

## The End of an Era: Reflections on a Career and a Legacy



Throughout her 29 years at CCHD, Pam Bergum has helped thousands of individuals learn to live better with hearing loss.

When Pam Bergum started working at the Milwaukee Hearing Society 29 years ago, it was still a tiny organization with only a handful of staff. And compared with today, there was little technology that could really improve the quality of life of individuals with severe hearing loss. But Pam knew that even with the best technology, successfully overcoming the challenges of hearing loss required a more comprehensive and personal approach. And so, she dedicated her career to helping adults with hearing loss live more active, fulfilling lives, by providing aural rehabilitation therapy, small-group speechreading classes and community education about how to live well with hearing loss. It is this legacy of advocacy, education and compassion that Pam leaves behind as she retires from CCHD to enter a new phase of her life.

Aside from just being a good Speech-Language Pathologist, Pam was also a good role model. Having a hearing loss herself, she was able to connect with her clients in a very special way, and often learned as much from them as they learned from her. Pam says that above all else, it's the

people that she will miss the most. "The clients I worked with faced challenges with communication, but they were people who still had families, jobs, hobbies and interests. They loved to laugh, but at times found nothing to smile about when hearing loss started getting in the way of these things. I always enjoyed being able to show them skills to ease that lost feeling, and I'm proud to say that over the years, many of my clients have become lifelong friends."

Pam's favorite part of her job was the small-group speechreading and communication strategies classes that she provided. It's a service that has been offered continually throughout the Center's 85 year history, but one that is rarely found nowadays as agencies and audiologists have turned to technology as the primary solution for hearing loss issues instead of taking a more comprehensive approach. But Pam always knew how critical her classes were for adults struggling to hear and communicate in their daily lives. In these groups, individuals learn the basics of lipreading and how to effectively deal with difficult listening situations using a combination of technology, technique and advocacy. But more than that, these groups become support systems for the participants. "For some, it's very scary to join a group and then have to admit they are hard of hearing. But then they realize that here they are welcomed and

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As a Speech-Language Pathologist, Pam specialized in providing small group speechreading and communication strategies classes.

accepted, and that they aren't alone." In some cases, Pam's classes even inspired individuals to become hard of hearing advocates in the community – helping others to discover a better life with hearing loss as well.

"There must be thousands of people whose lives have been made better by Pam's expertise and personal perspectives on hearing loss through all of the years of direct services and outreach that she has provided," says Deb Kravit, CCHD Director of Programs. "Pam's work reflects the foundation on which the Milwaukee Hearing Society was built, and which continues to this day as a core part of the mission of the Center for Communication, Hearing & Deafness." By helping to empower adults affected by hearing loss and providing a comprehensive approach to overcoming communication challenges, Pam has indeed been an important part of the Center's growth and history, and her special skills and extraordinary empathy for individuals coping with hearing loss will be sorely missed.

As Pam looks forward to a retirement filled with plenty of time for traveling with her husband Steve and spending time with her grandchildren, she also plans to continue helping others. "Many of my friends and family are acquiring hearing loss and I know that I can help them overcome their frustrations in dealing with it. So even though I will no longer be working at CCHD, I plan to continue sending many referrals to the Center, which is such a unique and important resource here in Wisconsin."

On behalf of everyone at the Center, we thank Pam for her many years of service and dedication. Many people

in the community are enjoying a better quality of life because of the skills she has taught them and the support she has given them. Pam's presence at the Center will be missed, but we look forward to carrying on her work to help a new generation of individuals affected by hearing loss, and wish her a very long and happy retirement!

## CCHD SUMMER RAFFLE

### You Could Win a 46" 3D HDTV!

Help support the Center for Communication, Hearing & Deafness and you could win one of three great prizes this summer, including a Sony BRAVIA 46" 3D HDTV!

Raffle Tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20 and are available at the Center for Communication, Hearing & Deafness, located at 10243 W. National Avenue, West Allis, WI. Raffle tickets can also be purchased online at [www.cchdwi.org](http://www.cchdwi.org). Winners will be drawn at the Center's Corks & Kegs beer and wine tasting event on Friday, August 26 at 9:00 PM. You need not be present to win.

