

Come to our Spring Workshop...

**Thursday, May 8 - 7:30 pm**

**Guest Speaker: Marietta Paterson, Ed.D.**

**Director, Vancouver Oral Centre**

**"Strategies for Parents to Help with Speech at Home"**

Dr. Paterson will join us for an interactive session focusing on strategies for working with hard of hearing children on speech. Due to the limited time for an evening workshop, she has asked that we give her guidance ahead of time as to three or four specific areas we'd like her to address (e.g. intonation, voice quality, nasality, the "s" sound, sound blends, etc.). She will also allow time for questions and answers. There is potential for a more detailed follow-up workshop (half-day or full-day) if there is enough interest.

**Location: TBA (BCFHRC in Surrey or VOC in Vancouver)**

Please contact Teresa Kazemir (phone 604-552-2254 or email tkaz@lightspeed.ca) to register (no cost), confirm the venue, and let us know what specific areas you'd like to see addressed.

**Parents, family members, professionals -- ALL welcome!**

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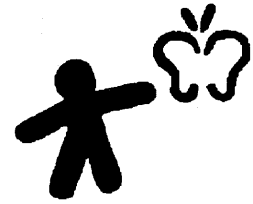
A HUGE thank you to CHHA-BC from the Parents' Branch for a great Annual Conference. Thanks also to the **Jeremy Chiao Foundation** who provided a \$1500 grant to assist 10 families to attend the conference. Thanks to **volunteers and attendees** - the conference was educational and inspirational!

### LET'S GO CAMPING!

A couple of our members from the Kamloops/Vernon area are looking into campsites and facilities for our first ever camping weekend planned for late spring or early summer. We'll try to keep you updated by email, and please feel free to give us a call/email to give us your suggestions and input.

Look for final details in our May newsletter!

January 2003



**C**anadian

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**B.C.**

**Parents'  
Branch**

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**Membership:** \$20 annual  
includes subscription to  
*Listen/Écouté* magazine and  
*The Loop* newsletter

## CHHA-BC Conference 2002

We can thank our friends at CHHA-BC for another successful conference this year. Highlights for me included the workshop by Dr. Janet Jamieson and Dr. Murray Hodgson (overheads from their workshop are available on our webpage – [www.chhaparents.bc.ca](http://www.chhaparents.bc.ca)) and the panel of two hard of hearing young adults, Curtis Les and Sarah. I also enjoyed the chance to socialize at the wine & cheese, and the discussion at our A.G.M./planning meeting. Many people shared ideas regarding what we want to see this coming year. We got the message that people still want the annual conference, as it is the only educational opportunity for many families. There was also a lot of interest in having a family camping weekend of some sort in the late spring/early summer. A couple of our Okanagan members are researching the options, and we will start planning soon. You can watch for information by email in coming weeks (please email me at [tkaz@lightspeed.ca](mailto:tkaz@lightspeed.ca) if you want to be added to my email list). TK

## Something New & Exciting...Conference 2003!

The 2003 Conference may be a little different from past conferences. CHHA-BC may take advantage of the opportunity to offer a joint conference with the Canadian Academy of Audiologists October 15 to 18 in Vancouver. This will provide a much larger variety of workshops and speakers. The conference committee (Leila Lolua, Teresa Lonn, Teresa Kazemir, Kathy Manuel, April Westwood, and Leslee Bruce) is currently working out the details of how we will include the parents' and children's programs...we'll keep you posted and would welcome your input!



FROM  
JESSE  
Hi it is Jess  
I didnt really  
like the sing  
because it was  
to quiet but I  
love making



T-shirts  
to the  
COMFRINTS

Thanks to 7 year old  
Jesse Kazemir for  
sending this lovely note  
giving his impression of  
Kidz Konnection 2002...

Editor

## URGENT MATTER - PLEASE HELP!

It has come to our attention that there is an 18-month wait for children's cochlear implant surgery in B.C.

**THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE!**  
Please take time to write a letter regarding this issue. As parents of children with hearing loss, we know first hand the importance of timely intervention. Politicians may put more weight on advocacy from families than service providers.

Letters from CHHA- Parents' Branch and others can be viewed on our web-site:  
[www.chhaparents.bc.ca](http://www.chhaparents.bc.ca)

If you would like help writing please contact Janet Les – contact info. on page 1.

If you are willing to share your letter, email it to our webmaster, Steve Kazemir, at [kazemir@pde.com](mailto:kazemir@pde.com)

1 ) Letter to: Colin Hansen  
Minister of Health  
1515 Blanshard Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 3C8

2) Copy to: Sharon Tooeey  
Vice President of Rehabilitation Programmes  
B.C. Children's Hospital  
4480 Oak Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3V4

3) Copy to your own MLA and us (optional!)

**THANK YOU from deaf children and their families!**



Looking for something to do?  
Lots of ideas here!

## SIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Family and Community Development Services are offering the following Sign Language classes:

**Burnaby** – Tuesday mornings Jan 21 - Feb 25

Wednesday evenings - Jan 29 to Mar 5

Friday afternoons - Jan 17 to Feb 7

**Langley** – Mon mornings - Jan 20 to Feb 24

**Surrey** – Thurs evenings - Jan 16 to March 6

Some classes include a children's component, parent sharing time, etc. Please contact FCDS for information at 604-660-5507- Email: psdhh@gems1.gov.bc.ca

### Visual Support Strategies Workshops

Brenda Fossett, a teacher at the B.C. School for the Deaf, will present a 4-part workshop on using "BoardMaker" to improve communication, understand behaviour and plan interventions.

LOCATION: Victory Hill Residence

4334 Victory Street - Burnaby

Jan 25 Workshop # 1 (9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

Feb 22 Workshop #2 (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

Mar 29 Workshop # 3 (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

April 12 Workshop # 4 (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

REGISTRATION, call Family & Community Development Services at 604-660-5507

INFORMATION about this technique:

<http://www.setbc.org/projects/fossett/default.html>

### NOTE TO PARENTS:

If you do not have Internet access and would like a printed copy of any on-line information mentioned in this newsletter PLEASE CALL Editor Janet Les at 604-794-3772.

If you use email, we would love to add you to our list for occasional news items – SEND EMAIL TO tkaz@lightspeed.ca

## SILENT WEEKEND 2003

**May 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Long Weekend - Start planning now!**

Silent weekend is held every 2 years at Thetis Island at Camp Capernwray Harbour. This beautiful 100-acre waterfront property is a great place for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Hearing family and friends to come together for 3 days of fabulous workshops, activities, entertainment, good food, and good fun.

Daytimes will be spent in workshops, playing beach volleyball, learning how to canoe or kayak, learning how to rock climb on the 40ft outdoor tower, at the obstacle course, walking on the beach and surrounding property or getting a ride in the speedboat. During the day children will be involved with the children's festival where they will do crafts, dye t-shirts, play games, and visit the farm animals. A range of activities will be planned for seniors. After dinner, evenings will be spent enjoying live entertainment, followed by a bonfire and marshmallow roast.

Accommodations are cabins in the woods. Accessible accommodation is also available. All meals, snacks, workshops, entertainment, lessons, kayaks/canoes, speedboat ride, activities and walk on ferry ticket from Chemainus to Thetis Island are included in the price.

Come and experience a Deaf world for the weekend – full signing environment. Come to Silent Weekend !

**Children 12 and under go for FREE !**

Limited number of subsidies available.

Registration is \$168 per person. Seniors rate \$150.

Registration begins March 26<sup>th</sup> on a first come first serve basis. **Book early as 2001 was sold out!**

Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre  
Victoria BC

Tel: (250) 592-8147 TTY (250) 592-8144 V

### Advance notice:

Canadian Academy of Audiology national conference is October 15th - 18th, 2003 in Vancouver.

