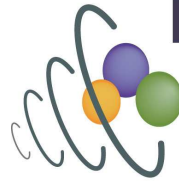


Hear It Is!

Oregon



**Hearing Loss
Association
of Oregon**

Summer 2010

Issue 42

T-Coils and Neckloops, Oh My!

T-coils and neckloops have been around for at least 30 years, yet many hearing aid users are still clueless about what they are and what they do. If you are asking "What is a T-coil?" you have plenty of company. A T-coil is (or should be) a component of a hearing aid or cochlear implant processor and, combined with a neckloop, it is a powerful tool for utilizing other assistive devices such as infrared or FM receivers, or any other portable audio device equipped with a mini jack. Page 32 of the Survivor's Manual (now undergoing revision) has a section on T-coils. It states as follows:

"A telecoil (T-coil) is the best means of communicating on the telephone. It provides a wireless interface between your hearing aid(s) and hearing aid compatible telephones, assistive listening devices, and induction loop systems. Without a telecoil in your hearing aid(s) you cannot take advantage of assistive listening systems installed in many public facilities without first removing your hearing aid(s) and using inferior headphones or earbuds. Although required under the ADA, many facilities do not provide neckloops with their assistive listening devices. Therefore it is a good idea to have a personal neckloop to bring along to use with the ALD's they do provide.

When you switch your hearing aid to the "T" setting, you activate your telecoil and only the transmitted sound is amplified and background noise is reduced or eliminated.

Be sure you talk to your dispenser about the need to have them on each of your hearing aids or having your current aids retrofitted. A telecoil adds a small amount to the cost of your hearing aid, but the benefits far outweigh the cost. They are available in behind-the-ear and in-the-ear hearing aids but, due to space limitations, often are not available for the tiny in-the-canal hearing aids.

Some adjustment may be needed to get used to the telecoil. Experiment; ask your hearing care professional for advice on how to use the telecoil in your hearing aid most effectively, and then practice! For example, you may need to determine the best angle to hold the handset of the telephone with respect to your hearing aid, and you may need to increase the volume on your hearing aid when using it.

If you hear a buzzing or humming when your hearing aid is on the "T" it could be caused by fluorescent lights, power lines, or your computer monitor. Try moving your head [or change location] to see if you can reduce the noise."

The strength of a T-coil on a hearing aid or cochlear implant processor varies depending on the model and/or how it is programmed. Try to get a good one. Some aids have an "MT" switch or setting that combines input from the telecoil and the microphone. This can be useful in certain situations. The strength of the signal from even "compatible" phones can also vary. Neckloop signals can be weak, but battery powered neckloops are now available to provide an extra boost. A neckloop is a lightweight coil of wire that fits around the neck and has a mini-plug that fits most portable audio devices. It converts the signal to a frequency that is picked up by the T-coil. It costs about \$30 to \$50 but a powered one costs around \$100.

Marc Zola's articles will resume in the next issue.

From My Lips to Your Ears

Editorial by Chuck Vlcek

When I was in prep school I took German. At the time I had a severe bilateral loss but wore only one hearing aid. Little English was spoken in this class but I managed to get by, barely. During my second year I did better, having learned how to study, and surprised my instructor. Thus it was with increased confidence that I opted for a third year (as a senior).

Then a curve was thrown at me: the class was supposed to listen to a series of tape recordings of a German radio broadcast and be able to answer questions on its content in a test. This was before ALD's and I didn't even have a T-switch. I could only put the headphone over my hearing aid, and I could barely hear much less understand.

I was invited to have a chat with the academic counselor who expressed concern that I might fail the course. I explained that I couldn't read lips on a tape. Ultimately a compromise was reached: I still had to listen to the tape as best I could but would be allowed to read a written transcript (in German) afterwards. That saved my bacon.

