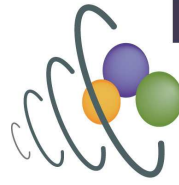


Hear It Is!

Oregon



Hearing Loss
Association
of Oregon

Spring 2010

Issue 41

Here's some advice... Don't give it.

By Marc Zola LMFT & LPC

Okay. Let me clarify. I'm on a mission of sorts: a mission to encourage people to resist the urge to offer unsolicited advice. "Why?" You might ask. "I've got great ideas!" you say. At the risk of doing the very thing I'm suggesting you resist, there's something about RECEIVING unsolicited advice that feels invalidating. Imagine you're in a restaurant and the waiter hands you your soup and starts shaking salt into it. Maybe it really needs salt? He should know, right? Wrong.

Unsolicited advice has a tendency to backfire or at least be ignored because it often leads to the receiver feeling misunderstood, unappreciated or belittled. It's very difficult for the presentation of unsolicited advice to NOT feel like a message of disdain: "You clearly don't know what you're doing, so let me tell you what you should do." In defense of the unsolicited adviser (a role which most of us are guilty of playing at one time or another), most of the times the advice is meant to have a beneficial outcome and comes from a place of best intentions. Consider Betsy and Brian:

Betsy: [*Noticing her husband is not wearing his hearing aids*] Why don't you wear your hearing aids?

Brian: I wear them some times. **Betsy:** I mean now. Why aren't you wearing them now?

Brian: Because I'm tired. Tired of listening all day.

Betsy: What's that got to do with it? How do you expect to communicate with me or live with me for that matter if you refuse to wear your hearing aids?

Brian: I'M TIRED! **Betsy:** I'M DONE!

What happened to Betsy and Brian is very common. Betsy made what she thought was a very reasonable suggestion and Brian seemed to dismiss it out of hand. Brian felt misunderstood and emotionally unheard. He reacted to Betsy's unsolicited suggestion with an obstinate response. As a result, Betsy felt disregarded, alone and frustrated. There is nothing wrong with Betsy's advice. The only problem is that Brian didn't ask for it.

Communication problems like these can often be solved by starting sentences with the word "I" rather than "You", such as: "I notice you're not wearing your hearing aids. I'm wondering if they're hard to wear/get used to?" By pointing out what she notices instead of what Brian 'should' do, Betsy softens her approach -- which will ultimately contribute to her seeming more approachable, from Brian's perspective. In the earlier example, Brian became defensive rather quickly. A 'soft' startup by Betsy with "I" rather than "You" would probably feel less threatening and more acceptable to Brian.

[Continued on page 10]

From My Lips to Your Ears

Editorial by Chuck Vlcek

Now that the health care bill has been passed and signed into law, we ask “What’s in it for us?” “Us”, of course, refers to the hearing impaired in this discussion. We already know what is not in it: a tax on hearing aids (see page 10). Is the only good news the absence of bad news? We hope that is not the case.

While there appears to be nuggets of reform in the new law(s), it is well known that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. There could still be changes ahead as parts of the law are challenged in court while other parts may be administered in ways not foreseen (and possibly unintended).

One obvious concern is that of insurance coverage for cochlear implants. Medicare had not been covering bilateral implants and is exempt from Oregon’s law requiring private insurers to do so if it covered implants at all. The cost of coverage is also a concern.

Hearing impaired persons also have concerns about health care not directly related to hearing loss. But even then the hearing loss is a factor in the ability to communicate with health care providers and insurers. Some local efforts at amelioration were described by Bob Williams in his winter issue article about the new hospital in Lebanon.

More information on health care for the hearing impaired will be brought to you as it becomes available. Stay tuned.

Board Election Results

The HLA-OR board of directors approved a motion to expand the board to 15 members (the Bylaws permit up to 17). The result is that all six candidates on the ballot were elected to three-year terms ending in 2013. Chuck Vlcek just finished one term, and Karen Swezey and David Viers are former board members. We welcome aboard new members Leela Davis, Duane Davis, and Sylvia Eckles. **All officers were re-elected.** Kathy Eckert-Mason will be Chair of the Nominating Committee for 2011.

Hearing Loss Association of Oregon

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Vice President Cheryl Davis
Recording Secretary Chuck Vlcek
Treasurer Wayne Seely

Board members: David Viers, Karin Smith, Cindy Campbell, Karen Swezey, Cathy Sanders, Bob Williams, Kathryn Eckhart, Anthony Montoya, Leela Davis, Duane Davis, and Sylvia Eckles

Hear it is! #41, Spring 2010. Published quarterly by the Hearing Loss Association of Oregon, PO Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402. Chuck Vlcek, Editor; and Karen Swezey, 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 Karen Swezey at info@hearinglossOR.org.

