

# HEAR OREGON

# IT IS!



AUTUMN 2020

ISSUE 83

Atomic-level mapping adds knowledge of ear filaments  
— Nick Lavars, Oct. 1, 2020

Much mystery surrounds the biological processes behind the human sense of hearing, but with cutting-edge scientific tools researchers are starting to unravel its secrets.

A team at Ohio State University has produced the first ever atomic-level mapping of tiny filaments inside our ears, offering unprecedented insights into a key mechanism of the organ. It can show how hearing loss can result when things go awry.

Recently, we looked at research from a group of U.S. scientists who pinpointed



a single protein that can determine whether (or not) a type of embryonic hair cell matures into healthy sensory cells that line the inner ear.

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WWW.HLAA-OR.ORG/

## In Corvallis, The Majestic Theatre offers open captioned video

— by Karen Brockett

In September Jimbo Ivy, Theatre Supervisor for the City of Corvallis Parks and Recreation department, announced via an open captioned video on Facebook they would bring performances into audiences' homes through video streaming.

Importantly for those who are Hard of Hearing or Deaf, these streamed video performances have closed captions.

The Hearing Loss Association of America-Oregon asked some questions of Jimbo Ivy about how the captioning decision was made and executed:

**HLAA-OR:** How did the Majestic Theatre come to the decision to provide closed captioning for its video streaming?

**Jimbo:** When the City of Corvallis Parks and Recreation department took over management of The Majestic Theatre in 2015, one area we needed to improve was the accessibility of our programming. In 2018 we started ASL interpretation for limited performances and expanded into better hearing assistive devices and were about to institute open captions for many performances. But then the pandemic struck and we had to pivot to online streaming and Zoom theater. When we started up our streaming performances this month, we knew that hav-



ing closed captions was critical to our community's engagement.

**HLAA-OR:** What is involved or what is the process for providing closed captioning for a streaming video performance? And what are some of the challenges?

**Jimbo:** It's a two-part process once we have the finished video: transcription and syncing.

For our first show, it was very time consuming; approximately 30 hours of work to transcribe a 2-hour performance because we were still perfecting our methods. Now we use a new program, Descript, to help us transcribe shows very quickly using artificial intelligence audio recognition. For a 90-minute performance, it was done transcribing in about 10 minutes, which is much faster than a human.

From there, the transcribed text is input into a video pro-

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# 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.*

So much uncertainty in the world and we are all (mostly) staying at home dealing with it: job uncertainty, the possibility of illness if we're not careful, worried and separated from family, and then add an upcoming election to all of it.

Recently I've noticed I'm becoming a bit more depressed without my usual activities and the friends I love to visit.

I checked out an online source to see if there are suggestions to help the situation and sure enough there are many easy ones — some of which I haven't been very good at following.

- Pause. Breathe. Take slow, deep breaths and stretch. I remember the wall pose from yoga class, where you lie on the floor and swing your legs and feet up on the wall. You can do this for 15 - 20 minutes and soothe swollen feet and ankles and cramped feet. This is also very good for digestion and it takes no fancy equipment.

- Listen to music or do something else you enjoy. Break out of your usual routine.

- Exercise regularly. Step out the front door and go for a walk. Fifteen to 30 minutes a day can greatly improve your health and outlook. Dance, even if you're alone in the house. Just move!

- Get plenty of sleep. Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time. Make your bedroom a peaceful, comfortable space. (That means no TV.)

- Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals. Drink plenty of water.

Look ahead into the future and think about what you would have liked to achieve in this alone time we've been granted. If you have always wanted to start a new hobby or learn more about the stars or birds or plants, now is that time.

With an Internet connection and a laptop you can tour museums or take a class. Try Google's Arts & Culture — <https://artsandculture.google.com/>. Visit historic places and view paintings closer than the guards would ever allow you to stand.

And there is a Facebook page called View from my Window. Log on, set a timer for 10 minutes, and travel worldwide. Say hello to people in other countries who are also staying home.

Don't forget to take care of yourself, remain hopeful, get a flu shot this month, and stay active. We can — and will — get through this.

Contact me by emailing [femminismo@gmail.com](mailto:femminismo@gmail.com). Let me know what sort of articles you would like to see in our newsletter.

## HLAA, Oregon State Association OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

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Mark Knecht, Richard Little, and Eileen Marma

## HEAR IT IS! #83

Published quarterly by the HLA, 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](mailto:info@hearinglossOR.org).

