

HEAR OREGON

IT IS!



WINTER 2019

ISSUE 80

DONATIONS MAKE US STRONGER

Thank you to our donors for their financial help. They are making this organization stronger through their underwriting of our goals. The Hearing Loss Association of America-Oregon believes in keeping a more even playing field for people with disabilities. These donations were received July 2019 through January 2020:

INDIVIDUALS

Josephine S. Bateman, Barbara Bay, Sylvia Eckles, John Hood-Fysh, Eileen Marma, Anne McLaughlin, Cathy Sanders, Holly Thau, Joyce Watson & Anonymous

BUSINESSES

Hoffman Corporation, 805 SW Broadway, Suite 2100, Portland

Mid-Valley Hearing Center, 2318 Heritage Way SE, Albany

Thank you for this vote of confidence. ■

HIGH BAR TO CLEAR 3rd group of deaf/hard of hearing attorneys sworn in to US Supreme Court bar

[HTTP://WWW.DEAFBAR.ORG/2019/12/12/](http://www.deafbar.org/2019/12/12/)

On Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019, 10 members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bar Association (DHHBA) were sworn in and admitted to the Bar of the United States Supreme Court. All members are deaf or hard of hearing attorneys.

DHHBA President Rachel Arfa made the motion in American Sign Language (ASL) and Spoken English, becoming the first attorney to address the Court in two languages simultaneously.

Chief Justice John Roberts responded to Arfa's motion in ASL and Spoken English, signing, "Your motion is granted," marking the third time that he has used ASL to approve DHHBA's motion.

The attorneys sworn in were are: Azeema Akram, Administrative Law Judge, Illinois Commerce Commission, Chicago, Ill.; Kristy L. Avino, Attorney, McCarter & English, LLP, Boston, Mass.; Jeremy Bolton, Solo Practitioner, New Orleans, La.; Jessica Kennedy, Legal Director, Communication Service for the Deaf, St. Paul, Minn.; Jana Miller, Attorney, Ashland, Ky.; Caitlin Par-ton, Attorney, Disability Law Center, Boston, Mass.; Peter Pentony, Attorney, Williams-

Ford, Shepherdstown, W.Va.; Robert Reilman, Solo Practitioner, Kalamazoo, Mich.; Michael Sabella, Attorney, Baker & Hostetler LLP, New York, NY; and Anna Maria Wilson, Chief Legal Officer, Commu-



nication Service for the Deaf, Austin, Texas.

This is the third time that DHHBA participated in the group swearing-in ceremony.

The Supreme Court provided ASL interpreters, realtime captioning (also known as Communication Access Realtime Translation, or CART) and assistive listening devices for DHHBA participants.

Arfa, DHHBA president, is also an attorney at Equip for Equality, the designated Protection and Advocacy Agency for Illinois, and was part of the inaugural group of 13 DHHBA attorneys sworn into the U.S.

Continued on page 3

NEWS INSIDE

- Supreme Court bar — page 1-3
- Board members — page 2
- Moonlight Sonata — page 4
- AI applications — page 7
- Shari Eberts — page 12
- HLAA convention — page 14-15

I'M ALL EARS ...

Editorial by Jeanne Fenimore Levy



Jeanne is a Hillsboro, Ore., resident who lost a significant portion of her hearing in the 1970s and despaired for her future. Hearing aids helped, though, and eventually she realized that coping with hearing loss was possible and, in fact, the only way to go.

Another year of wonder as I enter 2020. I wonder where I left my phone, I wonder where the scissors are, I wonder why I came in this room, I wonder if my memory problems are serious?

Another wonder is the human body and all of its intricate parts. The great design of the body includes those ears of ours!

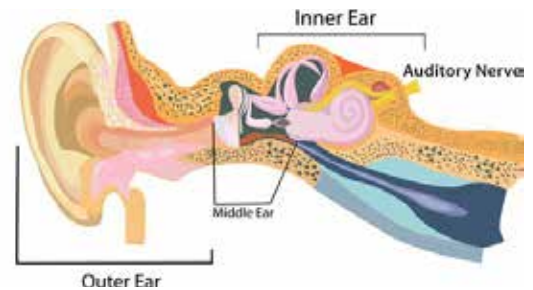
The outer ear — the part we see — funnels sound waves into the ear canal, where they travel through to reach the eardrum which then vibrates. These vibrations are sent to three teeny, tiny bones in the middle ear.

These awesome bones amplify the sound vibrations and send them to the inner ear which contains the cochlea, a snail-shaped structure filled with fluid. Sound vibrations create waves in the cochlear fluids, and as the waves peak, they cause tiny hair cells (types of receptors that can detect sound) to bend, which converts the vibrations into electrical

signals. Such magic!

