With the newly acquired knowledge of the seemingly invulnerable creatures' weakness, grief-stricken Evelyn Abbott finds herself on her own, with two young teens one of which is Deaf, a defenseless newborn son, and with no place to hide. Now, 474 days after the all-out alien attack in A Quiet Place

(2018), the Abbotts summon up every last ounce of courage to leave their now-burned-to-the-ground farm and embark on a peril-laden quest to find civilization. With this in mind, determined to expand beyond the boundaries, the resilient survivors have no other choice but to venture into eerily quiet, uncharted hostile territory, hoping for a miracle. But, this time, the enemy is everywhere. *(Rent it or buy it on Amazon Prime.)*

## BOOKS



### Sounds Like Home: Growing Up Black and Deaf in the South, written by Mary Herring Wright:

Originally published in 1999, Sounds Like Home adds an important dimension to the canon of deaf literature by presenting the perspective of an African American deaf

woman who attended a segregated deaf school. Mary Herring Wright documents her life from the mid-1920s to the early 1940s, offering a rich account of her home life in rural North Carolina and her education at the North Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind, which had a separate campus for African American students. This 20th anniversary edition of Wright's story includes a new introduction by scholars Joseph Hill and Carolyn McCaskill, who note that the historical documents and photographs of segregated Black deaf schools have mostly been lost. Sounds Like Home serves "as a permanent witness to the lives of Black Deaf people."





# THE FUNNIES

HAVE A LAUGH

## PICKLES

BY BRIAN CRANE



© Brian Crane.

## THAT DEAF GUY

BY MATT & KAY DAIGLE

