

CONNECTIONS



Spring & Summer News Letter

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The Deaf & Hearing

Connection's mission is to empower people who are affected by hearing loss to function as productive, independent and self-reliant citizens.

Annual Rose Sale

Starting NOW! DHC is accepting orders for its annual rose sale in celebration of Administrative Professional's Day. Florist Quality Roses will be delivered to your support staff or they can be picked up at the agency. Visit our website to print the flyer and/or for more details!

Amplified Telephone Center

DHC is the Regional Distribution Center for Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc.—**FREE** amplified phones for residents with hearing loss. If you are interested in having someone from our agency come out to your place of business to present information on this program and/or distribute equipment, call Tammy Shuman @ (727)-399-9983 for details.

If you or someone you know would like to receive this equipment at no charge, contact Gwen (727) 399-9983 to find out if you qualify.

Living with Hearing Loss

DHC is proud to announce that we have received a small grant from Publix Charities to provide a living with hearing loss class. The series is set to begin on April 7th @ 2:15 PM. Each class will run one hour in length and will run through May 26th. Sessions will be taught by Speech & Lan-

guage Pathologist, Natalie Donihi and/or Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Lois Maroney. We are very pleased to announce that Tess Crowder of CAI will be providing CART services for the series. If you are interested in this class, please contact the agency to reserve your spot. Because the series was not fully funded—there will be a small fee of \$25/pp for the class. We do have limited scholarships available for those who cannot afford to attend.

American Sign Language

DHC is currently accepting registrations for our next session in **American Sign Language class**. If you or anyone you know wants to learn in a fun and relaxed setting, please contact: **Gwen Sand by calling 727-399-9983**.

Classes fill up fast...
so sign up today!

DHC also offers other classes to the public related to hearing loss. For more information contact: Holliday Lisowski via email: hlisowski@dhctb.org.

H.E.A.R. Store

DHC offers Assisted listening Device presentations every Thursday from 12 pm-3 pm. Contact Ed Marquardt by calling 727-399-9983 for more details about the equipment offered.

Office Space for Rent

DHC has office space for rent for your small business! Contact Holliday Lisowski for more information @ hlisowski@dhctb.org.

Community Room Rental

You can now rent the Community Room for special events, club functions, and meetings. Call Holliday Lisowski for pricing, times and dates for your next event. Functions related to hearing loss are typically FREE!

Hearing Screenings

Call ahead to make an appointment for your FREE hearing test by: Jeff Rupp, Hearing Instrument Specialist. We will save you money on hearing aids and provide you with the most ethical advice.

Be sure to ask about the monthly specials that are available in the Hearing Help Center. Contact Kathy Ford or Ellie Ruck for information.

Come HEAR what a difference a non-profit hearing center can make!

Volunteers

We are in need of VOLUNTEERS for special events for the Deaf & Hearing Connection. Volunteering is a fun way to get involved with your community!

Please call Tammy Shuman or visit our website at: www.dhctb.org for volunteer information or applications.

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Readers/Supporters,

Over the last year the DHC has experienced a multitude of changes and enhancements. We are proud to say, that in this time of economic struggle, we have been able to greatly reduce our debt and expenses. As a team, we are working harder than ever to meet the growing needs of the clients we serve. Our board of directors is becoming stronger and we are feeling a sense of dedication from the community as we have never felt before.

Of course we continue to be

concerned with funding and where it will come from. We are aware that grant and foundation funding has severely decreased and also that our partnerships with the cities and counties we serve are at risk due to additional budget cuts. This year we are focusing on seeking funding for the core services we provide to prevent our clients from becoming homeless—Case Management and Job Placement. Because of our concerns with options for funding we are hosting more fundraising events this

year and urge you to take part in them. We also look to you to assist us in seeking out private citizens, businesses and corporations, etc. that want to join us in identifying additional ways to provide services to our clients. Hearing Loss makes up the largest disability group in the State of Florida. Did you know that you have a 75% chance of being personally affected by hearing loss? DHC is the only center of its kind in the area and we continue to strive to become better providers of service. Thank you for your continued support!



Holliday Lisowski
Executive Director

A much needed enhancement...

DHC is proud to announce a much needed enhancement to our TEAM! Carmen Voland, has returned as a staff member and is making a difference in the lives of our clients and friends as our *Community Activities Coordinator*. Many of you know and love Carmen from her previous position with the agency as one of our Client Assistants. We welcome Car-

men back to the agency! She is organizing monthly activities and workshops. One of the activities she has brought to the agency was our recent workshop on domestic violence. We'd like to say a special 'thank you' to Felisa from CASA for being our presenter! Carmen has also brought us fun activities like our Resolution Party, the Valentine's Day Party and our St. Patrick's Day

Party! She is busy planning other events and workshops for YOU! If you have ideas or suggestions you would like to share with her, you may contact Carmen via email at: carmenvkoala@yahoo.com. We believe that these activities will bring us together as a community and are an added way to provide service to the community. And we live by the thought that a community that plays together... stays together!

"It is a happy talent to know how to play."
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Acknowledgements

For the first time in a LONG time DHC enjoyed the opportunity to take part in the Deaf Expo that was held on Saturday, February 20th! What a great opportunity to get the word out about our services through FTRI, be involved with the community and to collaborate with Self-Reliance

for Independent Living. Thanks to Michael Yelapi (former staff member) for inviting us! Over 4,000 members of the Deaf community attended this event.

We would also like to thank the City of Clearwater and 'Z'VRS for including the DHC

in an event that same evening. The 'Z-Festival' was held in downtown Clearwater—it was an amazing event that brought more awareness to the community and all we have to offer. We were thrilled to participate in both events!