The auditory nerve carries the electrical signals from the inner ear to the brain, which somehow — through more magic — interprets the signals as sound that you recognize and understand.

You likely studied health textbooks in elementary school, so the diagram below is familiar to you. Now it's a bit different when you see this. You realize that — for you — there is a problem with these



delicate parts of the ear. The tiniest thing that could go wrong, did.

That's the exact purpose of this newsletter and our whole organization. To explain what might affect your hearing, to find things that might be preventive or helpful after damage has occurred, and to publish any information we can that will offer hope and education.

You can help us by subscribing to our newsletter, donating to our organization (<https://www.hlaa-or.org/donations>), and passing your newsletter on to another when you are finished with it. You and your friends can also visit our website to read it.

Thank you for your help and support.

Contact me by emailing femminismo@gmail.com. Let me know what sort of articles you would like to see in our newsletter. ■

HAAA, Oregon State Association OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

President - John Hood-Fysh

Vice President - Kathryn Eckert-Mason

Past President - Clark Anderson — Oregon state coordinator- south

Secretary - Vince Portulano

Treasurer - Cathy Sanders

Newsletter Editor - Jeanne Fenimore Levy

Board members: David Baldridge, Abbye Callender,

Mark Knecht, Richard Little, and Eileen Marma

HEAR IT IS! #80

Published quarterly by the HAAA, Oregon State Association, Inc., P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402.

Jeanne Levy, editor; and Eileen Marma, business editor.

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 Spring 2020 edition: February 15.

Website: <https://www.hlaa-or.org/>. ■

High bar, continued from page 1

Supreme Court Bar on April 19, 2016. A second group of 11 DHHBA attorneys was sworn in Jan. 17, 2018.

At the December swearing in of the 10 new admittees, Arfa said, “DHHBA is honored to present its members for admittance to the Supreme Court Bar, as a demonstrated commitment to increasing representation of deaf and hard of hearing attorneys in the legal field. Deaf and hard of hearing attorneys often have to navigate through barriers to succeed in their careers, and having them stand up in front of the greatest court of the land to be admitted is a significant and symbolic gesture for our members.”

It is customary for attorneys to be admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar with a group, such as a professional organization or a group of university alumni. At the ceremony, an attorney who is already a member of the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, vouches for the group of prospective members and the Chief Justice then welcomes them before they are sworn in.

Attorneys admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar are permitted to argue cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. Admission is granted if an attorney sponsored by two current members of the U.S. Supreme Court Bar has been an attorney in good standing for at least three years. DHHBA members admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar total 34.

Gallaudet University, a liberal arts college for deaf and hard of hearing individuals, hosted a special reception in honor of the 10 attorneys.



PHOTO BY HEADWAY ON UNSPLASH

Upcoming HLA board meetings

The next 2020 quarterly HLA-OR board meetings will be held April 18, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.; and July 11, 2 – 5:30 p.m., at Albany General Hospital, Reimer Conference Rm Bldg., 1085 6th Ave. SW, Albany, Ore.

To confirm meeting dates and times, and to get directions, please contact: Kathryn Eckert-Mason, k_eckertmason@yahoo.com; or John Hood-Fysh, jhood-fysh@wwmore.com.

Calling All CI Users!

Do you want to help cochlear implant research? It's easy!

We are looking for current CI users to complete a brief survey to assist us in understanding how babies learn language through cochlear implants. If you can listen to audio on your home computer, you can help!

E-mail brynn.lopez@gallaudet.edu today to see if you qualify!

Requirements:

- At least 18 years old
- Native-level English understanding
- CI user for at least 1 year

Approved by Gallaudet IRB PJID #3236



CI users, are you interested in participating in a research project? Brynn J. Lopez, B.A., Graduate Student Clinician – Au.D., Gallaudet University, is recruiting participants for her research study regarding how cochlear implant users understand infant-directed speech, or “motherese.”

We are looking for current CI users to complete a brief survey to assist us in understanding how babies learn language through cochlear implants. If you can listen to audio on your home computer, you can help. Please email brynn.lopez@gallaudet.edu today.

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA — MEMBERSHIP

HLAA is one organization — national office, state offices and associations, and HLAA chapters — all working to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and **advocacy**.

In a December 2018 survey the No. 1 reason for belonging to HLAA was its history of advocacy for those with hearing loss.

Now, after more than 10 years, membership dues increased as of July 1, 2019. New prices are now: individual, \$45 per year (online, \$35); and a couple/family is \$55. Professionals and nonprofits pay \$80. Membership includes the award-winning bimonthly magazine, *Hearing Life*.

Write to HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814. Or you may call 301/657-2248 (voice), 301/913-9413 (fax) or online at www.hearingloss.org.

Join and become a hearing advocate.



