

Celebrating milestones

This May we wrap up almost a year of celebration, which has included the 10th edition of DeaFestival, the first-ever coupling of DeaFestival and the National Association of the Deaf biennial conference, and the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.



Written by
*Virginia L.
Moore*
KCDHH
*Executive
Director*

In March we also recognized another important milestone, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the “Deaf President Now” movement at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. The landmark, eight-day protest led to the installation of I. King Jordan, the first deaf president in Gallaudet’s 124-year history.

Billy Lange, dean of student life and athletics director at Kentucky School for the Deaf, was a 24-year-old junior at Gallaudet during DPN. He remembers a feeling of outrage in himself and his fellow students when the school initially selected Elizabeth Zinser, the lone hearing candidate among the finalists for Gallaudet’s top position.

“Boy, I was really upset,” Lange said. “I said to myself that it was nothing new because of being so oppressed by hearing people and wanted to do something.”

Of course, another landmark anniversary we celebrate is the founding of the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

The Commission only stands today because you, the community, saw a need! A small group of strong leaders with the Kentucky Association of the Deaf, both deaf and hearing, had the foresight to push legislation which established KCDHH. The first Executive Director was Bill Rodgers, a farmer who had a wonderful relationship with legislators, and who established the foundation behind KCDHH. He hired excellent staff members, like Dana Parker. Before each of them retired, the duo of Mr. Rodgers and Ms. Parker were synonymous with the commitment of KCDHH to the constituents the agency served. Then there was west coast/Texas transplant Bobbie Beth Scoggins, whose leadership style and vision for KCDHH brought the agency’s reputation to a national level and crystallized its importance to Kentuckians. I am proud to say I have joined the ranks of those Executive Directors and I continue to be amazed at the rich history and current change this agency has to witness.

For 30 years this agency has worked to give deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians a presence and helped level the playing field for those who feel isolated by their hearing



The founding of KCDHH. From left, Terry Hostin, Jan Garrett, former Gov. John Y. Brown Jr., former KCDHH Executive Director Bill Rogers — the agency’s first executive director — and Ann Rogers.

Commission Members

Nina Coyer, Chair
Kentucky Association of the Deaf
Representative

David Bayersdorfer
Alexander Graham Bell Association
Representative

Susan Brown
Kentucky Speech-Language
Hearing Representative

Becky Bush
Parent Representative

Rebecca Crawford
AARP Representative

Marilyn Fenwick
Hearing Loss Association of America
Representative

Edie Ryan
Member At-Large

Barbie Harris
Kentucky Association of the Deaf
Representative

Amy Hatzel
Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for
the Deaf President

John Horsley
Kentucky Association of the Deaf
Representative

Joseph U. Meyer
Education and Workforce
Development Cabinet

Michelle Niehaus
Cabinet for Health & Family Services
(designee)

Joe Scott
Service Provider Representative

Sharon White
President of Kentucky Association of
the Deaf

Big news for D/HH truck drivers

Edited press release issued by the National Association of the Deaf

In a historic victory for deaf and hard of hearing truckers, the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) announced Feb.1, after decades of prohibition, that deaf drivers can operate commercial motor vehicles such as large trucks. On that day, the DOT granted 40 applications filed by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) seeking exemption from the hearing standard that has barred deaf drivers from obtaining commercial driver's licenses (CDLs). In announcing this historic decision, the DOT cited research demonstrating that deaf drivers are as safe as hearing drivers.



The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH) is gaining an understanding of how the new law will impact deaf and hard of hearing truckers in Kentucky. Executive Director Virginia L. Moore encourages any deaf or hard of hearing commercial driver's license holder to contact KCDHH if they need advocacy in pursuing or maintaining their CDLs. In the first quarter of 2013, KCDHH fielded many request from

deaf or hard of hearing Kentuckians interested in obtaining their CDLs. We advocated for them and helped them and the test administrators understand the necessary accommodations for deaf and hard of hearing applicants.

The DOT regulates the physical qualifications standards, or physical requirements, for people who want to operate commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce. For decades, the DOT has maintained a hearing standard that has excluded safe and skilled deaf drivers from a career in commercial trucking. The DOT hearing standard, contained in 49 C.F.R. §391.41(b)(11), requires that a CDL applicant be able to hear a forced whisper in the better ear at not less than five feet, or that an applicant does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid. The NAD has long argued that this standard has no relevance to safe operation of commercial motor vehicles and has insisted that the DOT rescind this standard.

In July 2011, the NAD filed exemption applications asking DOT to waive the hearing standard and allow deaf truckers with safe driving records to operate commercial motor vehicles. In February 2012, the NAD submitted a second group of applications for exemption. The DOT reviewed the driving records of each exemption applicant and asked for public comment on the exemption requests. In response, 570 individuals and organizations filed public comment, overwhelmingly agreeing that deaf people should be allowed to obtain commercial driver's licenses. The NAD expresses gratitude to these individuals and organizations that filed comments supporting the exemption petition. This policy change not only allows the 40 applicants represented by the NAD to drive commercially, but opens the

See CDL, Page 5



KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO YOU— 1982 - 2012

On July 1, 1982, the Commonwealth of Kentucky embarked an important day in our state's history with the founding of the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

We would like to take time to reflect on three decades of service, and we invite you to celebrate this anniversary with an old-fashioned picnic social 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, May 18 at Salato Wildlife Education Center in Frankfort. Bring friends, families, blankets and lawn chairs. Also, don't forget to bring your memories of the commission and its history. We welcome you to share them.

ATTENTION CORNHOLE TEAMS!

Please contact us at kcdhh@kcdhh.ky.gov, v/t (502) 573-2604 or vp (502) 416-0607 to sign up for the tournament. Registration will also be taken the day of the event.

COME JOIN US!

WHAT: KCDHH 30-Year Anniversary
Old-Fashioned Family Social

WHEN: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.,
Saturday, May 18

WHERE: Salato Wildlife
Education Center
1 Game Farm Road
Frankfort, Ky.

ACTIVITIES: Cornhole tournament,
fishing, horseshoe pitching,
fun and fellowship!



Celebrating 30 years of service and advocacy to you

Continued from Page 1

loss. There are a lot of things we do behind the scenes, like monitoring bills in the General Assembly, but the bulk of what we do boils down to one thing: accessible communication. Whether we are on the phone with your doctor explaining your need for a captioner, having a discussion with a school official about how a deaf student would benefit from having an interpreter, or opening a dialogue with nursing homes on how to address the needs of their hard of hearing residents, it's all about communication

To close this special anniversary year, KCDHH is hosting an old-fashioned social to celebrate 30 years of service to the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This picnic is open to any and all in the deaf and hard of hearing community and friends and family. We also hope to

see current and former KCDHH commissioners and staffers there. Most of all, though, we want to see you, the folks we are proud to serve and represent every day. Without you, there is no KCDHH.

We invite you to celebrate our agency's first 30 years at an old-fashioned picnic social 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, May 18 at Salato Wildlife Education Center in Frankfort. Bring friends, families, blankets and lawn chairs. Also, don't forget to bring your memories of the commission and its history. We welcome you to share them. Additional information is at the top of this page.

Hear More: A World of Resources

Hearing Loss Association of America - Kentucky Chapters 2013 Regional Conference

EARLY BIRD
SPECIAL
CONTINUED
TO
JUNE 15

*Bud Smith
Photography*

Mark your calendars for July 19-20 and head to Louisville for the inaugural Hearing Loss Association of America - Kentucky Chapters Regional Conference. From dynamic and engaging presentations to demonstrations of the latest innovations of assistive technology, this conference will have something for everyone, spanning the spectrum of hearing loss. Do you know a friend who would be interested in learning more about their hearing loss? Bring them along!

Since this is THE FIRST ever conference hosted by the HLAH Kentucky Chapters, it will be a historic event.

DON'T MISS OUT! BE A PART OF IT!

Visit hearinglossky.org for information on how to register for this exciting conference!

Nationally renowned,
award-winning comedian

KATHY BUCKLEY

will be appearing 7 p.m. July 20 at the HLAH Conference closing banquet. Kathy has appeared on The Tonight Show, Comic Strip Live, VH1's Stand-Up Spotlight, Evening at the Improv and Caroline's Comedy Hour!

**TICKETS
NOW
AVAILABLE!**



KCDHH launches new TAP campaign

This spring and summer, the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is rolling out a new advertising campaign to promote its Telecommunications Access Program.

Posters for the campaign — “It’s For You!” — are being sent to audiology offices, health departments and other social service agencies across the state in order to reach out to deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians who are not yet enrolled in TAP.

“TAP is an important service we provide at KCDHH,” said the agency’s Executive Director, Virginia L. Moore. “We want everyone who is diagnosed with a hearing loss to know that they can receive an amplified, captioned or wireless telephone of their own choosing at no cost to them through this valuable program.”