For advertising information and rates, contact Eileen Marma at [info@hearinglossOR.org](mailto:info@hearinglossOR.org). Deadline for Winter 2020, Dec. 8; Spring 2021, March 8.

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

## Majestic Theatre, *continued from page 1*

gram called Adobe Premiere which is used to sync the subtitles with the video and our volunteers added sound cues, music, and other context that Describe doesn't catch. We've been able to cut down production time to under 10 hours with these two programs in combination.

**HLAA-OR:** What has The Majestic Theatre been able to do to let people know about the closed captioned option when streaming a production?

**Jimbo:** We have added that closed captions are available to event descriptions and are working with our Hard of Hearing and Deaf community to get the word out. Thanks for helping us!

**HLAA-OR:** Has The Majestic received feedback about closed captions for the video streaming performances? If so what has been the response?

**Jimbo:** We have! People have been so happy to be able to engage in theater again through our shows with closed captions. We've even received donations in recognition of our efforts in supporting our community in this way.

**HLAA-OR:** Understandably COVID-19 was a motivator for going to this format in order to keep the theatre afloat and volunteers, staff and audiences safe. When the curtain rises again does The Majestic Theatre have plans to continue with some video streaming performances? What, if any future plans does the Majestic have for live performances that are accessible to audience members who are hard of hearing?

*Continued on page 4*



PHOTO BY HEADWAY ON UNSPLASH

## Upcoming HLAA board meetings

The first three 2021 quarterly HLAA-OR board meetings will be held Jan. 9, April 10, July 10, from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. by video conference. If you would like to attend remotely, send an email to John Hood-Fysh, [jhood-fysh@wwmore.com](mailto:jhood-fysh@wwmore.com) and he will send you a link.

## We have a winner in our drawing!

The winner of the \$100 prize from HLAA-Oregon is Sandy Leonard, Portland.

In the past two editions (Spring and Summer) readers were asked to get back to us either 1) to tell us that they read the newsletter or, 2) to submit their email address for receiving the newsletter by email notification rather than a hard copy.

Sandy chose the second option. Her name was submitted in a drawing of the readers who responded and was picked from the other responses and she won \$100. (Photo at right.)

Currently each newsletter is listed on our website: [www.hlaa-or.org](http://www.hlaa-or.org). That won't change.

If you do not use the internet and want to continue receiving this printed newsletter in the mail, let us know. We want to continue sending this important information to you. Our goal is to reserve the number of copies only for those who are not

receiving email.

If you have an email address, and want to receive your newsletter that way, please send your address now to: [info@hearinglossor.org](mailto:info@hearinglossor.org)

We look forward to sending you this newsletter via email. Thank you for your help in making this financially important change. ■







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.

Membership dues are: 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](http://www.hearingloss.org).

Join and become a hearing advocate.

## Majestic Theatre, continued from page 3

**Jimbo:** I think we've learned that we weren't truly serving all our patrons effectively and will redouble our efforts to bring good hearing assist, open caption, and audio description options to our patrons with accessibility needs.

**HLAA-OR:** Is there anything that would be helpful to The Majestic that the Hard of Hearing or Deaf communities can provide?

**Jimbo:** Please see our shows and let us know how we can do better to serve your community. And if you can, donate or buy tickets for friends to help us stay afloat in these difficult times.

The Majestic Theatre is at 115 S.W. 2nd St., Corvallis, Ore. Telephone is 541-758-7827. Online at [www.majestic.org](http://www.majestic.org).

## WE READ/WE LEARN

*Odyssey of Hearing Loss: Tales of Triumph*,  
by Michael A. Harvey

— Review by Eileen Marma

**O**dyyssey of Hearing Loss: Tales of Triumph captures both the uniqueness and the universal experiences of 10 people who faced their hearing loss and addressed their struggles with creative strategies.

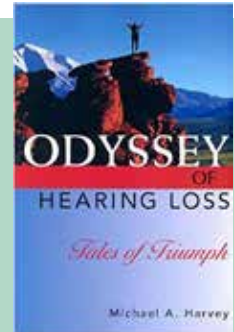
Each person's journey is accompanied by stigma, attacks on self-esteem, risk of isolation and, sometimes, either helpful or non-helpful family and friends.

