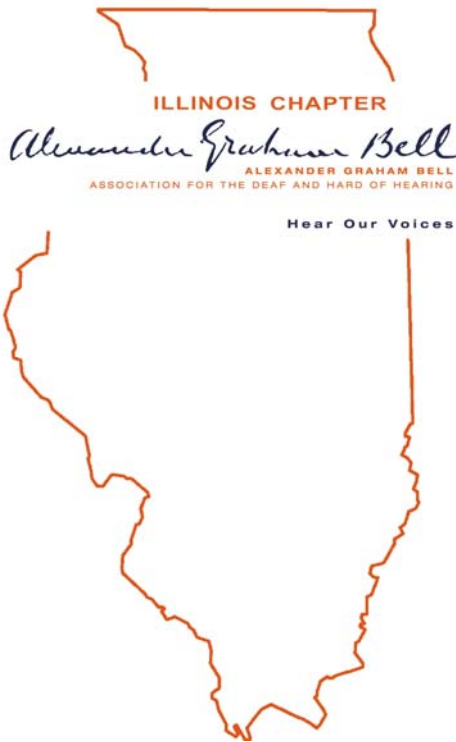


# ILLINOIS CHAPTER OF THE ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



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www.agbellil.org info@agbellil.org

Volume 1, No. 1— February 2006

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Illinois Chapter of AG Bell!

Approximately two years ago, a group of parents, adults and professionals affected by hearing loss realized the need for a greater support system in Illinois. It was therefore decided to undertake the process of re-establishing an Illinois chapter of AGBell. This has been no small feat and without the dedication of our outstanding board members it would not have happened.

My name is Becky Ebert and I serve as President of the Illinois Chapter of AG Bell. I am a Speech Language Pathologist serving as the Early Intervention Coordinator at Child's Voice School in Wood Dale, Illinois. I am involved in CHOICES for Parents, a coalition of agencies dedicated to providing immediate access to support, information and resources to families of children with newly identified hearing loss. In addition, I am a member of the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening committee in Illinois and a member of ASHA. I have been working with children with hearing loss for 4 1/2 years and absolutely love it. I am continuously amazed at the hard work and dedication of the children and families involved. I attended the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign where I received both my Bachelor's and Master's in Speech and Hearing Science. I began my career as an SLP at St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf at Carle in Urbana where I gained the most knowledge of working with children with hearing loss.



*Ajay, Teresa, Jenni, Julie, Kathy, Becky, Suhel, (Carol and Andy not pictured)*

It is my goal to have a strong network of support and educational opportunities, as well as increased awareness of the oral option for persons with hearing loss. As an adult with hearing loss, parent, family member or professional affected by hearing loss I hope that you will take full advantage of what the Illinois Chapter of AG Bell has to offer. In addition to participating in activities, there will be many opportunities to share your time and talents with others from around the state. Whether you take on a larger role of heading up one of the many committees available or the important role of being a 'buddy' for a newly identified family, your time and efforts are invaluable to the chapter. I hope you'll consider all of these options; it is you who make this chapter a success!

I encourage you to take full advantage of what the Illinois Chapter of AG Bell will have to offer, it is my hope that this organization will be an invaluable resource to those affected by hearing loss.

*Becky*

Rebecca Ebert, President

# Meet the Board

## **Becky Ebert**

*President*

*Schaumburg, IL*

Becky currently serves as the Early Intervention coordinator at Child's Voice School. She previously served as the Speech-Language Pathologist at St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf at Carle in Urbana. Becky was one of the founding members of the new Illinois Chapter of AG Bell when it was started in 2003.

## **Suhel Siddiqui**

*President-Elect*

*Addison, IL*

Suhel is the parent of a 4 year old daughter with a profound hearing loss and CI recipient. Suhel has been actively involved at the IL School of the Deaf Parent Support Panel for the past 3 years and was a co-founder and actively assisted in the development of the IEP support committee at Child's Voice School.