**First Prize:** Sony BRAVIA 46" LED LCD HDTV (Model KDL-46EX720)



Enjoy state-of-the-art technology including 3D in full high-definition 1080p, plus Full HD 1080p in 2D, Internet TV for streaming entertainment, and Wi-Fi Ready capabilities

**Second Prize:** Nintendo Wii Console & Wii Fit Plus with Wii Balance Board



**Third Prize:** One (1) ticket to the CCHD 85th Anniversary Luncheon at the Milwaukee Athletic Club on November 3, 2011

Prizes have been generously donated by McCoy & Hofbauer, SC. and Martin Tierney. For more information or prize details, please call 414-604-7230 or email [kschmidt@cchdwi.org](mailto:kschmidt@cchdwi.org).

Winners are responsible for pick-up at CCHD, or for shipping charges for delivery from CCHD. First name drawn will receive 3rd place prize, second name drawn will receive 2nd place prize and third name drawn will receive 1st place prize. Raffle license #R0011646A.



Left: *Silent Call Smoke Detector*, Right: *SafeAwake Fire Alarm*

While many people are familiar visual signaling systems for the phone or doorbell – to help alert people with hearing loss using flashing lights, vibration or amplified sound – there are two very important devices that you may not know about, which could be vital to your family’s safety and well-being this summer, and all year round.

**Specialized Smoke Detectors** use a bright strobe light or a vibrating disk to notify you or a loved one of a possible fire. Given that most fire-related deaths occur at night while people are sleeping, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are even more at risk because in addition to being asleep, they are unlikely to be wearing a hearing device, so a standard audible alarm may be impossible to hear. And when it comes to fires, time is of the essence. In fact, a home fire can become life-threatening in just two minutes! Would you hear your smoke alarm in time?

While many of the specialized smoke detector systems are a single unit with a built-in strobe that can be hardwired into a home or apartment, some are more portable and don’t require an electrician to set up. These more portable units also have the benefit of providing either vibration or an eye-level strobe light to alert individuals in the household, which research has shown to be more effective in waking people, even those who are sound sleepers.

One of the UniversaLink staff’s favorite products is the *Silent Call Smoke Detector*, which uses one 3v lithium-ion battery and can be used in place of any standard (non-hardwired) smoke detector in your existing home. While it will sound the same as a regular alarm, it also transmits a wireless signal to a receiver that you can place in various rooms in your house – including your bedroom. When used with the *Silent Call Sidekick Receiver*, which can be placed on a nightstand or dresser, an extremely bright strobe light will flash when the smoke detector sends its signal. The detector can also be used with a *Silent Call Shake-Up Receiver*, which features a small vibrating disk that is placed under your mattress, and will alert you using vibration in case of a fire.

Another option is the new *SafeAwake Fire Alarm*. This unique twist on fire safety is actually designed to work with an existing T-3 smoke detector. T-3 smoke detectors meet current fire safety codes and they alert by using a pattern of three beeps. The *SafeAwake* listens for this unique sound pattern and then alerts individuals in three ways. It flashes a bright strobe light, it vibrates a bed shaker that is placed under the mattress or chair cushion, and it emits a 500Hz low tone that is easier to hear for most people (even with severe hearing loss) than the traditional 3000Hz sound signal. Another benefit of the *SafeAwake Fire Alarm* is that it is very portable, and in addition to using this device at home it can also be used in dorm rooms, hotels, rental properties, assisted living facilities and more.

**Specialized Weather Alert Radios** are another home safety device that many people are not aware of, or may just never consider. But as we have recently seen across the country, severe weather can happen anywhere, at any time, and advance warning of a storm could be the difference between life and death – especially if you are unable to hear tornado sirens or a traditional alert on the television or radio.



