



Advancing Hearing Awareness

Better Hearing Institute Marks Quarter Century

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The Better Hearing Institute (BHI), the leading North American provider of free information about hearing health, celebrated its 25th anniversary in April 1998.

With generous backing from supporters in the hearing field, the Institute has championed hearing health as an important healthcare issue, offering hope and guidance to the estimated 28 million who have hearing loss.

"Today's climate is so much more positive for people with hearing loss than it was in 1973," said BHI president Dale Thorstad. "Now almost everyone can be helped by the latest technology and new medical and surgical procedures."

BHI was established 25 years ago to challenge prejudices associated with hearing loss and the use of hearing aids. Joseph ("Joe") Rizzo, Chairman Emeritus of BHI, was the founding Executive Director and an architect of the Institute's public awareness campaign.



Presidents Reagan and Clinton helped the Institute increase requests for information, with the announcement of their hearing help. Both wear binaural hearing aids.

For 25 years, Hollywood celebrities, sports personalities, political leaders, and other prominent BHI spokespersons have come forward to share their hearing loss and the choices they have made for better hearing. The Institute has collaborated with many famous personalities including comedienne Kathy Buckley, First Lady Rosalynn Carter, Nanette Fabray, Florence Henderson, former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, M.D., and President Ronald Reagan. Actors Leslie Nielsen and Richard Thomas are BHI spokespersons as International Chairman and National Chairman, respectively.

The Institute has launched several major initiatives, including the Family Physician Program, which focuses on the importance of hearing screenings during regular physical examinations. Capitalizing on the power of the Internet, BHI's award-winning Web site offers visitors information about both hearing health resources and providers now listed in BHI's Hearing Care Provider Directory.

As it enters its second quarter century, the Better Hearing Institute will continue to share with the public the important message that living well means hearing well. ■

To keep hearing health issues in the vanguard and encourage people with hearing loss to seek help, BHI has produced educational materials as well as television and print public service messages. In addition, the Institute is a frequent resource for the media on hearing issues and has recently worked with MSNBC, *Modern Maturity*, *Consumer Digest*, and *Men's Health*.

BHI Board News

On Hold with

BHI



BHI Stats Shattered for Second Year

For the second consecutive year, the Better Hearing Institute's Hearing HelpLine, **800-EAR WELL**, and Hearing Help-On-Line, www.betterhearing.org, are receiving a record-

breaking number of requests for information about hearing help and hearing care providers. BHI projects that calls to the Hearing HelpLine and visits to its new Internet site will exceed the 1997 totals of 38,000 calls and 10,000 Web site "hits."

In February of this year, BHI initiated its Internet Hearing Care Providers Directory, which lists approximately 20,000 audiologists, hearing instrument specialists, and otolaryngologists. BHI offers each provider the opportunity for a second prominent listing in the Internet Directory for a tax-deductible donation of \$100 to the Institute.

BHI continues to provide individual complimentary booklets in response to Hearing HelpLine and Hearing Help-On-Line requests.

JOAN LOWRY: An Interview

When did you join the BHI Board of Directors?

I have been a Board member representing the public sector since 1992. During this time, I have been the Treasurer of BHI and a member of the Executive Committee.

Before I joined the Board I was aware of BHI's contribution to better hearing through my activities as president of the Delta Zeta Foundation. Delta Zeta is one of two national sororities whose mission is to serve those with hearing loss.

What inspires you to continue on the Board of BHI?

I have a hearing loss and have shared the frustration and isolation that an estimated 28,000,000 North Americans with hearing loss experience. As a Board member of BHI, I welcome the opportunity to share the hope-filled message that hearing help is available for almost everyone. It is very rewarding to be able to urge others to join me in choosing better hearing.

Which BHI projects are most memorable?

Over the years I have worked closely on a variety of BHI special projects. I am featured in BHI's entertaining and highly informative video production, *People vs. Noise*, which stars Richard Dysart of



L.A. Law fame. The video provides valuable information on hearing conservation and hearing loss. It also features comedienne Kathy Buckley, race car drivers Al and Bobby Unser, Senator Tom Harkin, actor Richard Thomas, and others.