Deadline for Summer 2010 edition: June 15, 2010.

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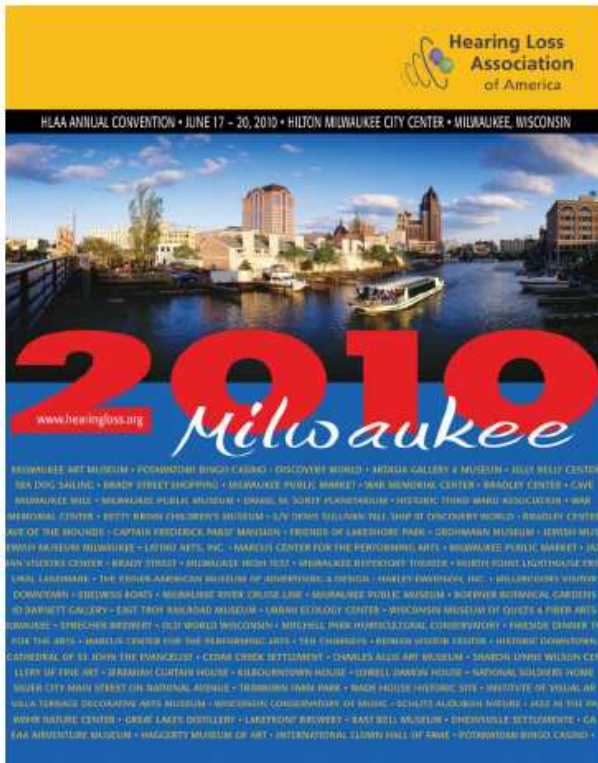
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For questions or comments, contact
the OTRS Account Manager:
damara.g.paris@sprint.com




Come experience the beauty of Milwaukee during Convention 2010, June 17 – 20 at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center and adjoining Midwest Airlines Center. Located on Lake Michigan, a multitude of attractions await you and your family. From the Milwaukee Brewers team to the many museums, mansions, breweries, and gardens, there is something for every age and interest to experience. Summer is the perfect time to visit Milwaukee – we hope to see you there! The Hearing Loss Association of America is proud to announce the following highlights:

 The Opening Session keynote speaker is Bill Barkeley who is deaf-blind and recently climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa. Bill is sure to inspire us all;

 The 2010 Research Symposium, *Hearing Aid Research and Development: What It Means to the Consumer*

 Educational workshops on a variety of topics, all communication accessible;

 **Registration discount** for first-time attendees. Vets of Iraq and Afghanistan receive a complimentary registration. See www.hearingloss.org for news, updates, and registration details.

HLA-OR Quarterly Meeting Dates

April 17, 2010

July 17, 2010

October 16, 2010

December 18, 2010

To confirm, contact President Bob Russell at bhrussell@verizon.net or call him at (503) 614-9730. Meetings will be held at Albany General Hospital. Guests are invited to attend but should first contact President Bob Russell.

NOTICE TO AUDIOLOGISTS AND HEARING AID SPECIALISTS

Want to keep your clients happy? Want to make them feel special? Want to help them face the world? What better way than to provide a gift membership to the Hearing Loss Association of America? It's easy. Just go to <http://www.hearingloss.org/> and select Membership from the menu, then Gift Membership (or Benefits opposite Gift Membership) and follow instructions.

Oregon CAP Takes its Baby Steps

The Oregon Communication Access Project (OR-CAP) has initiated efforts to get, or get expanded, banner captioning at 5 venues: the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) in Ashland, the Hult Center for the Performing Arts in Eugene, PK Park and the Knight Arena at the University of Oregon and the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall in Portland. The three Eugene sites have had previous personal contacts and now all four of the controlling organizations have received an initial letter stating our objectives.

Most of the communication since that time has been with the OSF and they are something of a special case since they do caption some performances. However, if you are hard of hearing and live far from Ashland you would likely want to go there for a week or a weekend to see a number of different plays. In that case the likelihood of seeing some, if any performances that are captioned is very small—they only caption 11 of 725 productions (1.5%).

The University of Oregon had previously noted that they would caption some of the events at the Knight Arena (basketball plus some other performances) but were not clear about what would be captioned (announcements, play-by-play, etc.) which types of events or how many of those would be captioned. Furthermore, they seemed to be leaning towards hand-held devices for displaying captions rather than using banner captions which present problems such as checking the devices in and out and the need to focus repeatedly from near to far. The former is discriminatory and a likely barrier to use and the latter is quite tiring over the course of a game or performance.

