

Summer 8-1-2011

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

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

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

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

MAINE-LINES

**23rd Annual Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing & Late-
Deafened Conference!**

“CHOICES”

June 24th, 2011

**Colby College, Diamond Building
Waterville, ME**



211 Informational Booth

Well, Meryl did it again, another successful conference! The conference theme was **“CHOICES”** this year. The keynote speakers were:

- Amy Sneirson, Esq. speaking on “Civil Rights for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Late-Deafened people”;
- Regan Thibodeau speaking on “Deaf Culture: Evolving in Maine”;
- Kristine Dach, LCPC speaking on “Choices from a Mental Health, Spiritual, & Motivational Perspective for People with Hearing Loss/Deafness and Those Who Serve Them.”



Regan Thibodeau, speaker, “Deaf Culture Evolving in Maine”

It was a great opportunity for networking with all the different agencies and organizations, many of which had tables with great resources available for the taking.



Deaf Culture: A Closer Look Work Shop

The workshops in the afternoon included something for everyone.

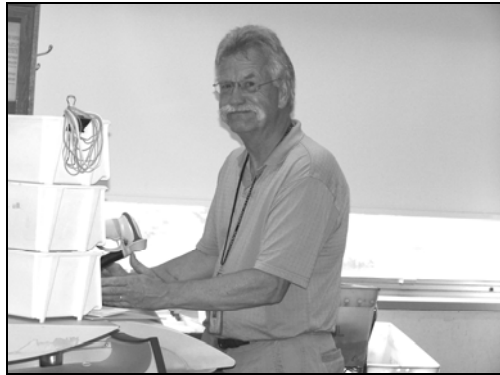
- Interpreters: Beyond the Classroom, Cubicle and Hospital;
- Vocational “Work” Shop-Keeping Your Benefits, Get Help from or Become a Job Coach or Job Developer;
- See What I Mean: Differences Between Deaf and Hearing Cultures;
- Deaf Culture: A Closer Look-Deaf Chat: VRS

Sponsors included: Maine Center on Deafness, Maine Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened (DDHHL), PEPNet Northeast, Mobius, Community Counseling Center, Maine Medical Center, Kewl ASL, Sorenson, Purple, and Maine RID.



Maine Center on Deafness informational booth

Meet David Johnson
State of Maine Postal Service
Department of Administration & Financial
Services (DAFS)



David Johnson, State Postal Center employee

Background information on David: After growing up in Maine and graduating from the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, David left Maine and went to Connecticut to work in a wire company for twenty-two years, where he was the only Deaf person. He came back to Maine in 2003. He has also been employed as a sheet metal worker, building maintenance worker and a rural postal route mail carrier.

He has been married thirty-five years to Tara, who works as a certified interpreter. He has two grown daughters, still living in Maine. One is an interpreter and the other is a certified nurses' aid.

David's supervisors (Andy Giroux and Dan Danforth) praise David as being a great employee, with great work ethics and work performance. They also are familiar with American Sign Language (ASL); they understand and respect the fact that ASL is David's first language and interpreters are a necessity.

David is a very quiet and private man, which makes this interview very rare, and I am thankful to David for agreeing to do this. Smile.

Now here's David!

DDHHL D: How long have you worked for the State of Maine Postal Center?

David: I have worked for the State of Maine Postal Center for a year and an half.

DDHHL D: What does your job consist of?

David: I start at six in the morning and my day ends at three in the afternoon. I drive the State Postal Center truck delivering and picking up mail on three different "runs". I also operate a sorting machine and do various other tasks in the mail room.

DDHHL D: Did you have training in this type of job before?

David: Yes, I was a rural route postal carrier for seven years in Edgecomb, Newcastle and Damariscotta.

DDHHL D: Do you feel that your job is accessible?

David: Yes, I use a Samsung text device provided by the State of Maine. When I am on the road the Center can text me and it vibrates so I know I have a message. I then read the text when it is safe. I also have interpreters when needed for meetings, etc.

DDHHL D: Is there anything that could improve accessibility on your job?

David: The text device I use is great; however, it could have a stronger vibrating signal to make sure I feel it.

I would really appreciate a videophone. My supervisors have done everything possible to make it happen, bought the television screen for the picture and made arrangements with Sorenson Relay Service to set up a videophone. (Note: There have been some issues with the set up, but it has been on the technology end and that is currently being resolved. David should have his videophone very soon. Other Deaf State employees do have videophones available for their daily use.)

