Lucas!!

When she found out about Lucas’s hearing loss, Tonya immediately began to research what auditory oral resources were available in Maine. She knew they wanted listening and spoken language to be part of their family life with Lucas. She says, “All families do things a little differently. For me, it helps to get all the information I can, and then I’ve learned to follow my gut. What works for our family is best for us.”

“I’ve never felt any judgment from the people at hear ME now regarding our choices for our family. They have a unique expertise in Maine, and I don’t know what we would have done without their support”, says Tonya.

Early childhood educators and parents are giving a big thumbs up to the Pilot Preschool Program – a partnership between the State Department of Education and hear ME now.

The program is designed to establish cost effective, community based education for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and who communicate using spoken language. It provides ongoing training resources to early childhood center teachers to optimize the listening and language skills of children with hearing loss.

“It was so helpful to observe the modeling of teaching strategies and then have the opportunity to discuss the reasoning behind them” – Arundel preschool teacher

Six different preschool classrooms participated in the program during the 2010-2011 school year. A hear ME now auditory oral teacher of the deaf spent extended periods of time as part of the classroom team coaching classroom teachers in equipment use, teaching strategies to facilitate listening and spoken language development, and social supports for children with hearing loss. In pre and post rating scales, teachers improved their knowledge of hearing loss and use of hearing technology by at least 50%, and their observed use of auditory teaching strategies by over 40%.

“Our hMn coach was very open to going with the schedule of the class and suggesting strategies within the activities planned” – Lewiston preschool teacher

The successes of the Pilot Program have led to an expanded contract between the Department of Education and hear ME now for the 2011-2012 school year. Newly named SHIPS (Speech and Hearing in Preschool), the program will be expanded to include a distance learning component and provisions for professional development learning credits. By working closely with State case managers for children ages 3-5 with hearing loss, we will offer this exciting opportunity to many more early childhood educators – for the benefit of their current and future students with hearing loss!

“Summer Camp” in July

Our 3rd annual July “summer camp” for elementary students was once again well attended and well received. The hear ME now one day camps focus on the development of self-advocacy and hearing loss awareness. Through a fun combination of games and activities the hear ME now team facilitated the children’s participation in reading stories about other children with hearing loss, writing their personal stories, and creating videos to introduce themselves to their new classroom teacher in the fall. There was time for sharing thoughts and feelings about their own hearing loss, and practicing strategies to facilitate communication within the mainstream setting. Of course, there were also many opportunities for playing with and learning from other children just like them.

This year’s group was led by Julie Neumann, Listening and Spoken Language Specialist and Katelyn Driscoll, Auditory-Oral Teacher of the Deaf both from hear ME now! For more photos of the fun, visit our Facebook page at hear-me-now!
You’re Invited!

Saturday, November 12, 2011
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Please join us for a pizza reception in our newly expanded office space at 4 Fundy Road, Falmouth.

Popcorn provided! Everyone welcome!

RSVP to: Cindy at crussell@hear-me-now.org or 207-781-7199

The Farmer’s Cheese

“Where children with hearing loss learn to listen and speak.”

PO Box 896
Portland, ME 04104
207-781-7199
www.hear-me-now.org

Thank you to our generous sponsors and skiers, the 9th Annual "Break the Sound Barrier” Ski Race at Shawnee Peak was yet another great success! In spite of the rain, we raised over $23,000 to help children who are deaf or hard of hearing in the state of Maine.

Winning Teams:

Top Fundraising Team: Time Warner Cable
Fastest Team Gross: Time Warner Cable
Fastest Team Net: Time Warner Cable
Fastest Male Skier: Jake Dawson
Fastest Female Skier: Tina Novick
Fastest Under 14: Sarah Novick

Thank you to all who turned out for this great event! See you next year on the slopes March 4, 2012!

Top Fundraising Team: Team Albin, Randall and Bennett
Best Wipeout: Zachary Glidden
Best Costume: David Rosignol
Most Leisurely Pace: Brittany Landry

Best Cheerers: Will and Emily Feagans

Raffle Winners: The Massey Family who donated their raffle winnings back to hear ME now! The Massey Family who donated their raffle winnings back to hear ME now!

Hear me! Hear me!

Cindy at crussell@hear-me-now.org or 207-781-7199

The Farmer’s Cheese
Based on a book by Geoff Plant of The Hearing Rehabilitation Foundation, “The Farmer’s Cheese” is a piece of children’s musical theater composed by Oliver Searle and performed by the Scottish ensemble “Symposia.” Commissioned by MED-EL, the performance was created for children with cochlear implants from the ages of 4-8, but has appealed to a much larger audience. The piece is performed by two actors who play the hapless farmer and the mischievous mouse and is supported by musicians playing the flute, violin, cello, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone and trombone. It includes a wide range of musical styles, slapstick comedy, dance, and mime.

If you are interested in seeing this performance, please contact Cindy at hear me now! to borrow a copy of the book and performance on DVD.

