

Editorial

TIPS FOR THE NON-DEAF

I thought it might be helpful for all those non-deaf people out there to know a little about what it's like to be one of us deaf people. It's always helpful to gain insights into other people's worlds so one can better appreciate their experiences and feelings and perhaps better understand how one can help along the way.

First off, common sense tells you, as a deaf person, that you should always try to inform people in advance that you're hard of hearing so they can make allowances when speaking to you. In my experience that doesn't actually help. On learning of my difficulty the speaker's first reaction is to bellow: 'CAN YOU HEAR ME WHEN I SPEAK LIKE THIS?'. 'Yes', I say. After all, the people standing at the bus stop over the road heard him when he yelled like that, so why wouldn't I, standing here right next to him? Then he immediately reverts to speaking just as softly as he was before and I go back to not hearing a word he's saying. That's how it happens every time.

And actually, it's often not about how loudly the other person speaks: it's about how clearly they enunciate their words. There are some people whose every word I can hear clearly across a room, even when they're speaking quite softly, because they pronounce their words very distinctly; meanwhile I'll be battling to make sense of whatever it is the mumbling fellow right next to me is trying to tell me.

Everybody lip-reads to some extent; deaf people just more so. And bear in mind that deaf people have difficulty distinguishing between words with similar sounds, so that tag, tack, tap, tab and tad all sound pretty much the same. So, do you want a Tab or a tap? Mostly, I'll have to watch your lips to know which one it is. If you mumble or cover your mouth, don't be surprised if I end up bringing you a fizzy drink when what you really needed was a faucet.

And, of course, deaf people don't all experience deafness in the same way. Hearing loss can range from slight to profound; some people have poor hearing in one ear but not the other; some struggle to hear high frequency sounds, like birdsong - or, conversely, low frequency sounds, like bullfrogs - but have no problem within the rest of the sound range. My loss is severe in both ears and occurs in the middle frequency range, which unfortunately includes human speech. So whilst I can hear and enjoy both the beautiful singing birds on the one end of the spectrum and the croaky old bullfrogs on the other, that's not much of a consolation in my day-to-day life when I struggle to follow even the person chatting to me on the other side of the table.

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Wynberg



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January in Rotary
Vocational Service month

Wynberg Rotary meet every Thursday,
6 for 6.30pm,
Palm House, Wynberg.

For more information about our club, like us
on Facebook or visit our website:

Wynbergrotary.org.za



BE THE INSPIRATION

Imagine for a moment what it's like having to listen to everything in your daily life through a microphone: your vacuum cleaner, the neighbour's yapping dog, the screeching brakes at the traffic lights and, at the end of the day, your lover's voice whispering sweet, though somewhat metallic, words in your ear.

Are you starting to get the picture?

Remember, too, that because a hearing-aid does not amplify sounds at source - which would produce a louder but still clear version of the original pure sound - but merely at the receiving end, being your ear, it can only produce a louder version of the original indistinct sound you were battling to distinguish anyway. So, whilst the sound may be louder, it's no clearer.

I have, in utter frustration, personally killed off my last 3 hearing-aids: one by throwing it against the wall, one by grinding it underfoot and one by drowning it in a glass of champagne - which was too grand an ending for it, actually. R.I.P. Gone but not missed. My present one cost more than my son's first car. It's okay, but only just okay. Despite the manufacturer's glossy brochures and extravagant claims, I still can't hear most of what is being said around me; I am still intensely frustrated and lost for much of the time.

As I said, don't get me started....

Some people get impatient because they think the deaf person is just not making enough of an effort. Let's remind ourselves, however, that there's a world of difference between not listening and not hearing. And if you think it's tiring dealing with a deaf person, just try reversing the rôles for a short while: try plugging some cotton-wool into your ears for a week and see how worn out and isolated you feel at the end of it, constantly trying to make sense of garbled messages and disconnected phrases.

Remember that if it's determined that a deaf person can hear half or a third or a quarter of what's being said, it doesn't mean they clearly hear one half (or third or whatever) of the sentence but not the rest, in which case they could notionally try to figure out the missing parts; it means they correctly hear a random assortment of only half (or whatever) of the separate, unconnected words being spoken, with lots of unclear phrases, plus some incorrect guesses, in-between. So for the deaf person the discussion can easily turn out to be, 'And secondly ...because, as you well know ...black-market prices ... over and over again ...society has always been ...never ever, ever ...tremendous luck ... so I keep on telling them ... holy cows ... in about a year's time ... purple rain'. And then my absolute worst moment comes at the end of one of those long conversations when everyone notices I've been rather quiet and turns to me and asks, 'So, what do you think, Bev?'

The ongoing effort of continuously picking up odd words in a group conversation and trying to piece the scattered snippets together into something that actually makes sense can be exhausting. Once you realise that you've lost the thread of the discussion you're often forced to give up and retreat once more into your own world of thoughts.

It's not through laziness; it's not a matter of choice. And it's intensely frustrating and it's often very lonely. Deaf folk sometimes talk about being alone in a room filled with people.

There's a statement - usually attributed to Helen Keller, though I haven't found any verification for that - which says: "Not seeing separates you from things; not hearing separates you from people". I have found that latter statement to be true.

