



Minnesota Hands & Voices FOCUS

—supporting families with kids who have hearing loss—

JANUARY 2010

Families love Dreams and Inspirations retreats

For many summers, Confidence Learning Center near Brainerd has hosted Camp Sertoma, building friendships and lasting memories for kids who are deaf or hard of hearing. This past year, the camp expanded its programs and its calendar to reach whole families as well as individuals in the Deaf community. The new offerings are called “Dreams and Inspirations Deaf Camps and Retreats,” and they’re earning high praise from participants.

“Great,” “fantastic” and “awesome” are sprinkled throughout the emails parents send to Camp Director Emily Smith-Lundberg thanking her for recent retreats. One mom deemed a retreat “the best weekend we have had as a family in almost five years. Our son has not stopped talking about it and told grandma every last detail! You have truly changed our lives for the better.” Another said she’d “absolutely” recommend the retreats to other families, and noted that having a camp director who is deaf gives an added dimension to the weekends: “Your ideas are more

personalized because of your life experiences,” she said.

Emily appreciates receiving such supportive comments, especially since she went out on a limb to set up Dreams and Inspirations in the first place. She has been directing Camp Sertoma with Jen Bailey since 2002, and saw a need for a wider range of camp offerings.

“When parents come and pick up their child(ren) from Camp Sertoma, they notice a boost in their child’s self-esteem and confidence,” Emily explained. “Many of the families expressed interest in having more programs for the family as whole at camp. This is where I started to think about expanding the options here at camp, for families and children.”

Her goal was to create retreats that brought together groups of people who shared similar experiences, concerns and modes of communication. It took numerous meetings to work out the details for adding new offerings to the Confidence Learning Center calendar, Emily said. The first retreat took place in November 2008. It was for hearing parents of deaf children who wanted more information on Deaf Culture and American Sign Language (ASL). The weekend included time with deaf adults and hearing parents who had raised deaf children who were positive role models.

“This was a very successful retreat and a great way to kick off the program!” Emily said. From that first retreat in November ‘08 to now, Dreams & Inspirations retreats have had more than 300 participants.

Families that attend Dreams and Inspirations retreats stay in private bedrooms in cabins with a kitchen, bath-

rooms and living area with a gas fireplace shared with a small group of other families. The camp has nine sleeping cabins.

Emily has worked with individual and corporate donors, service clubs, and fraternal organizations to offset the cost of attending Dreams and Inspirations retreats. While retreat costs vary, many have been as low as \$50 per participant.

Emily said she’s hoping to create even more retreats in the future. To submit an idea, contact Emily at or 866-948-9063 or email emily@dreamsandinspirations.com.



Upcoming Dreams and Inspirations Retreats

Hearing Siblings with Deaf or Hard of Hearing Siblings
January 29-31, 2010

Kids of Deaf Adults (Koda)
February 5-7, 2010

Families with Hard of Hearing Children
February 26-28, 2010

Wellness
March 12-14, 2010

Cued Speech
April 9-11, 2010

Pink Deafies (Breast Cancer)
April 23-25, 2010

Deaf Women
May 21-23, 2010

Youth Science Camp
June 18-20, 2010

DeafBlind
September 9-12, 2010

Deaf Men
September 24-26, 2010

Kids of Deaf adults (Koda)
October 22-24, 2010

Hearing Parents with Deaf & Hard of Hearing Children
November 19-21, 2010

Jason, Alyssa and Samantha Schmidt enjoy snow tubing during a recent Dreams and Inspirations retreat at Confidence Learning Center.

Here's What's Happening Around Town

Monday,
Jan. 11

Pay What You Can tickets go on sale for the Children's Theatre production "Mr. McGee and the Biting Flea." For show dates and times, see www.childrenstheatre.org. There will be an ASL-interpreted performance Feb. 12. See details in the box to the right.

Tuesday,
Jan. 19

Practice Cue Clutch meets from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Jo Jo's Rise & Wine, 12501 Nicollet Ave. in Burnsville. For more information, email info@cuedspeechminnesota.org.

Thursday,
Jan. 21

MDS-MNSA (Metro Deaf School-Minnesota North Star Academy) offers Teen Night from 6 to 9 p.m. with games, sports, movies and snacks. This event is open to all high school students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Cost is \$5. To confirm this event will happen as scheduled, email contact.us@metrodeafschool.org.