*Weather Alert Radios*

UniversaLink carries several weather alert radio options, which can notify you or a loved one of severe weather using a strobe light, vibration or both. The radio itself features three warning lights to indicate the level of alert, and an LCD readout to show the specific

warning taking place. And, it can be programmed to your specific county so that it will only alert you if you are immediately affected. When an alert is issued, you can feel confident that you will be alerted quickly and effectively with light or vibration – even if you are sleeping.

And, if you already have a *Silent Call* home signaling system for the phone, doorbell or smoke detector, a simple accessory can be used with the weather radio to transmit the warning signal to the receivers you already have in place, to create a multi-functional, home safety system that could save your life or that of a loved one someday.

**For more information about specialized smoke detectors or weather alerting systems for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, visit the UniversaLink store in person or online at [www.cchdwi.org/store/index.php](http://www.cchdwi.org/store/index.php) or call 414-541-5465 (local) / 800-755-7994 (toll free) / 866-954-9435 (videophone) to speak with a UniversaLink Technology Counselor.**

# Donors & Volunteers

Thanks to the generous donors who help make it possible to continue the work of CCHD.

We gratefully acknowledge contributions recorded between February 15, 2011 and June 21, 2011. Every effort has been made to ensure that all donors are listed. If there are inadvertent errors or omissions, please call 414-604-7211.

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CCHD also thanks its dedicated volunteers, who help support our mission in so many ways. Recent volunteers include:

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Ann Powers  
Jennifer Romero  
Helen Williams

## Supporting Pre-Literacy Skills through Songs, Stories & Play

If you have ever had the opportunity to observe a session of Toddler Communication Group at CCHD, you probably thought it looked like a lot of fun. And it is! Toddler Communication Groups are for children ages 15 months to 3 years old and each group meets twice per week. Staffed by Speech-Language Pathologists, Teachers of the Deaf, and skilled program assistants, these groups are organized according to whether the children use an auditory/oral method of communication or if they use sign language. The toddler groups provide a sensory-rich, natural play setting where children with hearing loss and hearing children of Deaf parents have the opportunity to interact with peers and adults who use a similar communication mode. Parents also get to actively participate and discover new activities to use with their child to help them develop strong language and communication skills. But as much fun as the children have in group – there’s actually a lot of learning going on. What appears on the surface as songs, stories and playtime, is actually a very calculated focus on helping children develop the “pre-literacy” skills they will ultimately need to be successful in school and in life.



### What is pre-literacy?

The years from birth to 3 are a critical time for children’s learning. And the habits and skills that a child develops during this period are directly linked to their long-term

learning success. The key to being ready to succeed in school? Strong language and pre-reading skills – also known as pre-literacy skills.

Through interactive storytelling, singing, imaginative play and one-on-one speech-therapy, CCHD Toddler Communication Groups help children develop the key pre-literacy skills that they need to be ready for school. Some of the primary pre-literacy skills that children in the Toddler Communication Groups develop include:

**Vocabulary** – Building a wide vocabulary and knowing the names of things around them.

**Print Motivation** – Developing an interest in and enjoyment of books – seeing that reading is fun and that stories can relate to experiences in their own lives.

**Narrative Skills** – Being able to understand and tell stories and to describe things that have happened in a story or at an event in real life.

**Phonological Awareness** – Being able to hear and create rhymes, to manipulate the smaller sounds in words and to be creative when expressing themselves by making up silly words or experimenting with language in different contexts.

**Self-regulation** – The ability to control his or her behavior and to listen to a story, sit still when necessary and to follow directions. This is a critical skill that helps children become good classroom learners.

Teaching children that learning is fun and supporting their natural curiosity about the world around them is a fundamental part of the Center’s Kellogg Child & Family Program. When children are motivated to learn and receive the tools they need to be successful, they have the opportunity to realize their unlimited potential. It’s a process that begins very early in life, but one that hopefully lasts a lifetime.

For more information about Toddler Communication Groups or the Kellogg Child and Family Program, visit [www.cchdwi.org](http://www.cchdwi.org) or contact Chris Kometer at 414-604-7213 or email [ckometer@cchdwi.org](mailto:ckometer@cchdwi.org).

