Moving Ahead with CVAA
Page 14

ALSO INSIDE:
The Road to Internet Captioning
Page 18

Interview with Karen Putz
Page 22
You’ll Love The Freedom

To learn more about SVRS®, visit www.svrs.com.
TDI’S MISSION
“TDI provides leadership in achieving equal access to telecommunications, media, and information technologies for deaf and hard of hearing people.”

FEATURE ARTICLES

What is the CVAA? .................................................................pg 14

The Road to Internet Captioning. ................................................pg 18

Interview with Karen Putz ........................................................pg 22

Calling For a New Accessible 9-1-1 System .................................pg 24

REGULAR COLUMNS

BOARD VIEWS by Dr. Roy Miller, TDI President ........................pg 2

Exactly What Does TDI Do?

CAPITOL COMMENTARY by Claude Stout, TDI Executive Director .......pg 4

A Three-Fourths Full Glass Versus an Empty Glass

ACCESSIBLE TECH by James House, TDI World Editor ........................pg 8

The Spirit of Innovation

WHEN CRICKETS SIGN by Bill Graham, TDI Associate Editor ................pg 11

CVAA: Help Me Out Here

TDI Membership Form ..............................................................pg 21

TDI IN ACTION June - November 2011 ........................................pg 26

Thanks to these Advertisers:

Sorenson (pg. C2) • ALDA (pg. 3) • Hamilton Relay (pg. 5) • ZVRS (pg. 9) • Maryland Relay (pg.10)
Verizon (pg. 13) • Convo (pg. 17) • Blackberry (C3) • CapTel (pg. C4)

Contact TDI WORLD Editor for reprints of articles in PDF format.

TDI WORLD is published quarterly by TDI to provide information about telecommunications, media and information technology access for people who are deaf, late-deafened, hard of hearing and deaf-blind. You may freely copy and distribute all or portions of TDI WORLD for non-commercial use with credit given to TDI. TDI has no affiliation with any company advertised, and the mention of company names, products and services in the articles herein comes solely from the authors’ own experiences and does not imply accuracy nor endorsement by TDI. Furthermore, TDI does not warrant any products or services mentioned in TDI WORLD to be in compliance with any applicable federal, state or local disability access laws and regulations or industry standards.
“This short list of activities can be structured around three primary organizational tasks – we EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, and COORDINATE in pursuit of our mission, which is to provide leadership in achieving equal access to telecommunications, media, and information technologies for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.”

Exactly What Does TDI Do?

One of the things that TDI does every year is to exhibit at the conferences of other national organizations serving people who are deaf and hard of hearing. For example, TDI generally exhibits at the Biennial Conference of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), and has a booth at the annual conferences of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and the Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA). These exhibits provide opportunities for TDI to share information with consumers, gain a better understanding of the needs and desires of deaf and hard of hearing individuals, and keep up-to-date regarding current and emerging technology that is available for people with hearing loss to facilitate their communications access.

I have often been privileged to help with the TDI exhibit booth at these various conferences. And I never cease to be amazed at how many people who stop at the TDI exhibit booth look totally confused, confess that they have never heard of TDI, and say something like “Exactly what does TDI do?” Admittedly, it pains me to think that there are many, many deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals out there who have no idea that TDI exists, let alone how important TDI is in the continuing struggle for telecommunications access for those individuals. Seemingly, the organization needs to toot its own horn just a little bit louder!

When asked “Exactly what does TDI do?” I sometimes jokingly respond by asking the person if they have an hour or two to listen, because it would certainly take me that long to fully detail the important activities of TDI. I seldom encounter a person who is willing to sit still and listen that long, so I have been forced to develop a short summary of what TDI does. This short list of activities can be structured around three primary organizational tasks – we EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, and COORDINATE in pursuit of our mission, which is to provide leadership in achieving equal access to telecommunications, media, and information technologies for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. So, “Exactly what does TDI do?” Here is an illustrative list of TDI activities.

EDUCATE

- TDI publishes annually the TDI National Directory and Resource Guide, also known as the BlueBook, a compendium of Video, Voice, Captioned, TTY and Fax telephone numbers; email, pager, and website addresses; and Instant Message IDs for thousands of deaf and hard-of-hearing people all over the United States. Of special interest are listings in every state for libraries, schools, and programs serving deaf and hard-of-hearing people, government agencies, and interpreting and captioning services.

- TDI distributes via email TDI eNotes, the electronic newsletter of TDI to members and friends with up-to-date news and action alerts.

- As needed, TDI testifies before congressional committees and government agencies regarding the needs and desires of people with hearing loss, as well as the many telecommunications barriers that they face on a daily basis.

- TDI regularly hosts an exhibit booth at the conferences of various national organizations that serve people with hearing loss, such as NAD, HLAA, and ALDA.

- TDI hosts a Biennial Conference in different locations throughout the United States that every two years brings together deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers.
industry representatives, and
government policy makers for the
discussion of the many issues
related to providing accessible
telecommunications.

- When invited, resources
permitting, TDI provides
presentations regarding
telecommunications access to
organizations serving people with
hearing loss.

- As requested, TDI provides
technical assistance and
consulting to industry,
organizations, and individuals
regarding the telecommunications
needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing
people.

ADVOCATE

- Using the invaluable services
of our three pro bono law
firms, TDI files comments and
reply comments to all Notices of
Proposed Rulemakings (NPRM)
issued by the Federal
Communications Commission
(FCC) that relate to
telecommunications access.

- TDI promotes uniformity of
standards and interoperability
of equipment for
telecommunications, media, and
information technologies.

- TDI advocates with industry for
accessible applications of existing
and emerging telecommunications
technologies.

- TDI advocates with various
federal government agencies,
such as the FCC, the Federal
Emergency Management Agency
(FEMA), the Department of
Transportation (DOT), and the
U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
for the development of rules and
regulations that ensure equal
access to telecommunications
for people with hearing loss. For
example, Claude Stout’s “Capitol
Commentary” column in this issue
presents a detailed account of
TDI’s advocacy efforts concerning
the passage and implementation
of the Communications and Video
Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA).

COORDINATE

- The Executive Director of TDI
chairs the meetings of the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing Consumer
Advocacy Network (DHHCAN),
which brings together
representatives of numerous
organizations serving people with
hearing loss to decide consumer
strategy when advocating for
equal access. TDI also provides
leadership in coalitions such as
the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Alliance (DHHA).

- As needed, TDI requests,
aranges, and leads meetings with
commissioners on the FCC as
well as industry representatives to
ensure that they are provided with
consumer perspectives regarding
telecommunications and media
access issues.

- Coordinates the development and
submission of nearly all petitions,
comments, and reply comments
that are filed with the FCC on
behalf of deaf and hard-of-hearing
consumers.

I want to be perfectly clear here. TDI
receives pro bono legal services from
two different law firms in Washington,
DC, namely Bingham McCutchen, a
giant firm of over 1,000 lawyers with
offices worldwide, and the Institute for
Public Representation (IPR), a public
interest law firm and clinical education
program founded by Georgetown
University Law Center. In addition,
TDI has a working relationship with
the Samuelson-Glushko Technology
Law & Policy Clinic at the University
of Colorado. One or the other of
these legal partners drafts almost all
comments and reply comments that
are submitted to the FCC on behalf of
people with hearing loss. These FCC
filings are all initiated by TDI, and
drafted with TDI’s leadership. Other
organizations serving deaf and hard of
hearing people, such as NAD, HLAA,
and ALDA, are given the opportunity
by TDI to review these drafts and
“sign on” if they would like. The point
is that TDI is the engine that drives
nearly all consumer input to the FCC.
Thus, TDI is responsible for doing
things like the following:

- Opposing petitions for waivers
from the requirement to caption
their TV programs by almost every
organization that requests such
waivers.

- Petitioning the FCC to increase
the availability of and improve the
quality of TV captions.

- Petitioning the FCC to eliminate
the “Top 25 Markets” rule that
allows all TV stations that are
not in the largest 25 TV markets
in the United States to use
the “Electronic Newsroom” for
captioning their local news,
weather, and sports broadcasts,
We are delighted to share with you in this issue of TDI World the good news concerning the implementation of the 21st Century Communication and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA) legislation.

Not many people realize the CVAA was the result of our advocacy work with your support for more than five years. We first proposed this legislation for consideration by the U.S. Congress in the year 2005. After years of negotiations and pushing our agenda, both houses of the 111th Congress passed the legislation with resounding bipartisan support in September 2010, and President Obama signed it into law during a brief White House East Room ceremony on October 8, 2010.

In its first biennial report to Congress on progress made during the initial 24 months of the CVAA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) indicated that it had lost no time implementing the Act by releasing multiple Public Notices and Notices of Proposed Rule Makings seeking comment on issues covered by the Act. In addition, the FCC established, and has since overseen the work of, two advisory committees – the Video Accessibility Advisory Committee (VPAAC) and the Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC). The FCC has worked with representatives from consumer groups, industry, and government to ensure effective and timely implementation of the new law.

As a result, the Commission has already released several Reports and Orders adopting rules to implement various provisions of the CVAA and has met every single one of the CVAA’s rigorous rulemaking deadlines. The first milestone was establishing the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP). During the program’s pilot stage, the FCC provides funding to one certified entity in each state—plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands—to distribute equipment to individuals who are legally deaf-blind. Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, MA, has been designated to handle outreach activities for NDBEDP. Qualified deaf-blind individuals will be able to access the latest in technologies that meet their particular needs, and not feel totally confined at home. They will be able to venture out in the community, and to compete for jobs and other opportunities.

Other milestones include the reinstatement of video description rules in response to a previous court order that rendered the original rules invalid due to lack of Congressional authority. According to Jenifer Simpson, a co-chair and co-founder of the Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT),

“Because of the CVAA, we can fully enjoy the new, empowering Internet applications and resources that become available almost every day. And with a more informed Congress, we will be better able to present our case for more accessibility to the technologies of the future.”

Continued on page 6

President Obama signs the Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA) in the East Room at the White House on October 8, 2010.

Hamilton CapTel® is making captioned telephone smarter than ever.

Backed by nearly a decade of proven captioned telephone technology, Hamilton CapTel is dedicated to delivering innovative solutions that make phone conversations simple and accessible for individuals with hearing loss.

Love your Android™, BlackBerry® or iPhone? Hamilton CapTel has an App that’s just a download away. Prefer a PC or Mac® solution? Hamilton CapTel is available wherever you have an internet-connected computer or laptop and a phone. And for your home or office, the latest CapTel phone easily connects via ethernet or WiFi – it’s the perfect solution.

