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Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Hearing Loss Association of Grand Rapids presents

Bill Barkeley of *Hear The World*

and

Joyce Thorson and Bobbi Taylor of *HARC Mercantile*, assistive technology

*[technical difficulties....presentation in progress with Joyce Thorson]* The transmitter is used by a teacher or pastor or anyone giving a demonstration. Are you hearing me okay? Turn the phone down below.

This also has a neck loop and the person that has a receiver can control the receiver and the volume. If you are next to someone you can hear them and the speaker. The microphone used to be on the transmitter and you were left out of half the communication. Now you can hear all that is going on.

**Guest:** does the transmitter need to go to the speaker?

**Joyce Thorson:** you would be able to hear me even outside the room. This is a radio frequency. It makes it a secured system. These are the only ones used in the jury rooms and court rooms. You cannot take a receiver that can tune in everything for obvious reasons. This only pairs to that specific frequency. So they do have court room systems that are only this. Generally you don't use these in theatres and concert halls. Some theatres have an FM system and they have receivers available to you. It becomes a bit complicated if you don't go to the same theatre each time. You could use the microphone on here to hear better but you would also hear everyone else too.

**Guest:** so the transmitter is of no use in that case?

**Joyce Thorson:** unless you could connect to the main amplifier. This is meant for personal things. This also works well from the back seat of the car to the front, or in a restaurant where it's hard to hear.

**Guest:** I have a question. Now how could my wife, being hearing impaired, use the receiver?

**Joyce Thorson:** with her hearing aid with a T-coil. If she would like to put it on, we can do that. The microphone can be omni-directional or just one way. In this case, I would have it directional so she would not hear anything else but me. If I set it on the table I would make it so she could hear everything around her. It has to be 10-12 feet. Are you hearing me now?

**Guest:** very good!

**Guest:** so I could use that anywhere at home, even in the backyard, where I wanted her to hear me. But she cannot talk to *me*. What else do you have to go with it?

**Joyce Thorson:** here is the receiver. We have 5-6 different brands and also infrared systems. This is the newest technology. This is similar. It has a transmitter and receiver, but this has a base that can be plugged into the phone or television. When this is plugged in like this, you can hear it through the neck loop. It's Bluetooth capable. You can use it for the cell phone too so you know that the phone is ringing. You cannot go as far between the transmitter and receiver with this other one. This has a 10 foot range. This is for like in the living room or kitchen or den. It's a really nice little system. The best part is the Bluetooth system that can be used with your cell phone, television or home phone.

Other loop devices that we have are things like this. This looks like a clip board and you carry it around with you. The loop is in here. The microphone is in here and you can get a lapel mike. Teachers use this and students use it. No one knows it's a microphone. You can set it on a desk and no one knows. You just have to be within the range of the device. That is a newer product.

This is another style. I have seen this one at hotels at the registration desk; it sits on the counter. The loop is here. If you have a hearing aid and you have someone on the other side of the counter you can hear the questions that the hotel person asks; it can also be used at a bank or at school.

**Guest:** then do you have to set your ear pieces in a T-coil mode to hear that? How do you know if it's available?

**Joyce Thorson:** they are standard on the desk. Look for the sign. Sometimes they are blue or yellow. One very similar to this is in the Kalamazoo airport where the ticket counters are. I went for a tour there after it first opened and I could stand 3 feet away and still hear very well. When a person would go there, they would look for the sign and they would know to go to the counter and be able to tune in.

This is our room loop system for a living room or television room. There are 4-5 different kinds available. This is the one we brought that is a transmitter that plugs into the electricity. You can put it in the ceiling or in the floor. You could also use this instead of the wire a loop pad in the back of your chair, as long as it's around where you are, and listen that way. We have all that to show you in our showroom.

For clocks, this is our newest. It's portable. We have 3-4 that you can take traveling. This one has a loud sound, shakes, and flashes—it hooks to your pillow. We have been to two hearing loss conventions recently and this is the best-selling product there. Everyone was late because they couldn't hear their alarms and now they don't have to be. They bought these and were impressed. We have 3-4 different portable clocks. I don't recommend a battery clock because it's not certain to shake you. As the batteries wear down, the weaker the shaking is. You may not hear it.

This is our old standby sonic boom clock which you plug in to a lamp. This has a shaker and volume control. Put it under the sheet of the pillow so you don't knock it on

the floor. The best thing is that it has a 5 year warranty. The manufacturer is right here in Michigan and takes care of it.