HLAA
Hearing Loss Association of America

**Become a
MEMBER:
Help yourself
& others.**

Moonlight Sonata: A Documentary in Three Movements from HBO

Moonlight Sonata begins with filmmaker and mother Irene Taylor Brodsky audibly trying to get her infant son's attention. He is already going deaf, but she does not yet know it.

A visceral and intimate story, the film chronicles a deaf boy growing up, a deaf man growing old, and perhaps the world's most famous deaf person, Ludwig van Beethoven, a composer who crafted a sonata that would resonate across time and cultures.

The story begins with Jonas' first years of life going deaf, undergoing surgery for cochlear implants, and then discovering a newfound world of hearing — and music.

Now 11, Jonas has had a cochlear implant and can choose when to be deaf and when not to be. He is struggling to learn the first movement of the "Moonlight Sonata," an anguished composition Beethoven wrote when he began going deaf. Beethoven's story is told by entering an animated 19th century, alive with watercolor imagery, haunting soundscapes and original score, and witnessing Beethoven descend, painfully, into the loss of something that gave him so much beauty. Jonas' teacher, Colleen, guides us through Beethoven's state of mind at the time of writing the piece. Meanwhile, Jonas' grandparents, Paul and Sally, who have been deaf for nearly 80 years, watch their grandson learn to play piano and feel the gulf that lies between them.

As Jonas delves deeper into Beethoven's sonata, the story becomes an intergenerational, inter-era tale of deafness. Paul becomes increasingly forgetful and frustrated: He is losing another sense — his mind. As Jonas navigates deafness and Paul dementia, Beethoven's process of writing "Moonlight Sonata" and unearthing creativity from loss serves as a poetic analogue. Like Beethoven, grandfather and grandson must tune into the voice inside of themselves to survive a world that was not built for them.

Much like the iconic piece after which it is titled, Moonlight Sonata is a story about loss and, more importantly, what we discover when we push beyond it.

HBO aired this show until Jan. 15. You can search online for other ways to view this documentary or visit the website moonlightsonatadoc.com. ■

Oregon Relay...

Everyone deserves to communicate by telephone

Just dial 7-1-1



Oregon Relay is a free service that allows individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or who has a speech disability to place and receive calls through specially trained relay operators. There are several forms of Oregon Relay services, depending on the needs of the individual and the telephone equipment that they use.

For more information:

www.oregonrelay.com

SprintTRSCustServ@sprint.com (Email)

800-676-3777 (TTY / Voice)

877-877-3291 (Fax)

877-787-1989 (Speech-disabled)

866-931-9027 (Voice Carry-Over)

800-676-4290 (español)



Center for Disease Control reports hearing-related issues *CDC.org dedicates section of website to hearing loss.*

Krista's Story: A woman living with hearing loss

"When I was 17 years old, I lost all of my hearing in one ear. I learned that I had a genetic syndrome that caused tumors to grow on my hearing nerves. And I learned that someday I would become completely deaf in the other ear. I was devastated and frightened. I grew up with full hearing and didn't know anyone who was deaf.

"I couldn't imagine the world without sound. A few years later, a friend told me about a remarkable new technology called an alpha pager — a pager that could receive a message sent via a live operator. I was excited to think that someday this technology could help me.

"Soon my world got quieter,

but I didn't really notice because it happened so slowly.

"After much urging from my frustrated family, friends, and coworkers, I got my first hearing aid. I can remember turning it on for the first time and immediately hearing a soft, low-pitched noise. My eyes scanned the room looking for the source.

"My audiologist smiled and said, 'That's the air conditioner.'

"I went for my usual run that evening and was surprised to hear the gravel crunch beneath my feet and the croak of a bullfrog. I had forgotten that frogs make noise!

"But the sounds around me continued to soften. I began using captioning on TV only a year after a federal law was

enacted requiring most new television sets to include a closed captioning feature. And I became unable to use the telephone only a few years after emailing became the norm.

"I'm completely deaf now. In addition to closed captions and email, I rely on technologies such as text messaging, IM (instant messaging), and CART (communication access realtime translation). Recent changes in technology, as well as other recent positive changes such as the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, have provided opportunities for people with disabilities that were not available 20 years ago. I sometimes think back to the excitement I felt when I learned that I might someday use an alpha pager, and I smile." ■

DID YOU KNOW?



people over the age of 60 have hearing loss

HEARING LOSS IS ABOUT

2X

AS COMMON
IN ADULTS
with diabetes



A recent study suggests that for every 10 DB LOSS in your hearing, your risk of Alzheimer's increases by 20%

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR HEARING CHECKED RECENTLY?