### Birds, Blossoms & Butterflies Help Children with Hearing Loss Develop Strong Language and Literacy Skills



The day was perfect and so was the company at the Center's Eighth Annual Gardens Luncheon, which took place on May 12 at the Woman's Club of Wisconsin. Nearly 200 guests attended, and showed their support by bidding on a wide variety of silent auction items to help raise money for the Center's children's programs. Later, they enjoyed a delicious lunch while listening to the music of Dan Dance.

The event was emceed by Tiffany Ogle, co-host of The Morning Blend on Today's TMJ4, who shared her personal experiences growing up with a parent with hearing loss and stressed the important role that the Center plays in the community. She highlighted the Center's Child and Family Program, which served nearly 150 children and their families in 2010, and provides critical services to help children with hearing loss develop strong language and early-literacy skills.

The centerpiece of the luncheon was an engaging and very informative presentation by gardening expert, TV personality and author Melinda Myers, on how to create a beautiful garden that attracts birds and butterflies. Melinda even stayed after the luncheon to personally answer questions from the guests about their individual gardening challenges and signed copies of some of her books.

Thank you to everyone who attended this special day and who contributed towards the event's success. Special thanks to the event's sponsors, Baird Foundation, Inc., Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Marshall & Ilsley Corporation, Lake Shore Wisconsin Corporation and The Business Journal.

Thanks also to the generous silent auction donors which included Bijoux, Boutique Vieux Et Nouveau, Crawford Tree and Landscape Services, Inc., Designs By Ruta, Eleta Salon, Elite Sports Club of Brookfield, Enhancing Light Cosmetic Laser Center, Gift of Wings, Gini Bunnell, The Good Life Catering and Personal Chef Company, Greenfield Flower Shop, GreenShore Lawn Care, Hon. Patricia S. Curley, Infinite Gymnastics Academy, Johnson's Nursery, Inc., Julie Eckels, Karen Case, Landmark Landscape Design, LLC, The Learning Shop of Brookfield, Marggraf Meetings, Monches Farm, LLC, The Organizers, Paula Stack, Longaberger Home Consultant, Ralph Schroeder, Rishi Tea, Robert Frisch, Schwanke Kasten Jewelers, Southwest Airlines, Stein Gardens & Gifts, Time Warner Cable, Wachtel Tree Science, Wild Birds Unlimited of Mequon, and Wisconsin Athletic Club.

The Center is also grateful to the businesses who donated items to the gift bags received by each guest, including Aloekui, LLC, Burke Candy, Birds & Blooms Magazine, part of Reader's Digest, Elements Therapeutic Massage, FragranceNet.com, J.W. Jung Seed, Morgyn Stranahan, and Soaps & Scents.

**Please mark your calendars for the 2012 Gardens Luncheon, which will take place on May 10, 2012 at the Woman's Club of Wisconsin. We hope to see you there!**



## I've seen advertisements for cheap hearing aids sold by mail or on the internet. Is this a good idea?

Well, the fact that mail order and online hearing aid sales are actually illegal in several states suggests that this is not really the best way to obtain help for your hearing. Although hearing aids purchased this way may be less expensive up front, this cost savings may come at a high price in the end.

Typically, mail order or internet hearing aid sellers offer lower quality devices in order to offer bargain-basement prices. In most cases, users are provided with limited or no instructions about the hearing instrument and may even have to 'assemble' the hearing aid on their own. And, because sound adjustments are made by shipping the devices back and forth to the vendor rather than in an office where the aids can be adjusted while the user is wearing them, individuals cannot benefit from fine tuning of the hearing aid, which can often be the difference between an aid that is actually useful and one that becomes another dresser drawer accessory.

In addition, individuals who have purchased hearing aids online or through the mail are often surprised to discover excessive fees for repairs out of warranty and shipping and service costs incurred each time the aid has to be adjusted. It's important to note that when you purchase hearing aids through your local audiologist, you are receiving a comprehensive service where services such as fitting, adjustment, follow-up, warranties, cleaning, counseling and support are all included in the purchase price of your hearing aids. And, because these services are all provided in an office where you can evaluate the results on the spot, this personal care usually results in tremendous savings in time...and money.