Author Michael Harvey, a hearing person, is a clinical psychologist who has focused his private practice on counseling both Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

He created 10 people, all with acquired hearing loss, from a collection of many true stories to show their similarities and highly individualized responses to the world.

Harvey reveals his deep respect and humility in working with people on their journey as each intimate story unfolds. There were many differences among the people in terms of how they acquired hearing loss, their ages, family support, education and even willingness to start therapy — two were "dragged in" by family. They find ways to overcome their challenges over time through their therapy conversations.

For some readers, a story may resonate in their own lives. For others, there may be simple appreciation for the unique and also universal issues faced by anyone who has struggled with hearing loss — or any loss. ■



## Archer Captioning

Elizabeth Archer | Captioner

ArcherCaptioning@gmail.com  
[www.ArcherCaptioning.com](http://www.ArcherCaptioning.com)  
503-319-0122

# 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](http://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)



# HEAR IT IS! GOES DIGITAL WITH THE SPRING ISSUE

**SIGN UP BY EMAIL.**



**QUARTERLY ISSUES**

## 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%

\* 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

**HAVE YOU HAD YOUR HEARING CHECKED RECENTLY?**

*Schedule your appointment today with the hearing experts at Pacific EarClinic*

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



## Hear It Is! is going digital soon

This autumn issue of Hear It Is! will be *one of the last* to be mailed out to everyone on our mailing list.

Beginning this spring 2021, you will only receive a mailed copy if you have requested one. If you sent us your email address as your preferred method of receiving your copy, it will be delivered to your inbox. This is necessary due to the ongoing cost of printing and mailing a paper edition to our members.

Please look for your postcard in the mail and respond to it. Let us know if you NEED a printed, mailed copy OR if you want the newsletter emailed to you. Either way, we will need

a response so we can keep you on our mailing list.

When you receive the postcard, you can contact us by mail at P.O. Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402; by phone, 1-800-413-0691; or by email: [info@HearingLossOR.org](mailto:info@HearingLossOR.org). Or click on the link you can find at <https://www.hlaa-or.org/>.

We are always eager to learn more about the articles you want to see. What questions do you have about hearing issues? What frustrates you? What helps? What do you wish your audiologist could help you accomplish? What do you want your friends and relatives to know about hearing loss?

Thank you. ■

## Health tip

In the fight to keep your body healthy and functioning properly, some minerals protect our hearing health.

**1. Potassium:** Helps regulate the fluid in your inner ear. Foods: potatoes, spinach, lima beans, tomatoes, yogurt and low-fat milk.

**2. Folic acid** helps your body generate new cell growth and increases circulation, contributing to the overall health of the hair cells in your inner ear. Foods: fortified breakfast cereal, liver, spinach, broccoli and asparagus.

**3. Magnesium,** in conjunction with vitamins A, C, and E provides protection when exposed to high levels of noise. It's be-

*continued on page 14*



## LNS Captioning

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



[www.LNSCaptioning.com](http://www.LNSCaptioning.com)



## Atomic-level mapping, *continued from page 1*

Known as hair cells, these play an important role in our sense of hearing, and the discovery opened up some promising new pathways when it comes to regenerative treatments for hearing loss.

The new study — from OSU researchers — builds on this in a way. It focuses on microscopic hairs that sit on top of these hair cells inside the inner ear. More specifically, very fine filaments attached to the top of those microscopic hairs called tip links.

As sound vibrations make their way through the ear, these tip links stretch and open up small channels for positively charged ions to carry electrical signals between the ear and the brain, enabling us to hear. It is a similar process that enables us to balance.

“If you don’t have the tip link,

you can’t hear, and you can’t balance,” says lead study author Marcos Sotomayor. “They are essential.”

Scientists have produced low-resolution images of tip links, and knew they were made of a pair of proteins called *cadherin-23* and *protocadherin-15*, which are linked to inherited deafness. Now, the OSU team has isolated parts of these proteins and used X-ray crystallography to produce maps of tip link structures at an atomic level.

“Now we can see down to the atom, and we can create physics-based movies of how these tip links respond to sound-generated forces,” Sotomayor says. “That can tell us a great deal more about how these work and what happens when they stop working.”

A key insight gleaned from

these images of tip links was a new understanding of how the cadherin-23 and protocadherin-15 proteins interact.

Scientists learned they forge a type of connection they describe as a “molecular handshake” — key to the filaments’ strength and considered essential for hearing and balance.