If you just can’t hear on the phone, Hamilton CapTel makes it possible to listen and read word-for-word captions of what’s said to you over the phone. Whether you’re at home, in the office or on the go, you can experience clarity and confidence with every call!

Find smarter solutions that work for you at HamiltonCapTel.com
CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 4

the new video description rules were larger in scope to cover newer digital devices and expanded to cover the top 60 television markets instead of the top 25, a move that pleased members of Congress from rural districts.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers are now obligated to contribute to the TRS Fund, which compensates TRS providers for the cost of providing their services. The CVAA also extended requirements in design and development, record keeping, and enforcement on manufacturers and service providers to ensure that their advanced communications services (ACS) and equipment are accessible to people with disabilities. ACS includes video conferencing services, non-interconnected VoIP services, electronic messaging services, and interoperable video conferencing services. Companies that manufacture or import tablets, laptops, and smart phones are now accountable for the accessibility of the hardware. Any software that they provide for e-mail, SMS text messaging, and other types of ACS must also be accessible.

Furthermore, new rules were issued for owners, producers, and distributors to provide closed captioning of their video programs that are delivered online after they were aired on television (commonly referred to as IP captioning). The FCC has updated requirements for manufacturers to ensure that their products support the rendering (display) and pass-through of captions on virtually all video display equipment, regardless of size. This set of rules has broken new ground in regulation of the Internet after years of "simply letting the marketplace shape the Internet ecosystem."

TDI and other consumer groups took a very active part in the FCC’s activities. I was a member of the Video Programming Access Advisory Committee, and Sheri Farinha represented TDI on the Emergency Access Advisory Committee. We filed numerous comments and reply comments for the FCC’s proceedings related to the CVAA.

In his article in this issue, Shane Feldman, Chief Operating Officer of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), comments about the process that the VPAAC undertook to propose some guidelines and deadlines to the FCC for IP captioning. The FCC took consumer participation seriously when it appointed Shane as a co-chair, along with Disney’s Vince Roberts for one of the VPAAC’s working groups, focusing on IP captioning. The FCC took the same approach for EAAC by having Richard Ray, a staff member in disability access with the Los Angeles, CA Mayor’s Office, serve as a Co-Chair, along with Nokia’s David Dzumba.

Dr. Christian Vogler, Director of Gallaudet’s Technology Access Program, and an active member of EAAC, contributes his article for this issue on the work of the EAAC. The EAAC was charged to conduct a national survey to determine the most effective and efficient technologies and methods by which to enable access to emergency services in an IP emergency network by individuals with disabilities, and to develop and submit to the Commission recommendations to implement such technologies and methods.

Thanks to the FCC, the many positive results from the CVAA will soon become more evident. The FCC released a Report and Order adopting rules governing the closed captioning requirements for the owners, providers, and distributors of video programming that are delivered on the Internet. The rules established an implementation schedule that started September 30, 2012, for full-length prerecorded television programming that a distributor shows for the first time on the Internet. The following March, the requirements were extended to live and near live programming. In September 2013, programming that is edited for Internet distribution must be captioned. Then for archival video programming that is already in a distributor’s Internet inventory, the distributor must add captions within 45 days after the video programming is shown on TV with captions on or after March 30, 2014. The TV broadcast industry and its partners are now implementing captioning of their video programs in compliance with the 18-month schedule.

Yet despite all this fantastic progress, there’s still work to be done. For example, TDI and other consumer groups tried to get the FCC to require that video clips (like those seen on such networks as ESPN and CNN) be included as part of the definition of full-length video programming and be subject to the IP captioning requirements. The FCC chose not to include video clips, primarily because they think video clips were not specifically addressed in the CVAA legislation. We filed a petition for the FCC to reconsider this position, and the agency responded saying they will look at this issue in six months, but encouraged captioning of video clips, especially news.

We opposed the petition of the Digital Media Association (DiMA) for two waivers that would exempt them until January 1, 2014 from two provisions of the CVAA. These were (1) the requirement that applications, plug-ins, or devices provided by video programming distributors and providers comply with the user configuration and caption formatting requirements; and (2) the requirement that distributors of video programming to “render” captions
even if they do not currently provide closed captioning. In August of 2012, the Commission chose to grant DiMA’s first waiver request but to deny its second request.

For the advanced communication services, We also opposed long-term waivers requested by the Electronic Software Association (ESA), Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), and National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA). These three trade groups filed petitions to waive CVA requirements for multi-purpose equipment or services that they claim are designed primarily for purposes other than “advanced communications services.”

ES sought a waiver for three classes of products and services for a period of at least eight years: (1) game consoles, both home and handheld, and their peripherals and integrated online networks; (2) game distribution and online game-play services; and (3) game software. TDI and other consumer groups made clear that eight years is too long to wait for and hard of hearing the ability to make emergency calls using pagers or smart phones to 9-1-1 centers. Many of us no longer use TTYs, as we have migrated to other more current technologies. At this meeting, the EAAC adopted a resolution to give support for an interim solution for text to 9-1-1, at a minimum, SMS, and other technologies as appropriate, with a three digit short code 9-1-1.

In response to advocacy efforts by consumers, the four major wireless networks, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon announced in December 2012 that they will support text-to-911 no later than May 2014. This commitment, with the backing of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) includes the implementation of error bounceback messages in 2013 that will alert anyone who attempts to text 911 that the service is not yet available in their area, and to use another method of calling 911. We have asked the FCC to extend this industry initiative to all other smaller carriers.

This interim solution is part of a big picture the FCC is pursuing to address ways that modern communications technologies can enable the public to obtain emergency assistance. It seeks to promote the acceleration in the migration to development and deployment of Next Generation 911 technology to enable the public to send emergency communications via text, photos, videos, and data.

Some of you have told us that the CVA does not cover everything on the Internet. This is true. Movies, “webisodes” or web episodes, and other video programs that have not been aired on television, are being posted directly online more frequently. Many of us are disappointed that such programming is not captioned and feel that CVA should have covered them. CVA only covers videos that were previously shown on television. Earlier drafts of the bill had a larger scope of coverage, including all except consumer-generated amateur videos. Subsequent negotiations led to limiting the scope of the captioning provisions to those programs already captioned on television. In most cases, preparing a TV program for online use is just a matter of converting a file made for television into a file made for the Internet. No new captioning needs to be done. From this perspective, the bill became more attractive and garnered support from more Senators and Representatives of both parties. Crafting legislation always involves some give and take. In order to get the bill passed, we had to sacrifice certain provisions that we wanted to see included. Nonetheless, we want to note that there is nothing to prevent providers of videos from adding captioning on a voluntary basis in the spirit of the law.

Another example of consumer advocacy in action happened when Congress released a new draft of the bill without the NDBEDP provision due to funding issues. The original plan was to have the deaf-blind telephone equipment program be
Rumor has it that in the mid-1800’s the U.S. Patent Office Commissioner Henry Ellsworth recommended that the agency be closed because everything that could possibly be invented had already been invented! Fortunately for us, the spirit of innovation has never subsided and remains alive and well in the 21st Century.

Advancements in technology in particular continue to grow exponentially. One of Intel’s co-founder, Gordon Moore is widely known for authoring Moore’s Law in 1965, in which he predicted that the number of transistors the industry would be able to place on a microprocessor chip would double every year. In 1995, he updated his prediction to once every two years. While originally intended as a rule of thumb, it has become the guiding principle for the industry in delivering ever-more-powerful semiconductor chips with inverse decreases in cost.\(^1\) Moore’s Law continues to rule today. We constantly see innovation everywhere we turn, things we could not have dreamed of a few years ago.

True innovation can be unleashed only when accessibility is designed throughout from the very beginning. One measurement that Moore’s law missed is the degree of accessibility and how many generations a product struggles without complete ease of use by everyone. Historically, when new technologies come out initially the products come with zero or limited accessibility features. For example, when the telephone was patented in 1876, deaf and hard-of-hearing people had to wait 88 years before the TTY modem was invented. Another example is the television, which became a popular household fixture in the 1950’s and 60’s. Deaf people had to wait 20 or 30 years before they could watch and understand television programs through captioning.

Today, thanks to the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA), people with disabilities experience shorter or no waits for inclusion when new technology is introduced. Nearly two years after the Act was signed, we are beginning to see tangible results. We are not there yet, but we are well on our way to shaping an accessible world where any new technology is fully usable by anyone right off the shelf.

\(^1\) [http://inventors.about.com/od/mstartinventions/a/Microprocessor-Chip.htm](http://inventors.about.com/od/mstartinventions/a/Microprocessor-Chip.htm)
No more remote control! No more tangled wires! No external add-on!

Pick One, Pick All.

Z5 mobile
...it’s a Z videophone anywhere you go!

Just download the Z5 Mobile software to your mobile or tablet for FREE!
www.zvrs.com/Z5

Z5 desktop
...it’s a Z videophone on your computer!

Just download the Z5 Desktop software to your computer for FREE!
www.zvrs.com/Z5

#soeasysosimple

E911 calls through VRS and 10 digit numbering may be subject to certain limitations, please visit www.zvrs.com/notice for more information.
a technology that only provides captions for pre-scripted information that appears on the teleprompter. Thus, most deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers in the United States are denied full access to the weather and sports segments of such broadcasts, as well as all remote coverage and dialogue among TV anchors.

- Advocating with the FCC to mandate captioning of all video material that is shown over the Internet, not just programming that was captioned when previously shown on TV.

- Advocating with the FCC to require interoperability of all Video Relay Service (VRS) equipment, so that consumers need not worry about whether or not their VRS equipment will successfully connect with equipment distributed by a different provider.

- Advocating with the FCC to not place burdens on hard-of-hearing users of Captioned Telephone Services (CTS) to prove that they are hard-of-hearing and legitimately entitled to make CTS calls.

- Advocating with FEMA to require the inclusion of people with hearing loss when developing and implementing emergency management plans as well as community notification systems.

- Advocating with the FCC over many years to expand Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS) from the original TTY-based relay to include new technologies, such as Voice Carry Over (VCO), Hearing Carry Over (HCO), Captioned Telephone Services (CTS), Internet Protocol Relay (IP Relay), and Video Relay Services (VRS).