The Hult Center has responded to our inquiry with an equivocal response that argues for a follow-up communication. The Schnitzer hall has not responded to our initial letter.

At their April 17 meeting, the OR-CAP Board decided to initiate legal action that could lead to a significant expansion of movie captioning throughout Oregon, a move that is welcomed by people with very few or no captioned movies available in local theatres. That description probably fits all of us!

For further information contact Clark Anderson at or.cap.comm@gmail.com. Membership in OR-CAP is free and helps us in our efforts to gain effective accommodations for all. To join, contact Elizabeth Archer at or.cap.membership@gmail.com.

Newsflash: OR-CAP is now a member of Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT).

Important Notice about our Website and Electronic Newsletter

Those who have opted to read the electronic version rather than have a printed copy mailed to them will receive an e-mail notifying them that a new issue has been posted on the HLA-OR website, along with a link to the specific web page, <http://www.hearinglossor.org/news.htm>. Those who have not yet made the change are encouraged to do so by e-mailing your request to info@hearinglossOR.org

Need Help Paying Your Monthly Phone Bill?

OTAP

Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP) may provide a reduction in the monthly telephone bill for Oregonians who receive qualifying benefits.

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(800) 648-3458 - TTY

(877) 567-1977 - Fax

(971) 239-5845 - Videophone

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Within Earshot: News You Need to Know

Lions Raise Funds for Hearing

The Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation (OLS&HF) held a fundraiser for the purpose of providing refurbished hearing aids for the needy.

The centerpiece of the fundraiser was the showing of a movie titled "Hear and Now", a documentary about a 65 year old deaf couple who got cochlear implants so they could hear for the first time in their lives. They did it as an adventure to share together but were not able to gain understanding of speech without lipreading. However, they were very proficient lipreaders and had used speech as the principal mode of communication all their lives.

The film was produced by the couple's daughter, Irene Taylor Brodsky, and won various awards. Irene's father was the inventor of the TDD (telecommunication device for the deaf). Irene was at the show held at the Legacy Good Samaritan Auditorium in Portland. She answered questions after the show and indicated that the movie was a work of love for her but she had no plans to document her son's experiences. Her son was born with a progressive hearing loss and now has an implant.

The Hearing Loss Association of Oregon was a non-financial sponsor for this fundraiser which grossed over \$3400, enough to provide at least 24 hearing aids. Audiological services to fit the hearing aids are funded by the local Lions clubs rather than OLS&HF.

Please Speak Up

Many colleges and universities are providing Realtime Captioning at their graduation ceremonies. If you or a loved one want to "hear" all that is happening at this type of ceremony, we encourage you to make your request for Realtime Captioning known to the college a few weeks in advance so they can set it up. If they do not receive a request for captioning/CART, they may not think to offer it.

Also, be sure to ask that the screen be up on the stage not too far from the podium so it will be easily visible to all who want to use it. Too often we hard of hearing people "don't want to be a bother" so we don't make this type of request. Please keep in mind that many others in attendance are hard of hearing and will benefit from your request. So please speak up.

Walk4Hearing Postponed

The first ever Walk4Hearing has been **rescheduled** to happen September 17, 2011. We are in the midst of some big projects this year including updating & printing our popular Survivor's Manual and our involvement in the formation of the Oregon Captioning Access Project (Oregon CAP). We want our first Walk to be a big success so the Oregon Walk 4 Hearing Committee has agreed to postpone the start of the Walk Project until next year when we can focus our attention on it more fully.

We hope you'll mark your calendars and begin to think of how you might like to support this effort. Please contact Walk4Hearing Chair Cathy Sanders at catsindallas@q.com or info@HearingLossOR.org.

We'll keep you posted on the planning progress in future issues of this newsletter.

Chapter Capers

Lane County chapter: This chapter continues to have interesting meeting topics. In March the bone anchored hearing device (BAHA) was discussed, with a demo available. The BAHA is suitable for those with those with conductive or mixed hearing loss and total deafness in one ear. It was presented by Julie Hearn of Cochlear America and Dr. Joyce Brackebusch. In April Clark Anderson presented a 5 part video to help consumers choose a hearing aid compatible wireless device using M or T switches. Other topics were also discussed.

Douglas County chapter: Condolences go to secretary Barbara Stoner on the recent death of her husband James. The newsletter she has been editing will be suspended for at least a month.

What is your chapter doing? Send your story to the editor at cvlcek@centurytel.net .