Saturday,
Jan. 23

Vision Loss Resources in Minneapolis hosts a workshop from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for friends and family to learn what life is like for a loved one who has vision loss. Registration is \$10, which includes lunch. Free parking is provided. Call Nene Vang by Jan. 14 at 612-871-2222.



Join us for our annual private party at the Roller Garden in St. Louis Park Sunday, Jan. 31 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Skating and dinner are on us! (Donations are welcome.) RSVP by Jan. 26 to mnhv@lifetrackresources.org.

Wednesday,
Feb. 3

The University of Minnesota Medical Center-Fairview holds a **cochlear implant coffee chat from 10 to 11 a.m.** for anyone who has a CI or wants to learn about them. The monthly chat is on the 8th floor of the Phillips Wangenstein Building on the U of M Minneapolis campus. For more information, email jackmaddio@msn.com.

Feb. 6 & 7

Improve your cueing skills at a Cued Speech Workshop with Tom Shull from Language Matters, Inc. The workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Days Inn West in Bloomington. Cost is \$100 for Cued Speech Association of Minnesota members, \$110 non-members. A box lunch is provided on Saturday. Register online at www.cuedspeechminnesota.org.

Sunday,
Feb. 7

"Love and Scandal" is the free, ASL-interpreted tour at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts at 1 p.m. in the museum lobby. For details, call 612-870-3131 (v); -3132 (tty) or e-mail dhegstro@artsmia.org.

Sunday,
Feb. 7

Naturally Kids, a free, hands-on nature discovery program for parents and children (5 to 12) with any disability, offers "Ice Is Nice" from 1 to 3 p.m. at Fort Snelling State Park in St. Paul. The focus is on ice facts and fun, with skating/sliding on Snelling Lake. To request an interpreter or register, see www.naturallykids.org.

Monday,
March 15

Cochlear Americas teams with Fairview to host a seminar on **"Facilitating Spoken Language Development for Young Children with Hearing Loss"** at the Earl Brown Continuing Education Center in St. Paul. Topics include current research, new technologies, and rehabilitation techniques. Registration, which includes morning coffee, lunch and materials, is \$80 for professionals, \$35 for parents, and \$30 for students. To register, go to www.regonline.com/hopeEI.



ASL-Interpreted Performances

Request the VSA discount.

The Mousetrap

Saturday, Jan. 16, 7:30 p.m. Lyric Arts, Anoka. 763-422-1838; www.lyricarts.org

Dreamgirls

Sunday, Jan. 17, 1 p.m. Historic Orpheum Theatre, Mpls. www.hennepintheatredistrict.org/guestservices/aslad; 612-373-5650

Romeo & Juliet

Thu. Jan. 21, 10:30 a.m.; Fri. Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m. Guthrie Theater, Mpls.; guthrietheater.org

The Snowy Day

Sun., Jan. 24, 2 p.m. & Thu. Jan. 28, 10 a.m. Hopkins Center for the Arts; 952-979-1111; www.stagestheatre.org

Great Rivers Across China—Minnesota Chinese Dance Theater

Saturday, Jan. 30, 7 p.m. University of St. Thomas, St. Paul; 651-698-7493; www.minghuadancetheater.org

Sister Kenny's Children

Sunday, Jan. 31, 2 p.m. History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St., St. Paul; www.historytheatre.com

The Light in the Piazza

Thursday, Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m. Bloomington Center for the Arts; 952-563-8575; www.bloomingtoncivictheatre.org

Mr. McGee and the Biting Flea

Sat., Feb. 12, 7:30 p.m. Children's Theatre, Mpls.; 612-874-0400; www.childrenstheatre.org

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Our mission is to build better lives for children who are deaf or hard of hearing by providing parent-to-parent support.

Newsletter Editor: Audrey Alwell

Information in this newsletter about events, services, or other organizations does not imply endorsement by Minnesota Hands & Voices or Lifetrack Resources.

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In Your Corner

By Candace Lindow-Davies, Minnesota Hands & Voices Coordinator

Hope your family had a fun, relaxing winter break. The multiple snow/rain storms sure made for interesting travel. I hope you arrived at your destinations safely, and could head outdoors to enjoy the newly fallen snow.

The holidays are a wonderful time to catch up with friends and family—even if it's only through a holiday card. I love to read the holiday letters we receive. I particularly appreciate the accompanying photos of the kids who are a sure sign time marches on. Each year, I expect the kids to look more mature and hit milestones. But still, I'm shocked to hold a family photo with a friend's child towering over her parents, or as in one case, a young man poised in front of the family car with a "thumbs up" to document he just got his license. News of graduations, engagements, marriages, children of their own?!—how does this happen? Weren't these kids all toddlers just a year or two ago? Weren't MY kids toddlers just a year or two ago? At least I can take comfort in the fact I haven't gotten any older....