They did simulations of the complex dynamics of tip links as sound vibrations wash over them, observing the way they stretch and deform as they open up the ion channels. These new insights could help scientists and doctors learn more about why tip links fail, and investigate ways to prevent that from happening.

*The research was published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.*

*Source: Ohio State University*

### Introducing the CaptionCall Mobile App



With CaptionCall Mobile, you can use your mobile device to make and receive captioned phone calls wherever you are. CaptionCall Mobile is available for Apple iPhone, Apple iPad, and Android devices.



[www.CaptionCall.com](http://www.CaptionCall.com)

## Help HLAA-Oregon: Link a Fred Meyer card, Amazon account

*by Eileen Marma*

**T**here is an easy way to support Oregon’s hearing loss organization: Select HLAA-OR as the recipient on your Fred Meyer Rewards card. To link, just log in to your online account.

Whenever you use your Rewards card when shopping at Freddy’s, you’ll be helping the nonprofit.

When you begin your Amazon shopping, if you start at [smile.amazon.com](http://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!



## Meningococcal disease can affect hearing

Anyone at any age can get meningococcal disease, but teens and young adults are among those who are at increased risk.

Although rare, meningococcal disease can develop rapidly and can claim a life in as little as one day. Even with treatment, 10 to 15 percent of those who get the infection will die from it. Among those who survive, as many as 19 percent live with permanent disabilities, such as brain damage, hearing loss, loss of kidney function or limb amputations.

Meningococcal disease is contagious. The bacteria that cause the infection can spread when people have contact with someone's saliva, like through kissing, coughing, sharing beverages or even cosmetics.

Vaccination is the best defense against meningococcal disease, yet only half of U.S. teens have received the recommended second dose of the MenACWY vaccine at age 16.

For the best protection against meningococcal disease, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends rou-

*"I was looking forward to all the fun things about that year, like prom and graduation. And overnight, that all changed."*

*During her senior year of high school, Francesca's world was turned upside down. Years later, she's recovered much of her health, but she can't get back all that meningitis took from her.*

tine MenACWY vaccination for adolescents starting at ages 11-12 years, with a second dose at 16 years of age.

Bacterial meningitis is known to cause sensorineural deafness. Sensorineural deafness happens when there is a fault in the inner ear or the auditory nerve that carries sound signals to the brain. Sensorineural deafness is permanent.

Meningitis can cause sensorineural deafness in a number of ways. The most common cause is the infection spreading in to the cochlea, damaging the hair cells. Another possible cause is inflammation of the auditory nerve. Deafness can range from mild through to profound and can affect one or both ears. ■

Note: *Viral meningitis* isn't usually associated with deafness. Also, always check with your physician for *ototoxic* medications that may cause hearing loss.



## Help by donating time

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 represented - 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.

## Everyone misses out with hearing loss

**Hearing loss contributes to isolation and loneliness and can affect the entire family.**

Your donations can help us teach and comfort those who feel alone or ashamed. We try also to inform parents, educators, and therapists about the latest in technology by sharing articles from scientists in the audiology field.

Even \$5, \$10, or \$25 will help our organization benefit those in need. Donate through our website <https://www.hlaa-or.org/> and choose "donate" on the drop-down menu.

An invoice will open and you can choose your amount, and then pay with PayPal, debit or credit card. Please share your address so we can thank you.

Get a flu shot  
this year

## Do you qualify for a discount?

Oregon Lifeline is a federal and state government program that provides a discount of up to \$12.75 on phone or high-speed internet service with participating companies for qualifying low-income households.



### Apply if you receive:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Veterans or Survivors Pension
- Federal Public Housing Assistance, or
- Your total household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines

### Proof of eligibility:

You may be required to provide proof that you qualify. Apply online, or print the application at:

[www.lifeline.oregon.gov/discount](http://www.lifeline.oregon.gov/discount)

[www.lifeline.oregon.gov](http://www.lifeline.oregon.gov)  
[puc.rspf@state.or.us](mailto:puc.rspf@state.or.us)

Call (800) 848-4442

TTY (800) 648-3458 | VP (971) 239-5845

**Monday — Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**



Lifeline is non-transferable.

The Lifeline discount is limited to one per household, consisting of either phone (landline or wireless) or high-speed internet service.