The last thing I have is a hearing aid dryer. This is the newest one. It has two UV lights that kill bacteria so you are less likely to have infections. It has a battery tester on it. You put the hearing aids in here and open up the door and press on; it goes on a cycle. If you go for a walk or have been in the rain, there is a quick refresh button to get the moisture out quickly. That is the number one reason for hearing aids to go for repair. This is about \$59. Previously they were \$100-\$150. We were excited to find this one; it's large enough for a cochlear implant too.

**Bobbi Taylor:** If you cannot hear me, let me know. I will start with the Workmaster. It's a general purpose alert system. This is the console with an alarm and bed shaker. There is a cord that plugs into a phone jack and it comes with a doorbell button. If someone presses the doorbell, you have a lamp plugged into it and the lamp flashes and this ring flashes bright red. If the alarm is set for the bed shaker, it goes as well. If someone calls you, the phone light lights up. The same thing happens with the alarm clock. You can get other transmitters that go with it to tell when there is motion or when the fire alarm goes off. It does a bit of everything. This is about \$180 for the base unit and it's a nice thing to have. You can have remotes in other rooms. You can put it in the living room or any other room of the house.

This is a telephone signaler. Whenever the phone rings, the light flashes. If you don't use a land line and use only a cell phone and you cannot hear it, you can put the cell phone on vibrate and when it senses that a call is coming in the alarm sounds off and the light flashes. You can also plug a bed shaker into this.

This is a very old standby product; it's been around for 30 years. If you have a phone you like and want more amplification, this plugs into the handset. You can amplify it up to 40db without buying a new phone. This is also good for offices. If you have a digital system in the office, this is the answer. It has to be a corded phone without the dial in the handset. This goes only on a corded phone and fits between the dial of the phone and the handset.

**Guest:** I have a system like this but I get feedback and it squeals.

**Bobbi Taylor:** is it an inline amplifier? Did you change the battery? There is a battery in the amplifier. Or if the phone has a volume control on it, sometimes you cannot do it. If it's amplified a lot, putting an amplifier on an amplified phone garbles it. The more amplified the phone is, the less likely you can add it.

This is an answering machine that amplifies to 40db and has a tone control *and* a speed control. When people call and leave a message that is too fast for you to catch, you can slow it down. There is also a jack on here for a head set or loop. If you need the extra help of induction, you can still hear it that way.

This is the latest amplified phone. It does everything. It has a cordless handset; this

phone is amplified to 50db which is one of the loudest you can get, and this is a speaker phone. You can still dial from the base. It has 8 speed dials on it and it can even hold pictures where the numbers are programmed. It's great for someone who likes the pictures or cannot see numbers well. There is a place for an emergency number in there as well. 911 says *don't* put their number there. It also has an answering machine and tone control. You can change the sound tone on the phone and the handset. This is wall mountable or available on the desk.

This is one that we sell most of. You have probably all seen this on TV or in the Sunday press: it's the Jitterbug. It's simple and most of the people we deal with want just a phone for emergencies. It has a large display, is compatible with the hearing aid and has nice big buttons. Everything on the menu has a simple 'yes' or 'no', and that is all you need to press. The operator button connects you to a live operator that answers and speaks English. All you need is right there.

These are Bluetooth receivers. You have seen the others but this is a neck loop for T-coils. You pair it to the cell phone and when your phone rings you get a beep, press the button to talk and also press it again to end. These also connect to the audio protocols for Bluetooth. The transmission from the cell phone is different than from a computer or iPod. Both of these do both. You can be listening to your iPod or music and when the phone call comes in, you press the button and it switches over.

**Guest:** so you get alerted to the call coming in?

**Bobbi Taylor:** if you are not in T-coil mode, you hear the phone ring. If you are listening to music, you will know when the phone is ringing. It's rechargeable and comes with a charger. This one retails for \$199 but we sell it for \$159. This one is \$175.

If you don't have any audio that puts out Bluetooth, there is an answer for that. This is a dongle that has a connection. It comes with the RCA connection for connecting to the television. The audio is then sent on a Bluetooth signal that you can pick up. You can plug it into any audio device, like a computer, and it's rechargeable with a wall charger or a USB port on the computer. It's very easy for travel.