Schedule your appointment today with the hearing experts at Pacific EarClinic

(503) 352-2692



PACIFIC earCLINIC

Tuality 7th Avenue Medical Plaza
333 SE 7th Avenue, Suite 4150
Hillsboro, OR 97123
PacificEarClinic.org

* Hearing Loss Statistic: American Academy of Audiology. Alzheimer Statistic: John Hopkins University National Institute on Aging Study Arch Neurol. 2011 Feb, 68(2):214. Diabetes Statistic: American Diabetes Association

AI APPLICATIONS IN HEARING LOSS WORLD

From The Hearing Journal, March 2019

BREAKTHROUGHS IN TECHNOLOGY

“No human can do it, but the machine can,” said Fan-Gang Zeng, PhD, a professor of otolaryngology at the University of California, Irvine, School of Medicine, and the director of the Center for Hearing Research.

Zeng, referring to artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities in hearing aids, may sound futuristic in his assessment, but as companies begin to integrate an array of new technologies—including machine learning, 3D printing, real time language translation, and fall detection—to hearing aids, it is evident that the future of hearing care is now.

“Looking back at the last nearly 20 years of history in hearing care, you will find that

technology and technological breakthrough have always been a part of the industry,” noted Thomas Lang, the senior vice president for Phonak.

“But now, artificial intelligence has reached a status where its solutions have become relevant for hearing care through direct connectivity, the ability to read and process large amounts of data, and the capacity to make intelligent proposals for users,” he added.

Such technologies have not only revolutionized the hearing capabilities of hearing aids, but also provided a unique opportunity to improve users’ lifestyles. One landmark breakthrough in hearing aid AI is the ability for devices to log users’ preferences in a variety of

listening environments, from daily work spaces to concerts, movie theaters, restaurants, public transportation, quiet home environments, and more.

Now the hearing aid will monitor adjustments users make in each space, log those preferences, use GPS to detect when the user returns to those places, and either automatically adjust to preferred settings or send an app-based push notification to ask the user if she or he would like the device to adjust. “When it comes to analyzing the sound environment and recognizing what you like and don’t like, AI does a great job of data logging and helping individuals,” Zeng said.

Continued on page 9



LNS Captioning

Thanks to Our Friends in the
Hearing Loss Association of Oregon
for Your Support!



www.LNSCaptioning.com

Oregon Health & Science University Ear Center

What We Do:

- Cochlear Implants
- Hearing Aids
- Hearing Screening
- BAHA Implants
- Vestibular Testing
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Research and Education
- Aural Rehabilitation

Who We Are:

- Timothy Hullar, M.D.
- Sachin Gupta, M.D.
- Jessica Eggelston, AuD, CCC-A
- Jennifer Fowler, AuD, CCC-A
- Sara Funatake, AuD, CCC-A
- Carrie Lakin, AuD, CCC-A
- Lindsey Schlobohm, AuD, F-AAA
- Jessica VanAuken, MA, CCC-A
- Yael Raz, M.D.
- Sarah Liebler, PA-C
- Brittany Wilson, AuD, F-AAA
- Amy Johnson, AuD, CCC-A
- Jennifer Lane, AuD, CCC-A
- Devon Paldi, AuD, CCC-A
- Alyce Schott, AuD, F-AAA
- Ashley Sobchuk, AuD, F-AAA

Contact Us

Audiology: 503 494-5171
Cochlear: 503 494-8135
Email: cochlear@ohsu.edu



Find Us On

[@OHSUEarCenter](https://www.facebook.com/OHSUEarCenter)
[@OHSUEarCenter](https://www.twitter.com/OHSUEarCenter)
Online: www.ohsu.edu/ent

Link your Fred Meyer card, Amazon account to help HLAA-Oregon

by Eileen Marma

Here is an easy way to support HLAA-Oregon. If you have a Fred Meyer Rewards card, you may select HLAA-OR as the recipient for a portion of your purchase. To link your Rewards card to HLAA-OR, just log in to your online account.

Whenever you use your Rewards card when shopping at Freddy's, you'll be helping the nonprofit linked to your card earn a donation from Fred Meyer. At the end of each quarter, Fred Meyer will make a donation to participating nonprofits based on the accumulated spending of the Rewards customers linked to each nonprofit.

The minimum quarterly

payout is \$25 per organization. If an organization earns less than \$25 in a quarter, the amount will be held until the donation exceeds \$25 or the end of the year, whichever is first.

When you begin your Amazon shopping, if you start at smile.amazon.com you can choose from a list of nonprofits.

Tell others about this easy way to donate. It certainly makes sense to use these companies' offer of donations if your budget won't allow for that.

Thank you for considering this contribution to the HLAA-Oregon! ■

JOIN THE BOARD TO EFFECT CHANGE

The Hearing Loss Association of Oregon is seeking additional board members.

We encourage members of local chapters to apply, particularly from areas that are not/or are underrepresented on the board.