Looking ahead to the start of a new year always makes me pause. I have two kids making transitions next year. One child is moving from elementary school to middle school. Her biggest fear is not remembering where her locker is or struggling to get it open. My son, on the other hand, is trying to figure out where he will go to high school. This sometimes can be a challenge for kids who are not deaf and hard of hearing, when choices about high school exist. But throw in a communication/hearing difference, and the choices become even tougher. The social dynamics, access to specialized instruction or services, class size, proximity to home/siblings/family, communication access, and a myriad of other issues are critically important. As a parent, I just want my son to have the best of it all. Then why do I feel every option comes with concessions?

Regardless, my son and family will make a decision based on the information we have. But we have also learned over the years, flexibility is critical. Peers move in and out of programs, teachers leave, programs change, and the needs of the student can change, too. There was a time when we thought we would buy a house, send our kids to the local school, my son's friends would be neighbors, and our family would stay put until the kids graduated. For some families, this is case. For our family, those days are long gone.

I have also learned something else from the hundreds of families I've been lucky enough to meet through MN Hands & Voices: children have an innate need to learn and communicate; and, nothing can stand in the way of a parent's love for a child. These truths combined make anything possible. As parents, we need to foster the opportunities that meet our child's needs and be open to when those needs shift.

As I look at our own holiday photo, noting how far my son at 14 towers over me, and when I reread our family's holiday letter listing our son's accomplishments, I am reminded of all that is possible. In turn, I'm wishing a world of possibilities for your child and family in 2010.

Hope you can make it to our Roller Skating party Jan. 31st—we'd enjoy seeing how much *your* children have grown!

2010 events outlined for MN Hands & Voices

With the start of the new year, we thought we'd give you a glimpse of events we're working on for 2010 at Minnesota Hands & Voices even though many are in the planning stages. Look for more information and confirmed dates in *FOCUS* as the year progresses.

Sunday, Jan. 31, 4:30-6:30 p.m. — Roller Skating at Roller Garden in St. Louis Park. This is our annual winter gathering. It's always a good time!

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 6:30-8 p.m. — Candace Lindow-Davies will be at Practice Cue Clutch at Jo Jo's Rise & Wine, 12501 Nicollet Ave. in Burnsville. If you've always been curious to see what it means to Cue, join her for this sneak peek.

Summer sign language classes for families — we hope to offer these popular classes once again at Bread of Life Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Thursday, Aug. 5 — save the date for our fun-filled Annual Family Picnic at Como Park in St. Paul.

Mid-October — school groups can plan now to attend MN Hands & Voices' and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services' Safety Workshop for deaf and hard of hearing students grades Kindergarten through 12th plus transition students.

Events for Spanish-speaking families — we're working on two separate events. We hope to build on the good response we had to last year's events.

Workshops for parents of newly identified children with hearing loss — we're planning several workshops to cover the next steps for parents in terms of the medical perspective, educational perspective, and communication choices (possibly).

Art contest asks kids to create

VSA arts and CVS Caremark are sponsoring a national art contest for children ages 5 to 15. "All Kids Can...CREATE!" invites young people with and without disabilities across the United States to explore their environments and discover the roles they play within their communities.

Artwork submitted before the Feb. 5 deadline will be included in an online art gallery and considered for display in a national touring exhibition that will debut in Washington, D.C. during June.

Winners will be selected to represent each state and the District of Columbia. Winners will be invited to a reception to celebrate the opening of the exhibition. While in Washington, D.C. for the opening reception, these young people will have a chance to join in the largest celebration of the arts and disability in the world: The 2010 International VSA arts Festival.

The website www.vsarts.org/allkidscreate includes eligibility, entry instructions and a link to the online application.

Art teachers could receive \$1,000 for their classrooms by submitting students' artwork to All Kids Can...CREATE! Up to five teachers from around the country will receive \$1,000 each. For more information, see www.artsonia.com/allkidscreate.

Chicago hosts national EHDI conference

The 2010 National Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Conference takes place March 1-2 in Chicago. More information about the conference is at www.infanthearing.org.

Another opportunity for parents and professionals is the Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program's 16th Annual Educational Seminar, March 29, in Warwick, R.I. The theme is "Creating Positive Environments for Children with Hearing Loss." For a registration brochure, email kflanagan@wihri.org.



