

# The Listening Post



## Missouri Hearing Society

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## President's Message

Dear members and friends of Missouri Hearing Society,

During our recent Annual Convention in St. Louis in March, David Shepard was elected President of MHS. My tenure is finished. So, my comment here is from a "has-been;" however, equally from someone continuously interested in the well-being of the Society. One of the perks of having served as President is the automatic spot on the Board for one year following my term, and I feel so privileged to continue in that "retirement" role.



*Yon Wibskov  
2018-20 MHS President*

In a most wonderful way, my two years in the chair were marked by gentility and good economy, and I have been very grateful for your solid interest in what we are all about. They were two significant and progressive years, and you have everything to do with that. Your backing of our endeavors remains pivotal.

Thank you!

And this leads me to a suggestion: A survey among you. A request for your comment. No longer just from a Past President, but comments from your savvy minds and devoted hearts.

A request that goes like this:

Tell us what you count as reasons to be a member of MHS. Perhaps even the most important reason ... maybe one word ... maybe a fine sentence. As in, if you were to suggest membership, what reason would you give?

My request is borne out of a few simple facts:

The first two relate to the changing health care provider landscape.

1. The original reason to provide a protective society for dispensers in private practice – although still valid – may not

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## Past President's Message

(from page 1)

today be considered nearly so needed as it once was.

2. Although CEUs are conveniently assembled in full at our Annual Convention, they are not the weighty reason for membership they used to be. CEUs online is a common fact, any more.

And then these three reasons for membership that should compel us all to consider the constant benefits.

1. The MHS, as well as all the other such state-wide organizations, continue to exist to maintain the interests of the dispensing provider. While a state-issued license to practice protects the consumer, MHS continues to exist to protect the provider.
2. MHS offers a forum for contact, even if only yearly - a place and an occasion to meet and share and gain the sensation of inclusion and partnership.
3. All state legislation is monitored by the MHS full-time lobbyist and staff.

You get my focus? Since we can indeed identify our reason for being, perhaps now is the time to flesh it out.

**Please send your responses on why you think membership in MHS works to Brenda at [info@missourihearingsociety.org](mailto:info@missourihearingsociety.org).**

Let us build a larger and stronger society, an impressive formation of excellence and capacity, and let us shine in our attempt to do so and in our success to get there.

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

*We want to offer our deep gratitude to the following companies for exhibiting at our Annual Convention in March.*

Alpaca Audiology

CapTel Outreach

CaptionCall

Cochlear Americas

E3 Gordon Stowe

Grove-Tek Inc.

IHS

Miracell, Inc.

Natus-Otometrics Division

Oaktree Products

Persona Medical

Phonak

ReSound

Signia

Starkey

Unitron

US Army Healthcare Recruiting

## Mark Your Calendar!



## MHS Annual Convention & Educational Seminar

**March 4-6, 2021**

*Adams Pointe Conference Center & Courtyard by Marriott  
1400 NE Coronado Drive ♦ Blue Springs, MO*

# MHS 2020-2021 Officers & Board of Directors

*The MHS Board members are here to help, so reach out to them with your suggestions or questions.*

## OFFICERS

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## MHS 2020-2021 Committees

*Why not invest in your industry by investing some time in these committees? If you'd like to help, please give Brenda a call at the MHS Office (573-636-2822).*

### CONVENTION COMMITTEE

Lynn Royer, Chair  
David Shepard  
Paula Rodgers

### EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Richelle Kluck, Chair  
Lynn Royer

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Bradley Jackson, Chair  
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### VENDOR COMMITTEE

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### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Tom Wright, Chair  
Scott George  
Tiffany Davis  
Rebecca Krouse

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Marsha Wade, Chair

### WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Rebecca Krouse, Chair  
Richard LeRoux

## Dean Brethower's Hearing Profession Journey



by Larry Brethower

### 1960's

In 1962, while Dean Brethower was selling Fuller Brush door-to-door to provide for his wife and four boys, he was introduced to Lowell Bennett. Lowell Bennett owned the Beltone franchise for the Springfield, Missouri area. Dean really enjoyed selling Beltone hearing aids for Lowell. He enjoyed it so much, that he decided he would like to own his own hearing aid business.

After honoring his one year non-compete with Beltone, Dean (with Lowell's blessing) acquired the Springfield Sonotone dealership and also became the authorized Maico dealer/distributor for the Springfield, Missouri area. As the new Maico distributor for the community, he sold diagnostic testing equipment to the University and the hospital audiology clinics as well as Maico hearing aids.

Dean spent a lot of the time working outside of the original Brentwood Center office location. He would hold regional hearing aid service centers and sell hearing aids by making house-calls. He had battery operated portable test equipment. With an Arkansas license to sell hearing aids, Dad would often travel to southern Missouri and northern Arkansas.

