

Hear It Is!

Oregon



Autumn 2018

Issue 75

ALDAcon Education, Support and Fun

By Eileen Marma

The Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA) hosted their annual convention in Portland, OR, on Oct. 11-14th. I attended with over 100 members from many states. Workshops and social time occurred nearly equally on the program. ALDA emphasizes opportunities for support of each member. As a “newcomer”, I was welcomed, starting with a “Newcomers’ Breakfast” and offered helpful attention throughout the convention. It was a friendly gathering with people who wanted each member to feel accepted and assisted as needed. Several of the members use American Sign Language (ASL). It is a great language for continuing conversations when the crowd noises get too loud to hear. All the meetings and workshops were supported with hearing loops, Real Time Captioning, and ASL interpreters. There was no “straining to hear” or missed information which is a delightful relief.

Workshops covered advocacy, updates on technology, hearing aids and Smart phones, a panel of experienced cochlear implant users and strategies (both low tech and high tech) to improve our communication with others.

The keynote speaker, Richard Pimental, told his life story and how he contributed to the long journey of rights for people with disabilities to promote legislation for the American Disabilities Act of 1990. Pimental is a fascinating story teller, sharing true, difficult experiences and insights, sometimes enhanced by humor. The audience both shook our heads in sadness and laughed out loud, as we heard how he developed a strong sense of responsibility to do the right thing, in all situations. This sense of responsibility remains his primary guide in life.

His hearing loss occurred during his military service in Vietnam. He was in a bunker with four others when it was hit by an explosion. His injuries were both traumatic brain injury and sudden hearing loss in both ears. After he returned to the US for medical care, he wanted to become both a public speaker and a business manager. He said that he was “counseled” by a VA vocational rehab counselor that he wouldn’t be able to do the careers that he aspired to because he was deaf. Pimenti wouldn’t accept that as his life. He moved on to achieve in both careers.

Pimental explained to the audience that he perceives his “disability” of hearing loss as a key to unlock closed doors. He urged, “Don’t let a disability stop you.” His inspiring message was for others not to allow obstacles to prevent a person from pursuing important goals or to effect change that makes a difference in the quality of life for self or others. Use the “key” to open the door. His work in promoting the ADA legislation may be viewed in the documentary, “Music Within” (2008). Look for the DVD at your local library.

Social time during ALDAcon mainly was offered during the provided meals, each day. Karaoke on the last evening was all about having fun together. Music from the sixties up to current hits were offered by a DJ who also used American Sign Language. “Elvis Presley” arrived just in time for his signature songs. I heard that “Elvis” makes an appearance yearly during the ALDAcon Karaoke. Singing and dancing were all group participation—no solos needed. When we couldn’t sing well, we laughed. When we sang well, we laughed over and over, until the party ended.

Before I attended, I was told that ALDA is more about having fun than similar conventions with an educational focus. That reputation continues. Next year ALDAcon will be in Kansas City, KS. I think Dorothy and Toto will be there too.

From My Lips to Your Ears

Editorial by Chuck Vlcek

After editing this newsletter for 14 years, I think it is time to let someone else do it. I will continue to contribute and mentor, and ensure a smooth transition. Perhaps a talented young journalist is willing to take up the challenge and respond to the notice at the bottom of the next page.

The Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA) recently held a convention in Portland. Eileen Marma, who is the business editor for this newsletter, attended and wrote of her experiences there (front page). Although not part of HLAA, ALDA has much to offer.

There is also a significant development for veterans, described in *Within Earshot* on page 6. They are forming a "virtual chapter" online. If successful, it could lead to other virtual chapters for other groups such as young adults, or people with hearing loss who live in rural areas with no physical chapters nearby. Many Oregonians could benefit from this kind of chapter. However, we hope that

some arrangement can be made for those who do not have internet access.

Finally, Tashiko Weinstein Paulson has written a riveting article about her experiences as a deaf camper who became a deaf counselor.

HLAA, Oregon State Association

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Hear it is! will regularly print your hearing loss-related stories – personal experiences, coping strategies, and evaluations of technology are welcomed. Maximum word count is 500 words. Article contributions should be made to the editor at info@hearinglossOR.org.

For advertising information and rates, contact Eileen Marma at info@hearinglossOR.org.

Deadline for Winter 2019 edition: December 31, 2018.

The next HLAA-OR board meeting will be held Jan. 5, 2019 at 10 a.m., at Albany General Hospital (Reimar Building).

