

First Grader Gives Up Birthday Presents to Help Others

Many of us spend our entire lives learning the lesson that “it’s better to give than receive,” but for Julia Jones, first grader at St. Mary Parish School in Hales Corners, it’s an obvious choice to help others whenever you can. On January 23, Julia did just that when she presented the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing with a \$500 donation, having raised this money by asking friends and family to bring a contribution to her favorite charity, instead of presents, to her seventh birthday party.

Julia came up with the idea to help the Center because she knew firsthand how important its services are to children with hearing loss. You see, Julia was diagnosed with hearing loss as an infant, and received specialized therapy services at the Center for six years, to help her develop strong language and communication skills. Julia was actually one of the first children to begin receiving Auditory-Verbal (A-V) therapy services at the Center when the A-V program was first launched.

A-V Therapy is a specific approach to working with children who have hearing loss that focuses on listening as the primary input for learning language rather than relying on speechreading or sign language. A-V Therapy teaches children to use their residual hearing to actively listen, and by doing so, neurological pathways are stimulated and the auditory centers of the brain develop more fully.

According to Julia’s mom, Kim Jones, “Julia decided that instead of getting 30 Barbie

dolls for her birthday, she would ask her guests to donate \$5 to the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She really wanted to do something to help others, because we have been helped so much since she was first diagnosed with hearing loss.” The positive response by friends and family to this simple donation request exceeded all expectations, and Julia managed to raise \$500 for the Center. She asked that her donation specifically be used for the Center’s A-V program, so other children like her can receive state-of-the-art therapy services to help them reach their fullest potential.

On behalf of everyone at the Center, thank you Julia for your thoughtful and generous gift to help others.

Did you know...

- May is National Better Hearing and Speech Month. When was the last time you had your hearing checked?
- Noise induced hearing loss is almost 100% preventable by turning down the volume on car stereos and audio players, using hearing protection and limiting exposure to noise.
- Risk factors for permanent hearing loss include smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.
- Professions at high risk of hearing loss include firefighters, police officers, factory workers, farmers, construction workers, military personnel, heavy industry workers, musicians, and entertainment industry professionals.

Below - Julia Jones presents a \$500 donation to Amy Laliou of CDHH to help other children with hearing loss.



New Cellphone Designed to Help Seniors with Hearing Loss

Are you among the thousands of people who have trouble hearing on a cellphone? Are you also less concerned about having a cellphone that can take pictures and play music and just want to be able to make a simple phone call? If this sounds like you, then you will be glad to know that Clarity, one of the largest and best-known manufacturers of telephones for the hard of hearing, has recently released a new amplified cellphone – the first of its kind on the market.



Cellphones have dramatically changed our lives in recent years and for some, they have become an indispensable part of everyday life. We have come to expect that others can be reached at any given time on their cellphone and have learned to rely on it in case of emergency, whether in the home or on the road. They are small, convenient and a great tool for staying in touch and staying safe. But for those with hearing loss, finding an adequate cellphone has been a challenge. Even

more of a challenge is finding a cellphone that is easy to use. The new Clarity C900 cellphone is different. Not only does it amplify up to 20 decibels, it also features large, easy to see numbers, a large LCD display for caller ID information, five ringer volume settings, a strong vibrating ringer, and a visual ringer. Simple, four-button operation allows you to make or receive calls easily, and if you do run into any problems, the phone comes pre-programmed with a “Customer Care” number that will take you directly to Clarity’s customer service team. Staff there are trained to consider an individual’s special hearing or cognitive needs and they also speak slowly, avoid technical jargon and even use voice amplifiers to help you hear them better.

Other unique features include an emergency button on the back of the phone that can automatically call and/or send text messages to a list of five emergency contacts until it reaches someone, and an ultra-bright, built in flashlight. To give individuals maximum

CDHH

Wish List

From time to time, some special items are needed to help the Center do its work and which are not included in the regular budget. If you are able to help by donating any of the items below, the Center would be extremely grateful.

- ★ Digital camera – 8 megapixels or higher
- ★ Portable photo printer
- ★ Digital camcorder
- ★ Plastic children’s size picnic table
- ★ Decorative stickers for art projects
- ★ Covered diaper pail
- ★ Heavy-duty wheeled cart
- ★ Easels
- ★ Foam boards
- ★ Polaroid film
- ★ Small TV with built-in DVD player
- ★ Gift certificates for products or services to use as silent auction items
- ★ Two or four-drawer metal file cabinet

flexibility, the phone comes unlocked, meaning that it can be used with any cellphone provider with a GSM network, such as T-Mobile or AT&T. This ensures that you can get the right cellphone plan for your budget and calling area. Simply take the Clarity C900 cellphone to your preferred provider and they will get it set up and working for you. The phone could even be added on to an existing family plan. The compromise for this flexibility in choosing a provider is that the phone is more expensive than others with similar features, retailing at \$269.99. But, given the extra volume, simplicity and care that has gone into designing this phone, the extra investment may be well worth it.