CI Corner

Adjusting to Bilateral Cochlear Implants

By Bob Williams

It has been almost four months since my surgery and subsequent hookup for my second cochlear implant. The adjustment has been more gradual than the first one and, as my audiologist told me upon my first re-mapping, "You're very early in the game."

For a person who was able to hear and understand almost everything from the get-go with the first one, this was not what I wanted to hear (pardon the pun). Conversely it was encouraging knowing that with time it will get better.

The first word recognition test she gave me I got 22%. Later, after some more fine-tuning she gave me a second test and I jumped to 40%. She was very pleased as was I.

Most of the time both processors are on, so I hear better than I did with the single unit. I get a fullness of sound that makes speech clearer and music richer. I do not notice the difference until the batteries go dead in the new processor. It sounds like half my head has shut down.

When I listen with the new processor while leaving the old one off, I still have trouble recognizing and identifying some sounds, but I am doing better. When my cell phone rings it sounds softer but otherwise as it does with the original processor.

Human voices still generally have a high female quality regardless of whether they are masculine or feminine. My own voice is beginning to sound like mine, but I practice oral reading daily. I can recognize it by listening carefully to the mid-range. It sounds close to my recorded voice. But when I get caught up with the text, I continue to hear two voices: one high boyish voice and one very deep masculine voice.

Over Easter weekend, I tried singing "The Holy City"; a classical Easter song by listening with the new processor. For the first time, I was able to identify each tone. This is no guarantee I was actually singing the right notes since cochlear implants do not have enough stimulation to define pitch. But for me in the privacy of my bathroom as watched myself in the mirror, it was a eureka (an ah ha) moment.

On the down side of the equation, I have continued to have more tinnitus. It generally does not linger very long but it's a loud roar and terribly distracting when trying to carry on a conversation.

As of this writing, I return to Seattle next week for my second remapping. Stay tuned.

Bob Williams is a board member of the Hearing Loss Association of Oregon.

HLAA Happenings

The following information comes from the summary sent out by Brenda Battat, Executive Director of some of the actions at the recent HLA of America Board. If you have internet access, you can get this kind of news quickly and directly by going to their website at <http://www.hearingloss.org/>. You may also sign up to have this information e-mailed to you periodically.

HLAA is developing a Wiki for parents of children with hearing loss. This initiative is being led by Marcia Finisdore, past president of the HLAA Board of Trustees and assisted by Suzanne D'Amico, a parent from NYC who is also co-chair of the NYC walk. The Wiki will be ready to launch soon.

HLAA attended the FCC announcement of the national broadband plan as it relates to people with disabilities. They intend to track HR 3101, the 21st Century Communications & Video Accessibility Act which we have been supporting via our membership with COAT. It is a positive step to have the FCC publicly support the proposed bill. The FCC Broadband plan is very long. You can find a summary put together by the Trace Center focusing on reference to disability issues at the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/FCCBBDisability>.

Health Care Reform: we were successful in avoiding a tax on hearing aids that health care legislation threatened to impose. A coalition of consumer groups contacted our representatives to voice our concerns and HLAA sent out an action alert and many of you responded by contacting your representatives. As a result the House of Representatives adopted a Health Reform Reconciliation Bill to amend the Senate's overall health reform bill which the House also adopted verbatim as part of the process. During final negotiations, the FDA Class I medical device tax exemption was dropped; however, a specific hearing aid exemption that was included in the legislation. This exempts hearing aids from the medical device tax that will be imposed on almost all other devices not sold at "retail."

In a meeting of the FCC Consumer Advisory Committee the Disability Working Group agreed on standards for the quality of television captioning and video description, setting reimbursement rates for telecommunications relay services, ensuring access to televised emergency information by those who are blind or visually impaired, and the need for the agency to update and implement new rules and regulations and to work more closely with the companies that make the equipment we use to watch television so we can be sure the new technologies are accessible & the remote controls usable Captioning on 3-D.

Unsolicited Advice (*from page 1*)

It might be preferable to resist altogether the urge to offer unsolicited advice. Ideally, Betsy would wait for a time when Brian IS wearing his hearing aids and could provide positive reinforcement or comment on the behavior by saying, "I'm happy to see that you're giving your hearing aids a go. It makes me feel like you want to communicate with me." But sometimes, it's hard to wait for those moments to arise and sometimes it's hard to resist advice giving -- especially in the heat of the moment. In that case doing an "I" for "You" substitution might be just the trick.

Marc Zola, MEd, LMFT & LPC is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor in private practice in Eugene Oregon. Much of Marc's practice is dedicated to helping clients manage the emotional impact of hearing loss. Marc may be reached via email at marc@eugenetherapy.com.