They take it one step further for people without T-coil. This is a Bluetooth television listener. This is new. The headset receives the Bluetooth and, as I said, it comes with the dongle. The headset also pairs with the cell phone so if you don't have a T-coil to use the head receiver you can still use this.

The other option for television listening is a transmitter and a wireless receiver. You have seen these before. This is the same concept as the television ears. This is not infrared because you need to be in the same room in the same line of sight as the device that this is paired with. With this one you can still hear the television when you leave the room—like going in the kitchen—because of the signal. It comes as a headset or T-coil option.

The last one is a wired one. It's not that new but some people don't have T-coils and want to listen to music. This is what you would plug into your computer or iPod. It has a neck loop to put out the sound and it's also amplified to 30db and gives an extra boost.

Do you have any questions? Otherwise we will move the table.

**Guest:** I have four. One, you are a senior citizen and you tend to want to make sure things are put away. Can you find where the item is in the house? I was curious because you can call the cell phone and find it. Is there a process to find this?

**Bobbi Taylor:** not on most of them. Most just receive the sound and don't emit a sound. They don't have an alarm that allows you can find them. Only the telephones.

**Guest:** what if you are in a court room or there is a lot of machinery around making noise? Or what if you're in an airport and want to travel with this? Will the TSA know that this is what it is?

**Bobbi Taylor:** People travel with a lot of the devices and I don't know that they have a harder time traveling with them than a computer. None of them look threatening. I don't know why TSA would have a problem with them.

**Guest:** third, do you offer 24/7, 365 days a year support to go with the technology? What if the bed thing is not doing what it's supposed to?

**Bobbi Taylor:** we are available during business hours. The manufacturers as well. Jitterbug support is 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Guest:** fourth, you have precious animals dwelling with you. We have a something at home—like if I run a machine—and they want to scatter because of the frequency. Are they sensitive to these machines that sit around the home?

**Bobbi Taylor:** I cannot think of anything that would necessarily be sensitive to a dog or cat. When the smoke detector goes off, maybe. This is the monitor. What it does is listen for the smoke detectors in the home and when it goes off—if it's a T3 the signal beeps and pauses—this machine listens for that pattern in the frequency of the smoke detector. When that happens the bed shaker shakes and the machine emits a low frequency sound. That is one researchers found is heard most by sleeping seniors and children. In case you don't think you'll hear it, there is the bed shaker. The high frequency usually is what the animals listen for. I don't think this is harmful to them.

**Juli Wiseman:** any other questions?

**Guest:** is there any development going on that would enable those with hearing aids to use something else to hear like with a T-coil if you don't have one with that option?

**Bobbi Taylor:** if you don't have a hearing aid set with T-coil, it comes through a mike. When you have a T-coil, it goes directly to the T-coil and you bypass the mike. You get the same circuitry. The mike picks up all the sounds. The T-coil has a clearer signal for the audio. You will probably never get the same kind of signal with a microphone that you get with the T-coil. Microphones would have to come a long way.

**Guest:** in regards to low frequency and dogs, my experience is that helicopters

and hot air balloons set them off. You also had a headset and other units that were battery operated. How easy is it to replace the battery? That one is charged as you put it back, correct?

**Bobbi Taylor:** you can also put in a regular battery if your rechargeable battery runs low and needs charging. The Contego model battery is not user replaceable. It holds a charge for 8 hours depending on the volume. This is the transmitter. They tend to be about the same for transmitter and receiver. You can plug them into a wall charger. It has a dual connection for it to plug in both the transmitter and receiver at one time.

**Guest:** you cannot leave the transmitter on all the time? Just plugged in permanently?

**Bobbi Taylor:** there is no reason not to. It operates fully during charging.

**Guest:** And the other headset?

**Bobbi Taylor:** I knew you would get to that because I am not sure. It's so new. I don't think you can replace the batteries yourself. You can charge it, but I don't have the instructions here.

**Guest:** Sony has one that only has a battery from Sony. This one does not look like it's replaceable.

**Bobbi Taylor:** I think you probably cannot replace it yourself. There are a number that you cannot. These you can't do. They have to go back to the manufacturer. There is about a two year life on them. The personal amplifiers and this television listener allow you to replace the battery yourself. This one cannot have a battery replaced on the receiver but you can on the transmitter. You cannot replace the battery on this either. It has to be charged. If the battery has to be replaced, it has to go back to the manufacturer. This one can stay plugged in.