Other meeting dates in 2019 are April 6, July 6, and Oct 5.

Guests and persons wishing to confirm should contact President Clark Anderson at clarkoa@msn.com or leave a message at (541) 736-4804.

Board Election Notice

Elections will be held in April 2019 for up to 9 positions on the HLAA-OR Board of Directors (3-year term). We meet once each quarter (see schedule in the middle of this page). There may also be committee meetings. A full description of Board duties and activities is provided by the Board Reference Manual at: <http://www.HLAA-OR.org/HLA-OR BoardReferenceManual.pdf>. Should you be interested in serving on the board or have questions, please contact the Nominating Committee Chair at info@hearinglossOR.org **no later than January 5, 2019**. You should include your biography with any application to be placed on the ballot. All board members are *required* to be members of the Hearing Loss Association of America (see page 4 to join). NOTE: If the number of candidates does not exceed the number of board positions available, candidates will be confirmed by a simple majority of current board members at the annual meeting of all HLAA-OR members on April 6, 2019, in conjunction with the quarterly board meeting on that date. Otherwise ballots will be distributed several weeks prior to the annual meeting and counted at that meeting. Also note that the president may appoint someone to fill a vacancy at any time, subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the board of directors. Appointees shall complete an unfinished term or serve until the next election.

New Editor Needed

After 14 years of editing this newsletter, the editor plans to retire next spring but will remain available for mentoring and contributions. This is and has been a volunteer position. The new editor will begin with the Spring 2019 issue which should be submitted to the publisher prior to May 15, 2019. The newsletter is published quarterly. Duties include gathering content from contributors and other sources and arranging them in a neat presentable format, and ensuring that ads are correctly placed, up to date, and of good quality. To achieve this the editor should be able to communicate with contributors to solicit articles, the business editor (Eileen Marma) to coordinate ads, the ad sponsors to ensure quality control, the publisher (Shelton Turnbull) to submit the newsletter for printed publication in black and white, and the webmaster (John Hood-Fysh) to have the color document posted on the HLAA-OR website. The editor should also work with volunteers to help with proofreading. It should be noted that the business editor will solicit ads and receive payment for them, and handle other financial issues so the editor is not responsible for them. The new editor may choose to alter the layout if that will improve the appearance and/or the functionality of this newsletter, but is constrained to keep the length at 16 pages. The new editor may also change the editing software used (currently Word converted to pdf) if that is feasible.

Interested candidates should contact President Clark Anderson at clarkoa@msn.com or leave a message at 541-736-4804.



Next HLAA Convention: Join us in Rochester, New York June 20 - 23, 2019. Some details are available on: <http://www.hearingloss.org/content/convention>

HLAA Membership

Individual Membership in HLAA is \$35 for 1 year, \$95 for 3 years, or \$140 for 5 years.

One-year membership in HLAA is \$20 for student, \$45 for couple/family, \$50 for professional.

Membership includes the award-winning bi-monthly magazine, *Hearing Loss*.

Write to HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814

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Within Earshot: News You Need to Know

Internet Chapter for Veterans

While veterans with hearing loss may be members of local HLAA chapters, they desire to be in contact with other veterans with hearing loss. These other veterans are scattered across the country, and many are not sufficiently near the meeting location of any local chapter.

A group of veterans gathered at the 2018 HLAA convention in Minneapolis to address this issue. Their solution was to create a “virtual chapter” online. It is called the HLAA Veterans Across America Virtual Chapter.

Utilizing the team management software Basecamp, members of a virtual chapter can log on remotely, collaborate with others on projects, join discussions, delegate tasks, store documents in a library, etc.

Chapter meetings are held via a video conferencing platform called Zoom, which allows live captioning using CART.

The HLAA staff is staying involved to ensure a smooth start, and will remain until everyone is comfortable with using the technology. Then they will step back and give the chapter the autonomy to function on its own.

The formation of a virtual chapter follows the same process as any physical chapter and will be recognized as such. They must go through the same start-up process, which includes finding at least four other members of HLAA who are interested in becoming involved. Founding members will

be required to create their own bylaws, budgets, committees, and file for their own Employer Identification Number (EIN) and obtain 501(c)(3) status to be able to accept tax deductible charitable donations.