This happened long before ADA, and the moral is that many problems can be solved if the parties involved have an accommodating attitude. Unfortunately, many people are still not very accommodating, which is why we have an ADA. Now, 20 years later, we are taking stock, which is the subject of several articles in this issue.

The article on page 5 deserves some comment. The Oregon Department of Justice offers tips on purchasing a hearing aid, and readers are encouraged to review similar, complementary articles in the Summer 2009 issue of "Hear It Is". For those with Internet access, that issue can be accessed from www.hearinglossor.org/news.htm. The reader should be aware that the shape and design of an earmold can also affect how a hearing aid sounds, and is the responsibility of the person doing the fitting, preferably a certified audiologist. That may well be the subject of a future article.

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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 Karen Swezey at info@hearinglossOR.org.

Deadline for Autumn 2010 edition: Sept. 15, 2010.

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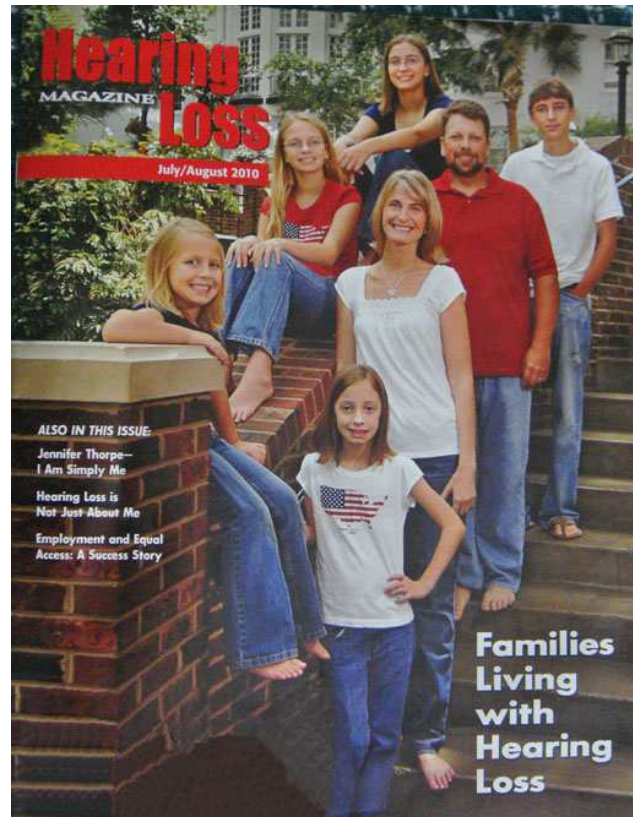
HEARING LOSS AND FAMILIES

Don't miss the [article by Cathy Kooser](#) in the latest [July/August Hearing Loss Magazine](#) where she talks about her hearing loss and how it affects everyone around her.

Jennifer Thorpe also writes about her experiences in "[I Am Simply Me.](#)"

Hearing Loss Magazine is included with membership in HLAA. [Join or renew today.](#) Send your check to Hearing Loss Association of America, 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814. Or phone (301-657-2248 (voice).

www.hearingloss.org



HLA-OR Quarterly Meeting Dates

October 16, 2010 December 18, 2010 April 16, 2011 July 16, 2011

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.

Consumer Protection for Hearing Aid Purchasers

Oregonians suffering from hearing impairments number in the thousands and older residents make up nearly 60 percent of that group.

For those considering purchasing a hearing aid, there are state and federal laws to assist you. You cannot be fitted for a hearing aid device without a signed statement by a doctor saying that your hearing problem is of the kind that a hearing aid might help – unless you sign a waiver of this requirement. Federal law forbids the dealer from encouraging a prospective buyer to sign that waiver.

So, first of all, visit a physician, preferably a specialist in diseases of the ear. Many hearing problems can be treated medically. Your condition might be one that could be improved by drugs, surgery, or even a change in diet. Your physician might suggest an audiologist for additional testing, or you might be referred directly to purchase a hearing aid from a dealer.

