THE COMMONWEALTH CALLER

Virginia Relay: Telecommunications services for the deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind and speech disabled

Summer 2012

Introducing the CapTel 840i

The newest innovation in CapTel® technology is now available from Virginia Relay: the CapTel 840i. Like its predecessor, the CapTel 800i, CapTel 840i allows individuals to call a CapTel user directly, without having to dial a toll-free access number first, making the entire process more similar to a regular phone call.

The CapTel 840i hooks up to your phone line like any other phone, but it also connects to your high-speed Internet access to automatically display captions of everything your caller says on all incoming and outgoing telephone calls.

Other new features and benefits of the CapTel 840i include:

- The ability to work with either WiFi or Ethernet connections
- Captions appear automatically on all calls—incoming and outgoing
- Extra-large, easy-to-read captions window with adjustable font sizes and colors
- Built-in answering machine—takes voice messages and shows you captions
- Adjustable volume control for captioned calls
- Captions can be turned on or off at any time during a call
- One-touch access to CapTel Customer Service available 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- Easy-to-follow menu system with Yes/No questions
- Phone book allows you to easily store and dial more than 95 names and phone numbers
- Speed dial keys for one-touch dialing of frequently called numbers
- Caller-ID capable—shows you who is calling on the display screen (Caller ID service is required)
- Captions AES-encrypted for ultimate security
- Menu options are now available in Spanish

To use the CapTel 840i, you need telephone service (digital, DSL, VoIP or analog) and high-speed Internet access (WiFi or Ethernet cable).

CapTel 840i phones are available to Virginia residents through Virginia Relay for the exclusive discounted price of just $99. To find out more about CapTel, call 1-800-552-7917 (voice/TTY) or visit www.varelay.org.

Later this year, phones will be available at no cost to qualifying individuals through the VDDHH Technology Assistance Program. To find out if you qualify, contact the VDDHH outreach office nearest you. For a list of office locations visit http://www.vddhh.org/orproviders.aspx or call 1-800-552-7917 (voice/text).

CapTel is a registered trademark of Ultratec, Inc.

Relay Center's 20th Anniversary

On November 2, 2011, representatives from Virginia Relay, AT&T and VDDHH gathered to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Virginia Relay Center in Norton. During the celebration, VDDHH Director Ron Lanier presented the Virginia Relay Center staff with a letter from Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, congratulating them on 20 years of serving as the communication connection for Virginia's deaf and hard-of-hearing community, as well as their volunteerism efforts in the local community.

Top: *Communication Assistants (CAs) undergoing training and relaying the first calls received at the Virginia Relay Center in 1991.*

Bottom: *VDDHH Director Ron Lanier, joined by Virginia Relay and Technology Programs Manager Clayton Bowen, and Director of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services Center Betti Thompson, presents a letter from Virginia Governor Robert McDonnell to Reava Gardner, on behalf of the Center employees.*

Find Us on Facebook!

Virginia Relay now has a Facebook page! Just enter "Virginia Relay" in Facebook's search field and click the "Like" button at the top of our page to get regular status updates of Virginia Relay news, events and more.

Virginia Relay 20 Years

A Commitment to Communication – 40 Years Strong
VDDHH

Virginia Relay CapTel®

HLA-Greater Richmond Raises Money and Awareness at D.C. Walk4Hearing

On November 6, 2011, a team of 25 members from the Greater Richmond Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) traveled to Washington, D.C. to join nearly 400 others participants in Walk4Hearing. The Walk is a national HLAA campaign to raise public awareness of hearing loss and to eradicate stigmas attached to it, as well as raise funds for programs and services that support people living with hearing loss. HLA-Greater Richmond brought the largest team of walkers from outside the D.C. area to participate in the event, including people with varying degrees of hearing loss, several people who were deaf-blind and their supporters. The event route circled the entire D.C. Tidal Basin, and included scenic views of the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument and the new Martin Luther King Memorial. At the end of the day, each member of the HLA-Greater Richmond team crossed the finish line, raising a total of $1,320 for HLAA. In turn, HLA-Greater Richmond received $660 to support the chapter's own mission of education, advocacy and support for those living with hearing loss. All together, Walk4Hearing raised more than $60,000 in D.C., and more than $1.2 million nationwide.