## 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.

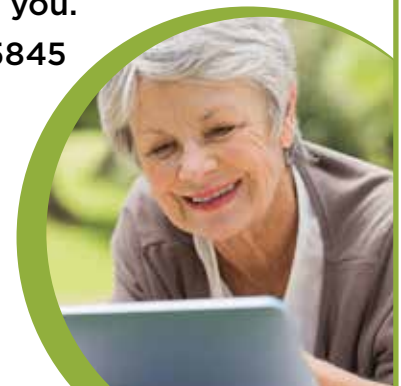
(800) 848-4442 | TTY (800) 648-3458 | VP (971) 239-5845

**Monday — Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**



Info/application:

[www.tdap.oregon.gov](http://www.tdap.oregon.gov)  
[puc.rspf@state.or.us](mailto:puc.rspf@state.or.us)



# Chapters in Oregon

Local chapter meetings are open to all. Check ahead of time, due to Covid 19. 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; 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.

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

HLAA of Portland meets the third Saturday each month (except June, July, and August) 10 am, in the Wistar Morris Conference Room in the Main Hospital Building on the Legacy Good Samaritan Campus, 1015 NW 22nd Ave. (at Marshall), Portland 97210. Contact Mark Foster, President; email: hlaportland@gmail.com. Write P.O. Box 2112, Portland, OR 97208-2112; www.hlaa-or.org/portland-chapter.html.

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. Right now all meetings are postponed due to COVID-19. Contacts: Andrea Cabral; email: angora@comcast.net; 541/345-9432, voice. 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.

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.

Oregon Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services is a resource for all Oregonians (and their families) who need these services.

ODHHS staff work to make state services and programs welcoming and accessible. They are engaged in ongoing training to improve your experience and offer advice and referrals to resources, tools, and information.

Search online at <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/Pages/index.aspx> and check under "Seniors & People With Disabilities." You can find the link to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services and can request a sign language interpreter or a real time captioner.

ODHHS Zoom meeting dates are available and are open to the public. The committee represents individuals who identify as Deaf, deaf, deaf-blind/DeafBlind, hard of hearing, or late-deafened.

Members assist Department of Human Services in identifying the needs and concerns of the Deaf or hard of hearing and make recommendations to DHS related to the full achievement of economic, social, legal, and political equity for the Deaf and hard of hearing community.



# 5 THINGS COVID-19 TAUGHT ME ABOUT HEARING LOSS

- by Shari Eberts

<https://livingwithhearingloss.com/2020/09/22/five-things-covid-19-taught-me-about-hearing-loss/>



Shari is 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](mailto:shari@livingwithhearingloss.com).

As a hearing loss advocate — and a person who has lived with hearing loss for more than half her life — I pride myself on knowing a lot about hearing loss. Over the years, I have become skilled at self-identifying, using assistive listening technologies, adjusting the environment for better hearing, and asking others to use communication best practices. But as the pandemic showed me, there is always more to learn.

Below I share the top five things Covid-19 taught me about hearing loss.

## 1. Lipreading is a critical communication tool.

Communicating with masks is a challenge for everyone, but especially for people with hearing loss because masks hide important speech reading cues like lip movements and facial expressions. I have always used lipreading to help me communicate and understand conversation, but I didn't know to what degree I relied on it until it was gone. Trips to the grocery store, the doctor or an outdoor restaurant have all become more challenging with everyone's faces hidden.

## 2. Hearing loss is exhausting.

I had experienced hearing loss exhaustion already, but the pandemic put the period full stop at the end of the sentence. The fear of not being able to understand

adds to the exhaustion of each communication encounter — whether online or in person. My hearing loss confidence falters at times, but I am working to rebuild it by embracing new technologies including speech-to-text apps like Google's Live Transcribe or Otter.ai and phone amplification apps like Ear Machine or Chatable.

## 3. Hearing loss is truly invisible.

Most people take their hearing for granted, so they assume everyone else can hear too. Waiters speak at the same volume despite being masked, as do doctors and nurses, and almost anyone else. This is only natural given their life experience, but for people with hearing loss, hearing is not something we do in the background while performing another activity. Hearing, or should I say understanding, is the activity.

Making our hearing loss more visible by self-identifying right away or wearing buttons or pins declaring our hearing problems is an important coping tool in our new masked world. As is visible advocacy. Our community must continue to demand the communication access tools we need to remain active participants in society during these unnerving times.