This information has been provided in an article (Bridging the Divide) which appears in the Nov.-Dec. 2018 issue of the HLAA magazine “Hearing Life”. It was written by Erin Mirante, who is HLAA’s national chapter coordinator. For further information on how to join this chapter, please contact Erin at emirante@hearingloss.org.

“Hearing Hope” Film

[Hearing Health Foundation \(HHF\)](#) recently released “Hearing Hope,” a new short film about hearing loss as told by individuals who live with it, their loved ones, and those dedicated to prevention and the advancement of better treatments and cures. Find out why hearing loss must stop being hidden — and become visible. You can watch the full 15-minute video on the HHF website at hhf.org/hope.

Med-EI Open House Info

The Med-EI ad on page 10 has listed dates for open house events at OHSU ending on November 30. An update is not available at this time. Interested persons should call the reservation number to learn of future open houses. Also, another open house was scheduled for Friday, December 14 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. and from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. at 5200 SW Meadows Road, Suite 150, Lake Oswego, OR 97035.

Tales of a Deaf Camper Turned Counselor

By Tashiko Weinstein Polson

During the summer I was a camp counselor working through the YMCA in Salem, Oregon. It has been a wonderful learning experience for me and it has given me a better understanding of exactly what counselors have deal with when someone with a disability is at camp! Background story: when I was 16 I was kicked out of camp for being Disabled or Hard of Hearing! For 12 years I never understood why I was kicked out and I had a lot of anger and resentment because of it. Now that I am a camp counselor, I understand why I was kicked out and why I was treated the way I was treated and all it took was switching shoes. First off, counselors received no training on how to deal with or manage a person with a disability. Also we had no idea what the signs are and how to look for them. This creates problems for the counselor and the camper. The counselor will feel totally lost and may feel that isolation is only way to solve the problem which makes the camper feel left out and lonely and that can lead to problems such as social anxiety, anger, lack of social interaction, etc. Another problem: parents! Parents can actually do more harm than good when sending their kids to camp. Many parents won't disclose that their child has a disability on the medical form out of fear that their child may be discriminated for it. Well if that is the case let me tell you this: you will be discriminated against for having a disability regardless of whether your disability is disclosed or not. So, make it a little easier for me by allowing me to know exactly what I am dealing with.

Now, as for being a counselor with a disability, that too has been an experience. So, I will start from the beginning -- when I did the interview for the job I did not mention I was Hard of Hearing. It was only after I was hired that I mentioned my disabilities. When training started I had come to the "OH MY GOD" moment thinking that my hearing loss would jeopardize my ability to do the job. My hearing loss was a safety concern so I had freaked out and come close to quitting before I even started because I felt like my hearing loss was going to be too much of an issue. I was right, and first couple of weeks did jeopardize my campers' safety, but I managed to find ways around it and began to cope and learn using what resources I had. A few of the counselors I was working with made hand signs. Some were based off of ASL while others were completely new and only meant what we created them to mean. Another way I have been coping with hearing loss is by showing my campers my hearing aids! Most of them have never seen a hearing aid let alone heard of the term Hard of Hearing. I have on a few occasions been able to educate and allow my campers to have fun with my hearing loss thanks to the Pocket Talker I used through ATI (Access/Accommodations Technology Incorporated). With this device campers had a chance to make funny noises for me to hear and sometimes had the opportunity to use it themselves. I am sadly still struggling to understand, listen to, and hear what my campers have to say especially when it is super noisy, but I am trying the best I can with what I've got! And if summer taught me anything, it is that what happened to me is nothing new, and that if people with disabilities want to be included then they are going have to demand better training and more opportunities or we will continue to be left out!

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Does a hearing problem cause you difficulty when listening to TV or radio?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Chapter Capers

Douglas County Chapter: Meetings were held in September and October but the November meeting was canceled due to its proximity to Thanksgiving. Attendance was reduced due to schedule conflicts. The annual Christmas party will be hosted by Frank and Dolores Elias at noon on December 15.

Portland Chapter: The chapter did not meet in September or October but did meet again on November 19 with an open discussion about attendees' concerns about hearing loss. Five volunteers joined the board, with Mark Foster returning as president.

Linn Benton Chapter: the chapter went to the movies for meeting night, November 28th. Open captions were seen with the movie, "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" (from J.K. Rowling's book, same title). They met at the Albany Pix Theater, 321 SE 2nd Ave, Albany, OR 97321. Admission is \$8. Show time is 7:00 p.m. In addition to regular movie snacks, The Pix Theater offers a wide selection of foods and beverages including beers by the bottle or on tap. You can view their menu at <http://www.albanypix.com/page/5995/Menu>

What is your chapter doing? Please submit your story to the editor at cvlcek@centurytel.net See pages 14-15 for contact information for these chapters and events.