In my dual roles as BHI director and Delta Zeta officer, I brought these two groups together in order to establish BHI's Speakers Bureau. And I brought both groups together again when we initiated BHI spokesperson Florence Henderson as a member of Delta Zeta and then filmed her promoting hearing help in a television public service message.

I am particularly proud that BHI recently received a Community Volunteer Award from my employer, Media One, through the USWest Foundation, in recognition of my volunteer service to the Institute.

It is a privilege to be a member of the BHI family. ■

BHI Director Don Worthington Selected for AAA's First Professional Achievement Award

Don W. Worthington, Ph.D., audiologist, full professor, and BHI Board member, was honored recently by his colleagues at the 10th Annual Convention of the American Academy of Audiology, when he received the first annual Professional Achievement Award.



This award acknowledges an academy member who has developed a new program of the highest caliber for clinical service, research, or the teaching of audiology. Dr. Worthington is full professor in the Department of Surgery, School of Medicine, at the University of Utah. In addition to his academic accomplishments, he developed and now is the Director of the Intermountain Health Care Hearing and Balance Center in Salt Lake City. In just three years, this state-of-the-art Center has become one of the country's most highly respected hearing health care facilities.

Dr. Worthington has been a BHI Board member since 1993 representing audiologists, and he has contributed to educational initiatives and program development of the Institute. ■

EAST vs. WEST BHI Is Winner in Canadian Competition

The annual duel between fun runners and walkers from two Canadian symposiums of hearing instrument specialists—one representing Ontario in the East and the other provinces in the West—once again made BHI the clear winner. The groups contributed more than \$4,200 to the Better Hearing Institute. Phonak Canada funded both events and provided each runner with a distinctive T-shirt and refreshments, plus donated awards.



Fun Run sponsor Graham Twomey, Phonak Canada, congratulates top fundraiser Mike Steffler (r).

In the East, runners and walkers from the Association of Hearing Instrument Practitioners of Ontario met on April 24 in downtown Toronto on the campus of the University of Toronto. A total of \$2,500 was donated to BHI, with the laurels as top fundraiser once again going to Mike Steffler, who raised more than \$1,400. Mike was joined by other fundraisers including: Dianne Bernath, Peterborough, ON; Jamee Chatten, Oshawa, ON; Cathy MacDonald, Peterborough, ON; Nancy Gemill, Lindsay, ON; and Ruth Lawy, Burlington, ON.

On March 28, the Western Canadian Symposium's Fun Run/Walk was held against a backdrop of the Canadian Rockies at the Jasper Park Lodge in Jasper, Alberta. The event raised \$1,700 for BHI, and for the second consecutive year John

Letts, Saskatoon, SK, set the record alone by raising \$700. Other winning Western fundraisers were: Paul Tait, Wainwright, AB; Esther Lee, Calgary, AB; Pat Matheson, Calgary, AB; and Mary Ann Juhasz, Edmonton, AB.

Winning female walkers in Jasper were: Gerry Rhodes, Cranbrook, BC (first place); Esther Lee, Calgary, AB (second); Lori Cunningham, Burnaby, BC (third); and Lisa Koz, Camrose, AB (fourth). Top male walkers were: Michael Higgins, Courtenay, BC (first place); Steve Bernath, Lindsay, BC (second); Dan Black, Burnaby, BC (third); and Randal Roberts, Sherwood Park, AB (fourth). Running awards to females were presented to: Arlene MacDonald, Edmonton, AB (first place); Kim Taylor, Vancouver, BC (second); and Kim Pearson, Vancouver, BC (third). Winning male runners were: Ian Burnette, Nanaimo, BC (first place); John Letts, Saskatoon, SK (second); and Paul Tait, Wainwright, AB (third).