**Guest:** can you repeat the comments on the T-coil one? Joyce Thorson had a wire spool room loop model.

**Joyce Thorson:** you put it on the television when you want a loop so you don't have to wear something on your neck. You just switch the hearing aid to T-coil and the television audio is directly sent from the television to your hearing aid.

**Guest:** so you just lay the wire in the room?

**Joyce Thorson:** yes, in a way that no one trips on it. We have one in the showroom and we can show you. We can have you see how it works.

**Guest:** this is under or over the carpet?

**Joyce Thorson:** under is best, but if you put it over the carpet, you should tape it down so no one trips over it.

**Juli Wiseman:** we have time for one last question.

**Guest:** how much money for the small alarm clock?

**Bobbi Taylor:** \$49. We have brochures here on these products but if you want a full catalog, you can request one and we would be happy to send it to you.

**Juli Wiseman:** If you'd like to ask additional questions or want to see any of these products closer, you can stop by after Bill speaks. Thank you so much.

**Juli Wiseman:** before we bring Bill up to talk you will all get a number. What it is is that we have a couple gifts for some of you. Three of you will be the lucky winners.

How does a deaf and blind motivational speaker lead a group of 17 students of mixed hearing abilities on an adventure down the Colorado River? Well, Bill Barkeley will tell us. He is one of 15,000 people in the United States with Type 2 Usher's Syndrome, the leading cause of deaf-blindness in the world. He served as a mentor for the *Hear The World* expedition to the Peruvian Amazon and his goal is to have people take on challenges one step at a time.

He is presenting for us for a third time as an advocate for the hearing loss community. Please welcome Bill Barkeley.

**Bill Barkeley:** How are we doing? We are just waiting for the computer to boot up so we can switch the picture. My computer is jammed!

While that is booting up, *Hear The World*, based in Switzerland, is funded by Phonak as the world's largest global initiative to raise awareness about the importance of hearing and the consequences of hearing loss. The third largest physical challenge in the world is hearing loss, right behind heart disease and...(*unable to hear*). The perception is that it primarily affects people that are elderly. The reality is that 65% of all cases of hearing loss that are diagnosed are between the ages 18-44. The main reasons are first, the mass industrialization of the world. The people are moving from a rural society to large major metropolitan cities. There is noise pollution and as a result that causes hearing loss. But the second reason is one induced by man himself—the advent of the MP3 player and other such devices. You use the small ear buds in the ears and when used for long period of time at a volume that is too high they cause hearing loss in a young population. Some countries want to limit the volume output on these devices, but in the United States there is no restriction. We go as high as we want and that induces hearing loss.

Three years ago I went to *Hear The World* and told them I wanted to do expeditions with young people with varying degrees of hearing loss. The goal was to educate the public on not letting physical disabilities stand in the way of living life. I wanted these students to be ambassadors of sound to get the message out about dealing with hearing loss. The first year we went to the Amazon and explored how sound was conveyed in the forest and under the water. This last summer we did the Grand Canyon. That is what is want to talk about tonight. [*slide presentation*]

About 20,000 people a year get to get on the river itself, but 5 million actually visit. We were less than 1% of the world that gets to get on the river! It's where the Hualapai Indians reside. The Colorado River is at a 100 year high because of the recent snow pack and rain. I was surprised to see a big mighty river when I expected something much calmer. The 17 students applied to be a part of the *Hear The World* expedition and were to do service projects for the organization once they got home. They also did sound observations on the river itself and, with the help of the National Park Service,

studied the impact of current natural sounds on the environment. They also did a podcast on preserving your own hearing.

The kids started out as kids do, and it was a bit awkward. They are right now on a Skype session. They talk frequently and also have planned a class reunion in Colorado for next year. We jumped into it and started to set up camp by ourselves. Because there were differing levels of hearing and hearing loss, many had not been with a deaf person before. We had people with no hearing aids, some with ASL, and some with cochlear implants. In this way it allowed everyone to learn about themselves and others on the trip.

We set our goals for what to work on, like being respectful and doing team work. In the morning we knew we would get on the boats themselves. The topography in the Grand Canyon is always changing. Sometimes the canyon is only a few hundred feet high and in other places it's several thousand feet. It's beautiful and the height and colors always change; that makes it very beautiful to float down the river. We broke down into teams and changed those teams each day. We all learned to paddle and learned how hard it is to paddle for five days on different types of water! There are pools, cascades and rapids. That requires a lot of work especially in 105 degree weather.