## 4. Self-care is critical for good hearing.

We all face many stressors in these unusual times that can

impact our ability to cope with uncomfortable or difficult situations. This is no different for people with hearing loss. We must take time each day to care for ourselves. This means eating properly, exercising, getting enough sleep and setting aside time for relaxation and reflection. The stronger our body and mind, the more stamina and patience we will have to take on our next communication challenge.

## 5. Self-advocacy is the key to success.

This has always been the key to success with hearing loss and it continues to be. Once we identify ourselves as a person with hearing loss, we must let others know the specific things they can do to help us understand. The more detailed we are, the higher the chances are for successful communication.

When asking for help, make your requests with a smile. Even if your smile is hidden behind your mask, the sound of your voice and your crinkling eyes may give it away. Everyone is struggling in these challenging times. When we ask for what we need with kindness, there is a much higher likelihood the person will do as we ask. ■

•Recent news coverage reveals COVID-19 can cause hearing loss due to clots in the tiny blood vessels within the ear. Wear a mask.

## Protecting your ears:

1. Use earplugs around loud noises.
2. Turn the volume down.
3. Give your ears time to recover. *Researchers have found your ears need 16 hours*

*of quiet to recover from one loud night out.*

4. Stop using cotton swabs in your ears.
5. Take medications only as directed.

6. Keep your ears dry.
7. Get up and move. *Pumping blood to the ears, too, is important.*
8. Manage stress levels.
9. Get regular checkups



## NEED HELP FINANCING HEARING AIDS?

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

### DISCLAIMER

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## 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](mailto:info@hearinglossOR.org).

Thank you to our  
HLAA Donors —

*Karen Jacobson*

*Tom Thompson*

*Barbara Nelson*

*Josephine Bateman*

*Debra Hubbard*

*Your donations enable our  
outreach programs and  
publication of this newsletter.*

# Deaf, hard of hearing COVID-19 patients face challenges

*Those trained in American Sign Language have become even more essential.*

by Leila Miller  
staff writer - Los Angeles Times

April 16, 2020, 2:48 pm —

A nurse at Health Central Hospital in Ocoee, Fla., activated a video screen with an Internet link to connect Jenny Lee Bruno to an American sign language interpreter.

Minutes later, Bruno's worst fear was confirmed: the shortness of breath, sense of fire in her lungs, and dry cough were a case of the coronavirus.

The doctor told Bruno, a deaf author and mother of five, that they could only help ease the pain. Then the video feed froze, unfroze, and froze again. Bruno sobbed from her bed.

*"I felt like they were giving me a death sentence," she said of that day in March. "I wanted to ask, am I going to die, what can we do, is there a cure, what about medications, what's the plan?"*

This story is from early in the pandemic, but the scenario from then to now hasn't changed very much.

Sign language interpreters facilitate communication between people who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who can hear.

Sign language interpreters must be fluent in English and in American sign language (ASL), which combines signing, finger spelling, and specific body language.

ASL is a separate language from English and has its own

grammar.

Other forms of interpreting for people who are deaf or hard of hearing include lip-reading English instead of signing in ASL.

Interpreters who work with these people do "oral interpretation," mouthing speech silently and very carefully so that their lips can be read easily. They also may use facial expressions and gestures to help the lip-reader understand.

Other modes of interpreting include cued speech, which uses hand shapes placed near the mouth to give lip-readers more information; signing exact English; and tactile signing, which is interpreting for people who are blind as well as deaf by making hand signs into the deaf and blind person's hand.

This is an important moment in history for those working with the deaf and hard of hearing. Some interpreters even have their own Facebook fan pages.



According to RaiseMe, a career planning website, a bachelor's degree is typically needed

to become an interpreter or translator — along with proficiency in at least two languages, one of which is usually

English.

Interpreters and translators generally do not need any formal training, as they are expected to be able to interpret and translate before they are hired. However, those working in the community as court or medical interpreters or translators are more likely to complete job-specific training programs or certificates.

The job outlook:

The projected percent change in employment from 2016 to 2026 is 17 percent (much faster than average).

Median pay — quoted by RaiseMe — is a \$46,120 annual salary or \$22.17 per hour. ■

## Health tip,

*continued from page 7*

lieved that the magnesium acts as a protective barrier to hair cells. Lack of magnesium has been shown to shrink blood vessels in the inner ear, causing oxygen deprivation. Foods: bananas, artichokes, potatoes, spinach and broccoli.

