

Fall 10-1-2011

Maine-Lines: A Newsletter for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Late-Deafened, Fall 2011

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Maine Division of Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Late Deafened

Nancy Melanson

Maine Department of Labor, Nancy.A.Melanson@Maine.gov

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalmaine.com/rehab_docs

Recommended Citation

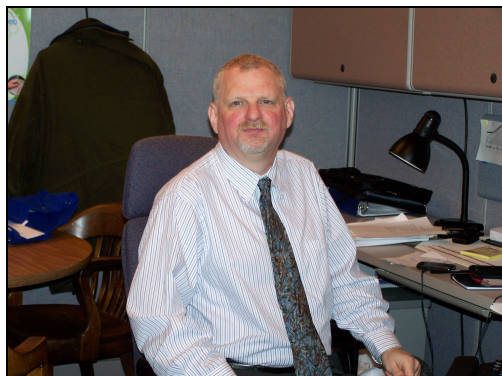
Maine Department of Labor; Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services; Maine Division of Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Late Deafened; and Melanson, Nancy, "Maine-Lines: A Newsletter for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Late-Deafened, Fall 2011" (2011). *Rehabilitation Services/Disability Services Documents*. 14.
https://digitalmaine.com/rehab_docs/14

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Labor at Digital Maine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rehabilitation Services/Disability Services Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Maine. For more information, please contact statedocs@maine.gov.

**THE DIVISION FOR THE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING &
LATE DEAFENED**

MAINE-LINES

**Welcome Terry Morrell, New Director of the
Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late
Deafened**



Terry Morrell, Director
Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened

Please welcome Terry Morrell to the Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened.

Terry began his work December 5th in the Augusta central office. Terry has a Master of Social Work degree from the University of New England and a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from the University of Southern Maine.

He has over 25 years of experience working with, supporting and advocating for people who are deaf, hard of hearing and late deafened. He is experienced with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program and assisted many individuals through the VR program while working at the Community Counseling Center. He is Deaf and fluent in American Sign Language.

**20th Annual Deaf Culture Tea
September 22, 2011
Hall of Flags, State House**

The 20th Annual Deaf Culture Tea took place September 22, 2011 at the Hall of Flags. The Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened recognized several community members with awards for their dedication and work within the Deaf community.

The event began with opening remarks from the Division's interim director, Betsy Hopkins. Betsy welcomed approximately 100 people to the Tea. Other speakers included Representative David Webster from Freeport and Department of Labor Commissioner Robert J. Winglass. Both expressed their appreciation for the community's advocacy work.



Representative David Webster, Maine State Legislature (Freeport)

The keynote speaker was Romy Spitz. Romy's speech regarding her experience as an immigrant to Deaf Culture was well received by the audience. The strong message was sent for everyone to work together to achieve the goal of educating deaf and hard-of-hearing children which will result in those children becoming productive working adults.



Romy Spitz, Keynote Speaker

The refreshments were provided by Richard Desjardins, operator of the Cross Café, located at the Cross State Office Building, and were delicious. The Cross Café is part of the Business Enterprise Program, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI).

The annual awards were given out by Jonathan Connick, Chair of the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. This year's award recipients and their accomplishments are as follows:

Clifton F. Rodgers Award A Lifetime Achievement Award

This award is named for Clifton F. Rodgers, a resident of Maine all of his life. He attended the Maine School for the Deaf and lived in Belfast for over 30 years with his wife Dorothy. Cliff was a member of the Division of Deafness Advisory Council for many years and also worked for the Division of Deafness as a Rehabilitation Assistant.

Quotes that describe him are: "He made an indelible impression on everyone he came in contact with, for his style always created good will and warm feelings;" "His knowledge of Maine and its Deaf Culture were immense;" and "He passed through this world making it a better place."

This award is unique in that nominations for the award must be made by a Commission member. The award is given to an individual in recognition for outstanding service in a professional or voluntary capacity to the Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities in Maine.

The award is presented to an individual who has worked in or with the Deaf community for many years. It is given in recognition of a "lifetime of achievement."

This year's recipient of the ***Clifton F. Rodgers Award*** is Douglas Moody.



