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Maine-Lines: A Quarterly Newsletter for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Late-Deafened, Winter 2001

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

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

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MAINE DIVISION OF DEAFNESS

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MAINE-LINES

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR MAINE'S DEAF, HARD OF HEARING AND LATE-DEAFENED COMMUNITIES.

We're Back! Our last MAINE-LINES newsletter was published in September 1995. Many things have changed since then. We have a new director of the Division of Deafness DoD, many new addresses, new phone numbers and we now have E-mail. You will get information about all these changes and more in our new debut issue.

Jan DeVinney, Director Division of Deafness



Jan DeVinney was hired as the new director of the Division of Deafness in February 2000. She has brought new life to the Division and is working on many projects.

Here, let Jan introduce herself to you...

I am a late deafened person. I was born hearing and have a slow, gradually progressive hearing loss that rendered me profoundly deaf around ten years ago. Most of my life was spent as a hard of hearing (HOH) person to one degree or another. I use spoken English for my expressive communication, as English is my first language, but rely on sign language to understand communication. I started learning American Sign Language (ASL) at Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (GBSD) 16 years ago.

Before coming to the DoD, I worked at the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services in the Office of Deaf Services for three years. Prior to that, I worked at Goodwill in Portland setting up and running their Community Support/Deaf Services State Street program for Deaf people with mental illness diagnosis. In the past, I've also worked at GBSD, Bath Iron Works, and owned my own carpentry/contracting business for a while.

I graduated from the University of Southern Maine (USM) with a Masters Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling in 1998. I also have an Associates Degree from Southern Maine Technical College in architectural drafting/building construction and a Bachelors Degree in elementary education from the State University of New York College at Cortland.

I live in South Portland with my husband of over 20 years and two sons (all hearing). My oldest son is a sophomore at the University of Maine, Orono and my youngest is a senior at South Portland High School.

In 1998, the Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (DOL/BRS) conducted a needs assessment of the Deaf Community of Maine. Many of the services requested already existed in Maine but were not accessible to Deaf and hard of hearing citizens. Through the hard work of John Shattuck, Director of BRS and others, the position of the Director of DoD was re-established. It is our job to make all state agencies/departments accessible to Deaf and HOH people. Most Deaf/HOH will initially contact the state via TTY. The DoD has established a TTY compliance project whereby we periodically call all 167+ TTYs in the State and follow-up with those who have problems. We have written the booklet "Using Your TTY Comfortably". This is actually written for hearing people and free to anyone contacting the DoD. We also publish the "Resources - A Guide to Deaf Services."

The DoD also administers contracts for the Maine Center on Deafness (MCD), the Telecommunications Equipment Program (TEP) through MCD, and the Legal Interpreting Fund through Pine Tree Society Deaf Services.

I will write more about the work we do as well as the goals for DoD in future editions of Maine-Lines. For now we just want you to know that DoD is once again alive and

Blaine House Tea Celebrating Deaf Culture Week September 21, 2000



Left to Right: Debra McCrum, June Ellis, Ted Glessner, Bill Nye, Mary Mackay, Elisa Boxer, Tess Niecelewicz, Roxanne Baker, Jonathan Connick, and Larry Taub

This year was the 9th annual Blaine House Tea in celebration of Deaf Culture Week. Larry Taub, new superintendent of Governor Baxter School for the Deaf was the keynote speaker. His speech emphasized the importance of the entire community working together towards common goals. He also said that this work is a year round commitment, not just during Deaf Culture Week.

Approximately 70 people from the Deaf Community, as well as public/private agencies who work with the people who are deaf attended the tea.

There were seven awards presented to the following people and organizations:

Tess Niecelewicz, Portland Press Herald, for her reporting on Governor Baxter School for the Deaf as it works to improve the education standards for students and becomes an independent school system.

Elisa Boxer, Anchor, Channel 8 News, for her sensitive and accurate reporting on Safer Place activities and the survivors of abuse at Governor Baxter School.

Ted Glessner, Chief Administrator Court System, for his advocacy working with Maine's Court system towards accessibility for Deaf, hard of hearing or late deafened

people. He is a very active member of the Legal Justice subcommittee of the Deaf Advocacy Group.