Winners in the East in the female walkers category were: Cathy MacDonald, Peterborough, ON (first place); Dianne Bernath, Peterborough, ON (second); Nichole Pearson, Kingston, ON (third); and a tie for fourth place between Nancy Gemill, Lindsay, ON, and Jamee Chatten, Oshawa, ON. In the male walker division, top participants were: Ron Redner, Belleville, ON (first place); Steve Bernath, Peterborough, ON (second); Alan Moore, Kitchener, ON (third); and Gordon Calder, Owen Sound, ON (fourth). Winning female runners included: Patricia Cote, Mississauga, ON (first place); Ruth Lawy, Burlington, ON (second); Helen Ellis, Orillia, ON (third); and Dianne Lank, Charlottetown, PEI (fourth). Top male runners were: Gordon Kidd, Minden, ON (first place) and Mike Steffler, Guelph, ON (second).

The Better Hearing Institute will once again use the contributions from the two Canadian events for hearing awareness projects. The funds raised in this year's Canadian East vs. West Fun Run/Walks will support a reprinting of BHI's *Answers to Common Question about Assistive Technology*. Last year the funds raised through the races were used to reprint *Nerve Deafness and You*, a booklet that discusses the facts and myths about hearing loss. Donations from previous years supported diverse awareness projects,



Western Canadian runners and walkers before start in Jasper, AB.



A.H.L.P. attendees race at the University of Toronto.

including announcements in Canada's Cineplex Odeon theater lobbies and the release of three television public service messages to Canadian TV stations that featured actors Richard Thomas, Robin Wright, and puppeteer Shari Lewis. ■

BHI Wins in Annual Boardwalk Event



Fun Run participants run on the Boardwalk.

BHI held its annual Fun Run/Walk on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City during the 1998 meeting of the New Jersey Association of Hearing Health Professionals and the New York State Hearing Aid Society. Runners and walkers enjoyed a brisk race down the Boardwalk, collecting funds to help BHI expand awareness of hearing solutions.

During the meeting, Michele Hartlove, BHI's Acting Executive Director, presented a program entitled "Healthy Lifestyle—Better Hearing," which highlighted forging relationships between hearing health professionals and physicians in their communities. Ms. Hartlove also addressed the importance of including hearing well in a holistic approach to health.

BHI SOUNDINGS

Computer Gift from Starkey Clicks at BHI

Christmas came to BHI in April this year when four Pentium computers and two color printers arrived. all gifts from Starkey. In addition, computer experts from Starkey traveled to the BHI office to get the computers up and running and to train staff.

These state-of-the-art computers will enable BHI to process an enormous amount of data, track calls to the Hearing HelpLine, and upgrade information for BHI's Internet Hearing Care Providers Directory. In addition, the Institute will be able to produce a wider range of resource materials with the complex graphics and print options that are now available.

"The Starkey gift empowers BHI to meet the needs of both consumers and providers quickly, efficiently, and online," said Michele Hartlove, BHI's Acting Executive Director. "BHI is up to speed on the information highway."

Better Hearing Institute

Administration
888-HEAR HELP

Hearing HelpLine
800-EAR WELL

**Hearing
Help-On-Line**
www.betterhearing.org

e-mail address
mail@betterhearing.org

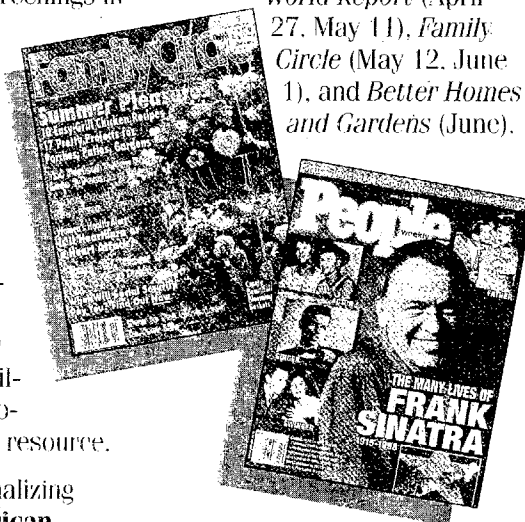
▼ With the help of Welch Allyn, BHI has contacted over 450 medical residency programs throughout the United States to stress the importance of including hearing screenings in regular physical examinations and to survey program administrators about educational initiatives regarding hearing loss and hearing screening. The Institute's booklet, *A Physician's Guide for Identifying Hearing Loss*, is available to residency programs as a teaching resource.

