

The Listening Post



Missouri Hearing Society

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President's Message

We have seen a lot of progress since summer that I could tell you about, but for now I will be selective and take my cue from the cover illustration and cover story title in the November '18 issue of *The Hearing Review* (HR): "PSAPs vs. Hearing Aids. Are today's PSAPs cut out for anything but mild losses?" (The article appears on pp. 10-18). And for those of you who want to check this out, you might also read Karl Strom's column on the latest news on the over-the-counters (OTCs).



Yon Wibskov
MHS President

It is fair to note that a focus in the HR this fall continues to question the application of OTCs and to suggest avenues to stall their distribution. In my view, it is a misappropriation of our professional reason to continue to resist the over-the-counter products. Not only are they warranted, just as all other commodities that are made generally available to the public, but they are being produced and will be marketed. For a while our official channels fought it, but the federal government saw fit to offer the green light. I think we should be happy for those many who really can benefit from a pair of "readers" for the ears.

In that context, it is remarkable to read elsewhere that the end of this year may see the total sales of hearing aids in the US reach – even exceed – four million! Currently, it appears that the increase year-to-date sits at almost 6%, meaning that something is going well. It represents a steady growth in business over the last decade with a combined total of some 1.5 million HAs (2008-2018).

The point? The point is that we ought to stay concentrated on what we do really well. For the time being, that means taking our eye off the possible OTC impact to our field of business and giving ourselves over to what is manifestly our strong suit: Bringing solutions to the many who, for whatever reason, cannot make do

President's Message *(from page 1)*

with anything less than a professional protocol of testing, counseling, fitting and detailed follow-up. Do that and live. And live well.

As I pen this, I am particularly mindful of the certain expansion of our market. The cover story in the October '18 issue of *The Hearing Review* brought to us the sensational statistic that 26 million Americans (in addition to the 38 million with already identified hearing impairments) present with normal hearing in the test booth, but are candidates for help to improve their Speech-In-Noise (SIN). They have difficulty understanding speech in noise and it is no longer a sin to fit them if it helps them!

It is interesting, isn't it? What if? What if we can help – and are allowed to help – the many who need that specific lift in audibility and intelligibility to make their day, every day, go better? And think also of our work to mask tinnitus. Those of you who are engaged in this know both how generally beneficial hearing aids can be and how fine-tuned such application may need to be. It is a worthy task for any of us to take on.

Likewise, consider the issue and facts of the positive influence of hearing aids on the effects of cognitive decline. Just a couple of years ago it was too controversial to speak about in good company. Now, so many more stats are on the table. We ought to embrace what we have learned, trust the research, and help those people.

Since I have mentioned here the heightened awareness of the many with SIN difficulties and those many with cognitive concerns, you might like to know that for our upcoming 2019 Convention in Springfield Doug Beck will present on the speech-in-noise issues among people with "normal" hearing, and David Larsen will return with new and definitive insights on the possibility of postponing the onset and effects of cognitive decline.

I am very excited about our roster of convention speakers and their topics! Take a look at the lineup. It is great! All of this is designed to magnify your awareness, your desire to practice, and your sense of pride in your profession.

While we are in Springfield in March, we will showcase our Hearing Science Program at the Community College. It remains simply exceptional that we in Missouri are so fortunate to have this curriculum and this offering at our disposal. The impact on MHS, both in terms of comprehensive education and in terms of the success it affords in the field, is welcome and heartwarming.

I think you will agree that even what little I chose to mention here suffices to encourage and entice. I want you with me, both in Springfield and afterwards, wherever you go to work. You matter.

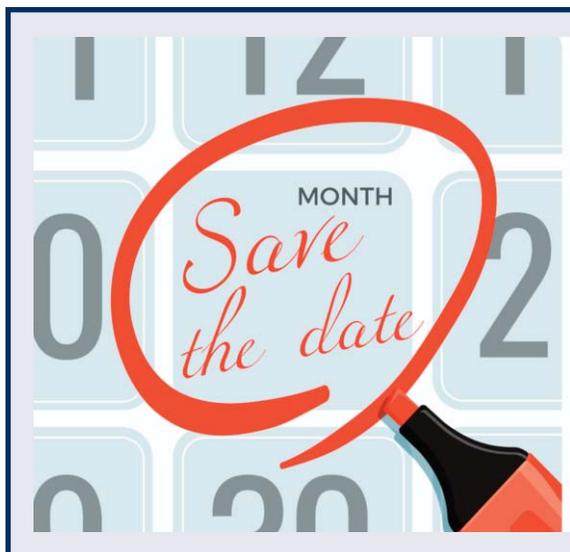


SAVE THE DATE!