Canadian Association of Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing annual conference is October 23 and 24, 2003 in Surrey.

# Computer analogy and amplification technology

by Carol Flexer, Ph.D

One way to illustrate the potentially negative effects of any type and degree of hearing impairment on a child's language and overall development and to explain the role of amplification technology, is to use a *computer analogy*. The primary concept is: *data input precedes data processing*.

An infant or toddler (or anyone) must have information/data in order to learn. A primary avenue for entering information into the brain is through the ears, via hearing. So, the ears can be thought of as analogous to a computer keyboard, and the brain can be compared to the computer "hard drive". Remember, as human beings we are neurologically wired to code and hence to develop spoken language and reading skills through the auditory centers of the brain, the "hard drive". Therefore, auditory data input is critical, and it is worth our time and effort to make detailed auditory information as available as possible to a child with any degree of hearing loss.

If data are entered inaccurately, incompletely, or inconsistently, analogous to using a malfunctioning computer keyboard or to having one's fingers on the wrong keys of the computer keyboard, the child's brain or hard drive will have incorrect or incomplete information to process. How can a child be expected to learn when the information that reaches his or her brain is deficient? Amplification technology such as hearing aids, personal FM systems or sound field FM systems, and biomedical devices such as cochlear implants can all be thought of as keyboards. . . as means of entering acoustic information to the child's hard drive. So, all that technology is, really, is a more efficient keyboard.

Unfortunately, technology is not a perfect keyboard and it does not have a life of its own, anymore than a car has a life of its own. Technology is only as effective as the use to which it is put, and only as efficient as the people who use it. Conversely, without the technology, without acoustic data input, auditory brain access is not possible for persons with hearing impairment.

To continue the computer analogy, once a keyboard is repaired or the figurative "fingers" are placed on the correct keys of the keyboard allowing data to be entered accurately, (analogous to using amplification technology that enables a child to recognize word-sound distinctions), what happens to all the previous inaccurate or incomplete information? Unfortunately, all of the corrected data need to be reentered. Thus, the longer a child's hearing loss remains unrecognized and unmanaged, the more destructive and far reaching the snowballing effects of the

hearing impairment. Early intervention is critical. . . the earlier the better!

Hearing is only the *first* step in the chain of intervention. Once hearing has been accessed as much as possible through appropriate amplification or biomedical technology, the child will have an opportunity to discriminate word-sound distinctions as the basis for learning language, which in turn provides the child with an opportunity to communicate and acquire the knowledge of the world. All levels of the acoustic filter effect discussed previously need to be understood and managed. Simply the wearing of hearing aids or a cochlear implant does not ensure development of an effective language base.



The longer a child's data entry is inaccurate, the more damaging the snowballing acoustic filter effects will be on the child's overall life development. Conversely, the more intelligible and complete the data entered are, the better opportunity the child will have to learn language that serves as a foundation for later reading and academic skills. That cannot be stated often enough – early intervention is paramount!

From the inception of early intervention programming, comprehensive audiologic management is the necessary first step for a child of any age with any type of hearing or listening difficulty to have an opportunity to learn.

A critical caveat is that, although amplification technology can provide a better "keyboard", a more efficient and consistent route of data entry, that keyboard will not be perfect. Thus, systematic listening and learning strategies need to be implemented; hence the importance of auditory-verbal intervention.

Excerpted from "Power of Hearing" The Listener 2000

- **Dr. Flexer will be presenting a full day workshop for B.C. Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on February 28 in Richmond. The event is co-sponsored by Phonic Ear whose representatives will demonstrate sound field systems**

"There is nothing so important as what happens in the first three years of life, and nothing so important within these years as learning to talk. It is through the child's growing mastery of language that he becomes a person, sharing the lives of others among whom he lives."  
... Charles Darwin

## *Parent to Parent . . .*

### **QUESTION: *What do you think your hearing children have learned from having a sibling with hearing loss?***

"...that everyone's the same. Even though he's hard of hearing he can do things that other kids his age can do... if it's going to a movie or watching TV. There's always something that adapts to his situation."