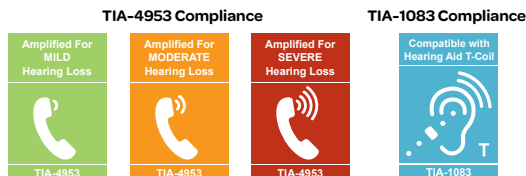
Examples are southern Oregon, eastern Oregon, Eugene and Portland.

If you are interested contact Clark Anderson (clarkoa@msn.com) or P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402. ■



CaptionCall is the Gold Standard

CaptionCall is the first and only captioning phone to meet the Telecommunications Industry Association standards for mild, moderate and severe hearing loss amplification and hearing aid compatibility.*



Want to learn more about CaptionCall?
Sign up today at www.captioncall.com or call 1-877-557-2227. Use promo code MN1136.

*67T and 67TB models. Learn more about TIA at tiaonline.org.

AI TECHNOLOGY BREAKTHROUGHS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

“It’s something current hearing aids cannot do and an area where the old statistic model of pattern recognition failed miserably,” he said.

“AI provides a realistic possibility for hearing aids to improve speech recognition in noise, which has been the number one complaint of patients but is still challenging to current noise-cancellation technologies,” he added.

Dave Fabry, PhD, the chief innovation officer for Starkey, added that machine learning technology ensures that hearing aid quality and performance in both quiet and noisy environments provides an exemplary experience using personalization and optimization.

“[Automatic preference adjustment] will provide satisfaction not only in terms of understanding speech but also with spatial sounds around you,” he added.

Although similar technology is available in other consumer electronic devices, Lang noted the introduction of AI and ML in hearing aids brings the vision for everyone to enjoy the delight of better hearing without limitations to fruition.

“Now hearing aids are compatible with the devices that already use AI and can deliver quality listening depending on the use-case even when listening to music through smartphones or watching television,” he said.

“Now, we are able to combine connectivity, rechargeability, and superior sound quality to bring everything together in one product,” Lang added.

AI has also introduced the ability for hearing aids to detect human speech, perform real time language translation, monitor physical and mental health, and detect falls. Using machine learning, hearing aids have the ability to access data and ultimately predict them, making automatic speech detection and real-time, amplified translation of foreign languages directly in the ear possible. Incorporating motion sensors also enables users to track steps without the use of a separate device. The same technology allows hearing aids to detect falls and even send notifications and GPS location to family members and/or care providers that the user has fallen. ■

At CES 2019, owned and produced by Consumer Technology Association, Starkey Hearing Technologies unveiled Livio AI, an Artificial Intelligence-powered hearing aid that automatically translates foreign languages and tracks both your physical and mental health.

“We are particularly pleased this year to receive CES Innovation Award for accessibility,” said Dave Fabry, chief innovation officer at Starkey.

“We work with people with hearing loss and we’ve developed the first hearing aid that uses embedded sensors directly on the hearing aid, in combination with machine learning and artificial intelligence, to enable the person to be able to track their physical activity and cognitive well-being from wearing their hearing aids on a day to day basis.”

The company is also incorporating a heart rate sensor directly in the hearing aid. This heart rate sensor will monitor heart rate and heart rate recovery. There’s a link between hearing loss and cardiovascular disease.

With the new device, Starkey wants to prove that hearing aids aren’t just medical devices for older folks, but they can also be wearables for the tech-savvy young generation. Real-time translation can translate 27 languages from English to other languages or back the other way. This feature may attract even young folks without hearing loss.

Those with dexterity issues can email or text by using voice-to-text within the app. There’s also a virtual digital assistant which can be activated by a simple tap on the device. ■



Archer Captioning
Elizabeth Archer | Captioner

ArcherCaptioning@gmail.com
www.ArcherCaptioning.com
503-319-0122



Having trouble hearing on the phone?

Specialized telephone equipment or tablets are available at no cost to Oregon residents who have a loss in:

**Hearing • Mobility
Cognition • Vision
Speech**

Let us help select the technology that will work best for you. Call **(800) 848-4442** Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Info/application:
www.tdap.oregon.gov

Sale of new American Girl doll benefits HLAA

Joss is a fierce surfer girl who never backs down from a challenge—even if it means taking a chance on something new, like trying out for cheer. But landing a spot on the cheer team is harder than it looks: Joss is hard of hearing, and often misses the count.

She’s determined to prove herself as a cheerleader and a surfer girl and realizes that an all-in attitude and an open mind might help her fly higher than ever before.

Joss comes with an outfit, hearing aids, a book, and more.

American Girl has built its company on finding worthy role models for girls. It is also committed to craftsmanship and quality.

Shop for dolls online at americangirl.com.



Our wish for you: Don't miss a single one of life's moments.

If you found value in this publication, gained insight, or found a new resource for yourself or another, please make a donation to support this newsletter.

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

HLAA, Oregon State Association, P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402.

