

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation

Report to Provincial Convention, June 16-18, 2006 Yellowknife

Who has difficulty hearing everything that is said at your council meeting, or at your diocesan convention, or at meetings in general? Do you know of others who have this difficulty? Do you know of a member who no longer comes to these events because they can't hear all that is being said? I can answer yes to all three of these questions, and I am confident I am not alone.

Two years ago when I was planning for our Edmonton Diocesan Convention it was brought to my attention that a member of the hosting council could not attend because she was unable to hear. She had approximately only 17% hearing in each ear. In further discussion, and a lot of phone calls later, a solution to this problem was found, but it came with a price tag. The solution was a system called Communication Access Realtime Translation, commonly referred to as CART. CART is similar to broadcast captioning seen on television except instead of two lines at the bottom of the TV, CART is displayed as a full screen of text on walls, screens or plasma monitors with no transmission delays. The realtime captioner writes everything being spoken on a computerized steno machine (the same machine used by court reporters). The steno strokes, written at speeds of 250 words per minute, are transmitted through a cable to a computer database and translated into English text within seconds of being spoken.

What a great way to serve our aging membership or those who just end up in a seat that doesn't allow hearing a soft spoken speaker.

In the last issue of *The Canadian League*, National Chairperson of Education & Health, Velma H., wrote an article entitled *Have You Heard?* This article identifies that deafness has many causes and can occur at any age. Velma goes into great detail to list suggestions on what members can do to assist those with hearing loss. CARTing can be added to the list.

The Edmonton Diocese is very familiar with CART. In the past two years we have utilized this service at 2 Conventions, and 5 Fall, Mid-Winter and Zone meetings. I explained this service to Agnes B., our National President, and she felt our membership needed to be made aware of this resource. She has been traveling to meetings and conventions across Canada spreading the word about CART. National is entertaining the option to use CART at their convention next year.

Sandra G. is the gal who has been CARTing for us. She is a CWL member from Cold Lake, Alberta, and is well versed on our terminology. Although, we still hear giggles in the room when a new word appears on screen in a humorous spelling!

This exercise of researching CART has helped numerous members and the best ending to this is that the member I referred to earlier in this report had a cochlear implant in April and is hearing more each week.

And the price tag I referred to earlier was easily managed by the hosting council, who held a raffle and earned three times the amount required for the CARTing cost for convention. For this past convention, the Edmonton Diocesan Council was asked to organize a raffle to cover future costs. In five short months of selling tickets over \$5000 was raised. Our CART funding is secure for many future events.

Fran L., CWL Provincial Chairperson Health and Education