"HLA-Greater Richmond brought the largest team of walkers to the event…"

A team of 25 walkers represented HLA-Greater Richmond at Walk4Hearing along D.C.'s Tidal Basin on November 6, 2011.

The HLA-Greater Richmond team raised $1,320 for HLAA.

Linda Wallace Receives 2012 Better Hearing and Speech Month Recognition Award

Linda Wallace, president of the Greater Richmond Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), is this year's recipient of the Better Hearing and Speech Month Recognition Award from Hamilton Relay. Each May, one individual in every state where Hamilton is the contracted provider is honored for being an outstanding leader in his or her local deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

Linda receiving her reward.

Linda was nominated by her peers for this year's award due to the many contributions she has made to her community, including serving as president of HLA-Greater Richmond for more than 10 years. She also serves on the advisory board for the NewWell Sensory Fund and has served as a general assembly advocate for legislation to require insurance companies to help pay for hearing aids. Linda is active in education, having taught courses in coping strategies for hearing loss, speech reading and communication technologies as well as serving as a speaker at Chesterfield Adult Education. She is an advocate for the importance of regular hearing screenings and other preventative measures to protect hearing, and she regularly donates her time to mentoring and peer building for those who live with hearing loss. Congratulations, Linda!

"like" us on
facebook®
facebook.com/VirginiaRelay

Virginia Relay Welcomes Two New Advisory Council Members

The Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC) recently announced the addition of two new members, **John Slone** and **Barclay Shepard**. They will join the rest of the VRAC members in representing the needs and concerns of Relay users across the state.

Mr. Shepard is an assistive technology specialist for the Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) with considerable experience in providing assistive technology demonstrations, outreach and presentations on the local, state and national level. In 2011, he was named to the national task force for the Pass It On Center, a U.S. Department of Education initiative that provides technical assistance to promote the reuse of assistive technology. Mr. Shepard holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Hampden-Sydney College and a Master's Degree in Health Services Administration (MHA) from the Medical College of Virginia.

Mr. Slone joins the Council as a Video Relay user and representative. A financial business analyst with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA)–Energy, Mr. Slone specializes in fiscal policy and oversees operations, maintenance and capital budgets as part of non-product items for the overall DLA-Energy operations. He is also an adjunct professor of finance at Gallaudet University. Mr. Slone earned his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Gallaudet and his Master's Degree in Public Policy (MPP) from George Mason University.

VDDHH 2012 Technology Focus Group Evaluates New Devices

The VDDHH Technology Assistance Program (TAP) recently held its third-annual focus group to evaluate new telecommunication devices for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled. Partnering with the Richmond Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America, the Department for Rehabilitative Services and the NewWell Sensory Fund, 33 individuals living with varying degrees of hearing loss participated in detailed trials and evaluations of 10 state-of-the-art devices, including the new CapTel 840i, two wireless phones, a stand alone answering machine and a wireless device for televisions.

VDDHH
TAP Technology Assistance Program

"TAP already offers adaptive telephone devices, at this year's focus group we made an effort to bring in other devices that people may need on a day-to-day basis."

"TAP already offers adaptive telephone devices, so at this year's focus group we made an effort to bring in other devices that people may need on a day-to-day basis," says Christine Ruderson, TAP coordinator. "From the preliminary feedback I've received, people were very excited by the new equipment we tested this year, and they are very pleased with the direction the program is taking. It was a fun-filled day, and we are already planning for next year's event."

The results of these evaluations will help to decide which new devices will be added to the VDDHH TAP inventory. A summary of the results will also be provided to the national Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) to be reviewed by other state equipment distribution programs.

To find out more about the devices available through TAP, contact your nearest VDDHH outreach office. For a list of office locations visit www.vddhh.org/orproviders.aspx or call 1-800-552-7917 (voice/text).

TAP is looking for participants for future focus groups, which will be open to the public. If you are interested in participating, please contact Christine Ruderson at christine.ruderson@vddhh.virginia.gov.

CapTel Customer Service Now Available 24 Hours

With support from Hamilton Relay and CTI, Virginia Relay is now offering CapTel Customer Service 24 hours a day, including weekends. Virginia Relay is committed to providing the very best care and ensuring that customers have continuous access to support.