To learn more about the Clarity C900 cellphone, call UniversaLink at 414-545-5465 or visit the online catalog at www.cdhh.org. You can also read a recent review of the C900 that was published in the Wall Street Journal by visiting: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123431567881471041.html>.



Did you know?



New Legislation Being Considered to Help Children with Hearing Loss

An effort is currently underway to help pass a bill in the Wisconsin state legislature that would require group and individual insurance companies to provide coverage for hearing aids and cochlear implants for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. According to the grassroots group LetKidsHear, “For years children with hearing loss have been discriminated against by insurance companies. Unlike many other medical issues and birth defects covered by insurance, families across Wisconsin with children who are deaf or hard of hearing have struggled to pay for medical intervention because many insurance companies view hearing aids as “cosmetic.” The benefits of intervention, especially early amplification, are well documented and clear. If a child who has difficulty hearing receives the proper hearing aids or cochlear implants, language, speech and social outcomes can be drastically improved. Additionally, the cost savings to taxpayers is significant.” In 2008, a similar bill to help children with hearing loss was considered, but failed to make it out of committee. This is an extremely important piece of legislation for the children and families of Wisconsin. To learn more about how you can help advocate in favor of hearing devices for children, please visit www.letkidshear.org.

CDHH Brochures Now Available in Spanish

In order to better serve the growing population of Spanish-speaking individuals who are affected by hearing loss, Spanish versions of the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing’s brochures are now available. If you would like to request copies of these CDHH brochures to help better inform your clients about services available to children and adults with hearing loss, please contact Kerry Malak at 414-604-7202 or email kmalak@cdhh.org.

Apply Now for Summer Camp Scholarships

CDHH has three scholarships available to YMCA’s Camp Matawa, located 45 minutes from Milwaukee in the Kettle Moraine State Forest. Children with hearing loss ages 7 to 14, or their siblings, are eligible for this one-week adventure which includes hikes, games and sports. To apply, please email dkerr@cdhh.org by May 15, with a brief statement of why your child should be considered as well as the child’s age and any accommodations needed. Applications will be considered in the order that they are received. For more information about Camp Matawa, visit www.matawa.org.

Free Legal Information & Referral Services

Marquette University’s Volunteer Legal Clinic features volunteer attorneys and Marquette University law students who can provide free, walk-in, confidential legal information and referral on a wide variety of civil legal matters. Legal information is provided in all areas of civil, but NOT CRIMINAL law. No attorney-client relationship is formed and on-going representation is not provided. No appointment is necessary. Clinic hours are held in Milwaukee on Tuesdays from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM and for Spanish speaking individuals, clinic hours will be held on Wednesdays from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

For more details, including clinic locations, visit: <http://law.marquette.edu/cgi-bin/site.pl?2130&pageID=3199>.

Online Tool to Assess Seniors’ Safety

The Independent Living Assessment, sponsored by Phillips and powered by Boston University’s Activity Measure for Post Acute Care (AM-PAC), is a free evaluation that can be taken online, which assesses seniors’ ability to live independently. This clinically validated assessment covers three areas of function – moving about freely, managing life skills and performing daily tasks. By answering a short series of questions, responses are scored and a comprehensive assessment is generated, including “Areas of Concern” that can be discussed with family members or care providers to determine the best course of action to improve safety and well-being. To learn more, visit www.Lifeline-ILA.com.

Find Reliable Health Information Online

Whether you’re interested in the latest health news or need more information about specific medical conditions, drug interactions or what is involved in an upcoming surgical procedure, MedlinePlus is an online resource that has it all. This site is a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health, so it is completely free and available to anyone with access to the Internet. MedlinePlus has information on more than 750 conditions and diseases, details about prescription, over-the-counter drugs and herbal supplements, and interactive tutorials and videos to help you understand and prepare for common diagnostic tests and surgical procedures. MedlinePlus also features health information in over 40 languages, with an extensive collection of articles in Spanish. You’ll also find a section specifically dedicated to Senior Health. To learn more about this great resource, visit www.medlineplus.gov.