Thank you!



John-Mark Smith - Unsplash

Chapters in Oregon

Local chapter meetings are open to all. Family, friends, and professionals are encouraged to attend and become involved.

Through chapter meetings and newsletters you'll find:

- Insights into effectively living with hearing loss
- Support/Referrals/Information
- Information about the latest technology
- Coping strategies & tips
- An opportunity to make a difference
- Diminished feelings of isolation and aloneness
- Opportunities to share concerns and hear from others

HLAA of Portland meets the third Saturday each month (except June, July, and August) at 10 a.m. in Building 2, 2nd floor, on the Legacy Good Samaritan Campus, 1040 NW 22nd Ave. (at Marshall), Portland 97210. Contact Anne McLaughlin; email: hlaportland@gmail.com. Write P.O. Box 2112, Portland, OR 97208-2112; hearinglossor.org/portland/

Note: HLAA of Douglas County no longer meets the requirements for a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Reinstatement may occur, but right now this group meets as a support group. Contacts: Vincent Portulano, president, email: HLAADC@outlook.com; or Ann Havens, secretary, 541/673-3119. Check with them for location for meetings and time.

HelpAmericaHear.org

Help America Hear, Inc., was incorporated in 2004 to help raise awareness and provide financial assistance to those with visual and/or auditory impairments (their families and their significant others). This is primarily accomplished by raising funds and providing donations to other charities and organizations that conducted research and/or provided assistance to such individuals.

Recently, HAH has begun to help those individuals with auditory impairments more directly by providing hearing aids and introducing the

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.

Below are some of the current chapters and contact people in Oregon. ■

HLAA of Lane County meets quarterly: second Thursday in March, June, Sept., and Dec., at 7 p.m. at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St., Eugene. Contacts: Andrea Cabral; email: angora@comcast.net; 541/345-9432, voice.

• HLAA-Lane County is having a program on Advocacy (Get Accommodations that You and Others Deserve and Need). The program is March 12 from 7-9 p.m. at the Hilyard Center, 2580 Hilyard St, Eugene. Captioning provided.

Mail: P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402
Clark Anderson; email: clarkoa@msn.com

HLAA of Linn and Benton counties meets the last Wednesday each month (except June, July, & Dec.) at 6:30 p.m. at the Reimar Building, next to Albany General Hospital, 1085 6th Ave. SW, Albany, OR 97321. Contact: John Hood-Fysh, email: jhood-fysh@wwmore.com; 541/220-8541 (cell – call or text), 818 Broadalbin St. SW, Albany, OR 97321.

Help America Hear scholarship to help fund the educational opportunities of those with auditory impairments.

At the beginning of 2019, the organization changed its name from Foundation for Sight and Sound to Help America Hear, Inc., and focused the scope of its corporate mission on the provision of hearing aids and the Help America Hear scholarship.

HEARING 'JUST FINE'

- by Shari Eberts

<https://livingwithhearingloss.com/2019/11/19/when-you-seem-to-hear-just-fine-felt-like-an-insult/>

Shari an active hearing health advocate and writes frequently on related topics on her blog and elsewhere. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of Hearing Loss Association of America. You can share your comments and suggestions with her on her blog or reach her at shari@livingwithhearingloss.com.



It was the annual celebration dinner for a community group where I volunteer. People wore their finest attire and mingled in the beautiful space, chatting ahead of the awards dinner. The sound was deafening, but I did my best to hear and partake in a variety of conversations using my “surviving a cocktail party with hearing loss tips.”

Finding my spot at my assigned table, I introduced myself to my seat mates. Luckily the majority had strong voices in the right decibel range for me to hear; and they were easy to lipread. The conversation flowed, bouncing from topic to topic, before my hearing loss and related advocacy work came up. Yes, I try to slip it into every conversation — that is what advocates do.

Their response: “But, you seem to hear just fine.” Part of me was happy that I was conversing so successfully — those lipreading skills do come in handy — but part of me felt almost slighted. Truth be told, this duck was paddling furiously under the water.

This was the second time someone had said those words to me recently, so maybe it was the double whammy that struck a chord in me. The first time was at a week-long yoga workshop held at my local studio.

Before I signed up, I contacted the organizer and asked if I could speak to the trainers to make sure I could hear their voices well. I did not want to commit to 40 hours of only partially absorbing the material. After a couple of emails back and forth explaining why this was

important, they were able to oblige and the teacher’s voices tested fine. I arrived early to make sure I had a good spot in the room and all went well.

At the end of the training, I thanked the studio owner once again for her flexibility with the voice test and she replied with a slightly skeptical look on her face, “Well, you certainly seemed to hear just fine.”

“Yes,” I replied, “that’s because I did the work upfront to make sure that that would be the case.”