Another consideration is the expertise of the staff providing your hearing aids. There's a reason that hearing aids are regulated by the FDA – they are highly specialized devices that can actually do more harm to an individual's hearing than good if not fit and programmed correctly. You wouldn't buy a pacemaker or artificial joint online would you? Of course not! You would want to work with a trained professional who can ensure that you receive the right device for your needs, and who is specifically trained in fitting them and providing follow up care and support. According to two studies conducted by Suzanne H. Kimball, AuD, from Illinois State University, dispensing over the Internet can result in ill-fitting hearing aids or even potentially dangerous fittings. On the other hand, when you work with licensed professionals

and Doctors of Audiology, like you will find at Community Audiology Services, you are working with professionals who have extensive training in hearing care and are held accountable for their actions, successes and failures.

So, when considering a major purchase like a hearing aid, keep these things in mind. With a little research, you may be surprised to find that by working with a clinic such as Community Audiology Services, your new hearing aids are actually less expensive in the long run and you will also have confidence knowing that you are receiving a quality, name brand hearing device capable of providing OPTIMAL improvement in your hearing so you

can live a fuller, more active life with those you love.

## Is there a way I can help make my hearing aids last longer?

Hearing aids are a big investment for most people, so it makes sense that you would want to keep them working well for as long

as possible. Of course keeping them clean of debris is critical to ensuring that they give you optimal performance, but just as important is keeping them free of moisture.

In addition to moisture from our bodies in the form of perspiration, humidity in the environment as well as changes in temperature can all result in condensation. And it's no secret that liquid and electronic devices usually don't mix well. It's easy to keep moisture from damaging your hearing devices though.

**Hearing aid dehumidifiers** are easy-to-use, affordable accessories that you simply place your hearing devices in for a few hours each day. Using dry heat or a desiccant block or gel, these dehumidifiers gently remove moisture from the device to help keep them working like new.

A simple dehumidifier may consist of a small jar filled with a desiccant pad or beads that you can place your hearing aids in each night. These low-tech options are usually less than \$15 and can last for quite a long time. More high-tech hearing aid dehumidifiers use electricity and may also use dry heat or air flow to completely remove the moisture from your devices. Some even sanitize your hearing aids while they dry! These options are in the \$100 price range, but work exceptionally well and are a great way to protect your hearing devices.

For more information on hearing aid dehumidifiers or how to maintain your hearing aids, contact Community Audiology Services at 414-541-4327 or [cas@cchdwi.org](mailto:cas@cchdwi.org). You can also visit the Center's website at [www.cchdwi.org](http://www.cchdwi.org) and shop online for your hearing aid accessories.





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The Center for Communication, Hearing & Deafness is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to help infants, children and adults reach their fullest potential by eliminating communication and language barriers through personalized services, technology and education.

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## Mark Your Calendars



### Join Us for Corks & Kegs on August 26

Enjoy a fun night out with friends while sampling a variety of craft beers, wines, and hors d'oeuvres at Corks & Kegs, a fundraising event to benefit CCHD on August 26. In honor of the Center's 85th birthday, Corks & Kegs is moving to a new venue – an historic cream city brick building located in the Florida and Third Industrial Historic District that has been newly renovated by Pieper Properties.

Enjoy music from the Dan Dance Trio, a wine pull, raffle, and a silent auction featuring a wide selection of unique items, travel packages and opportunities to experience some of the best restaurants and attractions that Wisconsin has to offer!

**Date:** Friday, August 26

**Time:** 5:30 PM - 9:30 PM

**Location:** 234 W. Florida St., Milwaukee (**NEW LOCATION!**)

**Attire:** Casual

**Tickets:** \$40 each or \$35 for two or more

Call 414-604-2200 or purchase tickets online  
at [www.cchdwi.org](http://www.cchdwi.org)