Indeed, it can reasonably be said that TDI is now the most important advocacy organization in Washington, DC, promoting equal access to telecommunications for deaf and hard of hearing people. Technologies like the telephone, TV, and the Internet are now used by everyone for everything from chatting with relatives, to following the news, to ordering groceries, to earning a living. And TDI has a 45-year history of fighting for equal access to these technologies – a fight that has benefited every deaf and hard-of-hearing person in the country. So the next time you are asked “Exactly what does TDI do?” please remember some of the things I have discussed, spread the word about TDI’s many important activities, renew your membership in TDI, and help TDI “shape an accessible world.”
The focus of this issue of TDI World is the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act. What I need to know is: Am I the only American who had trouble getting his head around this piece of legislation? Not that any federal law is as easy to understand as See Spot, see Spot run. The ADA, for example, spawned a cottage industry of lawyers, scholars, and gallant consumers dedicated to explaining it. Or trying to. Twenty-two years later, they’re still trying.

But at least the name of that law—the Americans with Disabilities Act—is straightforward and hard to mangle or disremember. The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, on the other hand, well...close your eyes and repeat the name. Be honest: you can’t. If you play ASL Whispers and pass the name of the law between six people, that sixth person might end up signing The 20th Century Communication Assistants and Drive-In Movie Act. Or worse.

And then there’s the initialization—CVAA. For whatever reason, I get it mixed up with other initialized terms I’m more familiar. Like CCAC, a captioning advocacy group of which I’m a charter member. Or CTA, the public transit system in my neck of the woods. Or plain old CV, which in my case has been revised way too much lately. Why couldn’t CVAA be an acronym and roll off the tongue like NATO, NASA, or CODA? Instead, it’s a Final Jeopardy answer waiting to happen, one that would dumbfound even Ken Jennings. (If you don’t know Ken Jennings from Peter Jennings, consult your favorite search engine.)

Problems with the name of the law aside, it took me about a year to even begin to understand the intent and importance of the CVAA. When I first saw a blurb about it, the words that stuck in my mind were “captioning,” “Internet,” and “media.” My first thought was “Ole! We’re finally getting access to webinars and podcasts.” It’s one of my chronic peeves—although webcasts grow exponentially each year, they’re almost never captioned unless they are government sponsored, involve ADA compliance issues along with a consumer request, or are inhumanely groveled for by people like me. I envisioned the CVAA bringing leverage and dignity to my groveling.

But when I clicked through the blurbs and read on, I soon learned that the law wasn’t a webinar stalker. Instead, CVAA mandated that broadcast media that is captioned on television also must be captioned if it appears online. Oh, okay. That’s it, huh? I admit to being disappointed. I mean, what was in it for me, a closet Luddite who doesn’t watch television unless there’s a ball and overpaid or soon-to-be overpaid athletes involved? It’s not like I’m going to start watching The Bachelor or Jersey Shore if it’s captioned on the Internet.

Gradually, however, I started to see the bigger picture. My growing appreciation of the CVAA was due mainly to persistent, detailed, and persuasive posts (not to mention fantastic work) by the Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology, a group that further won my admiration by having the easily-remembered-because-it’s-pronounceable acronym, COAT. As explained throughout this issue of TDI World, the CVAA addresses not only online access to network and cable television but to a far broader spectrum of telecommunications, including relay services, mobile phones and Bluetooth, and emergency...
CAPITAL COMMENTARY Continued from page 7

The CVAA has a provision that requires the FCC to send to Congress a report every two years detailing the complaints it gets from Americans with disabilities and other stakeholders on the new technologies that are not accessible to them. Because of this requirement, the CVAA launched a new round of awareness among our friends and many others at the FCC. More government workers that do the nitty-gritty work of drafting new policy will now have to ensure that new legislation will not interfere with the ability of people with disabilities to access telecommunications, which some of us consider to be as sacred as all of our other civil rights. Congress will keep track of the biennial reports, and hopefully will respond with future legislation or amendments to the CVAA to cover these new technologies.

The CVAA is significant legislation: It gives us much more access to the Internet than ever before. Although we haven't yet achieved everything we wish for, the glass is three-fourths full, which is a great deal better than nothing. Because of the CVAA, we can fully enjoy the new, empowering Internet applications and resources that become available almost every day. And with a more informed Congress, we will be better able to present our case for more accessibility to the technologies of the future. Equally important, our success with CVAA has inspired disability advocates outside of the United States to push for more access around the world. May you all enjoy the new access on the Internet!

Contribution Form

Please support TDI in its work in making technology more usable for everyone. While we do appreciate your membership, your contribution can help cover our additional advocacy costs. Please fill out and mail this contribution form (photocopies OK) with payment (check, money order or credit/debit card information) to TDI. You may fax or email a scanned copy of this form if you are paying by credit or debit card. To donate online, go to www.tinyurl.com/donateTDI

Name ________________________________________ Please keep my/our donation anonymous. ______

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip ____________________________________________________________

☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $200 ☐ $500 ☐ Other $___________

Check Credit/Debit card issuer: ____ MasterCard ____ VISA ____ American Express*

16-Digit Card Account Number: _______________________________ Card Expiration Date: _____________

Cardholder’s Name: ___________________________________ 3-Digit CCV Code (Back of Card):__________

Signature: ____________________________________________ Today’s Date: ______________________

☐ Sign me up for the free TDI eNotes at this email address _________________________________

☐ This donation is in honor or memory of someone. The name and other details are enclosed.

☐ My employer has a contribution matching plan for nonprofits. Details of the plan are enclosed.

*Note: AMEX has a 15-digit card account number and a 4-digit CCV security code on front of the card.

Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI)
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 121, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803
Video: 301-563-9112 • TTY: 888-202-1120 • FAX: 301-589-3797 • Phone: 301-589-3786
info@TDIforAccess.org • www.TDIforAccess.org
DO MORE WITH VERIZON FiOS

Never let anything stand in your way.

Verizon provides FiOS Internet and phone services over the nation’s most advanced fiber-optic network straight to your door. This means faster speed, more reliability, advanced extras, plus a superior entertainment and online experience.

FiOS helps you soar to new heights.
- Work from home with speeds ranging from 5 - 30 Mbps
- Upload speeds from 2 - 5 Mbps
- Live real-time, seamless Video capabilities

The Verizon Center for Customers with Disabilities is here to help you connect.
Call toll-free 1.800.974.6006 (V/TTY)
verizon.com/disabilities
The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA) (Pub. L. 111-260, Pub. L. 111-265) that was enacted into law on October 8, 2010, amends the Communications Act. The CVAA is divided into two parts, Title I, which covers Communications Access, and Title II, which addresses Video Programming.

Title I of the CVAA offers many benefits for people with hearing and vision disabilities such as:

- Expansion of Section 255’s accessibility mandates to advanced communications services and equipment
- Access to Internet browsers on mobile phones
- Improved accountability and enforcement
- Expansion of relay services definition and contributors
- Equipment for low-income deaf-blind individuals
- Expansion of hearing aid compatibility (HAC) rules
- Ensuring access to next generation 9-1-1 services
- Defines Advanced Communications Services (ACS) as
  - Interconnected VoIP service
  - Non-interconnected VoIP service
  - Electronic messaging service
  - Interoperable video conferencing service

Section 716 of the CVAA covers advanced communications services (ACS) and equipment that must be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities unless not “achievable.” If not achievable, then the ACS must be compatible with specialized equipment and peripheral devices commonly used by people with disabilities, if that is achievable. This gives the industry some flexibility to incorporate access or use third party apps, peripheral devices, etc., available to the consumer at nominal cost. Any new network features, functions, and capabilities must not impede accessibility and usability. The FCC released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in March 2011, and the rules were issued October 2011.

The CVAA raised the standard for what is achievable. In determining what is achievable, the FCC now looks at the following to determine whether it can be achieved with reasonable effort or expense:

- Nature and cost of steps needed for specific equipment or service.
- Technical and economic impact on operation of manufacturer or provider and on operation of specific equipment or service.
- Type of operations of manufacturer or provider.
- Extent to which service provider or manufacturer offers accessible services or equipment containing varying levels of functionality and features at different price points.

Section 716 that applies to Advanced Communications does not apply to equipment or services that are subject to Section 255 (i.e., telecommunications and interconnected VoIP services and equipment), nor does it apply to customized equipment or services not offered directly to the public. The rules do not require every single feature and function in every device or service to be accessible for every disability. Although the FCC must issue prospective guidelines regarding the requirements of Section 716, the Commission may waive requirements for equipment designed for multiple purposes but designed primarily for purposes other than advanced communications services and exempt small entities.

The FCC ACS rules must include performance objectives to ensure accessibility, usability, and compatibility, and provide that accessibility of information content is not impeded when accessibility has been incorporated into that content for transmission. The rules will also determine the obligations under Section 716 of manufacturers, service providers, and providers of applications or services accessed over service provider networks, and not mandate any

CVAA Continued on page 15
technical standards except as a safe harbor.

Another new section, Section 718 covers Internet browsers built into mobile phones. These browsers must be accessible to and usable by persons who are blind or have a visual impairment, when achievable. Here, the industry also has some flexibility to incorporate access or use third party apps, peripheral devices, etc., available to the consumer at nominal cost. These requirements are to take effect in October 2013, three years after passage of the CVAA. There are no requirement to make Internet content, apps, or services accessible.

Any service provider that relies on third party apps, services, software, hardware, or equipment to comply with the CVAA would have to make sure they are accessible. However, there are some limitations. There is no liability for passive conduits (a person or a company who transmits, routes, or provides intermediate or transient storage of advanced communications made available by a third party service, or for anyone who provides an information location tool (i.e., directory, index, menu, guide, link) used to access video programming, online content, applications, services, or advanced communications services or equipment. The FCC shall not require the use or incorporation of proprietary technology to implement this Act.

The CVAA improves accountability measures for Sections 255, 716, and 718. The new industry recordkeeping requirements will enable the FCC to comply with a Congressional mandate to provide a report every two years about the progress of the CVAA. The FCC has already started work on a clearinghouse of information on accessible products and services. In addition, the Comptroller General will conduct an enforcement study within five years. All of this accountability and reporting requirements will have the effect of improved outreach and education to industry and consumers alike.

To help improve enforcement on Sections 255, 716, and 718, the FCC is to establish complaint procedures and allow formal and informal complaints to be filed at no charge online, or through email, telephone and regular mail. The FCC must issue a final order on all complaints within 180 days. Complainants may seek a "writ of mandamus" to compel FCC action on complaints. Penalties could go up to $100,000 per violation with cap of $1 million, and these decisions may be appealed to federal court if necessary.