CI Corner

Most people who have cochlear implants are probably already aware that there are restrictions to having an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging). However, there have been a few changes since the early days when an MRI was pretty much verboten. The Nov.-Dec. 2018 issue of the HLAA newsletter "Hearing Life" has an article by Brad Ingrao, Au.D., on the current status of CI compatibility with MRIs.

The article is too long to reproduce here but the main points can be summarized. First, it covers all types of hearing implants, not just CI. Secondly, it also discusses other medical sensing devices such as standard X-rays, CT scans, and ultrasound. In a nutshell, devices other than MRIs are safe to use as long as they are not placed directly on any subcutaneous part of the implant. However, these other devices do not offer the high resolution imaging of soft tissue that an MRI can provide.

Older CI models with ferrous components are not compatible with MRIs under any circumstance. The same is true for middle ear implants and some bone-anchored implants. The remainder are at least partially compatible, depending on the model and on the strength of the MRI being used.

In some cases the magnet under the skin of a CI user (where the external coil is placed) must be surgically removed before undergoing an MRI. A non-magnetic "spacer" is put in its place, then is replaced with a new sterile magnet when the MRI is finished. However, the processor cannot be worn for several days while the incision heals. In some other cases it is sufficient to place a protective "bandage" over the ear without removing the magnet, thus avoiding the downtime. Some newer CI models permit at least low-power MRIs to be used with the magnet intact and without the bandage. Future CI models are likely to be fully compatible with MRIs.

CAVEAT: Do not have any medical imaging done without having your physician verify your specific implant's compatibility with that type of imaging. Call the manufacturer and give your name and date of birth, or the model and serial number.

OPEN HOUSE

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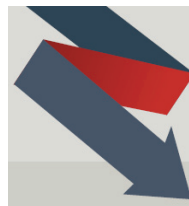
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How to Survive a Holiday Party with Hearing Loss

By [C. Scot Frink, audiologist](#) (reprinted from Autumn 2015 issue)

It's that time again. Holiday parties and family gatherings are right around the corner, and besides all the hustle and planning of gifts and dinners you have something else on your mind: your hearing.

For those of us with hearing impairment, holidays can bring a stress that others may not understand or expect. In crowded rooms filled with holiday music and laughter, some of us find ourselves feeling overwhelmed and stressed by conversations we struggle to hear. However you can prepare for these situations with these communication tips from Woodburn Hearing Center, and head into the season with confidence!

To start, call and set up an appointment with your audiologist for a tune-up. Hearing aids should be professionally cleaned and examined every six months at least. Your hearing loss may have also changed, and your audiologist will be able to adjust the settings on your hearing aid for optimal amplification.

When at a holiday party, there are several precautions you can take before you arrive. Have extra batteries with you, just in case. Background noise such as a television playing sports or a radio playing holiday music can make it difficult to hear others. If possible, let your host know that you have a hearing impairment and that this is a concern. A courteous host should take this into consideration and limit or lower the volume of background noise in the environment. If you cannot change the level of background noise at the party, try to distance yourself away from the source. *2018 update:* technology can also help. The better-equipped hearing aids and implant processors have noise-reduction algorithms that are helpful but not a perfect solution. If you are listening to just one or two persons at a time, have the speaker hold a microphone connected to a "pocket-talker" which provides a wired or wireless connection to your hearing aid or processor.

One-on-one conversations in quiet rooms are definitely going to be the best option for you. Find someone who you enjoy talking with and see if they would be willing to find a quieter area to talk. Large group conversations can be hard to follow — especially when friends and family are all talking over one another or have multiple conversations going at once. This is where you can be strategic with your seating. Sitting against a wall is best for sound quality because the sounds will all be in front of you.

Regardless of whether you can lip read or not, seeing someone's face while they are talking can improve communication immensely. Choose a seat that will allow for you to see as many faces as possible. If you have a "better ear" you can also seat yourself so that most of the conversation is taking place on that side. You can make sure you sit by a friend or loved one who will help you understand things you may have missed in conversation.