**4. Zinc:** Known to increase cell growth and heal wounds. However check with your physician before consuming this mineral, as it may interact with antibiotics and diuretics. Foods: beef, pork and dark-meat chicken, cashews, almonds, peanuts, beans, split peas, lentils, oysters — and dark chocolate!

**5. Omega 3 Fats & Vitamin D:** anti-inflammatory. Foods: flaxseed oil, krill oil, salmon, soybean oil, sardines.



# HLAA 2020 CONVENTION

— Hearing Loss Association of America

## Experience HLAA!

### — A Virtual Success!

Like many conferences taking place during COVID-19, HLAA 2020 was canceled.

To bring information to people with hearing loss, HLAA hosted Experience HLAA! on June 18 and 19, a virtual convention.

The event featured two days of informational and educational webinars on subjects ranging from regenerative medicine and workplace advocacy for those with hearing loss to tinnitus as part of the annual Research Symposium.

HLAA also took its exhibit hall online as well, showcasing sponsor websites along with a

well-rounded rotating lineup of sponsor ads which were educational and inspiring. It saw its highest average of attendees on day one with nearly 800 people tuned in. Around 2,400 combined registered for the event and another interesting statistic — 83 percent of attendees viewed the convention on a desktop PC or laptop.

Experience HLAA! Opening Session, now online at <https://www.hearingloss.org/programs-events/convention/experience-hlaa/>.

Presenters are Barbara Kelley, executive director, Hearing Loss Association of America; Rob

Engelke, president and CapTel inventor; David Owen, author of *Volume Control: Hearing in a Deafening World*; and Brandon Sawalich, chair, board of directors, Hearing Industries Association.

Topics include — The Potential for Regenerative Medicine to Restore Hearing Loss; Workplace Gain: A Discussion on Self-Advocacy, Marketing and Navigating the Workplace with Hearing Loss; Research Symposium: The Latest on Tinnitus Research; and Hearing Loss and the Health Care System: A Call to Action.

Watch any of these presentations online. ■

## Your opportunity to become a vital part of HLAA-OR

*Do you have these skills? Can you help?*

### Business Editor Job Description

Primary Responsibilities:

I. Recruit sponsors for the newsletter.

II. Maintain two bulk mailing lists and email distribution list for newsletter distribution.

III. Communicate all correspondence, updates with the editor.

- Recruit sponsors for the newsletter: There is both an annual recruitment for renewal of ads with current sponsors every spring and ongoing recruitment during the year. Tasks involved: a) send invitation to potential or current sponsor; b) send reminders for renewal or new sponsorship in 3-4 weeks and continue until getting a final decision and payment; c) identify new businesses or agencies that serve the hearing loss population to initiate recruitment; d) maintain spreadsheet to track communication, re-

sponses, when invoices are sent and when payments for ad are made; e) send all new ad information to the editor. Follow up with the sponsor on any delayed or missing ad information. f) Proofread newsletter edition for correct ad information.

- Maintain bulk mailing lists and email distribution list.

After each quarterly newsletter has been printed and mailed, the printer sends to the business editor an updated list, called NCOA, regarding bad addresses (cannot be forwarded) and change of addresses. Two bulk mailing lists are updated and saved for the next newsletter printing. Updating can be ongoing as these sources are received.

At the time of a new printing for the newsletter edition, all three bulk mailing lists must be sent to the printer.

III. Communicate all corre-

spondence and updates with the editor. Business Editor will forward all ad changes/updates from the sponsors to Editor.

Both Business Editor and Editor will build a file to store these ad changes for easy access at time of newsletter development. Any other correspondence from sponsors or readers will also be stored, as needed.

Follow the HLAA account with the Eugene post office to ensure adequate funds for the next mailing.

Keep Lane Co Board member updated to send the Lane County bulk mailing list, on same date that the newsletter will be sent to the printer.

Assist in locating potential articles for the newsletter. Write draft articles as needed.

Send an email to [info@hearinglossOR.org](mailto:info@hearinglossOR.org). ■



P.O. BOX 22501  
EUGENE, OR 97402

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Hear it is! Oregon Autumn 2020 newsletter

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

- 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. (The newsletter will be sent via email, due to mailing costs. Please be sure to include your email address in the form above.)
- 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). You can also sign up online at [www.hlaa-or.org](http://www.hlaa-or.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.