DDHHL D: How is the communication between you and your co-workers? Is it a comfortable atmosphere?

David: It is good. We help each other, sometimes tease each other and I do not feel ignored here. There is acceptance with them to me and me to them.

DDHHL D: Are you comfortable and satisfied with your job?

David: I love my job, I'm always busy, first I'm inside then I'm outside, it's great! I work hard, keep focused on my work and do my best.



David Johnson & Andrew Giroux

DDHHL: Finding employment is a challenge. How did you make this job such a success?

David: It did take some time to get this job. I was working part-time as a rural route mail carrier. I took the tests for the federal government postal center, went to several interviews and kept trying again and again. I did the same with the state postal center. Then the opportunity came; I interviewed with Andrew Giroux, and he was as determined as I was to have me working there. It was a great feeling to have support.

The Special Appointment Program is designed to place individuals with appropriate job qualifications into State jobs, by-passing the civil testing requirement for these jobs. For more information about the Special Appointment Program, please contact the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Valerie Oswald at 623-7963 or Bureau of Human Resources, Laurel Shippee, State EEO Coordinator at 287-4651.

Did You Know?



◆ **The Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened (CDHHL)** invites you to visit the DDHHL 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 next meeting date is October 13, 2011.

◆ **The updated *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 us online 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

◆ **Camp Sign-A-Watha**

August 17-21, 2011 - Camp Cobbossee, Monmouth

It's time to sign up!!! Check out the new web site:

www.lssne.org/Camp-Sign-A-Watha. For information contact Julie Novack at 866-215-4821 (VP) or 207-797-3935 (V). E-mail: jnovack@lssnorth.org

Camp Sign-A-Watha, affiliated to Lutheran Social Services-Deaf Services, is a 5-day residential camping program for Deaf adults with developmental disabilities. The program is designed to provide recreation, personal adjustment, and respite-care for individuals who, because of their physical or mental limitations, would be unable to profit from an alternate camping experience. Camp Sign-A-Watha accepts a wide range of campers, from the independent to those needing assistance in many aspects of daily living.

◆ **Maine Deaf Timberfest, August 11–14th, 2011** at Wassamki Springs Campground, Scarborough. E-mail DeafTimberfestME@aol.com or call 866-326-1908 (VP) for more information. Three days of logging events, children's activities, swimming, games, darts, horseshoes, BBQ, Tug-O-War. Everyone is welcome!

◆ **Attention all Deaf-Blind/Dual Sensory Loss Consumers & Support Service Providers (SSP)!!**

The Iris Network, Division for the Blind & Visually Impaired (DBVI), Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened (DDHHL), the Helen Keller National Center & the University of Southern Maine will be officially kicking off the Maine volunteer SSP program, "*Independence Without Fear*" in the near future. If you would like to apply for SSP volunteer services or you're a trained SSP and willing to volunteer for this program, please contact the DDHHL 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

◆ **Community Counseling Center has moved to 165 Lancaster Street, Portland!**

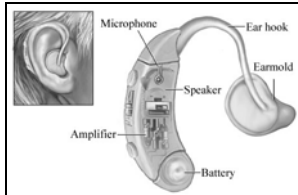
◆ **Contact numbers for the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing:**

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 and LOW cost telecommunications equipment to Maine residents who cannot use a regular telephone due to **ANY** intellectual or physical disability.

Emergency Alert Notification System Maine residents with hearing loss have access to audio broadcast warnings through an email-based real time notification system. Individuals who are D/deaf, late deafened or hard of hearing are eligible to receive, either on a loan or cost-share basis, equipment that will allow them to receive emergency alert notifications that are not accessible to them via normal television and/or radio transmission.