The Missouri Hearing Society Annual Convention and Education Seminar

March 7-9, 2019

*University Plaza Hotel & Convention Center
Springfield, MO*



Missouri Hearing Society CEU Award



The Missouri Hearing Society will again offer Continuing Education Awards for members who have completed a distinguished number of credit hours. Please complete the application for the MHS CEU Award.

You are eligible for the award if:

- ♦ Your membership is current as of December 31, 2018;
- ♦ Your membership is current at the 2019 Convention;
- ♦ Your application is received and in order at the MHS office by February 1, 2019.

Remember that attained hours must be earned at an education program which has received prior approval from the Missouri Board of Examiners for Hearing Instrument Specialists, IHS, AAA or ASHA.

For the Silver Award

You have attained and documented **18 hours** during the 2018 calendar year (include copies of hours);

For the Gold Award

You have attained and documented **24 hours** during the 2018 calendar year (include copies of hours);

For the Platinum Award

You have attained and documented **36 hours** during the 2018 calendar year (include copies of hours); and

*Please take advantage
of this opportunity to
earn recognition for
your hard work!*

MHS CEU Award Application

Applicant:

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

MHS Should Send Press Release to:

Publication: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Number of earned hours (circle one):

18 Hours – Silver Award (*copies enclosed*)

24 Hours – Gold Award (*copies enclosed*)

36 Hours – Platinum Award (*copies enclosed*)

Mail or Email CEU Award Application to:

Missouri Hearing Society
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Adding Snap and Pop to Your Paper Flow

General Organizational Problem Solving

by Dee Ann Drovdal



The knows-where-everything-is-go-to staffer is off on a week-long trip to Nepal, waaay out of cell phone range. You're pawing through papers, folders, and drawers to locate that "must have" item. You swear you can feel your hair turning grey as you draw closer to nowhere to look, having gone through it all—twice. What now?

Time to make a resolution that this will never happen again.

Let's review the ideal situation, then address how to get there.

All documents that come into your office should have a clear, defined path through which they should be processed. These should be in writing, compiled in a folder for everyone who may come into contact with all paperwork that enters your office to access.

Then, even if someone is out of the office, the person covering for them can access the folder, and see how to proceed with all documents to ensure that they are processed immediately and correctly. This should be the case even for "junk" mail to ensure no documents languish on someone's desk, until they can figure out who to ask about it--or until it is forgotten.

First, when a document comes to your attention that someone is unsure of how to process, be sure they have checked the process list (which you've written up and distributed). If it is not clear which flow line the document should follow, determine who needs to receive the paperwork and how it should be processed to ensure it is handled timely and correctly.

For example, let's say a payment for an invoice comes in with a thank you note for the driver who delivered the last load, as that driver had gone above and beyond what was needed to ensure the delivery was received. However,

attached to it was a reminder that there was an outstanding purchase order to your company for ordered items, noting that the 30-day pay period will be up in 10 days. (They had included the reminder since you usually pay your invoices within 10 days of their receipt.)

There should be three separate, clearly defined paths for each piece of this paperwork to process through. For example: the thank you note should be copied, with a copy to the individual's file, a copy to his supervisor, and one to the individual directly, depending on the office process. The payment should go to the individual responsible for logging in payments, processing the deposit and closing out the outstanding invoice.

The purchase order should be given to the individual who pays the outstanding invoice, with clarification as to why it had not been paid within the normal time frame. This helps lend responsibility to the situation and helps clarify if there is a root issue that needs to be handled.

Once the paperwork has begun flowing through the process and the situation is now being resolved, you may need to write down the flow process so it can added to the document process folder. This would be done if there was no policy to address similar situations.

As described above, this may involve getting to the root cause of the problem and figuring out why such paperwork had not previously been an issue. Once the root cause has been determined, creating the process and communicating it in writing becomes much easier.

Be sure to detail any time needs along the way. For example: Add a note clarifying that the person who normally pays outstanding invoices

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is on vacation for one week. Since everything had been paid prior to their going on vacation, management had decided that payments for anything that came in while the employee was out would be processed on their return.