To contact CapTel Customer Service:
Tollfree: 1-888-269-7477
(Voice/CapTel/TTY)

Spanish support: 1-866-670-9134

Fax: 402-694-5110

Email: Virginia@HamiltonRelay.com

Standard Mail:
Virginia CapTel Customer Service
P.O. Box 285, Aurora, NE 68818

Angie Craft Named Relay Center Manager

Virginia Relay is pleased to announce that it has named Angie Craft as one of three on-site managers to their center in Norton. In her new role, she is responsible for overseeing the center's 82-person staff and customer care team.

First hired in 1990 as a Virginia Relay Communication Assistant, Craft has devoted her career to the Call Center, serving in manager support and lead trainer roles over the years, as well as studying American Sign Language and becoming a Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) qualified interpreter. "I have always strived to be active in the deaf community as much as possible," Craft explains. "My goal as manager is to not only support my team, but to find new ways to inform and educate our local community about Virginia Relay."

When asked to describe the most rewarding part of her job, Craft doesn't hesitate: "I feel lucky to be part of such a wonderful team of people who enjoy helping individuals make phone calls that so many people take for granted."

Outside of work, Craft enjoys singing and spending as much time as she can with her husband and two daughters. Please join us on congratulating Angie on her new role!

"My goal as manager is to not only support my team, but to find new ways to inform and educate our local community about Virginia Relay."

Revised ADA Standards Include Hearing Loops as Assistive Listening Systems

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) now requires certain kinds of public and private facilities that normally provide amplification systems for their audiences—such as theaters, churches, movie houses, arenas and stadiums, auditoriums, meeting and lecture rooms, concert and performance halls, and courtrooms—to have assistive listening systems installed for people who want to use them. Assistive listening systems make dialogue easier to hear in public places, where background noises and reverberation can make hearing more difficult than in a private setting.

As of March 15, 2012, the ADA revised its standards defining what qualifies as an acceptable assistive listening system in venues that require them. One of these systems is known as an induction hearing loop—a technology that allows people who are hard-of-hearing to use their hearing aids as wireless loudspeakers, delivering clear, customized sound inside their ears.

Induction hearing loop systems transmit sound as magnetic energy through a wire that surrounds a room. Anyone in that room wearing a hearing aid or cochlear implant fitted with telecoils (T-coils) is able to receive that sound amplified directly into their ears, without any other portable device. Although most modern hearing aids and cochlear implants are fitted with T-coils, people without T-coils can still access hearing loops through portable receivers and headsets.

Hearing loops are becoming increasingly popular throughout the United States and Europe because, unlike alternative FM or infrared assistive listening systems, hearing loops are easier to install and maintain and are able to serve a larger number of people. Hearing loops also work well in transient situations where portable receivers aren't feasible, such as ticket counters, teller windows, drive-through stations, airports, and train and subway stations. The New York City Transit Authority is currently installing hearing loops at 488 subway information booths.

As they become the preferred assisted listening technology nationwide, hearing loop systems have the potential to help the estimated 36 million Americans who live with some degree of hearing loss. Studies show that only one out of every four of these people (about 8.4 million) currently wears a hearing aid. However, as T-coils become more prevalent in hearing aids, hearing loops may also help encourage more people with hearing loss to use them, as they can drastically improve hearing in public settings.

Richmond Student Wins $500 College Scholarship from Hamilton Relay

Virginia Relay is proud to announce that Dina Ayad, a senior from Douglas S. Freeman High School in Richmond, is Virginia's 2012 recipient of the Hamilton Relay Scholarship. On June 6, Dina will be presented with the scholarship of $500 to use towards her higher education as she attends Liberty University in Lynchburg this fall.

The Hamilton Relay Scholarship opportunity is available to high school seniors who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking. A recipient is selected within each of the states where Hamilton is the contracted service provider and is one of several ways the company gives back to the communities it serves. Dina was awarded this year's scholarship after completing an application and writing an essay on the topic of communication technology.

"Hamilton takes pride in promoting education and outstanding leadership across the country," says Virginia Outreach Coordinator Marta Cagle "We are excited to have the opportunity to contribute to furthering Dina Ayad's education and wish her success in reaching her personal and professional goals."