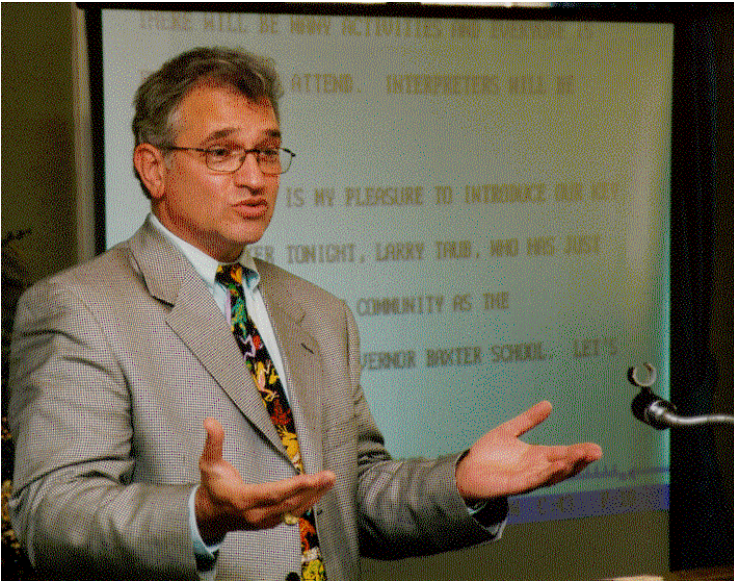
The Maine Center on Deafness (MCD) staff, for their ongoing advocacy and expansion of services to the Deaf Community. MCD's work in the areas of civil rights for Deaf, hard of hearing or late deafened and services to deaf people with mental retardation were highlighted.

Mary Mackay, interpreter, for her activities in the Deaf Community, beyond her role as an interpreter. She is a participant in the major events involving the Deaf Community, such as the Deaf Culture Festival, Red Cross training and the Deaf Timber Fest.

Roxanne Baker, Chair, School Board of Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. Her award was for her leadership in working with the news organizations and legislature as Baxter changes from a state school to an independent school system.

The **Clifton F. Rodgers Award** was presented to **William Nye**. He has worked for over 30 years to improve the services to the Deaf Community. Bill was called a "trail-blazer" and the founding father of services to his community in Maine.

Deafness 101 Conference a Great Success



Larry Taub, Superintendent, Governor Baxter School for the Deaf

On October 18, 2000, 131 people representing 27 departments and agencies of the State of Maine gathered for the first annual conference presented by the Division of Deafness. Jan DeVinney, Director of the DoD coordinated the conference entitled "Deafness 101". The purpose of the conference was to introduce state employees to: Deaf Culture, language and the Deaf Community, the unique issues of the hard of hearing and late deafened, learning about using TTYs and other assistive devices, and about hiring and working with sign language interpreters. This conference had something for everyone: administrators, EEOs (Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinators) and training coordinators, front-line staff and anyone who deals with the public.

Commissioner Valerie Landry, Department of Labor, presented opening remarks. Larry Taub, the new Deaf Superintendent at Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, presented Deaf Culture, Language and Community. Hannah Merker, who is a late deafened woman and an internationally known author of numerous articles and books relating to hearing loss, spoke about her experiences after she lost her hearing in a skiing accident.

In the afternoon, there were four workshops.

1. Mary Edgerton and Jim McGurty talked about the "Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Deaf and hard of hearing."

2. Diane McGinley and David Good taught a workshop on "Using your TTY and the Relay System."
3. Willie Tarr and Anna Perna presented about "Hiring and Working with Sign Language Interpreters."
4. Jennifer Hartling of Hartling Communications Inc. spoke on "Independence through Technology."

The feedback on the conference was very positive and hopefully it will become an annual event.

New England RCD Training Conference, Dec. 5-6, 2000

Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services hosted the New England Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD) Conference at Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland on Dec. 5 & 6. The conference was attended by 50 RCDs and interpreters who work with Deaf, hard of hearing and late deafened individuals in their state's vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. People came from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont and, of course, from Maine. At least 19 guests were Deaf, hard of hearing or late deafened themselves.

Two nationally known speakers spoke to the group. Debra Guthman of the California School for the Deaf, spoke on "The Gray Area: Boundaries and Ethics in Providing Services to Deaf and Hard of Hearing People." Her talk sparked many questions from the audience regarding the ethical dilemmas faced daily. For example being, a Deaf RCD and also being a member of the Deaf community.

Our second speaker was Neil Glickman of the Mental Health Unit for Deaf People at Westboro State Hospital in Massachusetts. His topic was "Engaging Psychologically Unsophisticated Deaf Persons in the Vocational Rehabilitation Process." He talked about using visual aids and other ways to engage this group of Deaf individuals who may not use ASL and have not been taught appropriate social skills.