This would explain why the inquiring company had not received their payment and allows other stand-in employees to make assurances that payment will be there shortly. This also ensures that follow through can be made by the individual in charge of processing the payment to ensure no late fees are incurred if payment is not received within the 10-day window.

By ensuring a detailed paperwork flow process and training staff on that process, no paperwork

should be left in limbo on anyone's desk. Timely payment can be processed. Invoices would be sent out quickly with clearly defined payment timelines. No loose paperwork will linger pending someone's clarification on how to handle that paperwork. The result of this clearly defined communicated process will be a high performing staff and communication and finance lines that snap and pop!

Dee Ann Drovdal is a freelance writer who has over ten years of office management and senior administrative experience. Organization is one of the topics she enjoys covering.

MHS Annual Convention & Education Seminar General Session Speakers



**Douglas L. Beck, MA, CCC-A,
F-AAA, AuD, Oticon Inc.,
Somerset, NJ**

"Issues in Normal Hearing, Hearing Loss, Cognition and Amplification"



**Jonathan Mikhail, MS, AuD,
FAAA, Area Hearing and
Speech Clinic, Joplin, MO**

*"Patient Counseling Amongst
Generational Differences"*



**David R. Larsen, MFHD,
American Brain Council,
Layton, UT**

*"New Innovations in Dementia
Prevention"*



**Ted Venema, PhD, FAAA,
Ontario, Canada**

*"Pure Tone & Speech Audiometry:
A Closer Look"*

*"Fitting Methods & Real Ear
Measurement"*



**Eloise Thomas, MA, MS, BS,
Instructor-Psychology, OTC,
Springfield, MO**

"Psychology of the Aging"

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Protect Your Vision While at the Computer



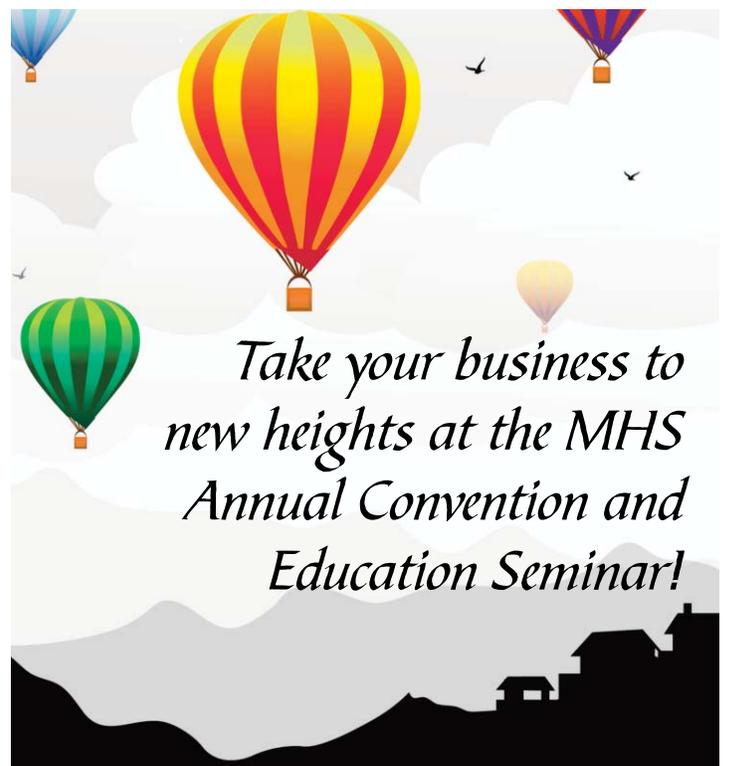
For both fitting professionals and administrative support staff, work tasks often revolve around computer use. A consistent glare, the awkward placement of the computer screen, or inadequate lighting can take its toll over time.

You can avoid health hazards and maintain healthy vision by following these tips from Prevent Blindness America:

1. Your computer screen should be placed a tad below eye level and about 20 to 26 inches away from your eyes.
2. Placing material you are typing on a document holder helps, when the holder is close enough to be seen without having to constantly adjust the focus of your eye or swivel your head.
3. Reduce glare and harsh reflections by using glare filters over your computer screen or adjusting the lighting in the room. Wearing a pair of yellow tinted glasses will also reduce exposure to blue light. Blue light is thought to damage the eyes' retinal cells over time.
4. Sit on an ergonomically designed chair that allows for height adjustments. This helps the user to find that correct relationship between the computer screen and their eyes.
5. Choosing tilt and swivel screens for popular work stations allows for personalization as staff changes. An adjustable keyboard also can be helpful as it may reduce head movement to monitor keystrokes.