In order to participate in TAP, applicants must be legal Kentucky residents for at least one year, five years of age, and have been diagnosed by a state licensed physician (general practitioner, family physician, ear nose and throat specialist or internal medicine specialist), advanced practice registered nurse, audiologist or speech pathologist as deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired or deaf-blind. In addition, applicants must verify that they have telephone or internet service already at their places of residence with a bill showing the applicant’s name, address and phone number.

“The ability to communicate is a common denom-



IT'S FOR YOU!

Did you know...

- 36 million American adults report some kind of hearing loss?
- Hearing loss is the third most common health issue, behind heart disease and arthritis?
- 1 in 5 teenagers will incur a hearing loss at a much earlier age due to exposure to loud noise?

The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Telecommunications Access Program is here to serve you if you have a hearing loss. We provide:

- Specialized telephone equipment **AT NO COST TO YOU**
- Other resources to assist you with your hearing loss

The Telecommunications Access Program...

inator among all of us, including the deaf and hard of hearing,” Moore said. “We have been fortunate to receive testimonials from several participants in TAP telling us how much their worlds opened up and how they don’t feel isolated anymore, simply because they have the right kind of communications device that accommodates their hearing loss.”

CDL: Transportation decision hailed as ‘huge victory’

Continued from Page 2

door to driving careers to any deaf driver with a safe driving record. The DOT explicitly states that this announcement pre-empts any contradictory state law.

“We made history, and this is a huge victory for all deaf and hard of hearing people in the United States. Previously we had to fight to be able to drive cars, and now commercial driver’s licenses are available to deaf and hard of hearing drivers!” says NAD President Christopher Wagner.

In addition to granting the 40 exemptions, the DOT

recognized that the NAD has filed a petition to remove the hearing standard in its entirety from the regulation. That petition is currently under consideration by the DOT. The NAD thanks the DOT for issuing the 40 exemptions at this time and urges the DOT to expedite the petition to remove the hearing standard.

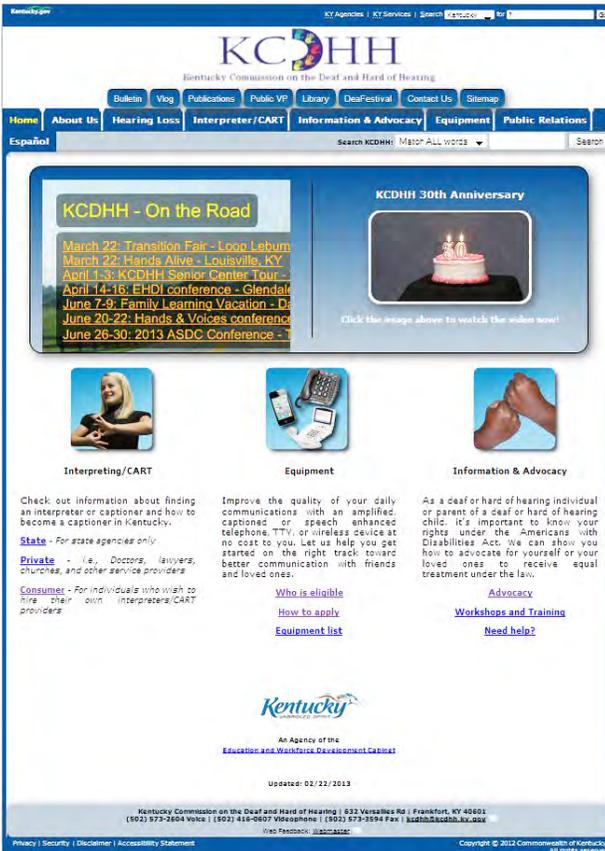
The NAD expresses gratitude to many people who worked hard for many years to reach this achievement including, but not limited to deaf truckers and their organization Deaf Truckers United, Mary Vargas and Michael Stein at Stein & Vargas, LLP and Thomas Knope.



KCDHH
632 Versailles Road
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

PRSRST STD
US POSTAGE PAID
FRANKFORT, KY
PERMIT NO. 481

An agency of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet



Say 'Hi'

to the new KCDHH website!

We hope you are enjoying the new design of KCDHH's home on the web. Much discussion went into making your online experience easier. We are pleased with the end result and hope you are too.

If you haven't checked us out recently, give us a visit!

WWW.KCDHH.ORG

