

We Only Part to Meet Again



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From the Executive Director's Desk

I came to HLAA in 1989 as a volunteer to give back to an organization that helped me pull myself out of despair to cope with my own hereditary hearing loss. Little did I know then that I would still be here almost 25 years later. I was originally trained as a physical therapist and worked in that field for more than 10 years. In my life I was presented with exciting opportunities to live among and experience different cultures and follow different career paths. These ranged from working in physical therapy, to teaching English in China, to counseling after graduating with a master's degree in my 40s.

My dropping in on HLAA was pure serendipity that shaped my life for more than two decades. Founder Rocky Stone convinced me that I could have a bigger impact on more people if I stayed on with HLAA rather than going back to physical therapy or counseling. Before coming to HLAA I was a national member who read this magazine from cover to cover and through that I was introduced to ideas and people who matched my own situation. Finally I had found a place that truly understood what I was going through. I also learned that I had rights, and that communication is a two-way street and does not depend solely on what I do.

Does this story sound familiar? I bet it does. I hear it over and over again when I meet HLAA members and that is how I know this organization is making a huge difference in people's lives. It is still very much needed and it will be needed until there is a breakthrough that enables hearing aids to "correct" hearing.

This is the last time I will be writing to you through this column as executive director. HLAA is poised for tremendous and exciting growth. It is financially stable, has a committed Board of Trustees that will ensure continuity through their Statement of Strategic Intent, loyal members and an incredibly hardworking and talented staff. I shall enjoy watching the next phase of HLAA under the new executive director, Anna Gilmore Hall, and wish her well. Farewell. "We only part to meet again." Please stay in touch. 

Brenda Battat completes her tenure as executive director of HLAA in mid-July, just as you are reading this issue. She can be reached at her personal e-mail, bebattat@gmail.com.

Thank You, Brenda

The staff of the HLAA national office joins the Board of Trustees and members across the country in appreciation for 24 years of dedication to the organization and her commitment to 48 million Americans with hearing loss.



This is one of our favorite photos of Brenda with Founder Rocky Stone and long-time national office volunteer, Betty Bonvillian. (Circa 1990)



Brenda with member Sue Miller this spring in Rochester, NY

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