VA Relay Launches Audiologist Outreach Program

Virginia Relay is launching a targeted outreach effort to educate audiologists on the services available to patients through Virginia Relay, the Virginia Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) and CapTel.

"Many of the audiologists I've reached out to have no idea that these services exist," explains CapTel Outreach Coordinator Marta Cagle. "We have an important opportunity to introduce the services to them so they can better assist their patients with their telecommunications struggles."

The program will provide audiologists the opportunity to receive a free patient demonstration kit, which will include a CapTel demo phone, patient brochures, and other educational materials that can be customized to each practice's needs. Mailings to promote the kit will be sent to more than 150 audiologists across the state. Marta and the VDDHH Outreach Specialists will follow up personally.

"Virginia Relay users are the real experts. We encourage you to talk to your audiologist and help spread the word."

But Cagle is quick to point out that the best asset in this outreach effort is the Virginia Relay community. "Virginia Relay users are the real experts. We encourage you to talk to your audiologist and help spread the word."

To help educate your audiologist on the services available through Virginia Relay, TAP and CapTel, ask them to contact the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at 804-662-9502 (V/TTY) or 1-800-552-7917 (V/TTY).

Check Out the Newest Relay Partners!

The overwhelming success of the Virginia Relay Partner program (over 500 registered businesses to date!) has made it impossible to allocate the necessary space in our newsletter to list every Relay Partner. Our newest partners, however, are listed below. You can view a complete list anytime at www.VARelay.org.

Attention Virginia Relay users: Make your next Relay call to a Relay Partner!

Apartment Complexes

Scott Hill Retirement Community
Clifton Forge
540-862-5741
www.scotthillretirement.org

Seton Manor
Hampton
757-827-6512

Banks, Loans & Mortgage Services

Edward Jones
Casey Billups, Financial Advisor
Ashland
804-550-2115
www.edwardjones.com

Beauty Salons/Spas

Geneses Hair Salon
Wise
276-328-2875
www.mygenesesalon.com

The Apprentice Salon Training Clinic
Richmond
804-225-9725
theapprenticesalon.blogspot.com

Medical Care

Central VA Community Services Child and Family
Lynchburg
434-948-4849

Central VA Community Services Adult and Family
Lynchburg
434-847-8062

Central VA Community Services Hudson House
Lynchburg
434-847-6046

Friendship Ambulance Service & Home Medical Equipment
Wise
276-328-9111
www.friendshipofva.com

Sheltering Arms Home Healthcare
Richmond
804-249-4611

Nonprofit

Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington
Annandale
703-354-6345

Restaurants

Abbys Bakery
Wise
276-328-3679

Retail

The Clapboard House
Wise
276-328-4470
www.clapboardhouse.com

State & County Government

Buchanan County Department of Social Services
Grundy
276-935-8106
www.bcdss.org

City of Buena Vista Public Works
Buena Vista
540-261-1530

Town of Dillwyn
Dillwyn
434-983-2076
www.dillwyn.org

Virginia Housing Development Authority
Richmond
877-843-2123
www.vhda.com

Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC)

Voting Members:

Eileen McCartin, Ph.D., *VRAC Chair*
Representing Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA)
eileen.mccartin@Loudoun.K12.va.us

Carl Amos, Ed.D.
Representing Hearing Relay Users
camos@dcc.vccs.edu

Robbin Blankenship
Representing Speech-to-Speech (STS) Relay Users
robbinblankenship@gmail.com

Traci Branch
Representing Voice Carry-Over Users
Traci.Branch@drs.virginia.gov

Ann Cutshall
Representing Virginia Association of the Deaf-Blind (VADB)
ann_adventures@verizon.net

Feta Fernsler
Vice Chair
Representing Internet (IP) Relay Users
dhhsc.feta@gmail.com

Abra Jacobs
Representing Centers for Independent Living (CILs)
jacaw2003@yahoo.com

Helen Justice
Representing Virginia Association of the Deaf (VAD)
Justice1118@comcast.net

Valerie Luther
Representing CapTel Users
valuther@vcu.edu

Kathi Mestayer
Representing Virginia Chapters of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)
kwren@widomaker.com