"By keeping our eyes healthy," says Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America, "we can become more productive and save on health care costs!" Eye fatigue can be one factor to feeling drained of energy and less attentive. Review your work station to see if implementing one of these tips will not only reduce errors, but leave you perkier at the end of the day.

Prevent Blindness America is the nation's oldest volunteer eye health and safety group. They can be found online at:
www.preventblindnessamerica.org.



*Take your business to
new heights at the MHS
Annual Convention and
Education Seminar!*



Spread the News: Hands Free Is Safer!

Talking on the phone while driving tends to be distracting and unsafe.

While it's recommended that a driver pull over to have a safe telephone conversation, most drivers won't. A driver talking on a cell phone while driving is *four times* more likely to have an accident. That's according to statistics from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. (RoSpa)

With a hands free connection, such as we offer our hearing aid users, a driver can answer the call then alert the caller to hold on while the driver steers off the road. Presenting hands-free as a safety factor rather than just "an option," may enable you to boost your bottom line while increasing your patient's satisfaction. Not only is their personal safety boosted, the call reception is notably better.

Streamers, a popular hearing aid accessory, are useful for enabling hands free cell phone use. And today select hearing instrument manufacturers offer hearing devices that connect directly to I-Phones and Androids, making a streamer unnecessary.

Need some facts to share with your clients, consider these:

According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, drivers who use a mobile phone, whether hand-held or hands-free:

- are much less aware of what's happening on the road around them
- fail to see signs
- fail to maintain proper lane position and steady speed
- are more likely to "tailgate" the vehicle in front of them

- react more slowly, take longer to brake and longer to stop
- are more likely to enter unsafe gaps in traffic
- feel more stressed and frustrated

They are also four times more likely to crash, injuring or killing themselves and other people.

Certainly we don't want to encourage folks to drive around talking on their cells phones. With adequate counseling we can, however, offer a solution that will sidestep these potentially hazardous situations. Remember, more calls are probably received out of the vehicle than in and all of those calls will be clearer too.

For many hearing aid wearers, it takes experiencing the increased clarity that the streamer or direct-connect models offer for them to fully appreciate the upgrade. Educate about the scope of use, and your clients will see the value in taking that step toward a hearing solution package.

For other interesting facts about accident prevention, visit the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents at www.rosipa.com.

*"Change before you
have to."*

-- Jack Welch, American Businessman



An Interview with Yon

by Kathy-Jo Facteau, BC-HIS

We want to thank Yon for his willingness to share some of his background and his valuable perspectives on MHS and our industry.

Q. What attracted you to the hearing healthcare field, choosing to be a Hearing Instrument Specialist?

Like many others in our field, I came in looking for a career change. It was made available to me, and I started. That was in 1991. I was licensed in December of that year. I am a linguist by training and did two years of pre-med in Copenhagen before I came to the US.

Q. If you don't mind me asking, how old were you when you entered the field?

I was 43.

Q. What skills from your past career as a restaurateur carried forward?

Many skills carried forward, but perhaps mostly general people skills. In my 11 years in the restaurant business, I honed my abilities to take care of people – to accommodate and to anticipate. The restaurant business is a lot about service, a lot about thinking ahead and looking for solution even before it is requested. It has to do with expecting the request. Besides, being in business taught me much about the business perspective and prepared me well for more of the same, although – of course – with a different product.

Q. How long had you been in the restaurant business?

I had moved to Missouri from Denmark in the fall of 1979 to work with my parents-in-law in their restaurant endeavors. But life happens. By early 1991, I needed to change some things. And yet, I still get compliments, these many years later, from restaurant patrons from my community.

Q. What was most challenging for you as you began to train for the exams and later board certification?

Perhaps the challenging part was to know what to know and why to know it. At the time, we didn't have the detailed and comprehensive curriculums that are mandated today.

Q. As you worked through the earlier years, what strengths did you find vital as a professional?

The question is two-pronged: It addresses both the issue of being in business and that of being the consummate professional – the expert dispenser. When you are in business, it is as true of our field as of any other that stamina and tenacity are essential. When I started, most of us were in business for ourselves, in independent offices and, at the end of the day, independently responsible for the outcome. At the same time, it is all connected to our proficiency as providers. I found strength in being very good at what I did, in knowing why I was involved and how to make the positive difference.