▼ The Institute is finalizing plans with the **American Academy of Family Physicians** for the Main Stage lecture entitled "Helping Those with Hearing Loss—Solutions for All Ages" at their 1998 Scientific Assembly in San Francisco's Marcone Center on September 16 from 5–6:30 p.m. Steve Allen, M.D., and comedienne Kathy Buckley, who will be featured in the presentation to approximately 2,400 family physicians, will address hearing loss and the importance of regular hearing screenings. A lecture on the technology of hearing screenings with hands-on opportunities for participants will be held the next day from 8:15–9:30 a.m.

▼ Through July 12, BHI's **Hearing HelpLine** has received 31,000 calls compared to 24,400 at this same time last year—a 27% increase.

▼ **Institute PSAs** have appeared in prominent national magazines: *ARP Bulletin*

(April), *Family Circle* (May 12), *New Choices* (April), *People* (April 6, April 20, May 18, June 1), *Time* (April 6, April 13, May 11, June 29), *US News and World Report* (April 27, May 11), *Family Circle* (May 12, June 1), and *Better Homes and Gardens* (June).



Several publications have used BHI as a resource and cited BHI information, including the *Chicago Tribune* (April 1, June 1), *Consumer Digest* (March/April and May/June), *Men's Health* (April), *Silent News* (May), and *Woman's World* (March 10).

▼ In March and April, BHI networked with hearing care providers at several annual meetings: New Jersey Association of Hearing Health Professionals in Atlantic City; Western Canadian Symposium in Jasper, AB; American Academy of Audiology in Los Angeles; and the Association of Hearing Instrument Practitioners of Ontario in Toronto.

▼ BHI is an exhibitor at conventions of two large associations which impact BHI's marketing initiatives to seniors

and family physicians: the **American Association of Retired Persons** from June 1 to 4 in Minneapolis, and the **American Academy of Family Physicians** from September 16 to 19 in San Francisco.

▼ **BHI's Hearing Help-On-Line** has won five awards in recognition not only of appearance but also for the quality of the information it offers to visitors. The latest is the "BioMedLink Award." Currently, the Institute's fledgling Web site is receiving over 1,000 visits a week from consumers seeking information about hearing health, providers, and hearing aids.

▼ **BHI's Internet Hearing Care Provider Directory** continues to receive a good response. Each \$100 donation will be applied to BHI's public education programs.

▼ **Kathy Buckley** has produced an award-winning one-woman show called "Don't Buck with Me," which has had



a long and successful run in Los Angeles. In it she recalls the many challenges of her profound hearing loss. Ms. Buckley is currently seeking funding in order to take

this show on the road. If in Los Angeles, take in Kathy's show from June 28 until the end of August at the Tiffany Theater. For ticket information, phone 310-289-2999.

BHI Connects with AARP Members

**35,000 Attend
Biennial
Convention**



The BHI booth was a popular stop for a steady flow of visitors to the 1998 AARP Biennial Convention in Minneapolis, MN, from June 1 to 4. International visitors and over 35,000 AARP members from throughout the United States enjoyed the convention's diverse educational programs, entertainment spectaculars, and star-studded guest list.

The Institute joined three other national hearing health organizations—the International Hearing Society, the American Tinnitus Association, and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association—in exhibiting educational materials about the options that are available to those with hearing loss and tinnitus.

Visitors to BHI's booth came with many questions about hearing loss and hearing aids. *Help Through Hearing Aids—A Guide to Today's Hearing Instruments* was the most popular handout, since it addresses many of the questions that prospective hearing aid users want answered.

"The 1998 AARP Biennial Convention was one of the most successful meetings for BHI," said Michele Hartlove, Acting Executive Director. "We were able to reach out to so many people who are anxious and uncertain about treating their hearing loss. It was wonderful to be able to personally assure them that help is available." ■

Better Hearing Institute MAJOR SUPPORTERS

BHI would like to thank the following companies that provide major quarterly gifts to make Institute programs possible. Their support makes everything happen.