### 1970's

This was a time of transition decade for Dean's hearing aid business and the hearing aid sales profession in Missouri. Missouri passed legislation which required a license to sell hearing aids. Dean relocated his office location from the Brentwood Center, to the Weihmer Building on Cherry Street, to the purchase of Lou Massey's Mid-West Hearing Aid Service location at 328 E. Commercial, and finally to the present location of Mid-West Hearing Aid Service at 628 E. Commercial. In 1975, Dean

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# Dean Brethower *(from page 4)*

was recognized by Maico Hearing Instruments and received the President's Achievement Award.

## **1980's**

In 1983, Dean Brethower became Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences. With the main office moves and this accomplishment, he was ready to aggressively open branch offices and offer best practice approaches to hearing aid dispensing. Dean became the first registered tinnitus clinic in Springfield, Missouri, as certified by Dr. Jack Vernon. He also was the first to introduce probe microphone hearing aid measures to the community.

In Springfield, Dad acquired Holland Hearing Aid Service. It was located in the Doctor's Building on Sunshine Street. He opened additional locations in Kimberling City, MO and Camdenton, MO. Ron Holden owned Fashion Optical and Hearing in Bolivar, MO. In 1989, Dean purchased Ron's business and changed the name to Bolivar Hearing Aid Service. It should also be noted that Dean Brethower served on the Missouri Board of Hearing Aid Examiners from 1986 through 1992.

## **1990's**

In the early 1990's, Dean decided to sell or close most of the branch offices and acquired additional properties surrounding the Springfield, Missouri location at 628 E. Commercial. A provider was employed to care for the Bolivar Clinic and Dean and Lorraine (his wife) would work together on Mondays and Fridays at the Springfield location and Thursday afternoons at the Bolivar office.

In 1997, Dean was recognized by Cochlear Corporation for exceptional educational and referral management services for the severely hearing impaired. Dean and Lorraine became both vocal and written advocates for the hearing health profession and those with hearing loss. They worked together in the Bolivar and Springfield offices and were known in the community as hearing health care

advocates. In January of 2000, their passion and desire led to the formation of Missouri's Hearing Aid Museum.

## **2000's**

In 2002, Dean chose to compliment his decades of hearing aid dispensing with balance disorders assessment and treatment. To address these additional needs and requirements, a relationship was formed with Doctor's Hearing/Testing Centers. In 2003, the museum name was changed to History of Hearing Museum. This was to better reflect the encompassing nature of hearing health care and education.

## **2010's**

Dean and Lorraine continued to work daily together in the Bolivar and Springfield offices. They also continued their advocacy and education work with the History of Hearing Museum. Probably one of their last memorable times in the profession was their attendance at the 2019 Missouri Hearing Society Conference in Springfield, MO. They were so pleased to see the many "young" faces continuing the legacy of the profession. Dean and Lorraine sold their two offices to their son, Larry, in 2019 and declared their retirement from the hearing health care profession.

## **2020**

In April of this year, Dean Brethower left hearing healthcare to others and passed away.

###

## **Editor's Note:**

*Dean was an active member in MHS for several decades. He and his wife, Lorraine, attended multiple MHS conferences and will be missed by all. We offer our deepest sympathy to his family and friends.*



# Our Scholars

Throughout the year, the following MHS members worked diligently to enhance their skills and perfect their abilities to service the hearing community by earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs). During our 2020 Annual Conference & Educational Seminar, MHS President Yon Wibskov recognized these scholars for their accomplishments.

**Congratulations  
to our MHS Scholars!**

**PLATINUM AWARD**  
*(36 or more CEU Hours)*

Kathy-Jo Facteau



**Kathy-Jo Facteau**  
**Platinum Award**

**GOLD AWARD**  
*(24-35 CEU Hours)*

Janette L. Call  
Sheila S. Cockman  
Tiffany Davis  
Salena Kennedy  
Pamela Lawrence-Cole



**Pam Lawrence**  
**Gold Award**



**Salena Kennedy**  
**Gold Award**

**SILVER AWARD**  
*(18-23 CEU Hours)*

Cynthia Bradley  
Nancy Frasier  
MacKayla Wheeler  
Tom Wright



**MacKayla Wheeler**  
**Silver Award**



**Tom Wright (left) and  
Cynthia Bradley**  
**Silver Award**

# A Walk Down Memory Lane

Our 2020 Annual Conference & Educational Seminar was full of education, association business, and recognition of our dedicated members, but we also took time to renew old friendships and build some new ones!

**Pictured below left:** As incoming MHS President, David Shepard (right) presents Yon Wibskov with the President's Plaque for his service as MHS President in 2018-20.