The View from Here

Central:

Sign Language at the Mall (SLAM), social time in ASL, goes from noon to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 at the Food Court in Crossroads Mall in St. Cloud. Also on Feb. 13.

A swimming party for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing takes place Sunday, Feb. 7 from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Monticello Community Center.

Save the date: an ASL film will be shown in the St. Cloud area on March 19 as a fundraiser for our area SNAPS organization. More details will be coming for the next newsletter.

Southwest:

American Sign Language Storytime goes from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 6 at South Central Service Cooperative, 2075 Lookout Drive, North Mankato. See www.deafminnesota.com.

Upper Northwest:

The Brainerd ASL 'PAH' Club hosts a community get together at Camp Sertoma/Camp Confidence (on County Road 18 going north from Hwy 210) Saturday, Jan. 16 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the morning, make chocolate 'I LOVE YOU' candy to sell and raise money for the Melissa Wooden Memorial Scholarship. From 1 to 3 p.m. build snowmen, sled and enjoy hot chocolate by the campfire. More time for making chocolates from 3 to 5 p.m. This event is open to anyone interested in ASL.

Get creative at Kid Quest, free art-making opportunity for families Saturday, Feb. 6 at the Plains Art Museum in Fargo. An interpreter can be requested by calling 701-232-3821. Save the date: Saturday, March 6, the museum hosts the **Great Art Free-for-All with deaf performer Toni Faribanks**.

Northeast:

A panel of adults with hearing loss discusses related issues on Thursday, Feb. 25 at the Secondary Technical Center, 802 E. Central Entrance, Duluth. An informal dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by the presentation and discussion at 6:30. During the presentation, kids will have activities in a separate room. To register or get more details, contact NE Parent Guide Curt Leitz, 1-866-750-4421 or CurtL@lifetrack-resources.org.

The Gallaudet University Center for International Programs and Services recently launched the World Deaf Information Resource Project to provide contact information for schools and organizations around the world that serve deaf people. The website can be accessed at <http://cips.gallaudet.edu/wdi.xml>. People are invited to submit information about deaf organizations or schools to World.Deaf.Info@gallaudet.edu.

7 VRS companies charged with fraud; local companies not under investigation

News of federal investigations into fraudulent use of video relay service (VRS) first surfaced last summer. In November, the federal government indicted seven VRS companies allegedly involved in a scheme to defraud the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) by submitting fraudulent claims for VRS calls. Since many in our Hands & Voices' community use VRS, we wanted to clarify which companies are involved and assure people that local VRS companies are not under investigation and will continue to provide services.

The indictments charge owners and employees of the following seven companies: Viable Communications Inc., of Rockville, Md.; Master Communications LLC, of Las Vegas; KL Communications LLC, of Phoenix; Mascom LLC of Austin, Texas; Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Interpreting Services Inc. (DHIS), of New York and New Jersey; Innovative Communication Services for the Deaf Corp. (ICSD), of Miami Lakes, Fla.; and, Deaf Studio 29 of Huntington Beach, Calif. Most of these companies are connected with Viable.

The indictments allege that the defendants made, caused others to make, or processed fraudulent VRS calls that were submitted to the FCC for reimbursement. Viable and other service providers were reimbursed \$6.73 per minute for these bogus calls.

In 1993, the first year the federal government reimbursed centers such as Viable, the FCC set aside \$30.8 million to fund relay services. As the number of providers grew, so did the funding, rising to \$64 million in 2002. When costs skyrocketed to \$440 million in 2007, the FCC began to question the validity of the reimbursements. The case is pending in federal court in New Jersey where the nonprofit association that administers the VRS fund is based.

Details of the indictments can be found at washingtondc.fbi.gov/dojpressrel/pressrel09/wfo111909.htm.

Congress considers bill to caption Web

A bill that would ensure captioning of Internet content is currently working its way through Congress. Congressman Ed Markey (D-MA) introduced the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3101) on June 26, 2009. The bill currently is in committee.

The Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT) has full details about the bill, including a link to the government bill tracker, a petition to sign that encourages passage of the bill, and links to legislative representatives so you can send your own letter of support for captioning. COAT's website is www.coataccess.org.

White House fellows wanted

Young adults who have disabilities are encouraged to apply by Feb. 1 for the prestigious White House Fellowship, a program that selects about a dozen fellows for a year-long internship in government. President Obama is especially interested in including persons with disabilities in the fellowship program.