David Moody accepting the Clifton F. Rodgers Award given posthumously to his brother Douglas Moody

- Doug Moody was a native Mainer, grew up in Portland, and attended Bates College. After an internship at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, he attended graduate school at Gallaudet University. He spent the remainder of his life working with deaf students, first at The American School for the Deaf in West Hartford, Connecticut, and then returning to the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Governor Baxter School for the Deaf) on Mackworth Island.
- Doug assumed many roles to support deaf and hard-of-hearing children. He went above and beyond his duty/role to ensure success for many of these students.
- Doug loved best working outside the standard, academic curriculum. For most students he was their first professor of the woods, carpentry, and emotional skills. There is a thriving generation of deaf Mainers who understand where oak trees come from, how to build a squirrel feeder, and the gift of kindness because of the time they spent with Doug. There is also a strong group of teachers of the deaf who continue his work by extending their classrooms to include the whole outdoors.
- Before his passing, the kids at Governor Baxter School for the Deaf made a great movie of themselves, which they sent to Doug when he was sick.
- His stories, laughter, warmth, and teachings will remain in the hearts of everyone his life touched.

Promoting American Sign Language, Deaf Culture, and Deaf People Award



Sammy McCoy Hargis – Promoting ASL, Deaf Culture & Deaf People Award

This award is given to a person who worked to improve Maine's Deaf community through leadership by promoting ASL, Deaf Culture, and Deaf People.

- Sammy Hargis worked at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf for decades where he was able to give not only an education but the gift and art of ASL storytelling to generations of Deaf students. In this way, he guided them to cherish their language and culture. Working in the pre-school, he was able to instill a love of stories and the artistic use of language at an early age. All of us have enjoyed his jokes, stories, and creative use of ASL. He not only promotes ASL and Deaf Culture, he creates it every time he raises his hands. He has served as an ambassador for Deaf people and for pride in their language, art and community.
- Sammy made a couple of videotapes of children's books. One was "The Giving Tree" working with Victor Vigna. They are still in the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf library and are wonderful for kids and people of all ages to see the beauty of ASL in storytelling.
- Sammy Hargis is the embodiment of love and self-esteem in ASL. Children from as early as their eyes could take in his signing in the pre-school and kindergarten classes and well beyond graduation enjoy his loving play with ASL. There is nothing more valuable than a skilled teacher with native language skills and a firm grounding in Deaf culture. Sammy is all of these. The Deaf community and the educational system in Maine have been blessed with the linguistics and academic gifts he has brought to our Deaf children.

Outstanding Citizenship Award



Mark St. Pierre – Outstanding Citizenship Award

This award is given to a person who is a leader in the Deaf community.

- Mark has worked in groups homes for many years. He works hard and is very supportive to other deaf individuals' needs. He fights for their rights and is brave to speak up.
- This year Mark St. Pierre received the June 2011 Award of Excellence, Medical Care Development, from his employer, the Carriage House in Skowhegan.

The Award of Excellence was given to Mark for showing safety and heroism by demonstrating outstanding judgment and courage in an emergency and for exhibiting meritorious action to prevent injury or loss of life.

On June 12th, Mark was attending a parade at the Special Olympics. An older gentleman walking in the parade using crutches became overcome from the heat and exhaustion. Mark stepped out of the crowd and quickly supported the gentleman and helped him into a chair, protecting him from falling. Mark began providing first aid for heatstroke, and he continued to provide first aid until the ambulance arrived. Everything was done in such a calm manner that the parade continued on as normal, and most spectators were barely aware of the situation. The following day, Mark checked on the status of the gentleman and made sure that he was doing okay.

Citizenship Youth Award



Joanna Foster, accepting the Citizenship Youth Award on behalf of her son,
Ben Luksha

This award is given to a student who is a leader in school and the Deaf community.

- Ben was chosen by his school as Career and Technical Education Student of the Year for 2009-2010 because he is a student who defines the best in technical education. Ben was the top woodworker in the program and the top student in both sessions for three years. Ben is a creative young man and a pleasure to have in class.
- Ben has a strong work ethic. He completed four years at Portland Arts & Technology High School (PATHS) studying woodworking and carpentry. He is one of the finest woodworkers the Woodworking Program has ever produced. He creates wonderful fine furniture.
- Ben has faced many challenges, so many more than the typical Deaf student, yet with hard work he has become a very successful Deaf adult. Nothing stops this guy!
- Ben would like to be a self-employed woodworker and continues his training and education to reach that goal.

Ginny Hewes - Advocate for the Needs of the Deaf Community Award



Beth Gallie – Ginny Hewes~Advocate for the Needs of the
Deaf Community Award

This award is given to a person or organization that advocates for the needs of Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons in Maine.