"I know for a fact that my hearing child demonstrates much more tolerance and acceptance of people with a disability, as well as people who are different in any way, than most of his peers. He knows first hand that his sister is just like anyone else, but is perceived as different by people who don't understand deafness. I don't see him give in to peer pressure to tease those who are different from himself, and although this may just be part of his personality, I think it also has to do with the fact that he has a sibling who has a hearing loss."

"...they feel a special pride in her accomplishments. But they don't cut her any slack!"

"My child's siblings say they learned some sign language, to talk louder and more clearly, to repeat, to have patience... all the time"

"Our hearing children have learned many things from having deaf and hard of hearing siblings. They have learned the importance of sounds and communication that they would otherwise take for granted. They have learned to be observant of the obstacles encountered, and have learned to explain things to other people. They have learned to clarify and explain more fully to the deaf and hard of hearing children. They have learned that their deaf and hard of hearing siblings are able to do anything they work to achieve."

"They have learned that they couldn't always have as much attention as they wanted, and learned to be resilient and responsible, and hopefully learned how much easier things are when you can hear normally."

"Though we did not see it in the beginning, when we look back we can now see that having a child with a hearing loss has been a real blessing to our family. It teaches compassion and draws out some of the best qualities in a person. Love, patience, and empathy for others, are only a few of the traits we see developing in our children. It has become one of the binding forces holding our family together, all wrapped up in our precious little one!"

### **SEND YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER:**

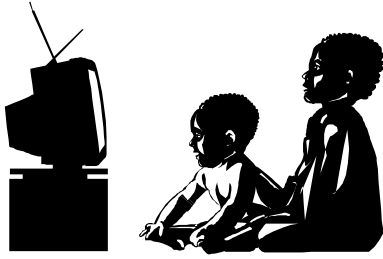
***What techniques do you use to get extended family members (grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, etc.) to interact with and communicate with your deaf or hard of hearing child? What works and what doesn't work?***

### **FM System, Dry Aid Kit...**

Nicole my 13 year old daughter, utilizes one hearing aid with a mild to moderate loss. This year she was eligible for a new type of FM system called the "Microlink." The Health unit recommended it for teens that are starting to feel more different and don't want to stand out in the classroom all the time. The component she wears is cordless and just attaches to the hearing aid with a boot, like the regular FM. It has a special crystal inside and needs no extra batteries. It runs on the hearing aid battery. The frequency it runs on is higher than the regular FM and is pre-programmed. The frequency cannot be changed without switching the whole unit, so that means if there is more than one FM user in the school, the teacher would have to wear multiple microphones. But the upsides are so great! My daughter does not feel like she stands out so much in her school and is still willing to wear the FM. The teacher's unit and microphone are about 1/3 the size of the other FM and she likes it a lot better too!

This year at the CHHA conference I had phoned ahead to Brad Brice at WIDHH and he ordered a Dry and Store. It is a fairly new Dry Aid Kit that runs on ultraviolet light with a desiccant inside. I was told it would be 10 times better at reducing moisture out of the molds and hearing aids. With two children wearing hearing aids I thought this would be a good investment to lengthen the lifespan and reduce repair bills for them. It cost about \$275, and came with two desiccants. I think the cartridges cost about \$60 for a box of twelve and each one lasts 2-3 months depending on how much moisture (sweat) your children have or if the hearing aid gets caught in the rain. It is also supposed to lengthen the life of the batteries by 20 percent. That is a savings too and a convenience, since you put the batteries in as well. I've very happy with it so far. Oh yes, it also sterilizes the hearing aid and mold. Great for killing those germs; Moms like that! I know Leila has one and her daughter said it made the sound quality in her hearing aids noticeably better. My kids haven't noticed yet, Luke is too young to say and Nicole has a brand new hearing aid; she had to get one that was "Microlink" compatible. So if you are thinking of one you must check out if your hearing aid is compatible or some models can be adapted to fit.