## **Julie Wirth**

*Secretary*

*Champaign, IL*

Julie has served as an audiologist for the ECHO (Expanding Children's Hearing Opportunities) Program at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana, Illinois since 1999. Julie specializes in pediatric audiology including evaluation and fitting of hearing aids and cochlear implants. In addition, she works extensively with the Adult Cochlear Implant program at Carle and the Carle Adult Cochlear Implant Support Group. Julie was one of the founding members of the new chapter of AGBell Illinois when it was started in 2003.

## **Ajay Marwah**

*Treasurer*

*Naperville, IL*

Ajay is the proud parent of a 4 year old daughter who has a moderate-severe hearing loss. Actively involved in supporting parents with deaf and HOH children, Ajay co-founded the IEP support committee at Child's Voice School and is involved with Sound Experience, a parent group associated with Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

## **Kathy Allen**

*Board Member, Programming*

Born with severe to profound hearing loss and raised orally, Kathy serves as a Regional Advocate Manager for Cochlear Americas. She is a bilateral cochlear implant recipient, receiving her first implant in January 2000 and her second in April of 2005.

## **Carol Ban**

*Board Member, Programming*

*Roselle, IL*

Born profoundly deaf, Carol attended Wright Oral School in NY until the age of 4. Carol then mainstreamed and graduated college with a BS in Biology/Medical Technology. She currently works at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Carol wore hearing aids from the age of 2 1/2 until receiving a cochlear implant almost 4 years ago. Carol served as past president of the first Illinois Chapter of AG Bell and as the DHHS membership secretary. Currently, Carol is on the nominations committee for DHHS and is the program chair for the 2007 DHHS retreat in Chicago.

## **Andy Ban**

*Board Member, Programming*

*Roselle, IL*

Andy lost his hearing at the age of 14 months due to spinal meningitis. Andy received early oral education in Budapest, Hungary and then at the Bell School in Chicago. He went on to Lane Tech and the Chicago Technical College where he received a BS in Tool Engineering. Born in Budapest, Hungary he was a refugee in 1956 when he arrived in Chicago, not knowing one word of English! Andy began wearing hearing aid in his early twenties. Andy currently works at Service Tool International as a senior design engineer. In the past, Andy served as a DHHS chairperson, VP of the original AG bell Illinois chapter, as well as other leadership functions in DHHS. Andy currently serves as a board member on the DHHS Advisory Board.

## **Jenni Current**

*Board Member, Programming*

*Champaign, IL*

Jenni received a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Deaf Education at Fontbonne University in St. Louis. Jenni currently serves as the kindergarten teacher at St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf-Carle in Urbana, IL. She previously taught at Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children for 4 years. Jenni was born with a severe to profound hearing loss and has been a member of DHHS and the Professionals section of AG Bell since 2000. Jenni wears one hearing aid and a cochlear implant, which was activated in December 2005.

## **Teresa Burgin Krueger**

*Board Member, Membership*

*Barrington, IL*

Teresa is the parent of a mainstreamed 7 year old child who has digital hearing aids. Teresa is active in community and service groups focused on women's and children's issues.

## What is the AG Bell Association?

The Alexander Graham Bell Association (AG Bell) is a lifelong resource, support network, and advocate for listening, learning, talking, and living independently with hearing loss. Through publications, outreach, training, scholarships, and financial aid, AG Bell promotes the use of spoken language and hearing technology. With over a century of service, AG Bell supports its mission: Advocating Independence through Listening and Talking!

## The Mission of AG Bell Illinois

AG Bell Illinois encourages independence through listening and speaking by providing support, advocacy, education and networking for persons with hearing loss of all ages, their families and professionals.

## The Vision of AG Bell Illinois

It is our vision that all persons with hearing loss in communities throughout the state of Illinois have equal access to academic, employment and social opportunities to enhance emotional and intellectual development thereby promoting greater independence.

## Chapter Sections

### **Parent Section (PS)**

The Parent Section is committed to extending emotional support and information to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Any AG Bell member who is a parent, grandparent, great-grandparent or legal guardian of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing can become a member of this section.

### **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section (DHHS)**

DHHS members are an active service group of adults (18 years or older) who are deaf or hard of hearing and choose to communicate through spoken language and speech reading. DHHS serves to help AG Bell carry out its mission of encouraging the use of the oral approach in educating children with hearing loss.