Brenda Seal, Ph.D.
Representing the Speech and Hearing Association of Virginia (SHAV)
sealbc@CISAT.JMU.edu

Barclay Shepard
Representing Hearing Relay Users
barclay.shepard@drs.virginia.gov

John Slone
Representing Video Relay Users
john.m.slone@gmail.com

Non-Voting Members:

Marta Cagle
Hamilton Relay Outreach Coordinator for Virginia
marta.cagle@hamiltonrelay.com

Christa Cervantes
Hamilton Relay Accounts Manager
Christa.cervantes@hamiltonrelay.com

Matt Myrick
AT&T Channel Manager
Virginia Relay, VRAC Liasion
mm9628@att.com

Brenda Neely
Center Manager, AT&T Norton Center
bn1545@att.com

Gary Talley
VDDHH Outreach Manager
Representing VDDHH Outreach Programs
gary.talley@vddhh.virginia.gov

Virginia Relay
DIAL 7-1-1

Video Assisted STS available to Virginia Relay users through July 31, 2012

Virginia Relay and AT&T are currently supporting a limited trial for an enhanced Speech-to-Speech (STS) service called Video-Assisted STS or Vid-STS. This new service allows a STS user with access to a high-speed Internet connection and a video device to communicate with a video-equipped and specially-trained STS Communication Assistant (CA) through a separate video link connection. The Vid-STS CA will be able to see the STS user's facial expressions and gestures in order to better understand what the STS user is voicing.

To participate in the Vid-STS trial, you must have:

- Access to a high-speed Internet connection
- Video phone or web camera
- A user account with a video conference application such as Skype
- A STS user profile
- A willingness to provide user experience feedback to AT&T and VDDHH through a survey

Through July 31, 2012, if you meet the above requirements, you may initiate a Vid-STS call by dialing the regular Virginia STS phone number, 1-866-221-6784, and informing the CA that you wish to place a Video-Assisted STS call.

at&t

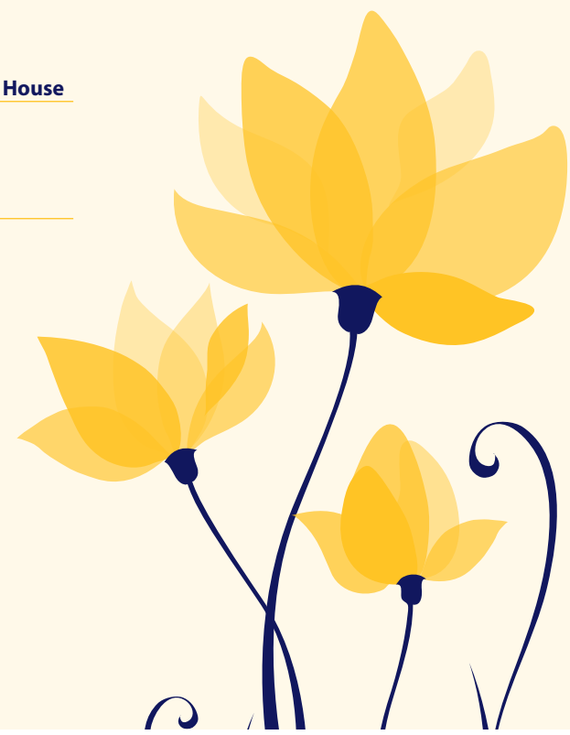
Upcoming Events

Department of Education Opening Doors Conference
June 26-27, 2012
Doubletree Hotel
Charlottesville, VA

Network for Aging Support Meeting
July 16, 2012
Winchester, VA
Network for Aging Support (NAS) is the premier organization for professionals serving elders and their families in the Shenandoah region.

VDDHH 40th Anniversary Open House
July 27-28, 2012
Richmond, VA

Virginia Cochlear Implant and Hearing Aid Conference
September 22, 2012
Mary Washington University
Fredericksburg, VA



For more information on these events, contact VDDHH or visit the Virginia Relay Facebook page.
facebook.com/VirginiaRelay

Virginia Relay
DIAL 7-1-1

1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 203
Richmond, Virginia 23229-5012

Visit us at VaRelay.org