

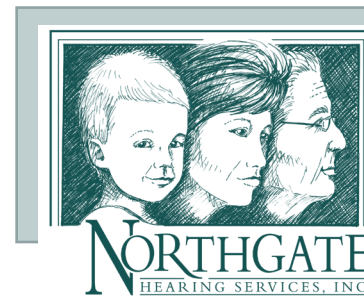


"We listen so you can hear"

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(206) 367-1345

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"We listen so you can hear"

## Hearing Healthcare News

May 2009

### CapTel Makes Phone Use Easier

For some people, understanding telephone dialog is difficult no matter how good or amplified the phone is. Due to the particular damage to the inner ear, some hearing losses just don't allow speech to be clear. This is particularly challenging on the phone, when you are limited to listening with one ear and have no visual cues to help you. If this is your experience, the CapTel, short for "captioned telephone", may be the answer. This technology arose out of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) passed in 1990, which requires equal access to public facilities (i.e phones) for those with disabilities, such as hearing loss.



The first CapTel phones became available in 2003. They operate just like normal phones but you read the incoming conversation on the phone's display screen at the same time you hear it, just like closed captioning on TV. Both one-line and two-line captioned phones are available. In the one line arrangement, the caller calls a 1-800 captioning service which relays the call to you to read/hear simultaneously. In the two-line system, callers can bypass the relay service and just call you directly. This is obviously more convenient but two phone lines are required. For more information, go to [www.captionedtelephone.com](http://www.captionedtelephone.com).

In 2008, Web CapTel was introduced. All you need is a computer with high-speed internet and a standard or cordless phone. Your calls are displayed on your computer screen, so you can adjust the type size for better reading. In addition to saving money (as you can now eliminate long distance calling charges), it also requires no special equipment. For more information, go to <http://www.captionedtelephone.com/webcappel.php>.



**Dr. Mercer:** Spring may finally have sprung! I was able to attend a very good national audiology meeting in Nashville, TN in February. As usual, lots of new developments are brewing in hearing technology. We'll always keep you apprised. Otherwise, I've been busy with my bagpiping and our high school Sophomore's activities. Our WSU Freshman will be home in a few weeks for summer. Can't wait to have him back! Hope you are all basking in sunshine...

**Jennifer:** Such exciting times! I finish with my doctoral program on May 31st at 7pm Pacific Standard Time (but who's counting?). I won't know what to do with all my time when I'm not hitting the books. My family, including my Mom, who just had hip replacement surgery (Larci can commiserate), will be traveling to Mesa, Arizona in August for graduation. We also just bought a new house so we'll be moving in June. Don't worry, it's just a mile away from our present abode. My son and daughter are already excited for school to be over but I keep telling them they've got two more months to go, so keep STUDYING!

**Larci:** I returned to work on April 13th and I am doing great! Thank you so much to everyone for their thoughts and cards. I sincerely appreciate the caring and support I received. My family has been wonderful and this allowed me to spend time with Veronica just watching movies or reading together. Lori, Jennifer and Catherine did an outstanding job taking care of our patients. I am grateful for all their extra hours and am happy to be back!

**Catherine:** I've already shared my bad news for this Spring, I'm going back to school for a new guide dog. It will be strange to miss spring in Seattle, but I hope we get some warm weather, which we all deserve! My sons are staying busy with school, sports and Sounders games. Gunther is beginning his transition which is strange, but I know he will be happy. Take good care.

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## HEARING NEWS YOU CAN USE

### A Visit With Catherine

It seems like once everything is settled then it is time for a change again, and that is the case for Gunther and me. As most of you know Gunther is a working dog, serving as guide dog for my low vision. While in the office he is the resident greeter, performer and “get his fur all over you” dog. Well, you can probably guess what I am leading up to, that the time has come for him to retire to the lazy life of a “retired dog”.



My trainer from Guide Dogs for the Blind and I have determined that Gunther is not working as well as I need and that safety will soon become an issue if he doesn't retire soon. Gunther has always had issues with dog distractions while working which doesn't seem to be getting any better. What this means is that he will no longer wear his harness and guide me through obstacles, and sadly he will not come to work with me anymore....I know that for many of you visiting Gunther is why you come to Northgate Hearing Services, and to get your hearing aids checked out, of course. He has brought so much joy and levity to the office and I know he will miss greeting all of you.

Gunther will retire with close family friends who live just a few miles from my family. He will live on a half-acre lot with an English Pointer named Pepper. They enjoy each others company and will get into all sorts of trouble I'm sure. I will also be able to see him for lots of dog sharing and dogsitting!

I will be going back to the Guide Dogs for the Blind School in May and will be back in early June with another special dog. My new dog will take awhile to get accustomed to the office, as “he/she” and I will need to establish our routine together, the dog will be out of sight for awhile. It is all very bittersweet, but I feel so fortunate to have had Gunther and to be able to share him with all of you.



## READERS PAGE

### Guatemalan Audiology Mission

Dr. Mercer is headed back to Guatemala in November for another audiology mission trip. She is affiliated with Healing The Children, (HTC), a non profit medical volunteer organization dedicated to the healthcare of children throughout third world countries.



In recent years, our audiology team has expanded to serve hearing impaired children in five geographic areas of Guatemala two to three times a year. We provide hearing aids, earmolds, batteries and accessories to hearing impaired children and have developed a network of trained volunteers to provide access to hearing aid maintenance and supplies throughout the year. Other dedicated Guatemalan volunteers receive training to provide ongoing auditory rehabilitation/therapy to these children.



These services are provided at no cost to the families. Our team members pay their own travel expenses to ensure that all donations go directly toward patient care. Demand for our services, and funding, is immense. If you feel moved to help with this worthy cause, please send a check, written to Healing The Children, to our office. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes. For more information, go to <http://www.youtube.com> and search for HTC Audiology Medical Mission Team.

### ATTENTION UNIFORM SUBSCRIBERS

If you have Uniform health insurance, great news! As of January 1, 2009, your hearing benefit has increased from \$400 every 36 months to \$800 every 36 months. What a great time to renew your commitment to better hearing and quality of life at a lower cost!

### OFFICE HOURS:

**Monday**  
**9:00A-12:00P, 1:00P-5:00P**

**Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday**  
**9:00A-12:00P, 1:00P-6:00P**

**Friday**  
**Closed**