As you can see we had a series of boats and you can see the rapids. Some kids had never been out of the city before and were excited yet nervous. We went over 50 miles in five days. We stopped a few times during the day just to jump in and cool off, and one day we did a hike. It was fun to see how everyone could hear each other and still be spread out. As you can see from this slide, someone is up there talking loudly, but you can also see one student doing ASL. So it was neat because all the kids felt comfortable. There was not a lot of self-consciousness. As a result it took a lot of stress out of the normal daily communication.

We hiked up a rocky trail and it was a great sense of accomplishment because of the varying levels of ability. Many had not hiked before. They could look at the Grand Canyon below from this point, but we went up further and further. When you find water in the Grand Canyon, you know there is a spring nearby. We followed it and found some ladders created by others before us. It was a treacherous climb for many of them with a disability but we worked our way up and found a beautiful cabin. It was 4-5 stories tall. Suddenly there was a big, huge waterfall. You could feel it all...the vibration of the water, the cool air. If you wore hearing technology, you took it out at this point and just experienced it. What is it like if you don't have technology on? They were very comfortable with it. The beauty was the silence as we went through.

But there was still the vibration of the water around us. It was neat to see how the people who were hearing watched us to see how we could experience the water through the vibrations. We had fun up there, but we kept exploring the waterfalls. The water was warm, unlike the river itself which was very cold. It was also one of the only times we could have a shower.

There are many interesting people in the group. This is Ryan. He has a bone disease. He has already had 15 operations where they had to break his bones and reset them. It's very hard for him to move as a result. But he got to the top of the mountain. We called him Ryan the Rock Star. This girl has cochlear implants, ADD and emotional issues. She is very high energy. It was an experience for her to be with other teens. As you can see they started to play games and "talk" with each other.

As we continued journey, this is travertine falls. The water trickles very slowly over time and it's very warm and slow. It's spring fed. Anytime we stopped we would have a presentation and each kid was assigned a topic. We talked about the ecology of the Grand Canyon, what people ate, the Hualapai Indians, the sounds of the Grand Canyon, the history of it, and the astronomy. The outdoors was a living lab and our classroom; it was a great place to learn.

We found ourselves going through that rapids right here. We had to scout it first; you look at it first and watch to see what the best course is to take the boat through so if we have trouble we know what to do. There was no guarantee that we would stay on the boat so we had to be prepared if we went off course or crashed into something. There was a lot of excitement and nervousness. The geology was incredible as well.

The woman in the blue is from the National Park Service and is a scientist. All the kids had a microphone and would decide what sound to record for the podcast. Anything that happened in the Grand Canyon they could use to tell their story. They also wore watches at night so if they were all awakened at night by the same sound, we could find out what the sound was. It could have been an animal, airplane or snake. There is a big concern about sound in the Grand Canyon and how it impacts the animals that live there.

We ate outside all the time. We rotated assignments like cooking, doing dishes, preparing, and unloading. We awoke at 5:00 am each day and went until 4:00 pm. We got to eat at the world's largest picnic table! A lot of the girls 'liked' the lizards at the camp but we handled it. We took umbrellas next to a spring as well so we could get out the sun. They also had competitions with each other about their presentations. They did skits on the food that is found in the Grand Canyon and how the Indians survived on it.

We paddled farther and as you can see, there is something different in each one of their perspectives. There is the mountain or the rush of the water or the measurements of the canyon. The National Park Service had us stop in specific places to see how the sound levels were changing. We would transport the microphones and do sound listening exercises. Could we hear animals, other people, birds? At the same time, we blogged the sound to the internet so people could follow us and experience it right along with us.

This is one of the spots we stopped to check the rapids. I will show you how big they got. The kids are up here doing another presentation. They knew that some people

could read lips or sign or do both. In this case, we have one person who is presenting and someone else doing the signing.

I wondered what we got into here with these rapids. Ian was another man on the trip and wondered the same thing too. We had one stretch where the famous Powell expedition went through and they decided to disband and go in two different directions. They did not know if they would make it. Not many people had done it much less make it. We took the waves head on and went crashing through, but we had to have a plan if someone fell out or we crashed. No guts, no glory. Everyone was in, but it was tense.