The dealer will test your hearing with the help of an audiometer. Find out if he or she is a registered dealer. Ask for a copy of your test results. Remember that this is a time to patiently compare and shop. Compare full costs, services, and warranties. Read the hearing aid brochure carefully. It must explain clearly just what the device will or will not do, how it works, and how to use it. It must also state that an aid can only amplify sound; it cannot restore hearing or prevent further hearing loss.

First timers in the hearing aid market should take their time and not be hurried into a purchase. Do not sign a contract without carefully reading each and every line.

Ask yourself some questions while trying out the aid: How is the sound quality? Does it help you understand speech in quiet places? In noisy places? Is the aid comfortable? Are the controls easy to operate? Is there a trial period? How long is that trial period and how do you go about returning your aid, if that is what you want, at the end of that trial period?

If you have trouble with your hearing aid(s), do not put off complaining to the dealer. Under Oregon law, consumers can rescind a sale for medical reasons or for reasonable cause but it must be done within 30 days after the delivery of the hearing aid(s). If conditions for rescission have been met, the seller is required by law to refund all monies paid by the buyer, minus 20 percent of the total purchase price, within 10 days. A written extension from the hearing aid dealer is necessary to for these rights to cover replacement aids and/or aids being serviced. If hearing aids are purchased door-to-door (in the home), consumers have a 3-day right of rescission and the contract must include the rescission clause.

Contact the dealer as early as possible and keep track of all dates and descriptions of service. Write down the manufacturer's name, the serial and model number of the aid before you return it through the mail registered with return receipt requested. If you continue to have problems with your aid(s), and/or you want to find out more about the Oregon law, call the Attorney General's Consumer Hotline between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., toll-free at 1 (877) 877-9392; in Salem at (503) 378-4320; or Portland at (503) 229-5576, TTY (503) 378-5938. Justice is online at www.doj.state.or.us. You may also contact the Health Licensing Office, Advisory Council on Hearing Aids, 700 Summer St. N.E., Suite 320, Salem, OR 97301-1287; (503) 378-8667 for possible assistance. HLO is online at www.hlo.state.or.us.

This information has been provided by the Oregon Department of Justice.

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.

E-MAIL: puc.otap@state.or.us

PHONE:

(800) 848-4442 - Voice

(800) 648-3458 - TTY

(877) 567-1977 - Fax

(971) 239-5845 - Videophone

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

Having Trouble Or Unable To Communicate By Telephone?

TDAP

Telecommunication Devices Access Program (TDAP) loans adaptive telephone equipment at no cost and with no income restrictions to eligible Oregonians who are hearing, cognitive, vision, speech or mobility impaired.

E-MAIL: puc.tdap@state.or.us



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Within Earshot: News You Need to Know

Communications Act Moves Forward

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and HLAA applauds and thanks the House Energy and Commerce Committee for voting favorably on July 21, 2010, for the "Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010" (H.R. 3101). It was passed by the full House on July 26. The Senate version, S3304, passed on August 5. It now goes back to the House.

H.R. 3101 will update the nation's communications laws to ensure that new telephone and television technologies are accessible. The NAD expresses deep appreciation and thanks to Rep. Ed Markey (D-MA), the author of H.R. 3101; to the leadership of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Chairman Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Ranking Member Rep. Barton (R-TX); and to the leadership of the Subcom on Communications, Technology, and the Internet, Chairman Rick Boucher (D-VA) and Ranking Member Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL).

When signed into law, this legislation will greatly improve the lives of millions of people who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind by ensuring expanded accessibility to 21st century technologies, including, among other things:

Require new video programming that is captioned on television to be captioned when distributed on the Internet; **Provide** up to \$10 million annually for specialized communications equipment for low income individuals who are deaf-blind; **Require** telephones that use the Internet to be hearing aid compatible; **Enable** users of different equipment to communicate with each other through relay services, such as TTY users communicating with videophone users; and **Require** devices with screens less than 13" to display closed captions.

