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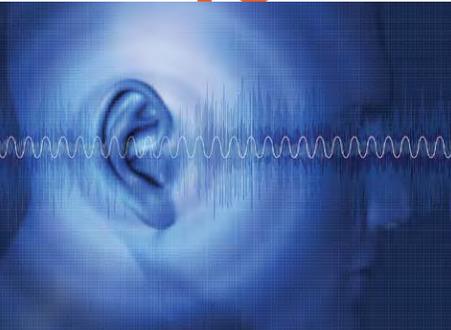
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1. Cochlear Limited. D1190805. CP1000 Processor Size Comparison. 2017, Mar; Data on file.
2. Cochlear Limited. D1182081. CLTD 5620 Clinical Evaluation of Nucleus 7 Cochlear Implant System. 2017, Mar; Data on file.

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Information accurate as of November, 2017





ABOUT HLAA

Founded in 1979 by Howard E. “Rocky” Stone (1925–2004), the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the nation’s foremost membership and advocacy organization for people with hearing loss. HLAA opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and advocacy.

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Hearing Loss Association of America

7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814
301.657.2248 Voice
301.913.9413 Fax
hearingloss.org
inquiry@hearingloss.org

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For advertising information, contact Keegan Hudson at **keegan@bluehouse.us**

Humans Are the Next Big Thing

BY BARBARA KELLEY

We live in the age where the Internet of Things—connecting one’s physical world to the digital world—rules the day. It’s no different for many of us who depend on the latest hearing technology to make it through the day. We negotiate wires, wireless signals, hearing aids, cochlear implants, remote controls, captions (phones, TVs, movie and live theaters), and cell phone apps, all to stay on a level playing field in a world that is ruled by sound.



This past January I was pleased to participate in the hearing access group at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. The Consumer Technology Association (CTA)

gathers the most influential, inspiring and disruptive technology visionaries from across the world at CES.

HLAA was part of the CTA Foundation Accessibility Leaders Tour, which included disability-focused organizations. Along with HLAA was the American Foundation for the Blind, the World Institute on Disability, the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind, and Gallaudet University. The CTA Foundation, in conjunction with CTA’s Government and Legal Affairs team, brings disability advocates to CES. We engaged with companies to continue the dialogue of making technology more accessible, as each of our organizations brought a wealth of knowledge and expertise to companies.

We enjoyed the Accessibility Marketplace where companies exhibited technologies that help people of all ages and abilities live healthy and independent lives. There were also two panels planned—smart homes and self-driving vehicles—to highlight technologies for enabling greater independence regardless of age or ability.

For the second year in a row, the CTA Foundation partnered with the Extreme Tech Challenge to hold

the Eureka Park Accessibility Contest. More than 200 startup companies showed how their products have the potential to improve the lives of seniors as well as those with disabilities. And, by age 65, one out of three people has some degree of hearing loss.

We talked with IBM, who is interested in working with HLAA and our members to better understand hearing access. IBM and many HLAA sponsors, advertisers and partners in the technology world feel they have a social responsibility to make products accessible to people with disabilities. And it makes good business sense. How many times do people with or without a hearing loss enjoy captioning? Mostly everyone I know has problems hearing in noisy restaurants, whether or not they have a hearing loss. Many of these people might like an earbud with some noise cancellation features to understand speech in noise.

Visiting the CES floor was intriguing. We saw the latest in wearable hearing devices, which included traditional hearing aids. The lines are getting blurred between technology for people with hearing loss and devices for those who want some hearing enhancement or simply want a better sound experience in a noisy world. We tried headphones for listening to music that measured acoustic emissions and then adjusted the sound according to your level of hearing.

Then there was the unforgettable and amazing Accessible Ollie, a collaboration between Local Motors, IBM, and the CTA Foundation to create a self-driving public transportation vehicle with accommodations for people with hearing and vision loss, mobility limitations, and cognitive issues. We are pleased to know that Ollie is equipped with a hearing loop and initial discussions with Local Motors and IBM allowed HLAA to have input into hearing access. A fascinating aspect of Ollie is that it is created on a 3D printer! (I can’t even begin to explain that one.)

Stephen Ewell, executive director of the CTA Foundation, says about Ollie, “Through the power of cognitive computing, the Internet of Things (IoT) and

Visiting the CES floor was intriguing. We saw the latest in wearable hearing devices, which included traditional hearing aids.

accessibility technology, this initiative will significantly improve the lives of persons with disabilities and the growing aging population.”

Traversing the landscape of CES is an overwhelming technology assault on all the senses, with mindboggling myriad disruptive gadgets that are supposed to make

life simpler, some day, where everything will be connected through the IoT. It left me in awe but not knowing how I, my family and our lifestyle, and my workplace will fit into it all.

In the midst of all this cacophony of hopeful, yet unsettling, technology, there was a beacon of hope, a phrase printed on a sign. The words were like an oasis in the desert; it came

from nowhere and gave me reassurance that someone understood what I was going through.

The sign read: *Humans Are the Next Big Thing*

Someone, maybe one of the great scientific minds or inventors, was mindful that, at the end of the day, there is a person who will use these technologies for a better life. There is a person who will be wirelessly connected to the Internet of Things, who will have to look up from his or her smart device to engage with others, to say hello, and to care about the people in our community.

We’ve always said here at HLAA that we are people first, people who just happen to have a hearing loss. We need technology to stay in the hearing world, and the technology will only get better and we will use it. But, there is still the human connection we crave. We are not meant to live alone with our technology or in a world without sound. As humans, we are not destined for isolation. We are destined for hope.

Come to an HLAA Convention, go to a Walk4Hearing, or attend an HLAA Chapter meeting. Bring your wires, your apps, your devices, but know that you are not living on an island with your hearing loss. **HL**

Barbara Kelley is executive director of the Hearing Loss Association of America. She can be reached at bkelly@hearingloss.org. Follow on her Twitter @BKelley_HLAA.

Our Lady on the Front Lines Retires from HLAA



Barbara Miller (right) at the HLAA2017 Convention Western-themed Get Acquainted Party

Many of you would recognize Barbara Miller only by her cheerful voice greeting you on the phone when you called the HLAA national office. Others of you might have met her when you visited our office and she offered you coffee, tea or water. And, of course, Barbara was at many HLAA Conventions working tirelessly at the registration desk to make sure you all had your badges, packets and anything else you needed to make your convention experience as enjoyable as possible.

Barbara Miller was a program assistant on the staff at HLAA since October 2005. She retired this February.

Barbara Kelley, HLAA executive director, said, “Barbara was the consummate professional; nothing was too much to ask of her. She worked many long hours, never going home until her work was finished, and took time with everyone on the phone who needed help or who just wanted to talk about his or her struggles with their hearing. And she did all that with sincere compassion. Barbara juggled a lot of tasks and made everyone’s job easier. We will miss her probably more than she knows.” **HL**

Setting the New Year in Motion

BY DON DOHERTY

By the time you receive this issue of *Hearing Life*, your HLAA Board of Trustees will have held their first meeting of 2018, which took place the weekend of February 23–24 at the HLAA national office in Bethesda, Maryland. The Board meets

three times a year, although the committee work goes on year-round in between meetings. We come together to review, report on committee work and set in motion our various agendas for the upcoming year.

Over the holidays I had the opportunity to purchase an iPhone 10 which I wanted to pair with my hearing aids. I was

traveling south and really wasn't feeling well so I went to the local emergency room, where I was admitted for a few days. The hospital had guest Wi-Fi and I had a new

phone—a seemingly perfect opportunity for exploration and work—until I discovered my internet connection wouldn't work, and neither would my email or social media. It was not a good feeling and made the time spent being hospitalized seem much longer.

I am sharing this experience because we all have been there. There are a lot of new technologies on the market today—most are good, some are not. Before spending your dollars, do your research, and try to be an educated

consumer. Most of us who are trying to hear and better communicate have spent hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars hoping the current “must-have” device will perform as advertised. (By the way, my phone works now, the factory default was for the wrong network.)

The 2017 year-end fundraising appeal was successful, and if you have been a member for a long time, you know that our need for financial resources is ongoing. We also conduct an appeal in late spring, and we sincerely hope you can donate. If you know of a company or corporation willing to partner with us to expand our outreach, please let me or Barbara Kelley, our executive director, know. We can do so much more by increasing our revenue and our partnerships.

On behalf of your Board of Trustees, thank you for being a member of this great organization that represents 48 million people with hearing loss in the United States. Please tell others about HLAA and invite them to join. Encourage them to attend an HLAA Chapter meeting. There is so much to learn about how to take charge of your own hearing health and HLAA is here to help. **HL**

Don Doherty, M.A., Ed.S., is chairperson of the HLAA Board of Trustees and lives in Moyock, North Carolina. He can be reached at chair@hearingloss.org.