Contact Sarah-Jane Wing, Equipment Program Manager

E-mail: sjwing@mcdmaine.org

866-680-9674 (VP) or

Samantha Clark, Equipment Program Specialist

E-mail: sclark@mcdmaine.org

Civil Rights Program 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:

Amy Sneirson, Managing Attorney

E-mail: asneirson@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

866-760-8430 (VP); 623-7958 (V)

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

E-mail: nancy.a.melanson@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 COMMISSION FOR THE
DEAF, HARD OF HEARING AND LATE DEAFENED

INVITES YOU TO THE ANNUAL TEA

IN CELEBRATION OF DEAF CULTURE WEEK

ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2011

FROM 2:00 TO 4:00 IN THE AFTERNOON

AT THE STATE HOUSE
HALL OF FLAGS

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
ROMY SPITZ

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

ALICE CRANDALL JOHNSON OR
ALICE.C.JOHNSON@MAINE.GOV
(207) 623-7964 (V)

NANCY A. MELANSON
NANCY.A.MELANSON@MAINE.GOV
(888) 755-0023 (TTY)

PLEASE RESPOND BY SEPTEMBER 16, 2011

**Deaf Culture Awards
Nomination Form**

I nominate: _____

For the Promoting of American Sign Language, Deaf Culture and Deaf People Award

This award is given to a person who worked to improve Maine's Deaf community through leadership by promoting American Sign Language, Deaf Culture or Deaf People.

Because: _____

I nominate: _____

For the Outstanding Citizenship Award

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

Because: _____

I nominate: _____

For the Citizenship Youth Award

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

Because: _____

I nominate: _____

For the 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 the Deaf, hard-of-hearing and late-deafened citizens of Maine.

Because: _____

I nominate: _____

For the Special Commendation Award

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

Because: _____

Please Return to: Alice Johnson
Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened
150 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

E-mail: Alice.C.Johnson@maine.gov
FAX: 287-5292

By August 13, 2011

Name (optional) _____

Maine's Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Council Presents:

The National Broadband Plan: What is it? Why should I care?

This two-day forum will examine and discuss the National Broadband Plan to bring high-speed internet to 100 million homes, and the impact that effort will have on rural areas and citizens.

SCHEDULE

Day 1: Thursday, August 25th

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM - Open registration

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - Consumer Orientation Session

9:00 AM - 9:45 AM - **THE CHALLENGE OF DEPLOYING BROADBAND TO RURAL AREAS- IS IT WORTH THE COST, AND WHO IS GOING TO DO IT?**

Ben Sanborn, Telecommunications of Maine; Billy Jack Gregg, Universal Consulting; Melinda Poore, Time Warner Cable; Tom Welch, Chairman Maine PUC

9:45 - 10:00 AM - Break

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM - **FILLING IN THE GAPS FOR COVERAGE- WHAT CAN WE DO?**

Phil Lindley, Connect ME; Sue Corbett, Axiom; Carol Miller, Director of Broadband Tech, State of New Hampshire

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM - **THE FCC, AND BROADBAND ISSUES IT MUST TACKLE**

Karen Peltz, FCC

12:00 PM - 1:15 PM - Lunch (provided)

1:15 PM - 2:00 PM - **WILL BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT REALLY BRING BENEFITS TO THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY?**

Brenda Frye, NASRA

2:00 - 2:30 PM - **PROJECT ENDEAVOR- HOW WILL IT HELP MAINE'S DEAF COMMUNITY?**

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM - **WRAP UP**

Bill Black; Ben Sanborn; Joel Shifman, Maine PUC

Day 2: Friday, August 26th

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM - **WHAT ARE THE ODDS THAT THE FCC PLAN WILL BENEFIT RURAL AREAS IN NEW ENGLAND?**

Bob Loube, Rolka, Loube & Saltzer Associates; Wayne Jortner, Maine Office of the Public Advocate

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM - **ADDRESSING FEDERAL ISSUES**

Tom Welch, Commissioner Maine PUC; Patrick Halley, FCC, USF

11:00 AM - NOON - Wrap up, Question and Answer period

Special Room Rates Available!

Mention the Broadband Forum when you book your room.

800/345-5050 voice

www.innbythebay.com

AUGUST 25th and 26th

Holiday Inn-by-the-Bay

Portland, Maine



FREE and OPEN to the PUBLIC

SPACE is LIMITED!

registration is required

email:
sclark@mcdmaine.org

or call:

800/639-3884 voice/tty

866/347-0275 videophone

ASL Interpreters and CART



www.acscaptions.com

For detailed information on the topics and agenda, please visit:

www.mcdmaine.org



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

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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, Interim Director
Tel: 623-6745 (V)
1-888-755-0023 (TTY)
E-mail: Betsy.Hopkins@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.*