By Bev Bird

Minutes: 17th January 2019

Compiled by Hugh Maunder

Attendance	13 members present = 50% Guests: Armien White, Sara Naidoo, Peter (Guest Speaker) and Erika Kuhnert
From the chair of President Biffy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Polio has reared its head in Mozambique.2. Wynberg Rotaract no longer have the church sharing their premises with them. We will have a planning party and then a work party with them. Planning will be clearing out the junk and planning how many shelves are needed and where pictures/certificates/etc will be hung up. Then a following Saturday morning will be putting up shelves and pictures on the walls. Some of our regalia is already on the walls. We will now be able to display our stuff and theirs in a "permanent home".3. Steenberg Rotaract are still collecting tins until June. We will look at another drive for them sometime.4. Wuppertal Fire disaster: Biffy has taken 2 loads of stuff to the drop off point and Justin has taken one load. A lot of this is from British Airways and Uncle Paul's.5. Sunday 20th Diversity in Rotary on-camera discussion. 12:00-14:00. Bootlegger Park, Century City.6. Saturday 2 Feb. is a Literacy workshop. R50 pp. 8:00-12:00. Kelvin Grove.7. Conference is in Somerset West at the Lord Charles Hotel early in May. Biffy is trying to find a 'swallow's' home so that we can all stay in one place at a reasonable price. Please think about this so that we can determine numbers.8. Diary dates: 13 March – Wynberg Rotaract birthday 11 May – Steenberg induction
Induction	Pres. Biffy Inducted Armien White into the Wynberg Rotary Club – Congratulations!!
Fellowship	Birthday: Paul Scarlett on the 18 th Wedding Anniversary: String and Barbara on the 20 th
Slots	David told members that there would be a braai at his house on 31 January. A list was circulated for members to note the items they would contribute to the braai. Justin informed us that the Rotary calendar could be downloaded onto our PCs.
Guest Speaker	Peter Kuhnert gave a very interesting but disturbing talk on the extent of rhino poaching. He told us that, as long as 2000 years ago, the Chinese ascribed rhino horn as having healing qualities. To this day, people in eastern Asia believe further that the horn can be used to rectify sexual problems. The demand for the horn has resulted in a kilogram selling on the informal market for tens of thousands of US\$. The financial incentive is so great that poaching has resulted in the likely extinction of black rhino by 2020 and white rhino by 2050. Peter suggested that "farming" rhino and selling the horn on the open market could be the only way of saving the rhino in the long term. Dave introduced and thanked our speaker.
Swindle	For R900, Karen's name was drawn but she drew the 4 of clubs (Ah shame) Attendance prize of R20 went to Stephanie, again!!!
President's Pearls	"Beauty is in everything if you look for it"

Duty Roster	January		February	
	24	31 SOCIAL: Braai at the Barnards' home	7 Club meeting	14
Sergeant	Jackson		Overbosch	Schreiber
Wynpress Editorial	Bredenkamp		Bonga	Cleveland
Wynpress Minutes	Cleveland		Thomas	Howard
Door Duty	Gowdy		Howard	Jackson
Grace	Schonegevel J		Schonegevel R	Smith
Loyal Toast	Thomas		Todd	Van Niekerk
International Toast	Van Niekerk		Barnard	Bayes
Speaker Intro and Thanks	Howard		N/A	TBA
Entertainment for the month			Murphy, Howard, Maunder, Overbosch, O'Driscoll	

Dates To Diarise

24 January	PP Peter Dutton – RC Hout Bay's Skate Park project, currently under construction
31 January	Bring-and-braai at the Barnards' home
7 February	Club meeting
10 February (Sunday)	Opera Lite @ Marist (Kromboom Rotary Club)
14 February	TBA
21 February	Kelly Blake on the negative effect of plastic in the oceans. + Students and teachers from Oddemarka Junior School, Norway
28 February	Julia and Andiswa (Manager and Training Manager from MOT) will share a typical training process with us; including packing their hand-out parcels
7 March	TBA
13 March (Wednesday)	Wynberg Rotaract's Birthday

Armien's contact details: 50 Dick Burton Street, Plumstead.

Email: Armien.White@westerncape.gov.za

Tel. (o) 021 4839799; (h) 021 7622668; (c) 083 3573708

2019-20 Rotary theme

Rotary International President-elect Mark Daniel Maloney explains his vision for building a stronger Rotary, calling on leaders to expand connections to their communities and to embrace innovative membership models.

"The first emphasis is to grow Rotary — to grow our service, to grow the impact of our projects, but most importantly, to grow our membership so that we can achieve more," Maloney said.

Maloney believes that connection is at the heart of the Rotary experience.

"Rotary allows us to connect with each other, in deep and meaningful ways, across our differences," Maloney said. "It connects us to people we would never otherwise have met, who are more like us than we ever could have known. It connects us to our communities, to professional opportunities, and to the people who need our help."

For more info. <https://www.rotary.org/en/rotary-international-president-maloney-theme-2019>



Tailpiece

Two hunters, Otis and Elmer, got a pilot to fly them into the Canadian wilderness where they managed to bag two big Bull Moose.

As they were loading the plane to return, the pilot said the plane could take only the hunters, their gear and one moose.

The hunters objected strongly saying, "Last year we shot two, and the pilot let us take them both...and he had exactly the same airplane as yours."

Reluctantly the pilot, not wanting to be outdone by another bush pilot, gave in and everything was loaded.

However, even under full power, the little plane couldn't handle the load and went down, crashing in the wooded wilderness.

Somehow, surrounded by the moose, clothing and sleeping bags, Otis and Elmer survived the crash.

After climbing out of the wreckage, Otis asked, "Any idea where we are?"
Elmer replied, "I think we're pretty close to where we crashed last year."