Beltone Electronics
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Eveready Battery
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Rayovac Corp.
Resistance Technology, Inc.
Rexton, Inc.
Starkey Laboratories, Inc.
United Hearing
Systems, Inc.
Unitron Industries, Inc.
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Mid America Hearing Instrument Specialists Rally Support for BHI

At the recent annual meeting of the Mid America Conference of Hearing Instrument Specialists, participants from Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Indiana pledged almost \$4,000 to the Better Hearing Institute. The pledges came in response to an appeal by BHI Board member and hearing instrument specialist Mike Stone, who addressed the 400 conference participants about BHI's achievements and the importance of supporting the Institute in its 25th anniversary year.

Those who contribute \$100 will receive a prominent second listing on a contributors' page in BHI's Internet Hearing Care Providers Directory.

The Mid America Hearing Instrument Specialists intend to rally increased national support by issuing a challenge to their colleagues across the country to contribute \$.25 to BHI for each hearing aid that is sold. Mr. Stone and Michele Hartlove, Acting Executive Director of BHI, will issue the challenge to attendees at the annual meeting of the International Hearing Society in Nashville next September.

"Hearing health care professionals know the importance of education for those with hearing loss," said Mr. Stone. "No association has educated so many so effectively as BHI. The Institute has spread the message that almost everyone can overcome hearing loss. BHI

deserves our support and will use it to expand services throughout the U.S. and Canada." ■



Mike Stone

Hear! Hear!
Fan Mail

Just wanted to thank you for all the work put into your Web site. It was just what I was looking for. I am a physician assistant student doing a community service project at my local senior citizens center. They wanted an informational session on hearing loss and hearing aids. Your Web site gave me great ideas, lots of useful information and plenty of resources. Thank you!

Chelsea Burchette
Physician Assistant Student
University of Washington School of Medicine

BHI—Just a Touch Away

Healthtouch®

BHI has entered into collaboration with Healthtouch, an interactive health education resource that provides consumers with accurate, understandable information about hundreds of wellness and disease topics as well as more than 7,000 prescription and over-the-counter medications. These resources can be accessed on Healthtouch's Web site (www.healthtouch.com) and at kiosks located in 1,500 pharmacies, including Leader Pharmacies and some Meijer or Kmart pharmacies, and in

several military bases and hospitals. Healthtouch kiosks are designed primarily to serve consumers in pharmacies as they pick up prescriptions or select over-the-counter medications.

Three articles about BHI—*Facts About the Better Hearing Institute, Hearing Statistics and Key Facts, and Preventing Hearing Loss*—are now available on Healthtouch's Web site. By November 1, these articles, with additional BHI resources, will be included in Healthtouch kiosks. ■

Hearing Technologies International Funds Reprint of Tinnitus Booklet

Hearing Technologies International, Inc. (formerly the hearing aid division of Best Labs), Pinellas Park, FL, a major sponsor of the Better Hearing Institute, has granted funds for the reprinting of one of the Institute's most popular resources, *Tinnitus, or Head Noises*.

Harvey Romanek, CEO of Hearing Technologies International, Inc., has once again stepped forward to support the Institute's educational initiative about tinnitus. "Ringing in the ears affects an estimated 50 million people, and 70% of the time hearing loss accompanies these annoying and disabling head noises," said Mr. Romanek. "The Institute has once again taken a leadership role in educating the public about the help that is available for those who suffer from tinnitus."

BHI's tinnitus brochure has received a record-breaking response through television and magazine PSAs featuring First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who urges others to seek help for tinnitus as she has done. The Institute's PSAs have appeared on 189 television stations and in magazines with national circulation such as *People, Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, Family Circle, and Better Homes and Gardens*.

A free copy of *Tinnitus, or Head Noises* is available by calling the Hearing HelpLine at **800-EAR WELL** or by visiting the BHI Web site at www.betterhearing.org.

Tinnitus, or Head Noises

By Norman Lee Barr Jr., MD, F.A.C.S.

