



The Listening Post

Fall, 2015

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MHS President's Message



*Robert T. Guison, BC-HIS
MHS President*

Greetings members of Missouri Hearing Society!

As we approach the end of 2015 and look forward to 2016, I wanted to take a minute to remind us all of all the exciting work that is being done in our field.

"Fit to Serve," a bill which is working its way through Congress, will need our support to be able to help our veteran clients.

Each manufacturer has exciting new products and wireless accessories that can truly reconnect people back into this modern world. As we look forward to next year's Convention, please encourage your vendors to participate with us in Kansas City.

We will be filling openings on the Board, so please take the opportunity to grow and direct MHS' course. May we all have a prosperous new year!

Save the Date ... for a Spring Break!



MHS Annual Convention and Educational Seminar *"Driving Your Practice to Success"*

March 4-5, 2016

*Adams Pointe
Conference Center
Blue Springs, MO*

What If Hearing Loss Meant Your Life?

by Sarah E. Bricker, Freelance Reporter for the *St. Louis Business Journal* and author of the blog *Conscious Ramblings of a 20-Something-Year-Old*



“In a wake of natural disasters and crises, the Hearing communities can respond quickly and sometimes have chances to protect themselves. They can hear the warnings, alarms, or even screams about the upcoming disasters.”

It’s not often that I search for articles on hearing loss, being surrounded by it at work and then living with it 24/7, but this afternoon, something caught my eye on the Silent World paper. August 13 edition. It was titled “During a Crisis, Deaf People Are Left Behind: What the Hearing Communities Can Do to Help.”

At first, I passed it by, because I am not 100-percent deaf, though friends and loved ones might state otherwise at times, and I kept perusing the day’s collection of stories, videos and pictures. Yet, something pulled me back to the simple white and red hospital icon. Some inner fear pulled at me, demanded that I click on the link.

I did. And boy was I glad I did.

When you have hearing loss, you don’t really think about the fact that one day it could be the final factor between life and death. But as I started skimming the article, I realized for me it could. Just last Sunday morning, I was half asleep and rousing my boyfriend to get up to drive to Ohio when my dog started howling. Over and over again. Howling like a loud, chaotic, annoying siren. And while I pleaded, petted and then yelled in frustration, she wouldn’t stop.

“It’s the stupid smoke alarm Sarah,” my boyfriend had said. I couldn’t hear it. My dog could hear it. My boyfriend could hear. I even bet my next-door neighbors who were assuredly awake now that my dog was howling could hear it. Everyone could hear it but me. And I lived there. I slept there. Alone.

I ended up driving to the grocery store at 5:30 a.m. to get batteries to put in the smoke alarm, dog in tow so she

wouldn’t wake up the building. I didn’t think anything of it after that and went back to bed with my laptop and *Private Practice* on hand. I didn’t think about it all, until today.

I thought about it today because reading Deafinitely Wanderlust’s (DW) article scared the living daylights out of me. I’m not deaf but my hearing loss is severe enough that if something happened like a fire, a flood, or anything else involving high-frequency public signals, I was going to be screwed. I was going to be absolutely screwed, dead before I hit 30.

Why? Because I can’t hear the following things: **ambulance sirens, police sirens, fire alarms, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, microwave beeps, oven timers, whistles, and tornado sirens.**

Based off the above, I could die in a fire, a flood, a tornado, of smoke and carbon monoxide, start a fire in my own apartment and essentially blow up my kitchen from heating something too long. Well, isn’t that just comforting.

DW makes some good points that, while written for the deaf communities, are completely applicable to those with hearing loss:

“In a wake of natural disasters and crises, the Hearing communities can respond quickly and sometimes have chances to protect themselves. They can hear the warnings, alarms, or even screams about the upcoming disasters.”

DW is right. Hearing helps alert your brain to an emergency and enables your body to respond quickly and

“The Blog” >p3



“Imagine if the alarm sounds through the building because the fire spreads like a wildfire at night and Deaf people slept through it because they didn’t hear the alarm since there was no flashing light warnings?”

About the Author: Sarah Bricker received her bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Missouri - Columbia, MO and has received many national and regional awards in recognition of her skills. She has accomplished all of this with severe, genetic hearing loss. She has both auditory and phonetic impairments. To contact Sarah: sarahbrix@gmail.com

appropriately, often quickly enough to save your life. Hearing loss impairs this transfer of information, essentially slows down or completely denies the entrance of “emergency response” sounds, thus creating either a delayed reaction or no reaction at all, both of which could be extremely dangerous.

DW provides a good example:

“Imagine if the alarm sounds through the building because the fire spreads like a wildfire at night and Deaf people slept through it because they didn’t hear the alarm since there was no flashing light warnings?”

Again, I’m not deaf, but my hearing loss makes it so I can’t hear these sounds even when I’m awake. And as of today, between college and living in three different states, I’ve slept through a total of 11 fire alarms (both practice and real). Imagine if there had actually been a fire and not some idiot burning a roast.

There is also a feeling of uncertainty and anxiety when you don’t understand what’s going on, and as DW states, this can lead to confusion, not being able to process or respond and essentially getting stuck. When you don’t know what’s happening, you can’t respond, so you shut down and stand still.