Q. Why did you elect to obtain the ACA certification?

ACA was created by the International Hearing Society (IHS) to give us a badge of accomplishment. It came about in the days before we had an associate degree in hearing science and it was a great step in adding to our formal education. I wanted it because I am an academic at heart and find all such opportunity worthwhile. The classes I attended in St. Louis were stellar. The content was substantial and the faculty second-to-

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none! And there is something to be said for an offering that runs one weekend each month for 13 months. No small thing!

Q. How did taking the ACA course change the way you implemented care in your own office?

Perhaps it didn't so much as it affirmed what I had been doing and gave me a stronger hook to hang my hat on. ACA became a distinction, a banner we could fly and a connotation of best practices, much like the associate degree now gives its graduates. ACA built trust among colleagues and gave reassurance to our patients that we could be counted on to deliver top level care.

Q. How long were you in private practice?

Twenty-five years, from 1991 to 2016, when I sold to the local audiologist. I had reached retirement age, and she was interested in expanding.

Q. How did being a member of the MHS support your activities as a practicing specialist and later, as you expanded into being a business owner?

From the beginning it was impressed on me that MHS was my professional organization and that my support of it would certainly be reciprocated, in every way and on every issue. Since I was a business owner practically from the onset, I did not feel any "before-and-after" difference but knew that my endeavors had the ears of my peers in the field.

Q. How do you feel the contacts you made at MHS nurtured or opened doors to opportunity?

After 27 years in the hearing healthcare arena, I sit, of course, with many connections acquired over time. MHS is in so many ways "common ground" for us, and belonging there became a part

of my professional life. I recognized early how an organization of practitioners would remain essential to me, and opportunities came from staying in.

Q. What do you see as the difference between a professional who has professional alliances and one who does not?

This is a matter of identifying the benefits of membership. We are constantly aware of the need to explain it. Of course, professional alliances may be formed in all manner of ways not connected with MHS, but from my MHS perspective, I hold that we give our membership opened doors to connecting with prominent people in the field. Fact is, our Annual Convention, if nothing else, provides a welcome chance to re-visit and re-acquaint.

Q. You retired from private practice to delve into instructing new professionals through Ozark Technical Community College (OTC). How has this altered or strengthened your viewpoint of the profession?

Wonderful question! Yes, I am, among other engagements, a part-time faculty at the Hearing Science Program at OTC in Springfield. This position has afforded me the time and space to bring the issues of current market conditions to the classroom. In that sense, I serve as a conduit to the students in the program. Because of it, the graduates will enter the market as employees or as independents with awareness of market make-up and with fortified resolve to impact it.

Q. What personal insights have you gained from teaching others a subject you have enjoyed for so many years?

That it is personal. Engagement with people easily becomes personal, and I am privileged because of it. I bring the

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students experience and pointers, and I am excited! They are stepping in where I am stepping off. They are coming; I am leaving. But in that exchange, I get to remain a voice and an entity conducive to their success. Very gratifying! I love my role there.

Q. This is not the first time you have been on the Board, but now you are leading MHS. What vision would you like to give our membership as an inspiration for the coming year?

My vision for the Society is, of course, shaped by the current conditions for practicing in our field. In a nutshell: Embrace what is. Fill the need. Send the signal of professionalism and best practice. Meaning, accept the arrival of the over-the-counter hearing aids and concentrate on those patients who cannot make do with them. Focus on your specialty, for example, tinnitus masking, assuaging the effects of cognitive decline, and the newly identified segment of normal-hearing

people with problems of understanding, especially in noise, just to mention three. Make it a daily point to be the best choice for the public for such counseling. The field remains wide open. And there are not enough of us to get the job done.

Q. Please share with us some advice, as we move toward an unknown future where challenges are sure to arise.

We exemplify the engaged, even passionate, Society of providers whose reward invariably will be the profound satisfaction of meeting hearing impairment challenges with front-line expertise and viable solutions. MHS is currently enjoying a fine position among the professional state dispenser organizations. Previous leadership made that happen, but I am, for the time being, the proud curator of it and voted in to make it stronger yet! I ask your continued support of MHS so together we can step into a bright future we have helped to shape.



The Missouri Hearing Society wishes you, your family, and your staff a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!