Section 715 requires contributions from all VoIP service providers to the Interstate TRS Fund within the first year by October 8, 2011. An NPRM was released March 2011. This Section also changes the definition of TRS to “. . . services that provide the ability for an individual who is deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or who has a speech disability to engage in communication by wire or radio with one or more individuals in a manner that is functionally equivalent to the ability of a hearing individual who does not have a speech disability . . . ”. The previous definition only covered calls between a person with hearing or speech disability and a hearing person. As a result of this change, a videophone user may finally call a person with a speech disability, even if two communication assistants (CAs) are involved in the call.

Section 719 has many benefits for individuals who are Deaf-Blind. The CVAA authorized $10 million annually from the Interstate TRS Fund to support programs approved by the FCC for the distribution of specialized equipment to make telecommunications service, Internet access service, and advanced communications, including information services. Participation in this equipment distribution program is limited to individuals who are deaf-blind, as defined in the Helen Keller National Center Act and who are low-income, which the FCC has defined as 400% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. This was one of the first rules issued - six months after the passage of the CVAA in April 2011. The rules established the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program for a two-year pilot program, with an option for the third year. The FCC to certify and provide funding of $9.5 million allocated by population to one entity in each state. $500,000 is reserved for a national outreach program. Entities will need to provide reports and reimbursement claims every 6 months. The equipment used in the program must meet individual needs and make communications services accessible. Related equipment costs and services are also covered. The FCC received applications from state entities and began the program in July 2012.

The CVAA extends the current Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) regulations in the Telecommunications for the Disabled Act of 1982 and the Hearing Aid Compatibility Act of 1988 to cover wireless handsets (eliminates exemption for cordless phones from text of statute), and voice phones that provide advanced communication to the extent technically feasible. The FCC proceeding is still ongoing since 2010 when the FCC issued notices seeking public comment in August, October, and December.

Included in the CVAA is a requirement that the FCC form an advisory committee on access to emergency services called the Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC). EAAC was formed to study and make recommendations on reliable, interoperable communication to
CVAA Continued from page 15

enable people with disabilities to access next generation (NG) 9-1-1 services. During its first year, EAAC conducted a nationwide survey of people with disabilities in order to make recommendations on the most effective and efficient technologies and methods to enable NG 9-1-1 access. Based on input from more than five thousand respondents, the FCC adopted rules based on EAAC recommendations and where achievable and technically feasible. In addition, text-to-911 through SMS is being promoted by consumers as the interim solution in the meantime until NG 9-1-1 is fully implemented within five to ten years. The EAAC has been meeting monthly since January 14, 2011.

Title II of the CVAA covers Video Programming. Like Title I with EAAC, Title II mandates the formation of a second group, the Video Programming and Emergency Access Advisory Committee, which has since been renamed the Video Programming Access Advisory Committee (or VPAAC). One of the most important milestones with the CVAA is that programs shown on TV with captions, must have captions when later shown on the Internet. All equipment that displays video programming must support closed captions, video description, and accessible emergency information with easy access to controls and settings for closed captions and video description features, including accessible on-screen menus and programming guides for people who are blind or visually impaired. The CVAA restored the video description rules that were developed in 2000, but later vacated by the DC Court of Appeals due to lack of sufficient authority by the FCC to impose those rules.

In July 2011, VPAAC submitted its first report to the FCC on one of its workgroups on closed captioning with the following recommendations:

- deadlines for the provision of Internet closed captioning
- technical capabilities
- regulations necessary to ensure compatibility between Internet video programming and devices capable of receiving and displaying such programming

On April 8, 2012, VPAAC submitted another report with recommendations to FCC on other topics such as video description, accessible emergency information, user interfaces, and accessible program guides and menus.

The requirements for closed captioning of television programs for the Internet was developed on a fast-track schedule. The FCC had to adopt rules by January 13, 2012, six months after VPAAC report. The rules must establish a schedule of deadlines for closed captioned programs shown on TV to be captioned when shown over the Internet. The FCC may exempt services, programs, or equipment if compliance was proven to be economically burdensome. The FCC may waive or delay captioning requirements for live programming, if it was economically burdensome as well. The rules will also establish a mechanism to make information about video programming that is subject to the CVAA available to video programming providers and distributors. Small one-time failures will be considered “de minimis” and will not be treated as a violation of the regulations. Alternate means of compliance are permitted.

Previously, the Decoder Circuity Act of 1990 mandated that television sets larger than 13 inches diagonally must include captioning capability. Now, the CVAA extends this requirement to all devices that display video, including apparatus less than 13 inches, if achievable, must be capable of displaying closed captions, delivering video description services and emergency information in a manner that is accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Equipment with display-only video monitors with no play-back capability are exempt from these requirements. The FCC may waive equipment primarily designed for other activities and equipment designed for multiple purposes where essential utility is derived from other purposes instead of viewing video.

For video programming equipment, the CVAA requires recording apparatus to enable the rendering or pass through of closed captions, video description signals, and emergency information, if achievable. This also requires that interconnection mechanisms such as wiring, cable or wireless transmission, between source devices and consumer equipment, be available to carry the information necessary to permit or render the display of closed captions, video description, and audible emergency information. The FCC must adopt these equipment requirements for closed captioning by January 13, 2012 (6 months after VPAAC report), and for video description and emergency information by October 8, 2013 (18 months after VPAAC report). Alternate means of compliance are permitted.

Video programming apparatus must have built-in access to closed captioning and video description through a mechanism reasonably comparable to a button, key, or icon on the user interface. If achievable, control of built-in video programming apparatus functions must be accessible to and usable by individuals who are blind or visually impaired. On-screen text menus or other visual indicators used are to be accompanied by audio output to be accessible to and usable by individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
impaired in real-time, either built-in or with an attached peripheral device. The FCC must adopt regulations by October 8, 2013 (18 months after VPAAC report). Alternate means of compliance are permitted.

Navigation devices (cable or satellite set-top boxes) must provide access to built-in closed captioning capability through a mechanism reasonably comparable to a button, key, or icon. If achievable, on-screen text menus and programming guides provided by navigation devices must be audibly accessible in real-time upon request by individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The rules must permit compliance through the use of software, peripheral device, or any other solution, provided free to the requesting blind or visually impaired individual within a reasonable time.

The FCC must adopt regulations by October 8, 2013 (18 months after VPAAC report). Cable systems serving 20,000 or fewer subscribers may be exempted.

In 2000, the FCC issued rules requiring affiliates of the top 4 broadcast networks in the top 25 markets, and the top 5 cable channels to provide video description for about 4 hours of prime time or children’s programming per week; rules overturned by the DC Court of Appeals due to insufficient authority. The CVAA reinstates these rules within the first year after passage. The FCC released an NPRM in March 2011, which directs FCC to conduct further inquiries on availability, benefits, use, and costs of televised video description and the technical and operational issues of Internet video description one year after the new video description rules are phased in. The rules also authorize expansion of video description up to 7 hours per week and phase-in of additional market areas. A report to Congress will be required within 9 years.

FCC must adopt emergency information regulations by October 8, 2013 (18 months after the VPAAC report). The new regulations must identify methods that video programming providers, distributors and owners use to convey emergency information in a manner that is accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired.

For more information, go online to http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/cvaa.html. To stay informed with updates, subscribe to Accessinfo@fcc.gov.
The Road to Internet Captioning

BY SHANE FELDMAN
CO-CHAIRMAN, WORK GROUP #1, VIDEO PROGRAMMING ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

When I was a college student wrapping up my final project in the fall of 2000, I took a break from the mind-numbing research and checked ESPN.com for the latest sports news. There I came across one of ESPN’s first online videos. At the time users had to download RealPlayer to play the videos and there were different download speeds in kilobytes per second for different types of Internet connections – 14.4, 28.8, and 56.6 kbps. Unfortunately, none of the videos were captioned.

The wait for accessible online video would span over a decade before the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), TDI, other consumer organizations and many inspirational individual advocates help spur the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA) through Congress. The CVAA, signed into law by President Barack Obama on October 8, 2010, stands as the most significant piece of legislation for our community since the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The CVAA set in motion a mandate to make a wide range of technology accessible, including many Internet videos. For example, as of September 30, 2012, the first of several industry deadlines for Internet captioning, captioned TV programs were required to be captioned on video distribution websites such as Hulu.com and on the Internet sites of broadcasting networks, such as Disney, HBO, Cartoon Network, and ESPN.

The effort to define and bring about these critical changes was the result of close collaboration between the industry, consumers, and vendors mandated by the CVAA. The CVAA charged the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) with the responsibility to establish an advisory committee known as the Video Programming and Emergency Access Advisory Committee (“VPAAC”) to identify “protocols, technical capabilities, and technical procedures needed to encode, transport, receive, and render closed captioning of video programming delivered using Internet protocol.”

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski appointed forty-five members to the VPAAC from a wide range of organizations and other entities with an interest in the delivery of video programming via the Internet. These forty-five members were chosen on the basis of their technical knowledge and engineering expertise. They included five deaf and hard-of-hearing representatives from NAD, TDI, Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (NVRC), Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), and the Center for Hearing and Communication. Industry members of the VPAAC included Comcast, Google, Microsoft, Adobe, CBS, DirecTV, Sony, and Viacom, as well as various trade associations and numerous captioning vendors.

The VPAAC members were assigned to four working groups, each responsible for a specific issue: Closed Captioning over Internet Protocol (Work Group 1), Video Description (Work Group 2), Emergency Information (Work Group 3), and User Interfaces (Work Group 4). All of the representatives from deaf and hard of hearing consumer advocacy organizations were members of Work Group 1 and the National Association of the Deaf was a member of Work Group 4, which focused on consumer controls for the viewing of videos.

The FCC and the VPAAC co-chairs, Larry Goldberg from WGBH and Wayne Luplow from LG, made it a point to select consumer representatives to co-chair each work group along with an industry representative. Karen Peltz Strauss, Deputy Chief of the FCC Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB), opened the first VPAAC meeting on Thursday, January 13, 2011, requesting that consumer advocacy groups select the chair of the Closed Captioning over Internet Protocol, which was Work Group 1 (WG1). After consumer groups conferred with each other, I was honored to accept their nomination to become WG1 co-chair.

My co-chair was Vince Roberts, Executive Vice President Global Operations and Chief Technology Officer for Disney ABC Television Group. The FCC designated Roger Holberg to be the staff support person for WG1. Roberts and Holberg were extremely gracious in their time and support for consumer needs, often going out of their way to find solutions to obstacles and ensure full access for everyone involved during meetings.