Each state had an opportunity to share some of their successful projects with the whole group. Many ideas were shared. The last activity was a panel of Deaf and late deafened consumers with employers and job developers from Maine, who discussed their experiences in working with the vocational rehabilitation system.

The meeting and networking with other professionals during breaks and after hours was also seen as a major benefit of the conference.

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services moved to the Department of Labor

Since the last issue of **MAINE-LINES**, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services was moved to the Department of Labor (DOL), and most of our offices are in DOL CareerCenters. What is a CareerCenter? It is a resource for people looking for jobs and training for jobs. Job openings from all over Maine are offered in detail at the CareerCenters. The jobs are accessible in a variety of ways to make it easy for you to find them: on paper, on-line, and on up-to-the minute "job menu boards". At your local CareerCenter we even offer free access to a computerized database of jobs around the country.

The following towns have CareerCenters:

<u>Town</u>	<u>TTY</u>
*Augusta	(207) 624-5134
**Bangor	(207) 561-4670
Bath	(207) 443-7449
Belfast	(207) 338-4399
Calais	(207) 454-7230
Dover-Foxcroft	(207) 564-6990
East Wilton	(207) 645-5806
Ellsworth	(207) 667-1576
Houlton	(207) 532-5301
Lewiston	(207) 753-9067
Machias	(207) 255-3198
Portland	(207) 822-0412
Presque Isle	(207) 760-6301
Rockland	(207) 596-6251
Rumford	(207) 369-9781
*Saco	(207) 286-2680
Sanford	(207) 490-1103
Skowhegan	(207) 474-4902
Waterville	(207) 873-1935

* CareerCenters that have a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD) available to you.

** RCD position presently vacant

RCDs in Maine

RCDs (VR counselors for D/HoH/LD) provide Vocational Rehabilitation services to Deaf, hard of hearing or late deafened people in attaining employment and independence. There are five RCD positions in Maine plus one rehabilitation assistant.

Augusta

Debbie Myers, RCD
2 Anthony Ave., Augusta
624-5111 (TTY)
624-5133 (FAX)

Ginny Pelletier, Rehabilitation Assistant

2 Anthony Ave., Augusta
624-5109 (TTY)
624-5133 (FAX)

Rockland Office

Debbie Myers
279 Main St. Suite 1
1-800-432-1680 (V/TTY)
594-1858 (FAX)
E-mail: Deborah.S.Myers@state.me.us

Saco

Anne Marie Riley, RCD
110 Main St., Suite 1106 Saco
286-2614 (TTY)
Tel: 1-800-492-0670 (TTY)
286-2608 (FAX)
E-mail: anne.m.riley@state.me.us

Saco/Portland

Rod MacInnes, RCD
110 Main St., Suite 1106 Saco
286-2615 (TTY)
Tel: 1-800-492-0670 (TTY)
286-2608 (FAX)
E-mail: rod.macinnes@state.me.us

Bangor

Vacant
45 Oak St., Suite 1, Bangor
561-4903(TTY)
1-800-498-6711 (TTY)
561-4927 (FAX)

Lewiston

Kelley MacKenzie, RCD
5 Mollison Way, Lewiston
753-9060 (TTY)
1-877-796-9833 (TTY)
753-9051 (FAX)
E-mail: Kelley.E.MacKenzie@state.me.us

Do you have a Masters Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation, Education or Psychology or a Bachelor's Degree with 2 years experience working with people with disabilities and are you fluent in sign language? If so, you

could be qualified to be an RCD. If you're interested in the Bangor position, contact LeRoy Dubay, regional manager, at 1-888-545-8811(V) or 1-800-498-6711 (TTY).

DID YOU KNOW??

A column of information and resources:

➔ About the **Telecommunication Equipment Program (TEP)**

This program provides telecommunication (phone) equipment to people with disabilities who can't use the telephone without assistive equipment. The TEP is the old TTY program expanded to persons with all disabilities. There is a loan program and a cost share program, depending on income level. Equipment available includes TTYs, VCOs (Voice Carry Over phones), amplified phones or phones with large number pads and much more. It depends on the needs of the person applying for the program.