Why did I take these comments so personally? Did I feel like I was being accused of faking my hearing loss? Did I feel unappreciated for the enormous effort I had put forth to hear? Did it feel like she was making light of the challenges people with hearing loss face?

I wondered if I should struggle more next time to advance the cause. Or was I just being cranky after a long bout of listening effort? It is hard to know.

In any case, it once again reinforced the notion that hearing loss is almost impossible to understand unless you have experienced it yourself. Why do we hear well in some situations, but not in others? Why are one person’s hearing challenges different from someone else’s difficulties? Why are some people easier for us to lipread than others? I can see why it is confusing for the uninitiated.

As people with hearing loss, we must continue to educate, and explain, and advocate for what we need in very specific terms. And when someone tells us that we

seem to hear just fine, maybe we simply reply “Thank you.”

Readers, do you ever “seem to hear just fine?”

Tips to Compensate for a Hearing Loss

• Look at the speaker.

Your brain can pick up a lot of information from visual cues that can supplement what you hear to help you understand the message. Everyone reads lips more than they realize, and facial expressions and body language can provide helpful cues as well.

• Find the best location for listening.

Placing yourself between the speaker and sources of background noise makes it much easier to hear and understand what is being said. Practice finding the best locations for different situations. Example: sit across from your host in a restaurant, or stay in a room apart from the music at a party.

Choose favorable listening environments whenever possible. The physical characteristics of a room can make it easier or harder to hear. For example, choose restaurants with better lighting or meeting rooms with carpeted floors and acoustic ceiling tiles that reduce the echo (or reverberation) in a room.

• Pay attention to the conversation.

It is easier to understand a conversation context than to understand a statement that has no background to help you know what it is about.

• Alert others to your hearing difficulty.

Speakers can use strategies to help you hear better as well, such as making sure they have your attention before they speak and giving you a clear view of their face.



NEED HELP FINANCING HEARING AIDS?

Northwest Access Fund  **CONTACT NORTHWEST ACCESS FUND**
nwaccessfund.org | 1 (877) 428-5116

BUY YOUR AD HERE!

Quarterly or Annually / Sizes
Business Card

\$175 - \$625 3.5" X 2.000"

Quarter Page

\$250 - \$850 3.5" X 4.375"

Half Page

\$400 - \$1300 7.5" X 4.375"

Full Page

\$700 - \$2000 7.5" X 9.250"

Contact Eileen Marma at
info@hearinglossOR.org.

DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual author and are not necessarily those of HLAA-OR. Mention of products and services does not mean endorsement, nor should any exclusion actually indicate disapproval. Personal experiences and diverse opinions related to hearing loss are welcome for publication and should be mailed to HLAA Oregon at the address listed below. Unless otherwise noted, readers interested in duplicating or distributing any or all material found in "Hear It Is!" have our permission to do so. Please credit the source when using such material. HLAA, Oregon State Association, P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402
e-mail: info@hearinglossOR.org.



Evonne Serpa, Au.D.
4311 NE Tillamook St.
Portland, OR 97213
503-774-3668



info@HearingResources.com
www.HearingResources.com

REPORT ON HLAA 2019 CONVENTION - by David Baldrige



Thank you to our organization for providing the money to cover my registration! The total cost of attending was roughly \$1,800, so it was a big help to have the registration paid.

I attended as many sessions and events as possible. Here are a few that stood out:

“Rewriting Your Stigma Narrative: The Road to Self-Efficacy,” by Holly Cohen, Peggy Ellertsen and Nancy M. Williams

“Piloting a Workplace Toolkit for People with Hearing Loss,” by Daniel Brooks & Tom Banach

“It’s Not Just Them – It’s Us!” by Gael Hannan and Beth Wilson, Ph.D.

“Enhancing Communication between Health Care Providers and People with Hearing Loss,” by Mary

C. Chizuk

“Hearing Assistive Technology 101,” by Ellen Perkins and Shelley Gladden

There was also a really well attended and impactful session on hearing loss and substance abuse by a young couple. I will find more details if there is interest.

The keynote was “Research Symposium: The Latest on Genetics and Hearing Loss.”

Many of the panelists had other workshops on this topic, including:

“Genetic Susceptibility to Hearing Loss from Noise,” by Patricia White, Ph.D.

“From Blood to Mutation: Demystifying Genetic Testing for Hearing Loss,” by Hela Azaiez, Ph.D.

“Genetic Hearing Loss: One Family’s

Continued on page 15



HEARPEERS

OPEN HOUSE

MED-EL Portland, OR 2020 Meetings

Reserve a 30 minute time slot with your MED-EL Representative.

JOIN US! WE'RE HOSTING AN INTERACTIVE OPEN HOUSE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR MED-EL CANDIDATES AND RECIPIENTS. Come at your convenience to learn about our technology or receive individual assistance with your device. We strongly encourage you to bring along your FineTuner remote control and other activation kit accessories.