Here’s how to reach us . . . 10243 W. National Avenue, West Allis, WI 53227 (between US45/1894 and Highway 100)

Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Voice • 414-604-2200
TTY • 888-742-7651
Fax • 414-604-7200
Online • www.cdhh.org

CommunicationLink

Voice • 414-604-7231
Toll Free • 800-542-9838
TTY • 888-758-6043
Fax • 414-604-7200
Online • www.cdhh.org

UniversaLink

Voice • 414-541-LINK (5465)
Toll Free • 800-755-7994
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Thanks to our donors who help make it possible to continue the work of the Center.

We gratefully acknowledge contributions recorded between November 20, 2008 and February 15, 2009. Every effort has been made to ensure that all donors are listed. If there are inadvertent errors or omissions, please call 414-604-2200.

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Volunteer Corner

*The miracle is this - the more we share,
the more we have. — Leonard Nimoy*

Thank you to the many volunteers who help the Center in so many ways – from answering phones and stuffing envelopes to assisting in toddler communication groups and providing interpreting assistance. Your time, energy and talents are very much appreciated! Recent volunteers include:

Sam Ballas
Phyllis Ballas
Nancy Castignetti
Sarah Fischbach
Debra Graff
Tara Huss
Emily Jansen

Laura Juranek
Kayla Lebeck
Brenda Lerner
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If you would like more information about how to volunteer at the Center, contact Ruta Murphy at 414-604-7211 or email rmurphy@cdhh.org. You can also visit www.cdhh.org to download a volunteer application online.

Winter Wonderland Party Brings Families Together

On Saturday, December 6, more than 100 children and their families attended the annual CDHH Winter Wonderland holiday party, to have some fun and socialize with other families with d/Deaf or hard of hearing children. As usual, the face painting and art activities were very popular, as was the storytelling program featuring the children's story "The Mitten." Other activities included a beanbag "snowball" pit, parachute play, a toddler roller coaster and family teamwork games. Kids also had the opportunity to have their picture taken with the Signing Snowman. Thanks to all of the staff and volunteers who made this event so memorable for all of the families who participated, and special thanks to the businesses and organizations that provided their support: The Silent Singers, WI Families for Hands and Voices, Marquette University WSSLHA Organization, WI Sound Beginnings Program, and Life Creek Church. A special thank you to Briggs & Stratton for allowing CDHH to host the event at their facility, and to Pastor Bud Palmer, the Signing Snowman.

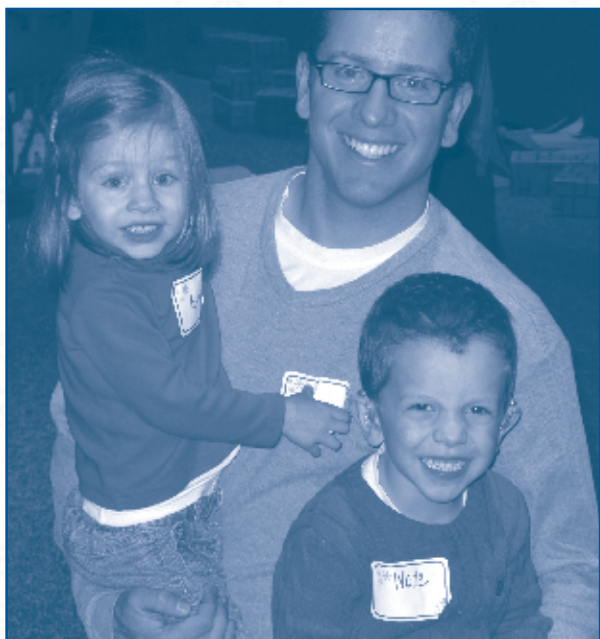
To see pictures from the 2008 Winter Wonderland Party, please visit the CDHH photo gallery at www.cdhh.shutterfly.com. And, if you or your business would like to hold a toy drive for Winter Wonderland 2009, please contact Ruta Murphy at 414-604-7211 or email rmurphy@cdhh.org.

Early Signs of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss is a condition that usually progresses very slowly, making it difficult to notice when it's starting to affect your life. Are you starting to think that you or someone you care about might have a hearing loss? Take this quick test to find out!

- Do you sometimes have a problem hearing over the telephone?
- Do people complain that you turn the TV volume up too high?
- Do you have trouble following the conversation when two or more people are talking at the same time?
- Do you have trouble hearing in a noisy background, such as a restaurant?
- Do you find yourself asking people to repeat themselves?
- Do family members or co-workers remark about your missing what has been said?
- Do many people you talk to seem to mumble?
- Do you frequently misunderstand what others are saying and respond inappropriately?
- Do you ever avoid social situations because you know that it will be hard to hear others' speaking to you?

If you answered "Yes" to two or more of these questions, you should have your hearing tested by a certified audiologist, such as the caring professionals at Community Audiology Services. A full hearing evaluation can identify the extent of your hearing loss and provide more information on how to start hearing better. To schedule a hearing evaluation today, call 414-541-HEAR (4327).