Contact: David Good
Maine Center on Deafness
68 Bishop St. # 3
Portland, Me 04103
Tel: 1-800-639-3884 (V/TTY)
Portland area: 797-7656 (V/TTY)
E-mail: mcdtty@maine.rr.com

➔ That if you need to apply for **unemployment** benefits the TTY number is: **1-888-457-8884**

➔ About the proposed Legislation to establish the **Baxter Compensation Authority** to compensate (give money to) survivors of physical and sexual abuse. If you attended the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (GBSD) or the Maine School for the Deaf be sure that Safer Place or DoD have your address so you won't miss out on important information related to compensation.

➔ That if you were a **victim of abuse** at GBSD or Maine School for the Deaf you are entitled to **counseling** at no cost to you. Please contact Safer Place for more information. 892-6814 (V/TTY) or fax: 892-6602 or e-mail: place4safe@aol.com

➔ That **Alpha One** has two deafness specialists

Julie Hebert

Maine-Lines Winter 2001

Alpha One Deaf Services
127 Main Street
So. Portland, ME 04106
Tel: 207-767-5387 (V/TTY)
1-877-906-5375 (TTY)
1-800-640-7200 (V/TTY)
799-8346 (FAX)

E-mail: julie_hebert@alpha-one.org

Theresa Burnette (Deckers)
Alpha One Deaf Services
Acme Office Park
41 Acme Road
Brewer, ME 04412
Tel: 207-989-1451 (V/TTY)
1-877-229-8954 (TTY)
1-800-300-6016 (V/TTY)
989-7976 (FAX)

E-mail: theresa_burnette@alpha-one.org

"As Deaf Services Specialists, we offer specific assistance and advocacy for those who are Deaf, hard of hearing and use sign language. The Deaf Services Program helps empower persons with a disability by providing information and instruction on how to access and use community resources."

Brochures available

Web site: <http://www.alpha-one.org>

➔ That **Bill Nye** has undertaken a major project at GBSD. He is organizing the archives and setting up the museum of Maine Deaf Community related items. He needs volunteers to help with this wonderful project who are willing to commit to a few hours each week. Please contact Bill at 781-6287 (TTY) or Fax: 781-6205

➔ That the Division of Deafness maintains a **registry** (names and addresses) of Deaf, hard of hearing and late deafened individuals in Maine.

➔ That the **Legislature has Interpreters for the 120th Session on Wednesdays and Thursdays**. If you want to attend a hearing, work session or meeting on those days please call Teen Griffen at **287-6826 TTY**

**Things available from the
Division of Deafness**

1. Forms for the Registry for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened Forms

2. "Resources - A Guide to Deaf Services"

A collection of state and national services to Deaf, hard of hearing and late deafened people in Maine.

3. "Using Your TTY Comfortably"

A booklet written by Jan DeVinney explaining how a TTY works. It was written for hearing people.

SOUND AND FURY

Did you see the Dateline story on Sound and Fury? I know several Deaf friends and interpreters did. It was interesting to listen to everyone's point of view. There is a documentary film named Sound and Fury. This is what I found out about the film.

SOUND AND FURY documents one family's struggle over whether or not to provide two deaf children with cochlear implants, devices that can stimulate hearing. As the Artinians of Long Island, New York debate what is the right choice for the two deaf cousins, Heather, 6, and Peter, 1 1/2, viewers are introduced to one of the most controversial issues affecting the deaf community today. Cochlear implants may provide easier access to the hearing world, but what do the devices mean for a person's sense of identity with Deaf Culture? Can durable bridges be built between the deaf and hearing worlds? Find out.

Information about the film and this controversial issue can be found on the web.

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/soundandfury/>

This site has information on Deaf Culture, Cochlear Implants, film schedule and much more.

SOUND AND FURY is appearing in selected theaters nationwide. The documentary will air on PBS in 2001.

SOUND AND FURY is a 2001 Academy Award nominee for Best Documentary Feature.



Cartoonist: Gerry Dorpel, Belgium

What information do you want??

We will keep you updated on:

1. Division of Deafness Activities
2. State Agencies accessibility activities
3. Information important to your communities

If you would like copies of the Deaf Registry form, publications of DoD, or if you have information, articles and other ideas for MAINE-LINES please contact:

Alice Crandall Johnson

624-5965 (TTY)

624-5966 (V)

E-mail: Alice.C.Johnson@state.me.us

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

John Shattuck, Director

Division of Deafness

The Division of Deafness provides a program of services to Deaf, hard of hearing and late deafened citizens of

Maine, which include: information and referral,
advocacy, statewide registry, and accessibility promotion.

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624-5980 (FAX)
1-800-698-4440 TTY/V (within Maine only)
E-mail: Mary.E.Goodheart@state.me.us

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