January 24, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
February 28, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
April 3, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
May 29, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
June 26, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

OHSU- Otolaryngology Clinic
3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Rd
Suite 250
Portland, OR 97239

Please specify the date, event, location and time when RSVPing.
Please state what you would like to discuss during the meeting time.
RSVP by calling, emailing or texting to reserve your spot.

There is no charge for this event; however, an RSVP is requested to reserve your spot. RSVP to Lyra Replinger at lyra.replinger@medel.com or 919-402-6935.

Cleaning wax from ears — Mayo Clinic

If your eardrum doesn't contain a tube or have a hole in it, these self-care measures may help you remove excess earwax that's blocking your ear canal:

- Soften the wax. Use an eyedropper to apply a few drops of baby oil, mineral oil, glycerin or hydrogen peroxide in your ear canal.
- After a day or two, when the wax is softened, use a rubber-bulb syringe to gently squirt warm water into your ear canal. Tilt your head and pull your outer ear up and back to straighten your ear canal. When finished irrigating, tip your head to the side to let the water drain out.
- Dry your ear canal. When finished, gently dry your outer ear with a towel or hand-held dryer.

You may need to repeat this procedure a few times before the excess earwax falls out. However, the softening agents may only loosen the outer layer of the wax and cause it to lodge deeper in the ear canal or against the eardrum. If your symptoms don't improve after a few treatments, see your doctor.

HLAA 2020 CONVENTION NEW ORLEANS - JUNE 18-21

Early Bird Registration is now
OPEN for HLAA2020!
Discounted rates through
March 2.



General Package includes:

- Exhibit Hall Grand Opening, Thurs. a.m., 6/18
- Opening Session, Thurs. p.m., 6/18
- Research Symposium, The Latest on Tinnitus Research, Fri. a.m., 6/19
- Get Acquainted Party (GAP) – Off-site Event, Fri. p.m., 6/19
- HLAA2020 Convention Walk4Hearing, Sat. a.m., 6/20
- Awards Ceremony and Reception, Sat. p.m., 6/20
- Unlimited entry to Exhibit Hall and Socials
- All workshops, demo presentations and featured speakers

REGISTER BY MAIL.
FOR FORM, CALL
301.657.2248

HLAA convention, *continued from page 14*

Story,” Brenda Battat; James Battat, Ph.D.; Anna Battat, M.D.; and Hela Azaiez, Ph.D.

I spoke with Azaiez at length (Associate Research Scientist, Research Hearing Team Lead, University of Iowa). I learned there are genes that cause hearing loss and deafness, but there are many more that do not directly cause hearing loss but rather make people more susceptible to certain triggers such as noise, medicines, etc.

So even if relatives do not currently have hearing loss, they may still be at an increased risk of developing hearing loss due to genes that they carry.

If you are interested in genetic testing, the University of Iowa has a top tier program.

On the upside, getting tested could help your relative avoid hearing loss, but it is expensive

and there are privacy concerns to consider.

I was also able to talk individually with Barbara Kelley (HLAA executive director); Shari Eberts (HLAA Board, vice chairperson); Katherine Bouton (HLAA Board, secretary and author); Gael Hanna (a famous hard of hearing comedian and author); Katherine Bouton (a well-known author with hearing loss); Amanda Watson (conference planner); the editor of Hearing Loss Magazine (now titled Hearing Life); Bruce Austin (RIT Press, director); and Molly Cort (RIT Press, managing editor).

Based on the meetings, I compiled the following proposal to present at the **2020 HLAA Conference**. In brief:

Presentation Title — Hearing Loss & Workplace Inclusion, presenter – David Baldrige
Panelist: Tina Childress, Shari

Eberts, Gael Hannan, and John Waldo.

Short abstract: People with hearing loss continue to face significant challenges with respect to full workplace inclusion. Professor Baldrige will begin by presenting recent research on inclusive workplaces and the workplace experiences of people with hearing loss. He will then lead a panel of experts and attendees in a discussion of best practices and specific actions that attendees can take to increase their own inclusion and to promote inclusion of others. I also discussed a webinar covering similar topics with Barbara Kelly and Amanda Watson.

I discussed another article for Hearing Loss Magazine / Hearing Life with the editor, as well as a possible book on Hearing Loss with RIT press.

Thank you again for the financial help to attend. ■



P.O. BOX 22501
EUGENE, OR 97402

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EUGENE OR
PERMIT NO. 471

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Hear it is! Oregon Winter 2019 newsletter

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

Name _____

Phone _____

Organization Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

I learned about the newsletter from: _____ please send my newsletter via email

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 page 4 for fee schedule).

Or you can sign up online at www.hearinglossOR.org. Click "membership," then "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, P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402.