The NAD looks forward to the U.S. House of Representatives taking up and passing H.R. 3101, which could be as early as next week to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

This information was provided by the NAD

Feds to Require Movie Captions

The United States Department of Justice today observed the 20th anniversary of the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) in dramatic fashion by announcing that it will require movies and many internet videos to be captioned, and thereby made accessible to people with hearing loss.

[DOJ is proposing](#) that within five years of the adoption of the regulations, at least 50% of all movie theaters must be equipped to show every movie in closed-captioned form. DOJ does not intend to require any specific form of caption display, but will leave that decision to the individual theaters.

Consistent with its past approach and with the [Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision](#) in the Harkins case from Arizona, DOJ is going to require closed-captioned movies, where the captions are visible only to people who request display devices. The proposal states that if some theaters wish to show open-captioned movies, they may be permitted to do so, and in that case, would not be required to engage the captions for every showing. DOJ did state, though, that a theater that elected the open-captioned option would need to show some prime-time weekend evening movies with captions.

For additional details, you may view the entire article on the Hearing Law website at <http://www.hearinglosslaw.com/2010/07/articles/ada/feds-to-require-movie-internetvideo-captioning/index.html> .

No internet access?

Use a computer at school or a library, or ask a friend or relative to download and print information for you.

Chapter Capers

Lane County chapter: This chapter is having a picnic Aug. 21 at Island Park in Springfield.

Douglas County chapter: This chapter also had a picnic on Aug. 2 at Chuck Vlcek's country residence in Idleyld Park.

Salem Chapter: Yet another picnic! This one is scheduled for Aug. 11 at Bush Park. Contact Donald Ladd for details.

Portland chapter: A business card about their meetings has been developed. Contact Mark Foster at stumptown76@gmail.com for the technique used.

Benton/Linn chapter: This chapter has developed small posters and placed business cards in them.

Bend chapter: A change in leadership is taking place. Lois Johnson is pursuing culinary training in Nevada during most of the meeting months and has recruited Dave Merryfield and assistant Julie Schnieder to take over for her.

HLA-Oregon: The Walk4Hearing is now scheduled for September 17, 2011 at the World Trade Center in Portland. Work on updating the Survivor's Manual has progressed more slowly than expected, and publication is now expected sometime this fall. A "board manual" is nearing completion to guide new and prospective board members. You are encouraged to run for a board position next spring. Send your resume to Kathryn Eckert-Mason at kathryn.e.eckert-mason@state.or.us.

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

See pages 14-15 for contact information for these chapters and events.

CI Corner

Bi-Lateral Implants in HighTraffic

By Bob Williams

A few days ago I drove to Seattle for the third re-mapping of my new bi-lateral cochlear implant. I am now six months out and each mapping brings a little better quality sound each time.

My speech recognition testing was near the same range as the last visit. It has gone from 62% to 65%. But here's the best part. Using both implants I got 100%. It doesn't get much better than that.

My audiologist told me that the 65% range is average for persons with a single cochlear implant. I have consistently been in the 90+ percentile with the first implant so practicing from time-to-time with the new one helps give me perspective in what most people experience. Cochlear implants do not provide normal hearing, but going from near 0% to 65% is no small change.

Conversely, I am finding that in high traffic areas (and we're not talking auto traffic here) that I actually hear better with my single cochlear implant than I do with both in one-on-one conversation. That's because twice as much information is entering my brain and I find it more challenging to try to sort out the voice I'm attempting to hear.

The solution is one I am not yet in the habit of doing: taking either a pocket talker or a personal FM system with you when you know you will be conversing in high traffic areas. By so doing, you can isolate the voice you need to hear. Carrying such devices is a good habit to develop. Do you hear yourself, Bob? (pardon the pun).