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1. Battmer RD et al. A multi-centre study of device failure in European cochlear implant centres. *Ear Hear* 2007 Apr;28(2 Suppl):955-995
2. Cullen RD et al. Revision cochlear implant surgery in children. *Otol Neurotol* 2008;29(2):214-20
3. Battmer RD et al. A review of device failure in more than 23 years of clinical experience of a cochlear implant program with more than 3,400 implantees. *Otol Neurotol* 2009 Jun;30(4):455-63

Hear now. And always



"Commitment isn't something that happens to us. It's something that happens because of us, because of a decision we make. When we commit to a person, a task, and to God, we pledge to show up and do our part, no matter what. How will you demonstrate commitment today?" - Rev. Mary Manin Morrissey

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We thank the following folks who have sent donations since the last issue:

7 Anonymous
Vivian Olheiser

Mary Faulkner
Jackie & Mindy Parsons

Penny Allen

Amy Cleary



WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU HEAR



The Bionic Ear Association (BEA), by Advanced Bionics, is a FREE support network for cochlear implant recipients, candidates and their families. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of those impacted by hearing loss by providing valuable information and services related to cochlear implants, including:

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- Providing technical and personalized support throughout your hearing journey
- Publishing a free monthly BEA eNewsletter to keep you up to date and connected to community events

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Membership in HLAA is \$20 -- student, \$35 -- individual, \$45 -- couple/family, \$50 -- professional.

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Membership includes the award-winning bi-monthly magazine, *Hearing Loss*. Write to HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248 (Voice); 301-657-224 (TTY); 301-913-9413 (Fax) or www.hearingloss.org.

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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*



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.

Hearing Loss Association of Central Oregon (HLACO meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month (except August) – 6:00PM at the St. Charles Medical Center, 2500 NE Neff Road, Bend, in Conference Room A (by the front entrance).

Contact: Lois Johnson
64682 Cook Ave. Box 84
Bend, OR 97701
e-mail: HLACO@YKWC.net
(541) 388-6869

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Lane County meets 2nd Thursday each month - 7 PM at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard Street - Eugene.

Contacts: Andrea Cabral OR Jeff Newton
e-mail: angora@comcast.net (541)-731-8135
(541) 345-9432 voice
PO Box 22501 OR Clark Anderson
Eugene, OR 97402 e-mail: clarkoa@msn.com

Mine to Keep

By Helen Keller

They took away what should have been my eyes
(But I remember Milton's Paradise).
They took away what should have been my ears
(Beethoven came and wiped away my tears).
They took away what should have been my tongue
(But I had talked with God when I was young).
He would not let them take away my soul
Possessing that, I still possess the whole.

Group of of Salem Hearing Loss Assoc. meets the 2nd Wednesday each month (except July and August) - 6:30 PM at the Salem Rehabilitation Hospital – Room 2A (2nd floor) 2561 Center St. NE

Contact: Donald Ladd
e-mail: SHHHSalem@aol.com
(503) 394-3863
38427 Shelburn Dr. Scio, OR 97374

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Portland & Clackamas County meets the 3rd Tuesday each month (except July and August) - 7 PM at the Northrup Building in the 1st floor conference room - 2282 NW Northrup Street, Portland

Contact: Mark Foster
e-mail: hlaportland@gmail.com
(503) 413-7348 - voice or TTY
PO Box 2112
Portland, OR 97208
www.hearinglossor.org/portland/

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Douglas County meets the 2nd Monday each month - 7 PM at the Mercy Hospital Community Education Room - 2459 Stewart Parkway -Roseburg (between Parkway Pharmacy & OfficeMax)

Contact: Chuck Vlcek OR Barb Stoner
e-mail: cvlcek@centurytel.net (541) 496-0060
(541) 496-4541
P.O. Box 175
Idleld Park OR 97447

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Linn and Benton Counties meets the 3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) – 6:30 PM at the Senior Center – 65 “B” Academy Square – Lebanon

Contact: Bob Williams
e-mail: robertiw@comcast.net
541) 258-5818
2020 South 12th #111
Lebanon, OR 97355

Change will not come if we wait for
some other person or some other time.
We are the ones we've been waiting for.
We are the change that we seek.

Barack Obama

If you are interested in starting a chapter in your area, contact:

Cathy Sanders
Oregon Chapter Coordinator
e-mail: catsindallas@q.com
(503) 881-1642 (cell) or
(503) 623-4662 (home)
1131 SW Marietta Lane
Dallas, OR 97338
or
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Hearing Loss Assoc. of America
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