- Beth Gallie is a lawyer and trusted member of the Maine Center on Deafness (MCD) team. Over the past ten years at MCD, Beth has represented hundreds (or thousands) of Deaf/hard-of-hearing/late-deafened people of Maine in administrative and court proceedings. She also is an advocate for Deaf/ hard-of hearing/late-deafened people at the Maine State Legislature.
- She accepts each person with an open mind and compassion, listens to their stories and helps each one, whether the problem they bring is actually “civil rights” work or not. Beth has achieved notable successes for the Deaf community, including forcing doctors, courts, the On-Star car system, financial companies, and others to provide effective access and communication for people with hearing loss.
- She has learned American Sign Language (ASL). Beth’s ASL is better than she thinks it is, but she is always striving to improve it. She goes above and beyond her job responsibilities in helping folks, and often works beyond her part-time schedule and handles matters from home.
- Beth is a quiet and somewhat retiring person and never toots her own horn. Her long dedication to Deaf rights is a rare treasured gift.

Special Commendation Award



Deaf Women of Maine – Special Commendation Award
Present, left to right: Deb Reynolds, Brenda Schertz, Diane Poulin, Roxanne Baker & Regan Thibodeau

This award is given to an individual or agency whose activities in and with the Deaf community deserves recognition.

- The mission of Deaf Women United is to promote the interest of Deaf and hard-of-hearing women in North America through education, advocacy, empowerment and a support network.
- Deaf Women of Maine has a profound influence on the empowerment of women in Maine's Deaf Community. It promotes self-advocacy, a positive self image as a Deaf person, and both a local and national network of support.
- Deaf Women of Maine has promoted leadership by Deaf women and encouraged other members to take on leadership roles.
- Deaf Women of Maine organized the 2006 New England Regional convention in Ogunquit.
- The encouraging Deaf Women of Maine get the work done, they are motivators, and act independently. They guide all the women within the group by encouraging them to be involved in the event and showing them how to feel good about what Deaf women have accomplished. Deaf Women of Maine won the bid to hold the National Deaf Women United Conference in Portland, Maine for 2011.
- A very successful national conference was held in Portland Maine, June 29 - July, 3, 2011. Diane Poulin and Brenda Schertz were very involved in making it happen.



Award Recipients 2011 – left to right: David Moody, Sammy Hargis, Deb Reynolds, Brenda Schertz, Regan Thibodeau, Diane Poulin, Roxanne Baker, Joanna Foster, Beth Gallie & Mark St.Pierre

Deaf Culture Festival “Celebrating 135 Years of Deaf Education in Maine” October 1, 2011



Deaf Culture Festival Welcome!

The Deaf Culture Festival took place on Mackworth Island, October 1, 2011. This was the biggest ever! A big thank you to the many people and organizations that made this event successful once again! According to the Portland Press Herald, who covered the event, there were nearly 500 people in attendance.



Vendors

There was so much to do-the opening of the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf Museum; a flu clinic; health screenings; Portland Pirate mascot Salty Pete's appearance; Maine author, Tammy Meserve, reading her book “There's a Moose Loose in the Hoose”; many vendor tables representing hearing loss; an ice cream social; and lots of children activities, including the always popular bouncy house.



Bouncy House



"Salty Pete"

What stood out at this festival were the many modes of communication used. American Sign Language, yes all over the festival; and there were people with deaf blindness/dual sensory loss who were assisted by support service providers (SSP) or specially trained deaf-blind interpreters.



Vendor Table

There was an opportunity for festival goers to understand the meaning of dual sensory loss by wearing special glasses, representing different forms of blindness and visual impairment, and ear plugs. It seemed to be a humbling experience for everyone who tried it. So humbling that the Support Service Provider Volunteer Program had an additional 23 specially trained SSPs officially apply to volunteer as SSPs. Also, there were 14 new people who requested to be trained to do volunteer SSP work. The University of Southern Maine will be training them in the near future. This volunteer program allows Maine's deaf-blind consumers to remain independent and to be social within their communities.



Grace Cooney, Interpreter, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

Camp Sign-A-Watha August 17-21, 2011 Camp Cobbossee, Monmouth

Once again, Camp Sign-A-Watha was an enjoyable summertime experience. Everyone gathered at Camp Cobbossee on Lake Cobbosseecontee in Monmouth. There were good times with friends, staff, signers, and gesturers of all kinds.



Campers & staff headed out for a boat ride

It was a five-day overnight camp program for deaf adults with cognitive disabilities. It was great to see old and new friendly faces and smiles. Campers came from all over Maine, from Lutheran Social Services homes, Goodwill Industries homes, and private homes.



Working hard tie-dyeing t-shirts



The finished product!

