

Greetings!

It's now time for us to gather and celebrate with the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) during its *Renaissance of the Minnesota Deaf - 125th Anniversary Celebration*.

This is, indeed, a very exciting time to be a deaf person. The term Renaissance (from the French word *renaistre*, meaning "to be born again") refers to a revival or a rebirth of cultural awareness and the human spirit, a realization of the human potential for development. How true this is!

This is also a time to celebrate International Week of the Deaf, to further sign languages worldwide as an inalienable human right. The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) is among many U.S. groups pushing for U.S. ratification of the U.N. Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD). Last summer, the NAD encouraged organizers of the 21st International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED) to formally reject resolutions from the Second Congress in 1880 that banned the use of sign language and employment of deaf educators and administrators. The resultant 2010 ICED "New Era Accord" accomplishes this by promoting the use of sign languages and participation by deaf citizens decision-making in all aspects of their lives.



Your weeklong anniversary celebration offers a wonderful selection of events that offer something for everyone - from historical preservation tours to activities for youth and those young at heart in addition to the President's Breakfast and Anniversary Gala. As a state association affiliate, MADC has a wealth of advocacy and cultural preservation accomplishments, thanks to its leaders, members and all who are part of its community. We take pride in this and the fact that many deaf leaders and members from Minnesota took part in shaping the NAD as we know it today. As an example, three former MADC presidents went on to become presidents of NAD during the early years. You have a very special person in Gerald "Bummy" Burnstein, who once lived in Minnesota and has story to tell about division within MADC on becoming the very first state association affiliate of the NAD. As it turned out, MADC filed its paperwork with the NAD in the nick of time, before another state organization sent in theirs. Learn more on October 1st, during the "History Matters" session.

I want to take this opportunity to recognize and give support to MADC History Committee's for their *Renaissance of the Minnesota Deaf* efforts, which also kicks off their ten year campaign to promote *Minnesota Deaf Heritage Preservation, Education & Investment*. It is so important to preserve and celebrate our collective heritage and invest in our future as a vibrant and proud community of signers - also to benefit many generations to come.

My warmest wishes to every one of you, on behalf of the NAD Board of Directors, for a most successful and memorable MADC 125th Anniversary Celebration!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobbie Beth Scoggins".

Bobbie Beth Scoggins
President