Kathy Manuel



## **CBC Commits to 100% Closed Captioning**

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) is taking significant steps to accelerate its timetable for closed captioning. By November 1, 2002, all programming on both CBC English Television and CBC Newsworld is captioned, including live breaking news, promos and commercials produced by the CBC. The broadcaster has committed substantial additional capital and operating resources, including new hardware and software and captioners on call 24 hours a day, in order to achieve these goals.

Henry Vlug, who is deaf, filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) in 1997 against the CBC for failing to provide closed captioning of all of its programming. The CHRC assisted the CBC and Mr. Vlug in discussions to reach an out-of-court settlement in October, 2002.

Henry Vlug is pleased with the outcome of his complaint, confirming that, "Today's settlement is an important milestone for the Deaf, deafened and hard-of-hearing communities. Now would be a good time for the other broadcasters to begin providing closed captioning of all their programming, too."

**CONCERNED ABOUT  
YOUR CHILD'S SPEECH?  
Come to our Spring  
Workshop!  
May 8, 2003  
See page 1 for details...**

## **IDIOM GAME**

You must be joking! Are you \_\_\_\_\_?

I need a favor - can you \_\_\_\_\_ with this test?

I couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ when he said that - it was so funny!

Every step you take I've got \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Answers:**

keep a straight face

give me a hand

my eye on you

pulling my leg

For more, see <http://www.edict.com.hk/vlc/idioms/games/>

## **The Dumbing Down of Language**

...Hearing people, especially parents, who live with deaf children often 'dumb down' their language to make themselves more easily understood.

Consider the following example. Instead of asking a child what kind of cereal he or she wants for breakfast by listing the options available, the person will just say "Do you want cereal?"

Sometimes the person will point to the cabinet where the cereal is stored. If signing is used, the hearing person is usually not fluent enough to fingerspell the names of the cereals.

...By keeping the language used with the deaf child simple, exposure to language and therefore, vocabulary growth, is unknowingly limited. It is the use of that very language, the richness and complexity of spoken language and its nuances, that is the basis for reading and literacy.

If the foundation of language is weak by virtue of its being simplified, then the building can reach only so high as the child grows up. The stronger and more solid the foundation, the more the child can achieve both academically and intellectually.

Hearing parents and teachers... need to use synonyms, adjectives and idiomatic expressions more freely. For example, once the child learns a word, switch to a synonym. This will increase vocabulary development. When the child learns couch, then it should become a sofa. Sad should be unhappy, disappointed, frustrated, angry or upset.

Different people say things in different ways. Do you turn off the light, turn out the light, shut the light or close the light? Do you sit on the chair or in the chair?

Use of descriptive words and other adjectives are important as well. Teeth are pearly white. Instead of saying "He is wearing a nice shirt" enhance the sentence with adjectives. "He is wearing a long-sleeve plaid shirt."

Excerpted from "The Dumbing Down of Language"  
by Sarina Roffé, National Cured Speech Association  
<http://www.cuedspeech.org/vp-dumbing.html>

## COCHLEAR IMPLANT RESEARCH REPORTED

Dr. Ann Geers of the Central Institute for the Deaf reported on her cochlear implant research at the AG Bell Association's 2002 International Convention on June 30, 2002.

In Geers' presentation, titled "*Then and Now: Performance Changes in Profoundly Deaf Children Associated with Cochlear Implantation*," she stated the findings of her five-year NIH study examining the effects of cochlear implants on skills achieved by deaf children. Specifically investigating speech, language and reading competence, Geers and her co-researchers studied 181 eight- and nine-year-old children from 33 states and five Canadian provinces; each was deafened under three years of age, implanted by five years of age and had used a cochlear implant for more than three years.