More than 100 children and their families came to the Winter Wonderland Party to celebrate the holidays and have some fun.

Is Hearing Loss the Next Health Crisis?

Not long ago, the number of Americans estimated to have hearing loss was 28 million. Then about three years ago, this number was revised to 31 million Americans, or about one in ten. Shocking results from recent research however, suggests that both of these numbers may be way off, and that the incidence of hearing loss among all age groups is actually much higher.

According to a study by Johns Hopkins University, the actual number of Americans suffering from some degree of hearing loss is now thought to be closer to 55 million. That's one in three people! This study also revealed that one in six people cannot discern speech well as a result of their hearing loss, which could have serious repercussions for learning, job performance, interpersonal relationships and psychological well-being.

Of great concern is the fact that this new wave of hearing problems is not just affecting older adults, the stereotypical face of hearing loss. In fact, an estimated 8.5 percent of people in their 20's have measurable hearing loss and a staggering 17 percent of people in their 30's are affected as well.

The cause of this recent surge in hearing loss? The primary culprit is noise. iPods, rock concerts, car stereo systems, lawn mowers, blow dryers – all of these have the potential to create permanent hearing loss over time. The good news about noise-induced hearing loss however, is that it is almost completely preventable. By wearing hearing protection such as earplugs, limiting exposure to noisy environments and simply turning down the volume the next time you listen to your iPod, you may be saving your hearing so it can last the rest of your life.

New Family Tradition Benefits CDHH

What are your family's holiday traditions? For one area family, 2008 was the start of a new tradition – to give to a local charity rather than exchanging gifts with one another. For 2008, the charity chosen to benefit from this act of generosity was the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. According to family member Jill O'Leske, CDHH was selected as the recipient for this gift because, "not only are there deaf children in our family – including myself and my sister, Jodi – but one of my nephews benefits from attending classes at CDHH in the Birth

JOIN THE FUN AT



Tasting Tuesday

June 9, 2009 • 5:30 - 9:30 PM



at the Milwaukee Ale House
233 N. Water Street, Milwaukee

Beer & Wine Tasting, Food & Music

Tickets are \$40 each or \$35 when you purchase two or more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
OR TO BUY TICKETS
Call 414-604-2200 or
visit www.cdhh.org

Proceeds benefit



The Center for the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing

to Three program. The challenges hearing loss brings to both deaf individuals and their families is very familiar to all of us, and we value and understand the need for the type of support that CDHH provides.”

Many thanks to Ted, Jill, Brianna and Zachary O'Leske; Mark, Jodi, Tyler and Alyssa Glennon; John, Karla, Lily, Carter and Jacob Baumgartner; and Mike Orth and Julie Baumgartner, for their support of CDHH on behalf of all of the CDHH staff and clients.



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You can help the Center to save money and reduce mailing costs by letting us know if your address changes. To notify us of an address or name change, please call 414-604-2200 (Voice) / 888-742-7651 (TTY) or e-mail info@cdhh.org.

Upcoming events . . . Mark your calendar now!

Annual Gardens Luncheon

Thursday, April 23, 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM, Woman's Club of Wisconsin, 813 E. Kilbourn, Milwaukee. Mothers, sisters and friends, please join us for this annual celebration of spring to raise money for CDHH. Featuring guest speaker Betty Adelman of Heritage Flower Farm, music, silent auction, networking and more! Tickets are \$65 each and available at www.cdhh.org or by calling 414-604-2200.

Tasting Tuesday

Tuesday, June 9, 5:30 PM – 9:30 PM, at the Milwaukee Ale House, 233 N. Water St., Milwaukee. Sample a wide variety of wines and beers and enjoy music, food, silent auction and more, all to benefit CDHH. For more information, please contact Aimee at 414-604-7210 or email akelchen@cdhh.org.

Family Learning Vacation

Friday, August 14 – Sunday, August 16 at the Lions Camp in Rosholt, WI. Join other families with d/Deaf or hard of hearing children for this annual statewide retreat filled with a variety of workshops and opportunities for family fun. Registration deadline is July 10. Call 414-604-7202 (V) / 888-742-7651 (TTY) or email kmalak@cdhh.org for more information.

***** SPECIAL OFFER *****

COMPLEMENTARY CHIROPRACTIC CONSULTATION & EXAM

When you visit Kemp Clinic of Chiropractic and make a \$25 donation to CDHH, you'll receive a consultation and exam – a \$100 value – at no cost.
Offer valid throughout 2009.

For more information, call 414-359-0300
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