This fall and winter, the Listening and Spoken Language Specialists at hear ME now will be providing a series of “Lunch and Learn” webinars to the Department of Education. Service Coordinators for children with hearing loss ages birth through 5 will have the opportunity to learn about the effect of hearing loss on child development, listening and spoken language options/outcomes and hearing assistive technology.

We are excited to be a part of this professional development initiative that will give Department of Education staff the tools they need to support families and access to expertise in the field of auditory oral education.

Hear ME now! is sharing its expertise.

centralize and optimize its hearing assistive technology inventory for students with hearing loss. This includes training (either on site or by distance technology) for early childhood educators for all children receiving new equipment.

Professional Development in facilitating listening and spoken language for deaf staff and contracted professional services.

Tele intervention for infants with hearing loss and their parents in their own home – no matter where they live, hear ME now! staff is receiving training from practitioners experienced on both the international and national levels in this unique and truly exciting service delivery model. We look forward to trials in the late fall.

We have tripled our adult clients this spring and summer as the new cochlear implant program at Mercy Hospital has gained momentum. It is a privilege to be a part of the important work of their hearing rehabilitation and to welcome them to the hear ME now! community.

We so appreciate your ongoing support and interest in our work to ensure opportunities for children with hearing loss to learn and speak! I hope to see many of you at our “Movie Day” on November 12th.

Pam

http://www.hear-me-now.org

*Where children with hearing loss learn to listen and speak*

Director’s Update ...Cont from page 1

CI Implant Recipient: March 31st, 2011
I first began seriously thinking of a Cochlear Implant (CI) back in 2002 when I went completely deaf in my left ear...the nearest CI Center was in Boston...

I was excited when I heard that Mercy Hospital has approved this process [in 2008]. After a few months, the surgery was set for March 31st.

Surgery was scheduled and I was very nervous. The staff at Mercy Hospital were terrific, I couldn’t have asked for better treatment.

It was three weeks till the CI could be turned on; I had no problems from the surgery, and almost no pain. Dr. Hearst didn’t cut off much hair.

The staples were removed in 8 days; it took two minutes and was painless. I realized I had almost no scar and it was difficult for anyone to see that I had even had the surgery done. I was back to work in 10 days. There was a little soreness, but nothing major, I felt great.

Being one of the first CIs for MKM ENT Associates, was a learning process for everyone involved. I was completely overwhelmed when it was first turned on. Everything sounded so weird, voices sounded like “Alvin and the Chipmunks” and there was no idea what they were supposed to sound like. It seemed to take forever...and I was nervous and sweating buckets. I was very concerned about what I was hearing, I couldn’t understand voices, couldn’t hear Dr. Hearst jingle his keys. After all the testing was done, my CI was programmed and I was sent out into the noisy world...I was a bit disheartened.

What was crucial as I look back was the sessions with Cathy Janelle from hear ME now! This would be my turning point; Cathy’s knowledge and training were just what I needed. She was able to explain to me what I was hearing and how the exercises were training my brain to work with my ears again. What I can say, it has been a huge improvement from that upsetting day when it was first activated. I would strongly recommend hear ME now! to everyone who receives an implant and after each new programming. It just gets better and better each day.

My social life has been completely turned around. I’m talking to people everywhere I go. I’m slowly building my confidence in the implant. I am so thrilled with the CI and the clarity of the voices I am hearing. I have begun to talk to people who I used to avoid because I just couldn’t understand them and now I can. There are no words to express how that makes me feel, every day is a new day and a new adventure. It’s thrilling! I’m just so excited.

Sincerely,
Davy Smith

Cathy Janelle working with Lucas
Photo courtesy Pierce McCleary

At 7:30 pm, Scott Londgren will be our MC for the night. We will be giving away great Door Prizes starting at 8:30 PM. All participants are encouraged to bring a new toy for the Giving Tree to benefit the children at the St. Raphael Parish Center in Medford, MA.

Deb Feagans, M.D. organized a wonderful group of friends and family to attend the lively performance held at the St. Raphael Parish Center in Medford, MA on July 18th.

Please join us for a pizza reception in our newly expanded office space at 4 Fundy Road, Falmouth.

Nadia Rosenburg; and photographer, Pierce McCleary.

If you are interested in seeing this performance, please contact Cindy at hear ME now! to borrow a copy of the book and performance on DVD.
hear ME now!

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011

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*Gifts of $500+

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- Dick O’Meara and Chris Bulsa-O’Meara
- Connie and Mark Ouellette
- Carolyn Pollock
- Peter and Susan Slivinsky

**Foundation Friends**

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- The Davis Family Foundation
- The Foundation for Maine’s Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children
- The Homer Family Foundation
- Maine Community Foundation

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Every effort has been made to include all our donors on this list. We apologize if we have accidentally omitted anyone’s name.

A special THANK YOU to our volunteers:
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Thank you for giving so generously of your time!