Candidates need to be promising young adults who are excelling early in their careers and are committed to leadership and public service. This is not for students, rather for individuals already in their careers. Learn more about the White House Fellowship at www.whitehouse.gov/fellows.

Roseville offers ASL classes

Roseville Community Education is offering a number of classes in American Sign Language (ASL) that are open to the public.

Level 1 provides a basic understanding of ASL. It runs from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays from Feb. 9 to March 9. Cost is \$39.

Level 2 builds on the skills learned in level one. It runs from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays from April 6 to May 11. Cost is \$45.

Parent/Child American Sign Language for third grade and up is a fun class for parents and kids to learn another language together. It runs from 7 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays March 10-31. Cost is \$65.

Each of these classes is taught by Denise Lau at Fairview Community Center, Room 100, 1910 W County Rd B, Roseville.

A fourth class, American Sign Language for Grades 4-8, will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 26 to March 4 at the Roseville Fire Station. Cost is \$62. Minnesota Hands & Voices' administrative assistant, Rachel Kruzell, might teach this class.

To register for a class, go to www.ISD623.org/commed and then click on Community Education Online Registration.

Film follows Deaf entertainers

A new documentary chronicles the lives of four entertainers who are deaf.

"See What I'm Saying," by filmmaker Hilari Scarl, follows four entertainers over a single year: Bob, a drummer for the world's only deaf rock band, "Beethoven's Nightmare;" CJ, a comic famous in the deaf community who is trying to cross over to mainstream audiences; Robert, a teacher at Juilliard; and TL, a singer who just produced her first CD "Not Deaf Enough." To see a trailer for the film, find a showing or request a showing, see www.seewhatimsayingmovie.com.

Online forum posts new topic

"Parents' Responses & Expectations of Child Communication Development" is the topic at the Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education website through January.

To read a summary of the research and posts by parents and teachers, you must first create a login password at www.wiki.educ.msu.edu. Click on the word "Join" in the upper right-hand corner. Then click on Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education: Author's Corner. To see the current topic, just click on "Current" in the menu on the left. In the future, you can go directly to <http://jdsde-author-corner.wiki.educ.msu.edu> and sign in using your login password.



Off the Shelf

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to learn more about deafness and related issues? If so, we can help you!

Whether you are a parent or a professional, you'll find great resources in our *FREE* lending library. We make it really easy to borrow resources, too. You can browse the library contents online at www.mnhandsandvoices.org—click on "Lending Library." Or, if you see a title you like from the list below, just email your request to mnhv@lifetrackresources.org, or call us at 651-265-2372 or 1-866-346-4543. We mail library materials to you with a postage-paid return envelope to make it easy to return materials by their due date.

We recently added many new resources to our library. Here are a few:

Mindfield by John F. Egbert

This is a fascinating novel by Twin Cities native Egbert about what it would be like if everyone in America suddenly became deaf.

Hearing Aids: Recent Developments

This updated version is edited by Harry Levitt.

Sign Language Interpreters in the Public Schools is a unique in-service kit from Madonna University.

Insight Into Cued Speech is a DVD published in 2008 by the National Cued Speech Association that is packed with details about cued speech, who uses it, how to learn it, and its impact on specific children.

Make your library request today and be on your way to fulfilling your New Year's resolution! It's easy, and it's FREE!!

Older DHH students offered expedition to Amazon, Peru

Students ages 17-22 who have hearing loss can take part in a unique trip to the Amazon rainforest in July.

Phonak hearing aid company and Global Explorers recently announced a joint venture called "Hear the World Expedition," which will bring together students of mixed hearing abilities for the learning adventure of a lifetime in the Peruvian Amazon. Much more than a trip, the *Hear the World Expedition* will include preparatory curriculum, a two-week international field workshop, follow-up service projects and a large-scale public outreach campaign. The students will be accompanied by Bill Barkeley, a deafblind explorer who climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in 2007.

The expedition, July 8-17, includes a training retreat May 13-16 in Estes Park, Colorado. Total cost is \$2,900 + airfare to Lima, Peru. Fundraising opportunities are available.

Applications are online at www.globalexplorers.org/programs/destinations/hear_the_world_expeditions/. They're due by Jan. 15.

There will be a 30-minute teleconference and webinar Monday, Jan. 11, 2010 at 11 a.m. To join the conference call, dial toll-free 1-866-740-1260 and enter the code: 4843633. The presenter's slides will be shown on www.readytalk.com (under "Join a Meeting," enter: 4843633.)