### **Professional Section (INPROSEC)**

Professionals in the field of deafness collaborate to promote excellence in education, serve as a contact for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing, assist AG Bell Illinois in becoming the leading state source for information, research, and education on hearing loss and spoken language and aid AG Bell Illinois in promoting Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EDHI) programs throughout the state.

## Joining AG Bell

It is easy to join AG Bell. Visit [www.agbellil.org](http://www.agbellil.org) or [www.agbell.org](http://www.agbell.org) to complete an on-line registration form. Several membership types are available for \$50 for an individual membership, \$60 for a household membership and discounted memberships of \$30 for seniors and students. Your dues cover national activities, subscriptions to *Volta Voices*, and participation in our AG Bell Illinois chapter.

## Child's Voice Celebrates 10 Years of Education

Child's Voice School located in Wood Dale, Illinois (Northwest Suburbs of Chicago) is proud to announce they are entering their tenth year of teaching children who are deaf to learn to listen and talk. A kick-off event for a year of celebrations will be held on February 25, 2006 at the Health World Museum in Barrington, IL. At this 10-year anniversary party, family and friends will have private access to all the museum's exhibits and special activities, as well as fabulous hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and refreshments. This event will showcase all the stars behind their students' successes, including the founders, staff, board of directors and community partners.

John Pride, father of the professional baseball player, Curtis Pride (who is profoundly deaf), will be the keynote presenter at this event. Curtis, who is an oral communicator, is currently a professional baseball player with the Los Angeles Angels. Mr. Pride will discuss his role in the success of his son, Curtis. The cost of this event is \$15 per adult and \$5 per child. Please call Amy Van Polen at (630)595-8200 if you have any questions or would like an invitation.



**We invest in futures.**

When children who are deaf attend Child's Voice, they learn to listen and talk without the use of sign language. They build their listening, language and academic skills, as well as the self-confidence to achieve what seemed just a decade ago to be impossible: return to their local school districts for a mainstream education. And a future without limits.

With a ten year record of success, Child's Voice has become the premier oral-deaf program in the greater Chicago area.

**Child's Voice**  
an oral school for hearing-impaired children

*Celebrating  
10  
years  
of  
voices  
1996-2006*

630.595.8200 • www.childsvoiceschool.org

### **WANTED: PEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGIST**

Child's Voice is looking for a licensed pediatric audiologist to start in the Summer/Fall of 2006. Responsibilities will include providing audiological services for our students and working closely with the faculty and families. Please contact Michele Wilkins at 630-595-8200 or [mwilkins@childsvoiceschool.org](mailto:mwilkins@childsvoiceschool.org) for more information.



## A solid foundation to build upon...

Children with hearing loss can listen, learn, talk and compete with their normally hearing peers in regular education classrooms...if the proper foundation is laid. Carle Foundation Hospital's family-focused Expanding Children's Hearing Opportunities (ECHO) and St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf at Carle (SJIC) programs team up to give children with hearing loss the strongest foundation!

### **ECHO**

- Illinois' first pediatric cochlear implant center
- Specializing in children with significant hearing loss
- Speech and language evaluations
- Aural rehabilitation therapy
- Support and education for families and schools
- Cutting-edge clinical research

602 W. University, Urbana, IL  
(217) 383-4375; [echo@carle.com](mailto:echo@carle.com)

### **SJIC**

- Comprehensive educational program
  - Full day preschool - K
  - Theme-based curriculum
  - Academic readiness
  - Daily one on one therapy
  - Play and social skill development
- Mainstream support program
- Infant, Toddler and After school therapy

810 West University, Urbana, IL  
(217) 326-2824; [sjic@carle.com](mailto:sjic@carle.com)

# What's Happening in Illinois?

## UNHS Day

The 2nd Annual Universal Newborn Hearing Screening day in Illinois is scheduled for April 11, 2006. This follows on last year's successful event at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. The Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Day recognizes the importance of newborn hearing screening, follow-up, and early intervention. The event is sponsored by CHOICES for Parents, a coalition of parents and professionals throughout Illinois that promotes the health and development of children with newly identified hearing loss by providing their parents with immediate access to support, information and resources to help them make the best decisions they can for their children.