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

Megaconference

HLA-OR board member Cindy Campbell and Linda Diaz attended the Megaconference at Eugene on June 3-5. This conference was a gathering of people of different types of disabilities sharing their efforts, needs, and goals. Cindy staffed a booth for the Telecommunication Devices Access Program (TDAP) at the conference, while Linda gave a presentation and staffed a booth representing HLA-OR.

Linda e-mailed a report to HLA-OR board members and other interested people. Her experiences and the discussion it generated during a flurry of e-mails are worth sharing with the hearing loss community in general for further discussion.

Linda's talk was accommodated with Realtime Captioning since that was requested in advance, and Elizabeth Archer did a great job with the real time captioning. However, that was the only presentation for which Realtime Captioning was available, because it was not requested in advance. Other ALD's that the hotel had were also not available because they were not requested in advance and were in fact reserved by another group not involved with the Megaconference.

The lack of availability of ALD's and Realtime Captioning has one thing in common: it is the responsibility of the attendee to make the necessary arrangements in advance, in proper fashion.

The ADA requires that facilities such as hotels and conferences make ALDs (and other accommodations for various disabilities) available but it is still the responsibility of the individual to request them in advance. That is not always a simple process. One individual did not make an advance request for ALDs for a movie at the conference because he did not know a movie was being shown.

Facilities such as hotels that are supposed to make ALD's available may have problems even if the persons responsible have a properly accomodating attitude. They may not be aware of what is availble or most preferred. They may also not know how to properly test and maintain the equipment. Linda once requested a neckloop (they did not know what it was) and an ALD (FM or IR receiver). She got only the ALD with a dirty earbud. Fortunately she had her own neckloop that she wasn't sure would work with the ALD. It did but the ALD produced static after 5 minutes.

Linda's message is that we need to advocate and make our needs known. Be sure to make your request for accommodations in advance to allow the organizers time to arrange for them. The squeaky wheel gets the grease!

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

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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

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Dr. Mehr has over 27 years experience working with individuals with hearing loss. He has served on the Oregon Speech and Hearing Association and Oregon Academy of Audiology Boards and as chairman of the Oregon Board of Examiners for Speech Pathology and Audiology.

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Using the form on the back of the newsletter, please mail your tax-deductible gift to:

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

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- Publishing a free monthly BEA eNewsletter to keep you up to date and connected to community events

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HLAA Happenings

The Milwaukee convention is over, and planning is already underway for the next one. The 2011 convention will be held June 16-19 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, which is a mile from Reagan National Airport, near Washington, D.C. More information will be provided in future issues.

HLAA has provided some demographics of on-line registrants of the recent convention at Milwaukee: **Attendance:** first HLAA convention, 34%; person with hearing loss, 81%, parent of child with hearing loss, 3%; spouse, 11%. **Equipment:** hearing aid user, 50%; cochlear implant user, 21%; both, 13%, neither, 4%; telecoil user, 62%. **Age range:** 18-35, 12%; 36-50, 16%; 51-60, 29%; 61-70, 31%; 71-80, 15%; 81+, 6%. **Degree of hearing loss:** none, 21%; mild, 4%; moderate, 16%; severe, 29%; profound, 39%. Over 800 people attended but not all registered online.

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

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.

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: Dave Merryfield
1001 SE 15th Street
Bend, OR 97702
e-mail: Seacook286@yahoo.com
(541) 848-2806

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
e-mail: angora@comcast.net
(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 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
Idleyle 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
Chapter Coordinator
Hearing Loss Assoc. of America
(the National Office)
e-mail: elebarron@hearingloss.org
(301) 657-2248 - voice
(301) 657-2249 - TTY
(301) 913-9413 - FAX
7910 Woodmont Avenue Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814

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- I want to join **Hearing Loss Association of America**, the National Organization. Please enroll me as a member. I'm including my \$35 membership fee.

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

Hearing Loss Association of Oregon 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 ***Hearing Loss Association of Oregon*** PO Box Box 22501, Eugene, Oregon 97402.