With a deadline of July 2011, WG1 had only seven months to pull together a recommendation. There was little time to waste. During the first few months, WG1 focused on

Continued on page 19
organizing the recommendations and dividing up the development of these recommendations to subgroups. These subgroups focused on sections of the recommendations including: Background on Captioning; Technical Requirements, Capabilities and Processes; Performance Objectives; Definitions for “Video Programming Distributor” and “Video Programming Provider;” and Schedule of Deadlines.

The teamwork and dialogue within each subgroup were critical in reaching a consensus on the recommendations. Consumer groups and industry members identified issues that were easy to resolve, tabling some of the more difficult issues for later discussion or for the FCC to consider in its Notice for Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM).

Some of the more controversial issues within VPAAC WG1 included determining the party responsible for providing captions on the Internet and whether to recommend a specific file format, such as Timed Text (W3C), SMPTE-TT (Society of Motion Picture & Television Engineers), and WebVTT. These discussions led to sections on “use cases” to guide our understanding of various circumstances and methods involved for content owners and distributors to deliver captions. In certain situations distributors may need to “reformat” caption files for transmission through web-based videos.

When CVAA was being discussed by Congress, I had thought it a straightforward process to take closed captioning from television and add it to the web version of the same show. But it’s actually a complex process and one of the early challenges for VPAAC WG1 was to fully understand what’s involved. Industry experts described barriers in CEA-608 (analog) and CEA-708 (digital) standards that support TV captioning features such as font colors, background opacity, size, styles, and edge attributes. In addition, they described how the industry was unprepared to grapple with the manual process of time-coding captions with Internet videos. Video programming provided on television contains advertising breaks, scenes that are edited when posted on the web, and other changes that affect the time-code synchronization.

The industry and consumers in our workgroup quickly reached agreement on several key points, especially the schedule of deadlines (specific dates by which the law’s requirements go into effect), the importance of “persistence” or the ability to leave captions on all the time, and our expectations for closed caption features that should be supported on Internet videos. The FCC ultimately adopted the most of the WG1 recommendations in its Report & Order, but in other cases did not. For example, consumers and the

---

**Implementation Schedule for Captioning Internet Video Programming**

The following deadlines apply to video programming that a distributor shows for the first time on the Internet (newly added to the distributor’s inventory of Internet video programming):

**September 30, 2012**: Pre-recorded video programming that is not “edited for the Internet” must be captioned on the Internet if it is shown on TV with captions on or after September 30, 2012. “Edited for the Internet” means the TV version has been substantially edited. Examples of editing for this purpose are: deleting scenes or altering musical scores. Changing the number or duration of commercials is not considered “editing” for this purpose.

**March 30, 2013**: Live and near-live video programming must be captioned on the Internet if it is shown on TV with captions on or after March 30, 2013. Near-live video programming is defined as programming that is performed and recorded less than 24 hours before being shown on TV for the first time.

**September 30, 2013**: Pre-recorded video programming that is substantially edited for the Internet must be captioned if it is shown on TV with captions on or after September 30, 2013.

**Archival Internet Video Programming**

The following deadlines apply to video programming that a distributor already shows on the Internet. Distributors have extra time to add captions to video programming that they already show on the Internet and that is later shown on TV with captions, as follows:

Within 45 days after the date it is shown on TV with captions **on or after March 30, 2014 and before March 30, 2015**;

Within 30 days after the date it is shown on TV with captions **on or after March 30, 2015 and before March 30, 2016**; and

Within 15 days after the date it is shown on TV with captions **on or after March 30, 2016**.

From: http://www.fcc.gov/guides/captioning-internet-video-programming

Revised FCC 2000C Complaint form Sent separately

Continued on page 20
industry in WG1 agreed that the FCC should mandate an interchange format, which did not specifically restrict Internet captioning to any one format available on the Internet. However, the FCC ultimately adopted SMPTE-TT (an Internet version of CEA-608 and CEA-708) as the “safe harbor” interchange and delivery format.

A key component of the VPAAC report called for an equal captioning experience—that is, the delay in captions appearing after words are spoken in Internet videos should be equal to or better than the delay on television. The delay in captions appearing involves time codes. The VPAAC WG1 report discussed the time-code issue and explained that “all processing through the distribution chain, including transcoding, must provide a timing experience that is equal to or an improvement to the timing of captions provided in the captioning shown on television.” Consumer groups will continue to advocate for improvements in captioning standards for television, which, if adopted by the FCC, would also serve as the de facto standard for Internet captioning.

The FCC required the following schedule for different categories of new video programming to begin full captioning compliance:

- September 30, 2012: Prerecorded programming that is not edited for Internet distribution;
- March 30, 2013: Live and near-live programming that was recorded within 24 hours of broadcast on television;
- September 30, 2013: Prerecorded programming that is edited for Internet distribution.
- By September 30, 2013, 100 percent of new video programming shown on television with captions must have captions when shown online.

Further, the FCC rules require that new “apparatus”—including computers, smart phones, tablets, DVD and Blu-ray players, and any physical device capable of receiving or playing back video programming simultaneously with sound—sold or manufactured in the United States must have closed captioning capability as of January 1, 2014. The FCC also established that date as the deadline for apparatus to support user-controlled captioning features (font, size, opacity, etc.).

Finally, the FCC released rules regarding archival content, which is television programming that was already available online before the CVAA’s effective date. If such archival content is shown or re-aired on television with captions, then the same content must be shown with captions online according to the following schedule: after March 30, 2014, programming must be captioned within 45 days after the date it re-airs on television with captions. The timeframe to caption archival programming falls to 30 days after March 30, 2015, and to within 15 days after March 30, 2016. Consumers fought tooth and nail to obtain a “sunset” provision where there would be no delay in captioning of archival programming, but we did not prevail. However, we anticipate that over time the library of uncaptioned content will shrink and hopefully the industry will caption this content voluntarily as part of its overall captioning effort to comply with the CVAA.

Now that many apps and websites support closed captioning, it is time to look back and thank the crucial coalition and key leaders who advocated for this important legislation. A great deal of thanks goes to the Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT) led by Karen Peltz Strauss, who at the time represented CSD; Rosaline Crawford, representing NAD at that time; Mark Ritcher with the American Foundation for the Blind; Jenifer Simpson, at that time with the American Association of People with Disabilities; and Eric Bridges of the American Council of the Blind, as well as two legislators in Congress—Representative Edward Markey of Massachusetts and Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas. Without their support, the deaf and hard-of-hearing community would not have been given this first critical step towards full access online.

Readers can access the transcripts of VPAAC WG1 conference calls, draft working documents, and other background information by visiting the following URL:

http://vpaac.wikispaces.com/home

alerts. In its breadth and ramifications the CVAA is landmark legislation, especially if the exasperating legal loopholes and forehead-slapping corporate arguments for endless extensions get deep-sixed.

I’m somewhat abashed that it took me two years to fully catch on to the significance of the CVAA. I blame the numbing effects of Facebook Scrabble, Words with Friends, the Cubs (always), and advancing age. But give me credit, by clicking through the blurbs and following COAT online, I finally got with the program. But is there a way to simplify the law’s name? I’ll grovel—whatever it takes.
2013 TDI INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM
(If you are a business or organization, contact TDI for an Affiliate Membership Application Form.)
Check here if this is a renewal ☐  Alternate Formats Available

First Name: ___________________ Last Name: ___________________
Additional person’s name desired in listing: ___________________
Street or Mailing Address: ____________________________________
City, State, and Zip Code: ____________________________________
(If your address is outside USA) Postal Code, Country: __________
E-Mail address (Necessary for free TDI eNotes): __________________
Phone: (_____): □ Video □ TTY □ Voice □ CapTel®
FAX: (_____): Mobile (Cell Phone): (_____): ________________
Pager Address: _____________________________________________
IM Service: ________________________________________________
IM User ID: ________________________________________________
Web Site Address: __________________________________________

Check all items that you want published ☐ Address ☐ E-mail ☐ Website ☐ IM ☐ Phones*
in the Blue Book or eBlue Book: (“Phones include Video/TTY/Voice/FAX/Mobile/CapTel®”
(If no items are checked, your contact information will be unlisted and not published.)

May TDI occasionally send you TDI eNotes, TDI’s free email newsletter? ☐ YES ☐ NO

All new listings/updates must be received in writing before January 1 to be included in next Blue Book. Allow up to 30 days processing in eBlue Book for changes mailed to TDI.

Select one TDI Membership rate: 1 Year □ $40.00 □ $75.00 □ $1,000.00 2 Years □ $30.00 □ $55.00 □ $1,000.00 LIFETIME

Indicate the TDI Membership Rate that you have selected above:
(Outside USA) Add additional $15.00 for International Shipping:
Contribution to TDI (Fed Tax # 35-1146784): Thank you!
GRAND TOTAL: $ __________ $ __________ $ __________

TDI Members Receive: Listing in the Blue Book, four issues of TDI World and one Blue Book annually, occasional eNotes, and access to the eBlue Book until date of expiration.

Sorry, no refunds. Exchanges allowed for defective merchandise.

(If Paying by Check or Money Order) Make payable to “TDI”.
(There is a $35 fee for checks returned due to insufficient funds.)

(If Paying by Credit or Debit Card) Issued by: □ American Express □ MasterCard □ VISA
Account Number: ___________________ 3-Digit Security Code: ______________
Name of cardholder: ___________________ Expiration Date: ______________
Signature: ___________________ Today’s Date: ______________

Mail or fax completed application with payment information to:

TDI - 8630 Fenton Street – Suite 121 • Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803
Phone: 301-563-9112 • Fax: 301-589-3797
info@TDIforAccess.org • www.TDIforAccess.org

SAVE TIME & POSTAGE – JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE AT www.TDIforAccess.org
(Revised 01/06/2011)
You always know Karen Putz is in the room. If you are paying any attention at all, her energy and magnetic personality will quickly suck you in. Online she is just as dynamic, posting just about everywhere with thousands of Friends, Followers, and admirers in cyberspace. Author, advocate, mom, athlete, volunteer, motivational speaker...if you don't already know her, it's time. Here's a start:

**TDI World: You were born with normal hearing? What brought you into the deaf world?**

**Karen Putz:** I started losing my hearing when I was in elementary school and received my first hearing aid when I was nine. There are five generations of deaf and hard-of-hearing folks in my family thanks to a gene passed on through females in the family. All of us were born with normal hearing and we became deaf/hard of hearing either from head trauma or illness; or in the case of my mom, she just went deaf in the middle of a conversation at a family BBQ.