In 2002, the Illinois legislature mandated that all 135-plus birthing hospitals in the state must screen the hearing of newborns before babies go home from the hospital. Every day in America, according to the July 2003 edition of *The Hearing Review*, approximately 1 in 1,000 newborns—or 33 babies—are born profoundly deaf and another two or three of every 1,000 babies are born with a partial hearing loss, making hearing loss the number one disability among newborns in the United States. In Illinois, it is estimated that 500 babies born every year with a hearing loss.

As stressed by speakers at the event, the earlier an infant is identified with a hearing loss, the earlier intervention services can be put into place to encourage language development. Children identified with a hearing loss between birth and six months of age have a receptive language of 200 words and expressive language of 117 words, whereas those identified between ages of 7 and 18 months have a receptive language of 86 words and expressive language of 54 words [1]. An undiagnosed deaf child aged three will only know about 25 words, compared to 700 words for a hearing child of the same age [2].

[1] American Annals of the Deaf, 143, 416-424. The development of deaf and hard of hearing children identified through the high-risk registry. Yoshinaga-Itano, C. & Appusso, ML. 1998.

[2] Yoshinaga-Itano, 1998, quoted in "The High Cost of Hearing Loss; What Our Publics Need to Know," Donald Radcliffe, *The Hearing Journal*, May 1998, vol 51 no. 5.

## Upcoming Events

### Jewel Shop and Share Dates:

Help raise money for AGBell Illinois through your groceries purchases at no extra cost to you! Simply bring the fundraising slip available on [www.agbellil.org](http://www.agbellil.org) to the check out when you shop at Jewel on the dates listed below. We get a percentage of each purchase donated back to our group!

2/20, 2/21 & 2/22

5/29, 5/30 & 5/31

10/23, 10/24 & 10/25

### 2006 Convention of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

June 23-27, 2006

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### Leadership Enrichment Adventure Program (LEAP)-

June 20 - 23, 2006

AG Bell invites undergraduate and graduate students to attend the Leadership Enrichment Adventure Program (LEAP)- designed to help young adults develop skills in leadership, teamwork, conflict resolution, and problem solving. Sponsored by the Rochester Institute of Technology National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), LEAP is a unique leadership workshop for college students with hearing loss who use spoken language to communicate. Applicants must have completed at least one year of undergraduate study to be eligible. The next LEAP program is scheduled for Tuesday, June 20, to Friday, June 23, 2006, at RIT in Rochester, N.Y. Registration fees are \$170 for AG Bell members and \$200 for nonmembers (includes a one-year student membership); registration includes all meals, sleeping rooms and all official LEAP program activities. For more information, contact Greg Zick at [gzick@agbell.org](mailto:gzick@agbell.org).

### Legislative Action for Consideration: Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit bill

To Email your Representative: Visit [http://ga3.org/campaign/hearing\\_aid\\_house](http://ga3.org/campaign/hearing_aid_house). Type in your information on the right side of the page, edit the sample letter in any way you wish and send. For example, you could edit it to emphasize the strong need HOH children have for hearing aids. The letter will be sent directly to your Representative.

Be sure to check out our website at [www.agbellil.org](http://www.agbellil.org) for contacts, resources and upcoming events!!

Convention Registration and Hotel Reservations begin February 1st

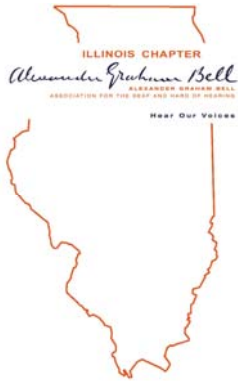
Mark your calendar now!

Join the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and more than 2,200 attendees at the 2006 Convention in Pittsburgh, Pa. Select from a variety of short courses, concurrent sessions and poster presentations for parents, professionals and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**2006 Convention of the  
Alexander Graham Bell Association  
for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
*June 23-27, 2006  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*



*Alexander Graham Bell*  
**ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL**  
ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



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