When you go through something like that, calm always follows. The lower level of the water lets you see the rocks worn away over time or where bank robbers used to hide in the caverns along the bank. We learned a lot of history as well. The people themselves were so interesting. This is a girl with two cochlear implants. She wants to be a disability attorney. As I mentioned before, the Powell expedition split in two and the one group that split off and tried to hike out were killed by Indians. The others made it. We were the first deaf and hearing impaired expedition to go through the Grand Canyon. Everyone was very proud of being a part of the group. We really got to know each other and knew about the others' concerns and fears.

They started to get excited about *Hear The World* and what they could do. David wants to be an audiologist just like his mom. This is Angie. She has hearing loss and has never worn hearing aids. After three days on the river she realized that she missed out on a lot and missed out on all the accommodations that she could have had in school. She was mainstreamed but had missed so much, and could not believe she was on this trip with all these people with all this success. She decided to get hearing aids after she got off the boat.

This is Mackenzie. She does sign language and this trip convinced her she was on the right path for her career. They saw a chance to see themselves for who they were and what they could do. Just like this picture shows, they see what is happening to them. For most of them, we want them to embrace their hearing loss and see this expedition as a leadership opportunity. We had fun but it really was about building a community. It was about what we could do for each other. We had a lot of parties too—like mustache and toenail parties; no one had to worry about what others thought.

It was very quiet and peaceful on the river. It was beautiful. It was also carefree and timeless. We just floated down the river and coasted down in a natural flow. The guides followed us. It was cool and fun. Everyone along the way who saw us kept saying we were all so friendly [*because their hands were in the air*] but the kids said their hands were just cold from being near the water all day which is why it looked as if they were waving.

Some were afraid of the water at first but became comfortable later. We talked about the history of the Grand Canyon and learned about each one of the kids themselves.

Gage has hearing loss and an auditory processing disorder. He kept it hidden for most of his life, but he came out of this with goals for himself. It was like a time for him to fly.

We are trying to come up with more ambassadors of hearing loss. The goal is for these kids to see that there is nothing that should get in their way. We want them to embrace life. They can jump in the Grand Canyon, go after opportunities, and find more than one way to do life...or rafting. Sometimes you need to change the life you have to build the life you want.

We talked a lot about trying new and old ways of doing things. Sometimes if you throw out the old and only have the new, it's not the best; sometimes you need to blend them. They also learned to take one day at a time. The more time you are in the natural world, the more you learn about the world around you. At first they wanted their iPods and computers, but by the second day they were seeing a world they knew they would not see again and didn't miss those things.

They had to set goals, but a lot did not like others to set expectations for them. We started to talk to them about setting their *own* goals. We talked a lot on the trip. As you can see, we have the water guns and tried to keep cool, but while we had fun we tied this in by telling them to set goals and aim high. A lot of kids had a lot of anger and were concerned about the fact that the world was not fair. They're right; it isn't fair. We had to tell them not to let that get in the way of your ability to move forward. You need to make peace with life and work with others. That is why we always talk to them about doing the better good.

We had a storm each day. This also taught the kids that each day you will run into rough patches so you need to plan for the storms in life. We also talked to them about talking to guides in life, just like we used our guides in the Grand Canyon. They knew many things that were scientific about the river or weather, but they also had a good amount of intuition. As a result, you need to think of your inner compass and think about how you are with others.

It was a life of adventure, which is what Helen Keller said. So they found out more about simple things: it's important to share yourself and have a point of view. A lot of kids were not being used to being asked about their own opinion. They were always told to do things, but not many had an opinion. It was amazing how well thought out and intelligent their ideas were. They were an exceptional group of kids.

Ian does not like being on a different bus than the other kids at school. He does not think he should have to be and his passion is education reform. David was locked out of an international business program because of a foreign language requirement. He is passionate about getting into the program. What we did not know until recently was that the UN declared that ASL is a basic human right and some colleges now accept this as a foreign language equivalent. David is excited to go back to school and pursue his dreams because they will now accept his ASL fluency as his foreign language.

There is a tradition in the Grand Canyon of painting your toes and the men have to do it too. We talked about being yourself and sharing with each other even if it seems at first uncomfortable. We also told them to do their homework, get all the details and get people on board with your point of view.

One point of discussion was about what impact the ever-increasing amount of helicopters in the Grand Canyon would have on the animals. Should you motor through the Grand Canyon instead of rafting? What impact does that have on the environment and the underwater life there? We just allowed people to have their own opinion and advocate. So some of the podcasts will include these topics.