My introduction to the Deaf Community came about when I fell on the water as a teen while barefoot water skiing and I went from hard of hearing to deaf. I attended Northern Illinois University and stayed in a dorm with deaf and hard-of-hearing students and immersed myself in American Sign Language.

I have three deaf and hard-of-hearing kids and I serve on the national board of Hands & Voices, an organization that provides support for families with deaf and hard-of-hearing children. I'm also the Director of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infusion in Hands & Voices, aiming to get more deaf and hard-of-hearing people involved in the organization. (That means you!)

**TDI World: Your blogs, books, and newspaper articles have won you national recognition and thousands of readers. What do you write about?**

**Karen Putz:** For a year and half, I had a column in the Chicago Tribune TribLocal section and I shared some advocacy topics there. In fact, my last column for the newspaper covered Enhanced 911 services and the benefits of having complete access. In the past I've written blogs for Disaboom.com, covering a variety of topics on people with disabilities and advocacy.

I have two blogs, “Jobs, Careers and Callings: Deaf and Hard of Hearing People at Work” and “A Deaf Mom Shares Her World.” The first blog features deaf and hard-of-hearing people in different occupations. The second one is about my life in general, covering all kinds of topics from parenting to deaf life.

**TDI World Interview: Karen Putz**
TDI World: You're known as The Barefoot Skier. What's up with that?

Karen Putz: Way back as a teenager, I thought it was really cool to be able to ditch the water skis and skim the water on my bare feet. No other gal on the lake could do that, so it was a great excuse to hang out with the guys. After I tripped on the wake and went deaf, I slowly abandoned the sport. I got married, had three kids and got out of shape (unless you count round as a shape). Then one day, the hubby sent me a link to the TODAY show featuring a 66-year-old woman barefoot water skiing. I got in touch with her and she invited me to learn to barefoot again at the World Barefoot Center with the two-time World Barefoot Champion, Keith St. Onge. I fell in love with barefooting all over again and decided it would be fun to enter some tournaments. The next thing I knew, I was traveling around the country barefooting and writing a book with Keith. The book, Gliding Soles, was published in November and is available on Amazon.com.

TDI World: You gave testimony on behalf of TDI at a Department of Justice hearing two years ago. What for?

Karen Putz: The Department of Justice held a hearing for enhancing the rules and regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. On behalf of TDI, I gave testimony covering captioning at the movies, accessibility on the web specific to captioned videos, and enhanced accessibility for 911 services. Today, we are seeing improved access to captioned movies via devices like CaptiView and Sony’s “Entertainment Access Glasses.” Patrons can now view many more captioned movies without time restraints, but we still have a ways to go in seeing every single movie captioned at any time. We are getting there!

In my hometown, I’m working with the mayor and our police department to bring enhanced 911 services to our town as well as the state of Illinois.

TDI World: Has the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act affected you?

Karen Putz: Yes, I spend a LOT of time on the web and I am extremely frustrated at the lack of captioned access. This law was long overdue and it is a great step in the right direction toward access.

I hear a lot of grumbling about the “cost” of adding captions to web content, but look at it this way, you’re inviting more than 40 million deaf and hard-of-hearing people to visit your content when it’s accessible.

If you have a radio show or podcast, providing a transcript is another form of access that benefits everyone—some folks prefer to skim through a transcript than to sit through a 30-minute audio feed. And the written word shows up beautifully in search engines, drawing more folks to a website.

What I’d really like to see is a shift in attitudes about access. Today, television producers don’t even blink at the thought of adding captions. We need to adopt that same attitude on the web...and everywhere, for that matter!

TDI World: What do you see as the major obstacles and issues related to telecommunications going forward?

Karen Putz: One thing we have to solve is the interoperability of videophones—we still encounter barriers and do not have full access among the various providers. For example, I use one VRS service and try to call another to leave a message and I can’t. The phone just rings and rings then disconnects. I would like to see the FCC ensure that all providers have equal access in terms of service.
Calling for a New Accessible 9-1-1 System

BY DR. CHRISTIAN VOGLER
DIRECTOR, TECHNOLOGY ACCESS PROGRAM, GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

Most people do not think about calling 9-1-1 very much. Two-thirds of the respondents in a survey stated that they had not called 9-1-1 in the past two years. In fact, when I ask around in class at Gallaudet University as to who has ever called 9-1-1 in their lives, I am lucky to get at most one or two people to raise their hands – if at all.

Yet, if an emergency arises, things absolutely must go right. Being able to communicate with 9-1-1 quickly is a matter of life and death. Despite this, if you are deaf or hard of hearing, there currently exist no good options for calling 9-1-1 – unless you are one of the few people who still own and use a TTY. I got a stark reminder of this fact when my wife with our two-year-old twins got into a car accident, and she attempted to call 9-1-1 via mobile video relay services. To state that this experience was a disaster would serve as the understatement of the year: it took more than eight minutes from the time she connected to a VRS interpreter to the point when she finally could talk to a 9-1-1 call-taker. In fact, thanks to someone else’s call, police arrived on the scene even before she could get through to 9-1-1. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, but that was the day when things became personal for me.

The current 9-1-1 system has become inaccessible, because it has not kept up with changing technology. The days when the majority of the deaf would make TTY calls over a landline are long gone. Instead, text-based forms of communication, as well as video and audio over the Internet and mobile phones, have taken over – not only among the deaf and hard of hearing, but also in the mainstream. Emergency associations and managers have recognized this fact, and started moving on next-generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1), which is a complete overhaul of the 9-1-1 system and promises much improved accessibility.

One of the great things that the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act did was to set up the Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC) under the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The law mandated that the committee should consist of stakeholders from the disability communities, public safety officials, industry players, as well as other subject matter experts. The law also tasked EAAC to conduct a survey on how people with disabilities access 9-1-1, and based on the survey results, to release recommendations as to how to make NG9-1-1 accessible to people with disabilities by the end of 2011. At the time of writing this article, EAAC has a total of eleven deaf or hard of hearing members, in addition to representatives from the FCC, academia, mobile carriers, cable companies, equipment manufacturers, and public safety.

The survey was conducted in the spring of 2011, and the summary of the survey results was released in July 2011.1 The full EAAC report along with a whopping 37 policy, 36 technical, and 4 outreach recommendations, respectively, was released in December 2011.2 Getting consensus on the report and recommendations among such a diverse group of stakeholders was a gargantuan task and required several hundred hours of conference calls, with 30 hours alone spent on conflict resolution in the final week before the deadline imposed by law.

Continued on page 25
Although some areas of the EAAC report clearly reflect the compromises and concessions that had to be made by all involved stakeholders, many of the recommendations constitute a new milestone for the accessibility of the NG-9-1-1 system. One fundamental core tenet adopted by EAAC is that all people get direct access to the 9-1-1 call-taker in the communication medium of their choice – video, audio, or real-time text –, rather than getting routed through a relay service. If some form of communication assistance is required – for instance, if a caller signs and the call-taker does not understand ASL –, the call-taker will be able to pull in a sign language interpreter into a three-way conversation, so that at no point during the call direct access to 9-1-1 is impeded. The concept of being able to mix and match video, audio, and text at the caller’s choice is called Total Conversation and was first tested in a pilot project in Europe, but subsequently adopted by the United States. Rather than trying to explain in so many more words what a future emergency call will look like, I encourage the reader to watch the demonstration at http://bit.ly/ZnnZcb. (Editor’s Note: The video shows a 3-digit number used in Europe to summon emergency assistance, which is 1-1-2.)

NG9-1-1 will undoubtedly raise accessibility to a new level, but as it changes everything about the emergency calling system, it will take 10-15 years before rollout has completed nationwide. To this effect, EAAC recognized at the end of 2011 that an interim text-based solution for accessing 9-1-1 was needed, and promised to undertake further work in this direction. In March 2012, EAAC members staged a fair where ten vendors demonstrated their proposed interim text-to-9-1-1 solutions. Following the success of this fair, on the next day on March 30, 2012, on Sheri Farinha’s initiative, a motion was passed that stated “EAAC support as an interim solution for text-to-9-1-1, at a minimum, SMS, and other technologies as appropriate, with a three digit short code 9-1-1.” This motion set the stage for the remainder of the year and resulted in the formation of a working group tasked with figuring out how to make SMS to 9-1-1 a reality. At the time of writing this article, it is expected that a draft report on text-to-9-1-1 will be discussed at the EAAC meeting on December 14, 2012.

EAAC also formed several other working groups tasked with tying up the loose ends that were left by the mad scramble to finish the main report before the 2011 deadline set by law. One of these focuses on policies and practices for making sign language interpretation available to the 9-1-1 caller and call-taker, and another one focuses on the phase-out of TTYs in favor of newer technologies. Both of these groups are anticipated to deliver an initial report by the end of 2012. EAAC originally was chartered for two years and is slated to dissolve in January 2013. However, it became clear in the fall of 2012 that there will be many additional tasks related to NG9-1-1 accessibility, as the transition from the current system to the next-generation system picks up steam. Committee members began to realize that EAAC represents a large amount of expertise from diverse stakeholders bundled in a single group, which would be very difficult to replicate elsewhere. In September 2012, EAAC recommended by unanimous consent to the FCC leadership that it should be re-chartered for an additional two years. The decision now rests with the FCC, and we are keeping our fingers crossed for a positive outcome.

When I started my new job as the director of Gallaudet University’s Technology Access Program in March 2011, I had no idea that EAAC and access to 9-1-1 calls for the deaf and hard of hearing soon would consume between a third and half of my working hours every week. It has been quite a ride, and I am honored to have worked with so many outstanding individuals from the deaf and hard of hearing communities on this topic. Together, we will get what we need.

Since those meetings, we have asked the FCC not to release the NPRM on this new methodology until they have come up with additional plans to ensure that the vendors would meet its benchmarks such as higher quality of service, extensive outreach to untapped sectors within the TRS base like hearing people and those who live in rural areas, and total interoperability with equipment and services in VRS. We have asked them repeatedly to please refer to our TRS Policy Statement in the NPRM. They feel that if they switch to this new method, they would have less staff and resources to combat fraud and abuse. We have countered this kind of thinking by saying that there will be attempts to fool the system, like what we have experienced under the per-minute method. We have pointed out that with the per-minute method, they have addressed fraud and abuse with some new decisions (new Fund Administrator, more strict certification criteria, etc.) last spring, and we recommended that they let things “jell” under the per-minute method for a good amount of time.