DW goes on to talk about a lack of accessibility for those in the deaf communities including not being able to hear announcements through media, lack of closed captioning, areas without deaf-awareness or accommodations and more, but while DW asks for those in the Hearing community to remember those who can’t hear, it made me think more about those with hearing loss who are alone, or families with hearing loss.

I live alone. My dad lives alone. We both have hearing loss, and we both

can’t hear any of the important sounds we need to when asleep or when we don’t wear our hearing aids. So what can we do?

DW mentions alarms with flashing lights. I agree. Having a visual element that would be obvious during crisis is essential for all emergency alarm systems. I also think setting the alarm to a volume high enough to hear even with its high frequency is important. My dad’s alarm system for the house is LOUD without hearing aids, and it’s EXCRUCIATING with hearing aids. But, I’d rather have hurting ears than be dead. Smoke alarms often don’t allow for such adjustments, so that is where the visual elements come in.

For me, I don’t have that choice. You can’t really adjust apartment emergency systems. Hence, if something happens – a fire or tornado – I end up relying on two things: my dog and my boyfriend. My dog is not a trained hearing dog, but she knows when I can’t hear things. And today, I realized I rely on her all the time, everyday.

Her body language, low-frequency growls and howls and the occasional heavy paw to the arm or face are all signals that in the last four years, we have developed together to survive. I know my food is done in the microwave because she runs to go sit in the kitchen when the beep goes off. I know the oven timer is done because she runs to the kitchen, sits in front of the oven, and if I’m not quick enough, starts howling at the timer’s high-pitched beep. I know when people are coming behind me outside (walking, running or biking), because her ears prick up, her head turns back and her fur stands up. And she stays like this until I notice the people too. When



ambulance and fire trucks scream by with sirens blaring, I can't hear them unless I'm no more than 50 ft away, but my dog can hear them without seeing them, and she alerts me to them too. She howls. And that howl is also for the smoke alarm when it goes off, the smoke alarm when the batteries are low, the fire alarm in the apartment building and the tornado siren that gets tested once a month.

During the day, I wear my hearing aids and I can hear most all of these sounds. During the night or when I'm at home and not wearing hearing aids, I have my dog.

But even with those two things, if you really think about it, it's still scary. Hearing loss left untreated could put you in dangerous situations, could mean life or death.

My hearing aids help, but if you're like me and you sleep without them or take them out towards the end of the day, I might just recommend you make an Alaskan Malamute or Husky your next puppy.



Beltone Boost™ Wins 2015 Red Dot Award for Product Design

Beltone Boost™, one of the most powerful hearing aids on the market today, received a 2015 Red Dot Award for Product Design. The award acknowledges Beltone's design excellence in creating a comfortable hearing aid that helps wearers overcome significant hearing challenges.

"Beltone Boost™ represents a unique combination of functional design and powerful features," said Beltone President Todd Murray. "This award validates the relentless effort our team put into developing an attractively designed super power hearing aid that addresses more profound hearing needs."



reddot award 2015
winner

Released in 2014, Beltone Boost™ offers a range of advanced sound processing features designed for challenging listening situations, including Feedback Eraser™, CrossLink Directionality™ and Sound Shifter™.

These features help wearers control their hearing experience and reconnect with sounds or conversations they might have been missing.

The award-winning design features a compact, ergonomic shape and HPF80 NanoBlock™ technology, an environmental protective coating that seals the entire instrument and protects it from moisture, sweat and dirt.

Beltone Boost™ wearers also benefit from Made for iPhone® integration that allows them to simply and discreetly control their hearing aids through their iPhone, iPad® or iPod touch® without an adapter or intermediary

device. Wearers can also use Beltone Boost™ as wireless headphones to talk on the phone, use FaceTime®, listen to music and receive GPS directions directly through the hearing aids. The Beltone HearPlus app offers additional customizable hearing options.

About the Red Dot Award

In order to appraise the diversity in the field of design in a professional manner, the Red Dot Design Award breaks down into the three disciplines of Red Dot Award: Product Design, Red Dot Award: Communication Design and Red Dot Award: Design Concept.

The Red Dot Award was created by Design Zentrum Nordrhein Westfalen and with around 17,000 entries each year is one of the best-respected design competitions in the world. In 2015, it is celebrating its 60th anniversary: It was in 1955 that a jury convened for the first time to assess the best designs of the day. The sought-after award, the "Red Dot", is the revered international seal of outstanding design quality.

Award-winning designers, manufacturers and agencies use the Red Dot winner label and receive numerous other winners' privileges, such as the presentation of the award-winning product on Red Dot Online, in the Red Dot Design Yearbook, the Red Dot App and on Red Dot 21. Additionally, the winning products are communicated in the international PR activities of Red Dot and exhibited in the Red Dot Design Museum Essen for a whole year.

More information is available at www.red-dot.org/press.

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, 2015;
- ♦ Your membership is current at the 2016 Convention;
- ♦ Your application is received and in order at the MHS office by February 12, 2016.
- ♦ 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 2015 calendar year (include copies of hours);

For the Gold Award

You have attained and documented **24 hours** during the 2015 calendar year (include copies of hours);

For the Platinum Award

You have attained and documented **36 hours** during the 2015 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
P.O. Box 1072
Jefferson City, MO 65102
info@missourihearingsociety.org