Geers found that deaf children who used implants exhibited substantially improved performance over what had been observed in deaf children who used hearing aids. When results were controlled for the influence of the child, family and implant characteristics, it was found that children who received oral education exhibited significantly better post-implant outcomes than children educated in total communication settings. The study found the following advantages for children with implants:

- Children implanted for four to seven years averaged 50 percent open-set speech perception through listening alone and almost 80 percent through lipreading and listening together.
- On average, more than 60 percent of their speech was intelligible to people with no experience listening to deaf children.
- More than 50 percent of the children achieved language and reading levels that were comparable to those with no hearing loss.

"Parents and teachers can do little to change the child's intelligence or type of implant array," said Geers. "However, they can ensure the child acquires the most up-to-date cochlear implant technology and choose an educational program that consistently emphasizes speech and auditory skill development in all communication."

<http://www.hearingexchange.com/articles/henews-122302.htm>

## Conversation Starters

... By setting up simple situations around the house or classroom you can open the door to many topics of conversation. For example, a small hole in a cup at snack-time might simply inspire a young child to use a vocalization to call attention to the problem. The same situation with a more verbal child might spark the beginnings of an interesting brainstorm of all the possible and ridiculous ways the hole got there.

It would be much easier for a child or adult to think of something to say about a shoe found in the refrigerator than it would if the shoe was in the closet. Unplugging the TV, removing the batteries from a toy, removing a chair before dinner, or changing the usual location of the crayons can be very effective tools to encourage a child to initiate a conversation. Other "conversation starters" may include:

- Putting a picture under each dinner plate to be discovered as the table is cleared;
- Hiding a small toy inside the child's shoe or under the pillow;
- Putting a note or photo in your child's lunch box;
- Selecting a T-shirt or sweatshirt with interesting pictures so others will comment about it;
- Forgetting the silverware when you set the table;
- Secretly replacing the milk with juice;
- Making place mats for each member of the family;
- Freezing a glass of milk to be set on the table before the child arrives.

Excerpted from "Towards Conversational Competence"  
by Pamela J. Talbot "The Listener – 2000."

### Sites to See... (share them with your child's teacher)

**Classroom Acoustics** - Nov/Dec 2002 BC Family Hearing Resource Centre newsletter. Read it on-line at <http://www.bcfamilyhearing.com/newsletter.htm> or call 604-584-2827 to receive it. Highly recommended!

**Hard of Hearing and Deaf Students: A Resource Guide to Support Classroom Teachers**  
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/hearimpair/toc.htm>

**All About FM**  
<http://www.phonicear.ca/resourcefiles/PhonicEarAllAboutFM.pdf>

**Acoustical Barriers to Learning: Children at Risk in Every Classroom**  
<http://www.hearitlc.com/asha012.htm>

**Classroom Speech Intelligibility: the effect of Background Noise** (from North Vancouver consulting firm M<sup>c</sup>Squared System Design Group, Inc)  
<http://www.mcsquared.com/classrooms2.htm>



**Membership** is open to any individual or organization that supports our objectives. Annual membership fee is \$20. Donations are welcome and needed by CHHA - BC Parents' Branch.

**Membership** in the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association entitles you to vote on any CHHA matter, and to receive a subscription to LISTEN magazine, CHHA-BC's newsletter *The Loop* and the Parents' Branch newsletter.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)     Professional     Other

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

H of H Child(ren) \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX - if applicable \_\_\_\_\_

Name                      Birthdate

New Membership     Renewal     Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you! Your support benefits deaf and hard-of-hearing children in BC...*

Payable to: CHHA - B.C. Parents' Branch - c/o 10150 Gillanders Road; Chilliwack, BC V2P 6H4 - Phone: 604-794-3772

## Welcome to Holland

*By Emily Perl Kingsley*

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this.....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.



It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland