



www.idhandsandvoices.org

Facebook: Idaho Hands & Voices

PO Box 9617, Boise ID 83707

Email: idahohandsandvoices@gmail.com

**"Early Bird" discount rates for our September 13-15 Family Camp near McCall have been extended until August 1! Go to our website and click on "events" to find more details, registration form, etc.**

*We conclude a series of articles we started in the January issue about advocating for educational services, based on input from various parents and professionals who've learned things through experience they'd like to pass on to younger parents. If you've ideas for further articles, please let us know!*

## **The Fourth R: 'Riting the IEP Part 4: Captioning/Notetaking Services**

Lorna Irwin (with help)

I've only found one family of a child who received captioning support during his time in public school, and then as an "experiment" which did not continue (perhaps, as Mom noted, because it was in middle school and the screen on his desk was one more thing that made him stand out from the crowd at an age when kids want to blend in.) Note taking is a service you can ask for, and chances are the teacher will ask another student to take notes--this allows the student with a hearing loss to use his eyes for whatever purpose he needs them for, whether that is lipreading or watching an interpreter, without having to divide his attention in order to take his own notes. (One hard of hearing adult of my acquaintance made use of note takers in college, but also took her own notes, just the main points. She'd then sit down after class with her own brief messy notes, the note taker's notes, and the textbook, and consolidate it all into one set of notes. A good study strategy for anyone!)

Note taking, assisted by a computer or not, gives the student an outline of what was discussed in class after the class is over. To use written English as a means of access during class, some form of real-time transcription must be provided. Currently, this is much more common in college settings than in K-12 classrooms. There are two basic types of transcripts possible, verbatim and meaning-for-meaning. Verbatim transcription captures every word, including "ums" and the less-than-grammatical utterances of some speakers. It requires either a stenographer using the phonetic keyboard used for courtroom transcription, attached to a computer which translates it into English (CART or computer-assisted realtime transcription), or specialized voice-recognition equipment (more about that later.) Meaning-for-meaning transcription systems such as C-print or TypeWell require a transcriptionist who has been trained to use abbreviations on a regular keyboard, which are then turned into English by a computer; because this is not as fast, the transcriptionist is catching the "meat" of what is said and condensing it into grammatically correct English. In both cases, the transcript can be displayed on a laptop screen or projected so a group of students or the entire class can see it, and the student will receive a hard copy to use as a study aid. Both types of transcription have their advantages and disadvantages, and which one (or an interpreter) is chosen depends on not only the student but the type of class. There is a series of videos at [www.pepnet.org/resources/speech-to-text](http://www.pepnet.org/resources/speech-to-text) that will give you a lot of information about transcription systems.

What about using speech recognition technology, and bypassing the need for a transcriptionist? The short answer is that the technology is not yet available that would allow us to clip a mike on the teacher, turn on the computer, and go. There is new equipment, the Caption Mic, that can be used by a person who has a clear speaking voice and has developed the skill to echo what is being said, and who has spent the time needed to "train" a speech-recognition program to accurately transcribe from his or her speech. No doubt we will see further development of speech recognition technology to the point where it can be used without a third party...some day.

I've included real-time captioning in our series about accommodations because I believe we'll see more of it in the future. There is some evidence that it boosts reading levels for the deaf student and probably helps most students, hearing or deaf, get more out of classroom lectures. It's something to consider requesting at a child study team meeting if you think there's a possibility your child will be using it in college, to give some early experience with the technology.

It does require that a student be able to read (the source I found said at least at a 4th grade level) and prefer written English to ASL translation. Most important, like everything else, one size does not fit all. A lot of my experience with transcription is second-hand, through my daughter, who has used both CART and C-print in college and graduate school (or used an interpreter or just a note-taker, depending on the class or situation.) I asked her what works best--"it depends." One thing she emphasized is that the skill and work ethic of the service provider are extremely important; she's had transcriptionists at both ends of the spectrum, from the absolutely "awesome" C-print transcriber to the CART stenographer that never did get all the hard-copy transcripts to her and was eventually fired by the university. For very specialized classes, her current university has sometimes hired remote transcriptionists who know the vocabulary used and have it entered into their computer dictionaries. Working over the internet, they can provide services from a distance if no one local has the needed expertise.

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### **Federal Legislation to Watch**

Legislation to allow a \$500 tax credit per hearing aid every five years (there is a \$200,000 income cap) has been introduced in the U. S. Senate and House. This isn't the first try for this bill, so if you feel it's about time they passed it, contact your congressmen! To learn more about the bill and express your support, go to [www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org](http://www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org).

The Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf has proposed legislation to strengthen the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act when it comes to providing educational services to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Current language in the IDEA calls for the child study team to consider the communication needs of the child; this legislation would add accountability and also address the need for more teachers and interpreters. The "Alice Cogswell Act" is part of CEASD's "Child First" campaign; to learn more, go to [www.ceasd.org/child-first/alice-cogswell](http://www.ceasd.org/child-first/alice-cogswell).

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### **Some Light Summer Reading**

A couple of books crossed my path in the past few months. Both are "fun reads" which also elucidate a bit of what it means to be deaf or hard of hearing. The first is a book of cartoons my daughter had with her on her last visit. She'd bought two copies as gifts for her grandmother and her best (hearing) friend, and was busy adding annotations such as "This has happened to me!" to its pages. To see these cartoons, you don't even need to buy the book (though it makes a nice gift.) "That Deaf Guy" is a webcomic, at [www.thatdeafguy.com](http://www.thatdeafguy.com), or visit the Facebook page for cartoons plus commentary. The artist is Matt Daigle (deaf), and his wife Kay (hearing and an interpreter) is co-author. The cartoons are about the humorous side of being deaf, raising a small CODA, and interpreting.

The second book has been around for many years, but I never got around to reading it until I found it while sorting used books for the Friends of the Library book sale. *Chelsea: The Story of a Signal Dog* was written by Paul Ogden, known to many parents of deaf children as the author of *The Silent Garden*. The first dog Paul adopted as an adult, from the pound, was Lox; he taught Lox to respond to visual commands, and Lox appointed himself as Paul's guardian. Highly protective, he'd bark so loudly when anyone came to the door that Paul could feel his bark. When Paul's wife Anne accidentally locked herself in the garage on a cold winter night, Lox came and stared at Paul until he got up, then led him to the sound of Anne's frantic pounding on the door. When Lox died, his people quickly came to realize how much they'd come to depend on their unofficial signal dog, and decided to acquire a professionally-trained dog through Canine Companions for Independence. What follows is a fascinating story of being matched to a dog and the training of the new owner. Chelsea is a true professional, and I honestly didn't realize how much a specially trained signal dog could do until I read this book. It's also just a wonderful story for dog-lovers!

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## Upcoming Events

*(Be sure to check our webpage or "like" our Facebook page to receive up-to-date information. If you'd like to have an interpreter present for an Idaho Hands & Voices activity, please let us know by email as far in advance as possible.)*

**Treasure Valley Hands & Voices Roller Skating** Tuesday, July 30, 10:00 am to noon, at the Nampa Rollerdrome, 19 10th Avenue S, Nampa. Hands & Voices is paying for the group; your cost is just skate rental, if needed, at \$2 a person. Driving directions are at [www.namparollerdrome.net](http://www.namparollerdrome.net), or contact Diana Collins at (208)550-9492.

### **Magic Valley Hands & Voices Summer Picnics**

Tuesday, July 30 at Dierke's Lake near Twin Falls, 10:30 am until we're tired. Swimming, beach play, and Lorna will bring kayaks. Lifeguards on duty, little kids' wading area and playground are available. Bring folding chairs or a blanket, your own sandwiches and beverages, plus something to share (chips, fruit, dessert, etc.) We'll try to nab a table near the beach. Entry to Shoshone Falls Park, which includes Dierke's Lake, is \$3 per carload.

Saturday, August 24 at Storybook Park in Burley, 4:00 pm. Our usual end-of-the-summer picnic on the east end of the Magic Valley. H&V will provide chicken (please RSVP to Lorna, 324-7544 or Beth, 934-4346, by noon on the 24th so we get enough) and table service, pop and water; you bring a side dish, salad or dessert. We'll find a spot near the fantastic play structures in the SE corner of the park, at Conant Ave and 14th St, three blocks west of Overland Ave.

**Treasure Valley Summer Play Group** Contact: Jill Muir 914-3728/ [jill.muir@iesdb.org](mailto:jill.muir@iesdb.org) or Esther Brune 284-2912(text) / [ruthbrune05@gmail.com](mailto:ruthbrune05@gmail.com).

Wednesday, July 24- Discovery Center – 9:45am-12:00pm, 131 Myrtle. St. Boise, 83702. We will receive the group discount- \$3.00 for ages 4-17, adults and kids under 4 free. If you want the discount please be there by 9:45 and bring exact change. We must pay and enter as a group!

Wednesday, Aug. 7- Jabbers-10:00am-12:00pm, 1210 N. Galleria Dr. Nampa, 83687. Play center at Nampa Gateway shopping center. Owner Linda Rutledge worked at ISDB. We can get a group discount of \$5.00 for ages 4 and up, \$4.00 ages 3 and under, adults free.

**Magic Valley ESCAPADE** Wednesday, July 17, and Wednesday, August 7 -- Twin Falls YMCA/City Pool, 756 Locust St, Twin Falls, 1:00-4:00 pm. Adults \$3.50, Ages 4-17 \$2.50, ages 0-3 \$1.50 (bring your membership card if you are already a YMCA member.)

**ASL Classes:** Kristi Dorris teaches classes and offers tutoring in Nampa. Contact her via video relay at (208)392-1275 or text at (208)695-3088. Tara Adams offers classes and tutoring at ASL Expressions, 1843 N Wildwood, Boise. She's planning her first children's ASL class for August. She also has an monthly ASL story time, every 4th Saturday at 11:00 am. For more details, see her website, [www.aslexpressions.com](http://www.aslexpressions.com).

**Signing Shakespeare!** This summer's interpreted Idaho Shakespeare Festival dates are:

Much Ado About Nothing	July 17
Sweeney Todd	July 31
King Richard III	August 20
The Foreigner	September 11

There is more information at [www.idahoshakespeare.org](http://www.idahoshakespeare.org); signed synopses of the plays are available at this location. Major ticket discounts can be requested by deaf people/family members/ASL students for these performances.

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day at Silverwood** July 20, 27843 N Hwy 95, Athol, Idaho. Sponsored by North Idaho Deaf Club and the Hearing Loss Center in Spokane, Washington. Admission \$40 adults, \$19 youth and \$4 parking.

**Deaf Awareness Day at Roaring Springs Waterpark** July 20, 11:00 am - 8:00 pm, 400 W Overland Rd, Meridian. Admission \$15.99 per person with flyer; contact Cindy at CDHH at [schreinc@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:schreinc@dhw.idaho.gov) for a copy of the flyer.

**Elks Hearing & Balance Center Parent Education Series** August 13 – Raising a Self-Advocate - Elks Hospital – 4th floor Bitterroot Room, 6:30 pm, RSVP 489-4999; interpreters available on request. Open to parents of children with hearing loss AND middle school-age children with hearing loss. Parents, professionals from IPUL and IESDB and students with hearing loss will be sharing information, advice and experiences to help your child become a self-advocate at school and beyond. (upcoming: September 17, Assistive Listening Devices; October 15, Auditory Skill Development.)

**Third Annual Idaho Hands & Voices Golf Scramble**, September 28 at the Boise Ranch Golf Club, 6501 S Cloverdale Rd, Boise. This is our big fund-raiser of the year, which allows us to offer scholarship memberships, buy food for events, and subsidize our family camp. If you know of any businesses or individuals that would like to support us, we offer lots of ways to do so, for every budget; if you golf, find three friends and sign up by September 16 to participate. Further details can be found at [www.idhandsandvoices.org/golf](http://www.idhandsandvoices.org/golf).

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## In Memoriam

Lorna Irwin

There's a saying that "It takes a village to raise a child." Some people scoff at this, believing that parents should have full responsibility and control over a child's upbringing, and some see it as an excuse for unwelcome intervention by those outside their family. Most parents treasure other adults--teachers, mentors, clergy, grandparents, scout leaders and others who can expand the pool of knowledge, viewpoints and skills available to a growing child.

To some degree, we all watch as our children go past the boundaries we've consciously or unconsciously drawn about our own lives. We may not be able to follow: I remember the mother of a young physicist who'd memorized a phrase describing his area of research, meaningful only to another physicist. We may have to let our child leave the family circle for a time to follow his or her own dream: I think of the parents who sent their son to a private fine arts academy half-way across the country so that he could study ballet while earning his high school diploma. We find ourselves grateful for friends who can serve as mentors: My sister-in-law raised a gay son in a tiny rural town; when he headed off to the big city for college, she took comfort in knowing that the older gay couple she'd gotten to know through the nursery business lived there and could help him navigate the world in ways she could not.

My daughter has a deaf mother. When we discovered that she hadn't heard anything we'd said to her for the first 15 months of her life, my husband and I pushed ourselves to learn all we could about how to communicate with her, so that we could nurture her as our parents had us: doing projects together, traveling, enjoying the outdoors, helping with homework and reading books together. We soon realized that she would be going one place where we could not be her guides, because we are hearing, not deaf. For that reason we chose to have her attend a deaf school, where she would be able to interact with deaf teachers, deaf counselors and staff, and deaf peers. One of those peers was a girl close to her age who came from a large deaf family--two deaf parents and eight brothers and sisters, all either deaf or hard of hearing (and all Deaf!) It wasn't long before we were traversing the 20 miles between our homes so that the two girls could play with each other. We two mothers enjoyed long chats about raising deaf kids, crafts, cooking, and just about everything else--and she was so patient with my developing sign skills and my terrible receptive fingerspelling ability.

We borrowed each other's daughters for overnight stays and even family vacations. When my son had a medical emergency, my daughter went to stay with her deaf family for a couple of days. During that stay, her deaf mother helped her make her very first TTY call to her hearing mother, by spelling out all the words she didn't know.

Eventually the two girls grew up, and grew apart. Visits became less frequent, often a matter of running into each other and quickly exchanging greetings and a bit of news. A few weeks ago, my daughter's deaf mother died suddenly and unexpectedly, and a huge hole opened up in our lives.

Della Wilding, you are missed, and by many more families than ours!

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*We welcome submissions from our readers! Send in articles, stories, ideas for stories, book and product reviews, anything you have to share to [niwri2@msn.com](mailto:niwri2@msn.com), or call (208)324-7544. "Wavelengths" is published every two months, give or take a bit.*