There are a lot of new technologies on the market today—most are good, some are not.

PHOTO © CINDY DYER



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PATIENT CONTENT REVIEW PANEL

Clear Digital Media's Hearing News Network (HNN) is a patient education and video network that plays in real-time in the waiting room of your hearing care professional's clinic. HNN is viewed by more than 1.5 million patients and their families providing valuable information and insights on everything from how hearing works and what to expect in your appointment to edutainment and human interest stories.

The Patient Content Review Panel engages HLAA members to review Hearing News Network videos and provide feedback and ideas. Clear Digital Media's commitment to the development of content that entertains, educates, engages, and inspires the audience while they wait is reinforced by providing the opportunity for HLAA Members to participate in this development. The Patient Content Review Panel reviews the latest Hearing News Network videos

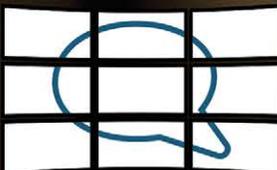
prior to broadcast and provides feedback on the topics, how topics were presented, as well as design and music choices.

Clear Digital Media is partnering with HLAA to deliver the best possible educational and edutainment content to patients and their families viewing HNN in hearing care practices across the country.

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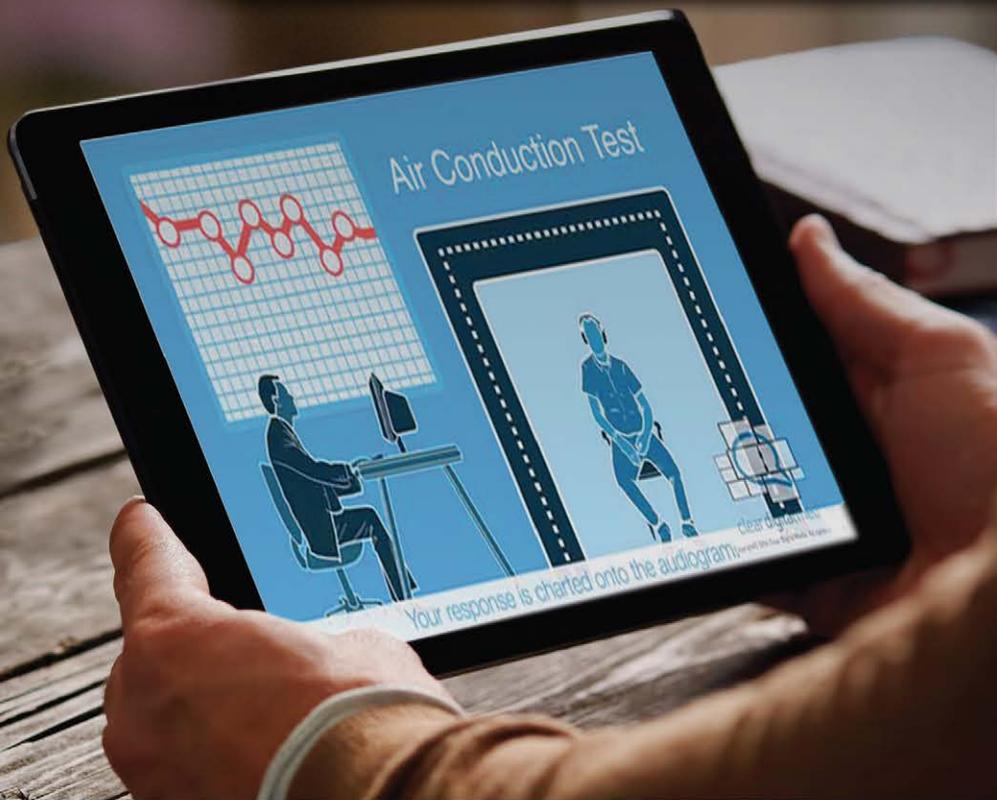
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WALK4 HEARING

Hearing Loss Association of America



The HLAA Walk4Hearing Is More Than an Annual Affair, It's a Family Affair

BY RONNIE ADLER AND ANN RANCOURT

Since its inception 13 years ago, in 2006, more than 6,800 Walk4Hearing teams have been formed, and several of them return year after year. They know the Walk4Hearing is about fundraising and bringing awareness in their communities, but to them, it's more; it's about meeting other kids and adults with hearing loss like themselves, parents sharing stories, and forming lifelong friendships. They all leave the Walk feeling empowered and inspired because they realize they are not alone.