Lastly, make sure to manage your expectations. Don't be afraid to tell people about your hearing loss. Hearing loss is very common and is nothing to be ashamed of. If you let others know, they will likely be more accommodating in the way they communicate and will understand if you have trouble understanding.



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If you benefited from reading this edition, got a pearl of wisdom, or found a new resource for yourself or family member, please make a donation to support this newsletter.

If you have not contributed in the last 12 months and are able to do so, please use the form on the back of the newsletter, and mail your tax-deductible gift to:

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The following persons have contributed since the last issue:

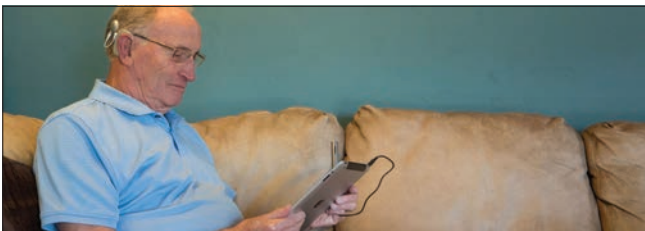
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Chapters in Oregon

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- *Information about the latest technology*
- *Coping strategies & tips*
- *An opportunity to make a difference*
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We believe in education - for those who hear well and those who cannot - so that both may understand the causes, challenges and possible remedies for hearing loss. At our meetings, you'll find a comfortable place where hearing loss is accepted and not a problem. Many people report that being a part of a Hearing Loss Assoc. group has made a major difference in their lives. Your participation benefits not only you, but others who attend as well. Following is a list of the current chapters and contact people in Oregon.

HLAA of Salem has disbanded and is no longer meeting. Try contacting HLAA of Lane County, Linn-Benton counties, or Portland (see below).

HLAA of Lane County meets quarterly: 2nd Thursday in March, June, Sept., and Dec., at 7 PM at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard Street - Eugene.

Contacts: Andrea Cabral
e-mail: angora@comcast.net
(541) 345-9432 voice
PO Box 22501
Eugene, OR 97402

Clark Anderson
e-mail: clarkoa@msn.com

DID YOU KNOW

That of the 114 veterans enrolled in the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) under Easter Seals Oregon in 2018, about 50% have some kind of hearing issue?

HLAA of Portland meets the 3rd Monday each month (except June, July and August) 6:30 PM in “Building 2”, 2nd floor, on the Legacy Good Samaritan Campus, 1040 NW 22nd Ave. (at Marshall), Portland 97210

Contact Anne McLaughlin
e-mail: hlaportland@gmail.com
PO Box 2112
Portland, OR 97208-2112
www.hearinglossor.org/portland/

HLAA of Douglas County meets the 4th Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Westside Christian Church, 2712 West Harvard Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon.

Contacts: Vincent Portulano, President:
email: HLAADC@outlook.com

Ann Havens, Secretary (541) 673-3119

HLAA of Linn and Benton Counties meets the last Wednesday of each month (except June, July, & Dec.) – 6:30 PM at the Reimar Building, next to Albany General Hospital, 1085 6th Ave. SW, Albany, OR 97321.

Contact: John Hood-Fysh
e-mail: jhood-fysh@wwmore.com
(541)-220-8541 (cell – call or text)
818 Broadalbin St. SW
Albany, OR 97321

For an electronic version of this newsletter:

<http://www.hlaa-or.org>

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Chapter coordinator contacts:

Oregon: Vincent Portulano
e-mail: vportulano@hotmail.com
15491 Highway 99, Oakland, OR 97462

HLAA:
e-mail: chapters@hearingloss.org
(301) 657-2248 - voice
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Here It Is! Oregon Autumn 2018 Newsletter

I would like to receive (or continue to receive) this newsletter.

Name _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____ Please send my newsletter via e-mail _____

I learned about the newsletter from: _____

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ to support the **Hearing Loss Association** outreach programs in Oregon. Contributions will be acknowledged in the next issue.

I wish to remain anonymous.

I cannot contribute but would like to receive the newsletter.

I want to join **Hearing Loss Association of America**, the National Organization. Please enroll me as a member. I'm including my membership fee (see bottom of page 4 for fee schedule).

Or you can sign up online at www.hearinglossOR.org (click membership, then click application)

Hearing Loss Association of America, Oregon State Association, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charity and depends on donations and grants. All personnel are volunteers. Please send your donation to support our efforts to ***HLAA, Oregon State Association*** PO Box 22501, Eugene, Oregon 97402.