Shared booth at Deaf Expo. DHC promoting the FTRI program along side Self-Reliance.

It's a Mystery!

On Saturday, January 16, 2010 **Raymond James** sponsored DHC's winter fundraiser, *"It's a Mystery!"* at the Hilton Bayfront St. Petersburg. It was the first time many of our attendees had the opportunity to feel what the **Deaf** experience when they attend 'hearing' events—with a focus on theatre. A good time was had by all and the goal of raising awareness was most certainly achieved!! The Deaf & Hearing Connection has many to thank for a successful event. We are deeply grateful to all of our auction sponsors, to **Best**

Buy St. Petersburg for providing a group of volunteers to work the event, **State of the Art Interpreting Services** for donating their time by providing theatrical interpreting and **Access Interpreting** for donating additional interpreting services. We would also like to say a particular 'thank-you' to our Table Sponsors:

Staack, Sims & Hernandez

MedRx

Paul & Kathleen Matecki

State of the Art Interpreting

Of course we must also thank the staff of the **Hilton Bayfront St. Petersburg** and the actors from the **Deaf Diner Theatre** and once

again to our Title Sponsor, **Raymond James**.

Events such as this are the key to bridging the gap between the hearing disabled and the hearing world. Once awareness is raised and we become more educated on an issue, we can truly begin to understand and find solutions.

Thank you to all that attended! If you would like more information on how you can become involved, please contact Holliday Lisowski at (727) 399-9983 or via email: hllisowski@dhctb.org.



Gatherings

DHC is hosting its Annual **St. Patrick's Day Party** on Wednesday, March 17th in the Community Room from 2 PM—6PM. This is a 'Pot Luck' event so bring a dish to share and remember to Wear Your GREEN!



Easter is also a fun time at the DHC! Come celebrate with us on Wednesday, April 7th from 3:30 PM—6:30 PM. The event is FREE—we will supply games and crafts and just ask that you bring a covered dish to share. These events are a great way to meet people and get involved and also to brush up on your signing skills!



Announcement!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS !!!

For the 1st EVER Bachelor/Bachelorette Auction to benefit the DHC!

This event, sponsored by Florida Bank and the Treasure Island Yacht & Tennis Club will be held on Friday, April 9th at the Treasure Island Yacht & Tennis Club, located at 400 Treasure Island Causeway, Treasure Island, FL. Special guest emcee for the evening is Jody Lowery, News Anchor for Bay News 9!

Get ready for a Fantastic Evening of Fun—filled with high expectations and

amazing "date" packages and maybe even a little bit of "LOVE!" Whether you want to be auctioned off or bid on a "package" this will be a night to remember! This event is NOT just for SINGLES! Packages can be bid on without going on the 'date' with the auctioned! For more information on attending the event, go to www.dhctb.org—if you are interested in participating as a bachelor or bachelorette or would like to make a donation to be auctioned, please contact Morgan Cook (board member/event chair) via email at: msmith@flbank.com or by calling Holliday Lisowski, Executive Director at (727) 399-9983.



Bachelor/ Bachelorette Auction on Friday, April 9th at the Treasure Island Yacht and Tennis Club

Summer Time

One of the best things about Summer in Florida is the time we take to spend with our family and friends and enjoy our surroundings, but Summer time at the DHC can get kind of quiet... so we encourage you to plan ahead and reserve the Community Room for your next gathering!

If there are events/projects you would like us to help with, please be sure and send us your request via email to:

info@dhctb.org or stop by any time to leave your suggestions!

If you are looking for things to do—be sure and volunteer your time!

If your heart is in serving others, perhaps you will consider serving on the Board of Directors or an event committee?

We always work to serve you better but we need your input to make that happen. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

DHC is also expecting to have the **final approval from RID** to become its local **Super Site** so be sure and make plans to plan your next workshop at the agency... we are looking forward to this collaboration. We will begin testing soon!!



Contribute

You've heard it before—'every dollar counts...' we say it and we mean it! Here are some examples of how your dollars go to work to support the clients of the DHC:

\$10 Supplies a client with Equipment Education

\$30 Pays for one hour of Case Management

\$50 Pays for two hours of Job Coaching

\$60 Pays for one hour of Interpreting

\$70 Pays for one person, eight-weeks of sign class with a text book

\$150 Supplies a client with an Assistive Listening Device

\$200 Pays for one person to attend eight weeks of speech reading/living with hearing loss class

\$1500 Purchases a pair of high quality hearing aids

The great thing about contributing is that you can control where and how your dollars are spent—We'd love to talk with you about additional opportunities to support the clients of the DHC.

"Some people give time, some money, some their skills and connections, some literally give their life's blood. But everyone has something to give."

-Barbara Bush

Contact Information

We'd like to make sure you know how to reach our staff:

Holliday Lisowski, Executive Director hlisowski@dhctb.org

Tammy Shuman, Executive Assistant tshuman@dhctb.org

Carmen Voland, Community Activities Coordinator

(727)235.6062 VP

Jeff Rupp, Hearing Instrument Specialist jrupp@dhctb.org

Kathleen Ford/Ellie Ruck, Front Office Managers

kford@dhctb.org

Antonieta Gonzalez, Community Support Services Coordinator agonzalez@dhctb.org

Marjorie Coon, Case Manager mcoon@dhctb.org

Gwen Sand, FTIRI Administrator gsand@dhctb.org

Robbyn Walters, FTIRI Distribution Coordinator

rwalters@dhctb.org

Ed Marquardt, Operations Manager ism@dhctb.org



We Care About Our Clients!