On a positive note, the FCC has made progress in its certification process. The total number of providers that are certified or conditionally certified with the FCC has increased to 12, including several that are not currently in operation, such as American Network, Hawk Relay, and CAC. Three received conditional certifications—ASL Holdings, Convo, and CAAG. Those that have obtained full certification are Sorenson, Purple, CSDVRS, Snap!VRS, AT&T, Sprint, and Convo. This is substantially a smaller pool of vendors today, as compared to the year before when there were 59 providers, many that were either uncertified or a “white-label company” subcontracting under a certified provider. To get certification from the FCC, generally an applicant company will need to demonstrate that it has at least a call center, interpreters on its payroll, and an automatic call distribution platform, either owned outright by the company, or through a lease with another VRS provider or an outside company.

TDI’s other efforts in telecommunications advocacy during this period included the following activities:


- **June 1** NAD, ALDA, TDI, AADB, CCASDHH, and DHHCAN filed a request for reconsideration and clarification with the FCC on international calls, which is in Part III, Section E of its Report and Order on April 6, 2011. [http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7021683524](http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7021683524)

- **June 16** TDI, NAD, ALDA, and AADB filed reply comments with the FCC for its Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on the certification rules and requirements for Internet-based Telecommunications Relay Services, including
June 20 TDI, NAD, CCASDHH, and ALDA met with representatives from SNAP!VRS, Purple, and ZVRS to discuss the ongoing work of the FCC to possibly shift to using per customer rate per month of reimbursing vendors for provision of VRS, thus moving away from the current per-minute methodology.

July 27 NAD and TDI met with Paul deSa, Nick Alexander, and Greg Hlibok at the FCC to discuss a likely NPRM regarding a reimbursement methodology for VRS, shifting from a per-minute basis to a per-customer basis. Improvements under consideration include:

- All VRS Communications Assistants (CAs) must be nationally certified.
- All VRS CAs are to be categorized by skill sets, signing style, and areas of knowledge.
- Callers would be able to create a list of preferred CAs, and be assigned a preferred CA when available.

August 2 TDI sent a letter of support for another five years of federal support to the Wireless RERC, the Shepherd Center, Georgia Tech University in Atlanta, GA. (Update: This RERC was awarded another five years of funding from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).)

August 4 FCC issued a final ruling that will phase out the use of toll-free numbers (phone numbers that begin with 800, 888, 877, 866, or 855) by video relay consumers.

August 9 TDI, NAD, and CCASDHH met with Karen Peltz Strauss, Greg Hlibok, and Diane Mason at the FCC to discuss a likely NPRM regarding a reimbursement methodology for VRS, shifting from a per-minute basis to a per-customer basis, and urged an NOI instead of NPRM.

August 11 NAD, ALDA, TDI, CCASDHH, RID, and DHHCAN met in the NAD headquarters in Silver Spring, MD to discuss certain reform initiatives that ask the FCC to bring VRS closer to functional equivalency with the experience of hearing people using a standard phone through improvements to the quality of interpreter services. Improvements under consideration include:

- All VRS Communications Assistants (CAs) must be nationally certified.
- All VRS CAs are to be categorized by skill sets, signing style, and areas of knowledge.
- Callers would be able to create a list of preferred CAs, and be assigned a preferred CA when available.

August 25-26 Claude Stout flew to Portland, Maine, to give a presentation with Pam Stewart from Maryland Relay on the benefits of broadband deployment for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. The event was Maine TRS Broadband Forum, sponsored by the Maine TRS Advisory Council. The Council’s leaders are Bill Nye and Barbara Keefe.

September 26 & 28 TDI, NAD, and ALDA met separately with three Commissioner offices at the FCC, to discuss an upcoming NPRM on VRS rate methodology.

September 29-30 FCC issued citations to 23 companies for violations of rules and regulations in providing VRS.

October 3 TDI signed on to the petition for rulemaking for Video Assisted Speech-to-Speech (VID-STS) by Speech Communications Assistance by Telephone.

October 6 TDI, NAD, and ALDA met with Christine Kurth of Commissioner Robert McDowell’s office, FCC, to discuss an upcoming NPRM on VRS rate methodology.

October 11 Andrew Phillips (NAD) and Cheryl Heppner (ALDA) met with Sherrese Smith of Chairman Julius Genachowski’s office, Karen Peltz Strauss, and Greg Hlibok, FCC, to discuss an upcoming NPRM on VRS rate methodology.
Claude Stout gave a keynote address at the conference of National Association of State Relay Administrators (NASRA) in Salt Lake City, UT. The title of the address was “Sharing with Our State Partners: A National Consumer Agenda Review.” A great part of the presentation covered key aspects of the Consumer Groups’ TRS Policy Statement.

Shane Feldman (NAD), Sheri Farinha (CCASDHH), and Claude Stout (TDI) met with Sherrese Smith and Jessica Almond of FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski’s office, and Karen Peltz Strauss and Greg Hlibok, both of the FCC, to discuss an upcoming NPRM on VRS rate methodology.

Claude Stout participated in the meeting of the Video Programming Access Advisory Committee at the FCC.

Robert McConnell participated in an interview on the benefits of using BlackBerrys by deaf and hard-of-hearing people at Research in Motion (RIM) headquarters in Canada. RIM is the manufacturer of BlackBerrys.

Claude Stout assisted Dr. Bob Segalman on giving advice and information to Bishop Philip Berrian of Liberia on how to set up a Speech-to-Speech TRS in his country.

TDI sent a letter of request to members and staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance to amend the proposed Wireless Tax Fairness Act of 2011 legislation to add TRS as one of the exclusions, along with Universal Service Fund (USF) and 911. The exclusions would be a part of the proposed legislation, if passed, to prohibit state and local governments from imposing any new “discriminatory tax” on or with respect to mobile services, mobile service providers, or mobile service property for five years from the date of its enactment.

TDI, NAD, and ALDA met with Angela Kronenberg of Commissioner Mignon Clyburn’s office, FCC, to discuss an upcoming NPRM on VRS rate methodology.

TDI filed ex parte comments with the FCC supporting the AT&T-T-Mobile merger, based on four factors that are used in response to this proposed union and past/future corporate merger applications. The four factors were:

- Consistent collaboration with all stakeholders in every phase of product and service design.
- A variety of service plans that meet our specific needs with minimal useless features, such as data-only plans; accessible customer service support; and alternative formatted promotional materials in broadcast, print, and online.
- Community support through exhibits and workshops at major and local events.
- Economic benefits through employment of people with disabilities throughout all organizational levels, and sustainable business relationships with qualified vendors and service providers with disabilities.

Media Access

May 30 TDI, NAD, AAPD, and ALDA met with the offices of FCC Commissioners Julius Genachowski and Mignon Clyburn on a number of TV closed captioning issues.

IP-Captioning NPRM On October 18. TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, HLAA, CSD, CPADO, TAP (Gallaudet), and IT-RERC (University of Wisconsin-Madison) filed comments for the FCC’s NPRM on closed captioning of Internet Protocol-delivered video programming, and followed up with reply comments on November 1. On September 26, and again on November 10, TDI and other consumer groups met as a follow-up with officials from the Media Bureau and Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, FCC, to discuss some details with the NPRM on closed captioning of Internet Protocol-delivered video programming.
Captioned Radio Project  
NPR is hopeful that more funding will be forthcoming so they can complete the captioned radio pilot project. NVRC and HLAA printed out a survey, which garnered responses from 52 national, state, and local organizations and 363 individual supporters. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) has also thrown in their support and adopted the Captioned Radio International Standard, which goes by the name “Digital radio broadcast service, captioned radio” aka ITU-R-BS 1894, and its passage was without opposition by a single one of the 192 member countries in the ITU. The fact that Captioned Radio works with Braille devices is sparking even more interest in its development, so it is hopeful that funding will be secured for this important project. Below is a photo of the Captioned Radio with Braille.

Filing by Public Interest  
Public Airwaves  
TDI provided consultation to the Institute of Public Representation (IPR) when asked for feedback on an ex parte letter that they were working on for a different client. The Public Interest Public Airwaves filed a letter with the FCC suggesting the creation of a database containing various information regarding how television stations serve the public interest. In the petition, there were some references to captioning in the form of a question asking how many hours of video programming were captioned. We suggested that because captioning is more of a rule than the exception to the rule, the question should be rephrased to ask which video programs were NOT captioned and why not, thereby bringing attention to the possibility that the program may or may not be compliant and to investigate why rather than “rubber-stamping” all programs as captioned. The database also included similar questions for video description in anticipation of the CVAA regulations. The suggestions we provided were incorporated into the Section 3 (page 3) of the letter at http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7021700424

November 1  
The Video Programming Access Advisory Committee had its meeting at the FCC. DHHCAN members participated in the VPAAC meeting at the FCC on Tuesday, November 1, 2011. VPAAC members include Claude Stout (TDI), Cheryl Heppner (ALDA), Shane Feldman (NAD), and Lise Hamlin (HLAA), working on developing Work Group 4 recommendations focusing on the location and behavior of the caption button and persistence (ability to keep captions on at all times until turned off by user).

November 7  
TDI issued an eNote congratulating FCC on its action to rescind the 2006 Angler’s Order. The FCC has asked over 300 television programmers to reapply within 90 days from the rescinding order for waiver of their captioning obligations for the programs they distribute on TV.

Industry Collaboration  

October 5  
Claude Stout attended an event at Gallaudet University sponsored by Sorenson Communications to announce the company’s new nTouch VP device. Then he joined Shane Feldman and Cheryl Heppner for lunch with Alex Varley, head of Media Access Australia, before the monthly DHHCAN meeting.

October 13  
Robert McConnell participated in the interim non-voice emergency services incubator meeting with Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions.

October 18  
Robert McConnell and Claude Stout had a lunch meeting with Johan Verstraete, the Chief Executive Officer with DirectEye, a company in Belgium that provides both video remote interpreting and video relay services.

October 28  
Claude Stout attended the FCC’s Chairman’s Awards for Advancement in Accessibility. The awards were presented for the development of mainstream and assistive technologies, the development of standards, and the implementation of best practices that foster accessibility.

Continued from page 28
The winners of the Chairman's Awards and honorable mentions were: CTIA, LookTel Money Reader, Microsoft, NonVisual Desktop Access, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Coach, Universal Subtitles, Apple, Apps4Android, AT&T, the Farfalla Project, Interpretyle, Phlixie, and Verizon.

**Consumer Group Collaboration**

- **June 16-19** TDI staff attended some activities of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Convention at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Reagan National Airport. Also, Dr. Roy Miller and Carol Sliney helped man the TDI booth there.