The Hualapai Indians have opened a huge resort up there where you can go and stay. There is mining there and cell phone towers. We had to decide not to take ourselves too seriously either so we just let things be and saw where it would go. We had Oreos. The challenge was to see how long you could keep the Oreo on your face; keep in mind this was in 105 degree heat!

The beauty is to relax and enjoy. But everything in life has consequences. There is a helicopter there and you can see the dust that is swirling around because of that. Is that healthy? People can actually listen to bubbles under the water with these under water microphones. We want people to become the change we want to see in the world. For hearing loss we need another generation of people to come forward who are committed to getting the word out. These 17 are ready to do that. I was honored to be with them.

We created this film and are starting on this goal to help get the word out. I have a short clip. (*playing video clip*)

Pretty cool, huh? So now what you will see is that in the January or February issue of the Hearing Loss magazine you will see their essays of these topics. You will also see more of that in the upcoming months through various media sources. The kids are also working on the podcasts right now. Thank you for your time. Look for more on this in the next few months.

**Juli Wiseman:** anyone have any questions?

**Guest:** how long did the Oreo stay on your face?

**Bill Barkeley:** mine lasted for 10 minutes. The longest was for 1 hour.

**Guest:** who proposed this type of expedition and awareness?

**Bill Barkeley:** I did this. I founded Global Explorers that did the curriculum for this. I plan the trip and do a lot of the hearing loss stuff. We have *Hear The World*, Global Explorers and this trip all involved. You need a permit to get on the river so we had to have the National Park Service on board. We also have the science put into it which was exclusive to our program. It's all under the auspices of *Hear The World* with the goal of teens going into the world to embrace and educate about hearing loss.

**Guest:** what is the next trip? Is it in 2012?

**Bill Barkeley:** I'm still working on that. The applications are online and we accept them in January or February. Once the kids are selected, we meet up and do the adventure and when they go back to school in the fall, they talk about their experience and how it impacted their lives. We do class visits, senior centers, etc., but the one joint project is the podcast.

**Guest:** how did the information get out to the kids?

**Bill Barkeley:** a lot is by word of mouth now. Phonak is also on board with soliciting participants. This year we went after teachers and audiologists and the doctors and end user community to drive people to the site itself. We get better each year.

**Guest:** do the kids have to fund themselves to go?

**Bill Barkeley:** yes.

**Guest:** What if they don't have the money?

**Bill Barkeley:** There is a series of scholarships for the covering of the cost. The kids need to raise \$2,500 to go. Because of the challenge, the students and parents don't necessarily want to do it, but when they do it's the greatest thing they ever did. People want to help them. When they ask people, they are so excited and the media attention is there that it's easier for them to raise the money. The goal is that there is too much isolation and loneliness and lack of self-confidence for these kids. By doing the process of raising money, they get the very skills they need in life. The nice thing about it is that it sells itself. That is why they do service projects after they get back. They are part of the larger world and assume the responsibility and become a leader.

**Juli Wiseman:** I want to go!

**Guest:** I have a question. How can other adults with hearing loss get involved?

**Bill Barkeley:** this is not the first time this has come up. People of all ages and abilities want to do it. I am also involved in No Barriers United States. My friend is the first one who climbed Everest and he helped me when I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. We took people to Colorado and took them rock climbing even if they were missing limbs. We did adaptive kayaking and such. It's about anyone of any age or ability coming together to push themselves to do things in life they never dreamed possible. We do this for people with disabilities but also for their families. They can go back to their own homes and do things with them.

I do a lot with the hearing loss piece of it but I use all the wireless technology when I go out on my expeditions. My mission is really on the vision side because I am legally blind. I have a passion for the assistive technology piece. We need to help people of all ages and disabilities.

**Juli Wiseman:** do we have any other questions for Bill Barkeley?

**Guest:** I just want to thank the two young ladies up here [*ASL interpreter and captionist*]. They are so impressive!

**Bill Barkeley:** it was not easy either given all the problems we had with the technology. Thank you so much for all your help. It was noticed.

**Juli Wiseman:** It's late so let's do the drawing. Nancy will help me. We have two gift cards to Jimmy Johns and a haircut gift certificate. *[drawing]* Thank you for coming. If you have any suggestions for future programs, please let us know. We are doing this for you. If there are any programs you want to see, let us know. Once again, thank you for coming out tonight. Don't forget that we have refreshments.

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