There were activities for everyone, boat rides, fishing trips, swimming, T-shirt tie-dyeing, and arts and crafts.



Swimming fun!

Julie Novack, Lutheran Social Services, was the contact person for camp. She did a fantastic job coordinating the very busy week. Julie's contact information at Lutheran Social Services is 866-215-4821 (VP) or 207-797-3935 (V). E-mail: jnovack@lssnorth.org



A happy camper



Another happy camper.....



And another happy camper!

“Independence Without Fear”

The Iris Network, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened, University of Southern Maine Linguistics Department, Helen Keller National Center and consumers have been meeting for over a year to develop a Support Service Provider (SSP) Program for people in the State of Maine who are deaf-blind/dual sensory impaired. This program has been named, “Independence Without Fear.” The mission of this program is to recruit, train and maintain a database of specially trained volunteers who can facilitate communication for people with significant vision and hearing impairments.

People with dual sensory impairment are often frustrated with the day-to-day communication we take for granted. Some examples are: shopping for a pair of shoes, selecting a particular outfit, participating in their child's school or extra-curricular activities, participating in a support group and, in general, integrating into their communities.

Volunteers complete a required training program where they learn the human guide technique, how and when to provide “descriptive information,” communication with someone wearing hearing aids, finger spelling and limited signs. An SSP cannot replace a licensed, qualified interpreter. All legal and medical situations require licensed, qualified interpreters under Maine law.

Anyone interested in becoming a Support Service Provider volunteer or needing the services of an SSP should contact Nancy Melanson at the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened.

Telephone: 207-623-7958
TTY: 888-755-0023
Nancy.A.Melanson@Maine.gov
www.maine.gov/rehab/dod
Nancy Melanson
150 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

New Volunteer Program for Deaf-Blind/Dual Sensory Loss Consumers & Support Service Providers (SSP)



Roger Poulin & Ingrid Nevar-Nosko in conversation

On September 10, 2011 the official “kick off” for the “Independence Without Fear” Support Service Provider Program took place at Wolfe’s Neck Woods State Park in Freeport. It was an all day event starting with a cookout at noon. We had five deaf-blind/dual sensory impaired consumers and 17 SSPs attend.

Everyone enjoyed a deaf-blind version of the game Charades which was done tactilely without using sign language or voice.



Left to right: front: Ona Stewart, Deb Reynolds & Andy Hutchinson, Park Manager. Left to right: back: Larry Poulin, Roger Poulin & Ingrid Nevar-Nosko

A Shore Tour was given to the group by park manager, Andy Hutchinson, from the Department of Conservation. Andy described the park using a “hands on” approach such as touching shells, trees, leaves and feeling a tactile wooden display describing the park. There were many questions from the consumers and SSPs about what was being described which the park manager enthusiastically answered. This process helped the consumers to visualize everything from the SSP’s description and the tactile experience.



Diane Poulin & Ona Stewart in conversation



Ona Stewart & Regan Thibodeau in conversation



Roger Poulin & Judy Kegl in conversation



Left to right: front row: Diane Poulin, Roger Poulin, Larry Poulin, Ona Stewart & Nick Thompson. Back row: Ingrid Nevar-Nosko, Deb Reynolds, Arricka Nowland, Regan Thibodeau, Bill Billingsley, Matt Welch, Tyler McKinley, Myron Shepard-Kegl, Andy Hutchinson, Judy Shepard-Kegl, Scott Murray, Yuri Shepard-Kegl, & Brian Dietzel

If you are deaf blind or dual sensory impaired and would like to apply for SSP volunteer services or you are a trained SSP and willing to volunteer for this program, please contact the DDHLD for an application. Thanks!
Nancy Melanson - 623-7958 (V) or 1-888-755-0023 (Toll free TTY) or E-mail:
nancy.a.melanson@maine.gov



Independence without Fear

The Maine SSP Project. A collaboration of the University of Southern Maine, The Division of the Blind and Visually Impaired, The Division of Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, and Late Deafened, Helen Keller National Center, and the Iris Network in addition to Deaf-Blind consumers and community volunteers.

For more information contact: Nancy Melanson <Nancy.A.Melanson@Maine.gov>

Did You Know?



Amy Sneirson, photo taken 2007

◆ **Congratulations to Amy Sneirson, former attorney for the Maine Center on Deafness (MCD)!** Amy is now the new Executive Director of the Maine Human Rights Commission! You will be missed at MCD Amy! It is wonderful news to see you move forward.



◆ **The Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened (CDHHLDD)** invites you to visit the DDHHLDD web site www.maine.gov/rehab/dod to view the Five-Year Plan that has been created by Commission members.