- **July 21** Claude Stout received word from the FCC Chairman's office that he was reappointed to serve as Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network (DHHCAN) representative on the FCC's Consumer Advisory Committee. He has served on this committee since 2001.

- **July 26** Claude Stout took part in the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) event on Capitol Hill to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- **August 15** Claude Stout met with Joseph Mosley, a senior at Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) in Washington, DC. Mosley wanted advice on how to advocate for better accommodations with the Metro subway system in DC (such as providing message notifications in the cars on which station is approaching or has been arrived at, etc.). Mosley hopes to serve on Metro's advisory committee for people with disabilities. Prior to his graduation from MSSD, he became an intern at TDI.

- **October 7** TDI issued an eNote tribute about Steve Jobs, the CEO of Apple, recognizing his legacy in accessible technology.

- **November 6** It was a wonderful Sunday morning for Team TDI For Access members at the Hearing Loss Association of America's (HLAA) Walk4Hearing fundraising event around the Tidal Basin in Washington, DC. This ten walkers in Team TDI for Access t-shirts, led by team captain Joe Duarte, raised more than a thousand dollars and walked three miles around the Basin.

- **November 11** Claude Stout and his wife Judy co-presented at the biennial convention of the Maryland Association of the Deaf (MDAD) in Columbia, MD. The presentation title was: "Developing & Maintaining Grassroots Connections with Area Government & Political Officials."

- **November 19** TDI signed on to a letter sent by NAD to Reps. Lamar Smith, Chair, and John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member, on the U.S. House Judiciary Committee to oppose the Stop Online Piracy Act, H.R. 3261. Certain rules in the Act might inadvertently discourage websites from developing or permitting others to develop accessible technologies.

**Emergency Preparedness / Notification**

- In June, Andy Perlman facilitated a series of tabletop exercises at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. This gave the school's administration a clearer picture of their roles and responsibilities under their Emergency Preparedness Plan. Based on the success of this outreach, the Community Emergency Preparednessness Information Network (CEPIN) is now marketing these services to other schools nationwide.... Our partnership with enableUS, an organization that facilitates accessible educational events that emphasize emergency planning practices, has been fruitful. Neil McDevitt, CEPIN's former Program Director, spoke at their conference in Des Moines, Iowa.... Claude Stout gave a workshop, titled "Emergency Preparedness: Are You Prepared?" at the 68th Biennial Conference of the Empire State Association of the Deaf in Buffalo, NY, which covered the impact of 9/11 and provided tips on how to be better prepared.

- In July, CEPIN attended the Tennessee Association of the Deaf conference. This strengthened relationships with the consumer community in middle Tennessee. Introductions were made to the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) and as a result, consumer emergency preparedness issues are now well-represented in TEMA.... Also in July, a subcontract was signed between CEPIN/TDI and the Inclusion Preparedness Center (IPC). CEPIN will be delivering 10 workshops focusing on fire prevention and safety for the deaf and hard of hearing across the country. We expect these to be
In August, Neil McDevitt stepped down as Program Director at TDI and Andy Perlman became Acting Program Director. Jim House assumed some of the Outreach Coordinator duties. As a result of a smooth transition process and with support from TDI’s Board and staff, CEPIN’s relationships with consumer, advocate, and emergency responder communities are as strong as ever.

In September, CEPIN produced a video for SafeAwake, an accessible smoke alarm manufacturer. We worked with LifeTone, another supplier of accessible smoke alarms, which provided a coupon code to be used on the CEPIN website. This gave consumers a substantial discount on their product, getting more of these important devices out in the consumer community....We attended the annual FEMA conference. This gave CEPIN an opportunity to network with our existing and future partners in emergency/disaster preparedness for access and functional needs communities....We solidified plans to deliver AWR-186 in North Carolina in January 2012. AWR-186 is the catalog number for our course titled “Emergency Responders and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community: Taking the First Steps to Disaster Preparedness.”....CEPIN sent out its own eNote early in the month to promote September 2011 as National Preparedness Month, and to share a few other tidbits....Claude Stout represented TDI in a special meeting of the E911 Stakeholders Council at the FCC.

We heard an overview of the work to date by the Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC), after which we gave input on topics such as real-time text, interim text-to-911 solutions, the differences between Video Remote Interpreting versus Video Relay Service, and the phase out schedule for TTYs.

In October, CEPIN/TDI produced a video about the Emergency Alert System (EAS) test. This was a nationwide outreach effort....Also in October we delivered the first CEPIN/IPC workshop in Nashville, TN. It was highly successful and we are working on the nine other deliveries to ensure continued success under this subcontract....General outreach continues to address consumer inquiries involving accessible alerting devices, access to the 9-1-1 system, and AWR-186 training. We also signed up for “Google for Non-Profits” in hopes that their tools and resources will help with CEPIN’s funding situation. Our relationship with enableUS continues to help broaden CEPIN’s brand awareness....Andy Perlman, CEPIN’s Acting Program Director, spoke at conferences in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Prestonsburg, Kentucky, continuing the relationship- and network-building....CEPIN issued two eNotes to encourage everyone to participate in the TDI/CEPIN survey on using phones while driving; more than 240 people participated.

The National Emergency Alert System (EAS) Test In early November, TDI and CEPIN issued an eNote and a vlog to inform everyone about a historic initiative by FCC, FEMA and NOAA: the first nationwide Emergency Access System (EAS) test taking place on November 9 at 2 p.m. Eastern Time. The vlog described the EAS test, which became one of our hottest vlogs with more than 2,000 views within its first week and peaking at more than 7,021 hits. It was a timely topic and very helpful in clearing up the confusion about the EAS test. We received many accolades from consumers and industry alike.

Although EAS has been used successfully in local and statewide disasters, there has never been a full nationwide activation from the U.S. Government, not even during 9/11. Initially FCC and FEMA warned that because EAS tests were designed about 50 years ago, full accessibility was not taken into consideration. For example, local television broadcasters still retain full control over what is visible on television during the EAS test, which means that they can provide important visual information for deaf and hard-of-hearing people, unlike some cable channels. This historic test was the first time EAS was activated on all three tiers of government: from the Federal level (President/FEMA) to the state level (governor/emergency management agencies) to the local city or county level (mayor/public safety officials).

Howard Rosenblum from National Association of the Deaf (NAD) called for a meeting at the FCC with officials from the Disability Rights Office, Bureau of Homeland Security and Public Safety, and the FEMA Office.
of Disability Integration over concerns that deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers would panic because no visual information would be forthcoming during the three-minute test, and asked that the test be postponed or made more accessible. Jim House represented TDI at this meeting. All the parties agreed on a compromise where each station would show a brief public service announcement a few minutes prior to the test, which ultimately was shortened to 30 seconds beforehand.

At TDI the staff watched a small TV tuned to WJLA TV-7. It did convey the emergency message; the only problem was that the scrolling text at the top of the screen blended in with the white graphic making the text difficult to read. We learned that there were many glitches in states across the country, where the EAS failed to appear on television sets. The test performed what it was designed to accomplish - expose gaps in dissemination. Those gaps will be repaired over the winter before another nationwide test is scheduled. Also during November, TDI/CEPIN sent out eNotes about several items: a reminder to put in fresh batteries in smoke alarms when changing clocks, fire safety related to holiday cooking and decorations, recent news of fires involving deaf and hard-of-hearing people, a new online 911 service that speeds up emergency calls, and the availability of training and consultation services on emergency preparedness.

Steve Jobs
1955 – 2011

TDI Expresses Thanks to Steve Jobs for His Contributions in Shaping An Accessible World

TDI joins the world in celebrating the life of the late Steve Jobs, who left behind an impressive legacy in shaping an accessible world.

Through a lifetime of innovations by Jobs, Apple, Inc. has immensely benefited TDI’s mission of providing leadership in access to telecommunications, media, and information technology for the nation’s 36 million people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The following is a short glimpse of a long list of Apple’s achievements under his leadership and huge capacity for innovation that we want to recognize:

- iPhone 4 with hearing aid compatible technology and other accessibility features.
- FaceTime software, making video calls a reality on MacIntosh computers as well as iPhone 4, iPad 2, and iPod Touch mobile devices.
- iTunes, making it easy for captioning viewers to browse through its growing library of online videos with captioning.

“Thank you, Mr. Steve Jobs for an extraordinary life of innovation, and your visionary leadership of the management and technical operations at Apple, Inc.” said Claude Stout, Executive Director of TDI. Mr. Stout further emphasized, “Everyone marvels about your ‘state-of-the-art’ technologies, but we talk about how they become interactive tools for full independence used by people with hearing disabilities in America. Without your team’s commitment to accessibility, Apple, Inc. would not be the widely respected company it is today.”
Introducing BlackBerry 10

**Accessibility menu**
Customize your accessibility settings and quickly access features such as TTY settings from the dedicated Accessibility menu.

**BBM™ Video**
Use the front-facing camera for face-to-face video chat with BBM Video.

**New BlackBerry Keyboard**
Type more efficiently with contextual auto-correction, next-word prediction, and a personalized learning engine that gets to know the way you type.

**BlackBerry Hub**
Stay close to what’s important and keep everything that matters to you in one place. Simply peek into the BlackBerry® Hub from any app with just a swipe, and flow effortlessly in and out of your messages and conversations.

**BlackBerry Messenger**
No matter who you’re talking to, BlackBerry® Messenger (BBM™) is designed to get your messages to where they’re going in no time. With BBM, you’ll know exactly when your message has been delivered and read¹.

**Text Messaging (SMS and MMS)**
Communicate on the go with contacts who are using phones or other mobile devices that support SMS and/or MMS¹.

**Hearing aid compatibility**
Certain models are rated for use with hearing aids².

**Alerts and notifications**
Customize your alerts and notifications using tone, vibrate, on-screen alerts or the LED indicator.

Discover more features at blackberry.com/accessibility

¹Data plan required. Check with your service provider for pricing and details.
²For a list of BlackBerry models rated for use with hearing aids visit blackberry.com/accessibility.

© 2013 BlackBerry. All rights reserved. BlackBerry® and related trademarks, names and logos are the property of Research In Motion Limited and are registered and/or used in the U.S. and countries around the world. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.
When it comes to Captioned Telephone, trust your conversations to the inventor of the technology: CapTel®. With more than 10 years of captioning experience, independently-proven caption quality, and phones to match any environment (including landline, IP-based, and mobile apps), CapTel sets the standard for unlocking the telephone.