Parents wanted for survey

National Hands & Voices is asking parents to complete a five-minute survey about newborn hearing screening.

Information from the survey will be used to create educational materials to improve the timeliness of infant diagnostic testing. Professor Karen Muñoz in the Department of Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education at Utah State University is conducting this study with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) and Hands & Voices.

The survey is online at www.infantheating.org/survey/family through Jan. 15. Individual responses will be kept completely confidential; all data will be presented in aggregated form.



Dad's Viewpoint

By Curt Leitz, NE Parent Guide

The holidays are over. After all that family time, do you need another holiday to recover from the last one? If so, you're not alone; sometimes intimate family time can exhaust rather than refresh.

For example, this past summer our family took our annual canoe camping trip in the Boundary Waters. As a foursome, we paddled and portaged, hiked and fished. We shared three meals a day, and a single tent at night. After a week, my wife and I needed some time to ourselves! We'd been giving all our time to the family, and none to each other.

This experience is a microcosm of one of the challenges of raising kids with special needs: parenting can become so consuming that a couple puts all its energy into nurturing a child, leaving little to nurture the couple's relationship.

I frequently hear that divorce rates are higher among couples raising a child with a disability. I actually tried to find out whether, statistically, I'm more likely to get divorced because one of my daughters has a hearing loss. The more time I wasted on the Internet, the more clear it became that no consensus exists regarding divorce rates. None of us should allow spurious statistics to become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Experts do agree that raising a special-needs kid does add to the stress on a relationship. It's perfectly normal to go through a period of upheaval with any major life change, and having a child with a disability is no different. (Note that among the culturally Deaf, the birth of a Deaf child is frequently celebrated—it isn't the "life change" it can be for hearing parents.)

Much of the strain on a relationship can stem from partners who have different coping strategies, different perspectives on their child's hearing loss, and different expectations for their child. Such differences need to be discussed, not denied. If partners communicate respectfully with one another, they create the opportunity to build a common perspective.

Those of us parenting children with hearing loss often devote enormous time and energy to learning to communicate effectively with our children. Just think if we spent a fraction of that time and energy working on communicating more effectively with our partners! Not only would we benefit as couples, but our children would benefit as well.

At some point, though, I think we need to forget about what we can do to benefit our children—or at least push it out of mind for a time, and focus on being partners. Parenting is just one aspect of our relationships with our partners, and our relationships will atrophy if parenting is the only thing we ever do together.

That's the trap that my wife and I fell into last summer in the Boundary Waters: all kids, all the time. Our time alone together consisted of sitting by the campfire getting hammered by mosquitoes after we'd made the kids retire to the tent. With the tent within earshot and mosquitoes attacking all exposed flesh, we couldn't even have a conversation in privacy, let alone anything else. When we got home, we called a babysitter!

MSAD wins national volleyball title

The girls' volleyball team from Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD) was named Team of the Year by the National Deaf Interscholastic Athletics Association (NDIAA). NDIAA also selected MSAD coach Michele Heise as Coach of the Year.

This is the third straight year MSAD has received the Team of the Year award for Division II schools. Junior Cindy Siebert earned First Team All American. Juniors Molly Perkins and Rachel Novella both were awarded Second Team All American. Freshman Payton Brown earned Honorable Mention. Player of the Year was Ashley Wagner, a senior from Wisconsin School for the Deaf.

The MSAD volleyball team had a winning year. They took first at the Great Plains Schools for the Deaf (GPSD) tournament in Oklahoma, playing nine games in two days. That was their 8th consecutive GPSD Championship title. The Lady Trojans also won their conference tournament. The team's 2009 record was 25 wins and 12 losses.

Save the date: The 50th Biennial Conference of the National Association of the Deaf will be in Philadelphia July 6-10. The conference theme is "Celebrate Our Heritage. Invest in Our Future." See www.nad.org/philly for details.

Practice cue clutch

Meet with other cuers for directed activities designed to practice cueing. All ability levels are invited. Come one and all as we encourage and motivate one another!

Winter/Spring Schedule:

6:30-8:00 pm, third Tuesday of the month

Tuesday, January 19th

Tuesday, February 16th*

Tuesday, March 16th

Tuesday, April 20th

Tuesday, May 18th

Location:

Jo Jo's Rise & Wine
12501 Nicollet Ave., Suite 100
Burnsville, Heart of the City



* Curious about Cued Speech?

Join MNHV representative, Candace Lindow-Davies, for an opportunity to observe, ask questions or join in!