The Commission for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing & Late Deafened meetings are open to the public and take place at the Central Maine Commerce Center, Department of Labor, in Augusta, in the Frances Perkins conference room, 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM. The meeting dates for 2012 are January 12, April 12, June 14 and October 11, 2012.

◆ ***Resources - A Guide to Services for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened Resource guides are available!!***

For your current issue, see the contact information below or see the Guide on-line at the address below:

Nancy Melanson

Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened
150 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

623-7958 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (TTY)

Nancy.A.Melanson@Maine.Gov

www.maine.gov/rehab/dod

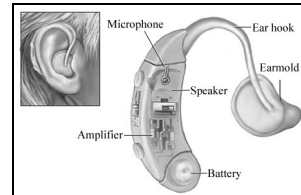
◆ **Contact numbers for the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing:**

Sitara Sheikh.....1-866-926-3321 (VP)

Joe Roquebecil.....1-866-588-6360 (VP)

Ginny Pelletier.....1-866-638-1058 (VP)

◆ **WANTED, USED HEARING AIDS**



Do you have a pair of hearing aids in a drawer?

Want to put them to good use? Mail them to the Penobscot Community Health Center/Warren Center. We will fix them, and pass them along to an individual in need. Penobscot Community Health Center (PCHC)/Warren Center, P.O. Box 439, Bangor, Maine 04401. Tel. 941-2850 (V); 877-542-9000 (V); 941-4932 (TTY); Web site: www.pchcbangor.org.

◆ **Do you have trouble using the telephone?**

The **Telecommunications Equipment Program (TEP)** provides adaptive No-cost and Low-Cost telecommunications equipment to Maine residents who cannot use a regular telephone due to **ANY** sensory intellectual or physical disability.

Contact Sarah-Jane Wing, Equipment Program Manager

E-mail: sjwing@mcdmaine.org

866-680-9674 (VP) or

Erin Sprinkle, Equipment Program Specialist

E-mail: esprinkle@mcdmaine.org

Civil Rights Program at the Maine Center on Deafness (MCD) promotes the rights of D/deaf, late-deafened and hard-of-hearing people throughout the state. MCD advocates for D/deaf, late-deafened and hard-of-hearing individuals whose civil rights related to hearing loss have been violated in employment, housing, federal, state and local government programs, education, or public accommodation situations.

Contact the MCD Civil Rights Program staff:

Beth Gallie, Attorney

E-mail: bgallie@mcdmaine.org or

Meryl Troop, Civil Rights Advocate & Staff Interpreter

E-mail: mtroop@mcdmaine.org

1-800-639-3884 (V/TTY)

866-347-0275 (VP)

If you attended the Maine School for the Deaf or Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (GBSD), counseling is available at no cost to you.

Signing mental health counselors are listed in the *Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened Resource Guide* www.maine.gov/rehab/dod/resource_guide/clinical.shtml they are trained to help deaf people who were abused. If you prefer non-signing counselors with a qualified interpreter, it can be arranged at no cost to you. Insurance or MaineCare will be billed first (if you attended the Maine School for the Deaf or GBSD, no money will be charged to you for co-pay or deductible).

For more information, please contact:

Department of Labor

Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened

490-7668 (VP); 623-7958 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (Toll free TTY)

E-mail: Terry.L.Morrell@maine.gov

Maine Center on Deafness

866-971-9133 (VP); 797-7656 (V/TTY)

1-800-639-3884 (V/TTY); 866-347-0275 (VP)

E-mail: info@mcdmaine.org

**YOU CAN FEEL BETTER.
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

Maine Department of Labor
Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing
& Late Deafened
150 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0150

Return Service Requested

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 8
AUGUSTA,
MAINE

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Carolyn R. Lockwood, Director

Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened

The Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened provides a program of services to Deaf, hard-of-hearing and late-deafened people in Maine, which includes information and referral, advocacy, and accessibility promotion.

Betsy Hopkins, Director, Vocational Rehabilitation

Tel: 623-6745 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (TTY)

E-mail: Betsy.Hopkins@maine.gov

Terry Morrell, Director

Tel: 470-7668 (VP)

623-7957 (TTY)

E-mail: Terry.L.Morrell@maine.gov

Nancy Melanson, Assistant to the Director

Tel: 623-7998 (TTY), 623-7958 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (TTY), 287-5292 (FAX)

E-mail: Nancy.A.Melanson@maine.gov

*The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity in employment and programs.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.*