We've always loved seeing everyone connecting, sharing their stories, and growing their team every year. But what tugs at our heartstrings the most is meeting families who have a newborn with hearing loss and are at their first Walk. They are still learning how to get the resources they need and adjusting to raising a child with hearing loss. Then, five or ten years later as the children grew, their parents have learned, overcome obstacles, and are well on their way to ensuring a successful hearing life for their child.

We've always loved seeing everyone connecting, sharing their stories, and growing their team every year.

For years, we've seen how families have developed more confidence and grown stronger because of the comfort, support, and resources the Walk4Hearing provides. At all the Walks we attend, we find great joy in meeting parents and children with hearing loss.

Team Addie—Pennsylvania

Last year, at the Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing, having met Addie's family and her team, Team Addie, back in 2011, we recalled how her parents felt lost. Today, the family has blossomed and become stronger because of the comfort the Walk4Hearing provides, letting them know they are not alone. Addie is always excited to come back. She said, "I like the Walk4Hearing because my family, friends, and people from school are there. I like to see others who can't hear and who wear cochlear implants. It makes me happy."



Team Addie has been participating in the Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing since 2011.

Team Bailey–Chicago

Bailey Wesolowski was diagnosed with hearing loss at the age of five after a hearing test at Children’s Memorial Hospital in Chicago. Bailey’s parents took her to an audiologist to get her hearing tested because she was struggling with her speech and interaction with her peers and family. After learning about the Chicago Walk4Hearing from seeing a poster at an audiology appointment, Team Bailey was formed.

Bailey and her parents recruited friends and family to join their team, raise awareness and funds, and even created t-shirts in Bailey’s favorite color—purple. But little did they know the Walk4Hearing would change their lives.

Bailey’s teammates also included her parents’ co-workers. Her parents quickly knew they raised awareness for hearing health in their workplace by asking them to join Bailey’s team and show their support. One of their co-workers said, “[Hearing loss] is a cause that you don’t hear a lot about yet it affects so many people.” Those co-workers banded together to make sure Bailey got the resources she needed to live a happy and successful life with hearing loss.

Bailey’s mother Kim explained that by participating in the Chicago Walk4Hearing for six years Bailey has realized that she is not alone; she knows there are other kids just like her who wear hearing aids. And now Bailey has blossomed and gained the confidence to tell her story to others.

Kim said, “Because of the Walk, Bailey has learned to become her own advocate, to teach her peers and teachers about hearing loss, and has learned how she can get help when she needs it. As parents, my husband and I hope we have given her the tools to use the knowledge she has gained from the Walk4Hearing to help live a more productive and fulfilling life.”



Team Bailey has been participating in the Chicago Walk4Hearing for six years.

It’s a Fresh New Look for the Walk4Hearing

For those of you familiar with HLAA, we have made some exciting



changes to our brand, including new logos for the corporate HLAA organization, our chapters, and now for our premier program, the Walk4Hearing.

A critical element of increasing brand awareness is consistency in all that we say and do. It is with that in mind that we are excited to introduce you to the new Walk4Hearing logo. The new logo has a similar look and feel to the new HLAA brand. Presenting a more unified brand will help all the Walk4Hearing events raise even greater awareness to support people with hearing loss.

Also, be sure to visit the newly redesigned Walk4Hearing website, walk4hearing.org. With its vibrant colors, clean look and easy navigation you are sure to find all the information you need to make your 2018 Walk4Hearing experience a huge success! **HL**

Team Ben–SE Michigan

At just 15 months old, Ben Tackett was diagnosed with hearing loss. It was a stressful time for Ben’s parents, Rodney and Julie, because they had many questions but didn’t know where to begin to look for answers and to get the help they needed. Rodney and Julie were contacted by different organizations and school districts and started to get more information. They also began to do their own research, and that’s when they came across the Walk4Hearing website.

As Ben’s parents learned more about the Walk4Hearing they knew it’s what they wanted to do. Julie said, “We craved information and meeting other parents; we wanted to meet others who were going through the same thing.” Julie knew the SE Michigan Walk4Hearing would help them realize that they are not in this journey alone.

Ben was 2 years old when he participated in his first Walk in 2013. Team Ben had 21 members, and since then the whole family has formed lifelong friendships and they look forward to seeing them

every year. Ben likes Walk day because it gives him an opportunity to see his audiologists, speech therapists, and former teachers and friends from his first school, the Redford Union Schools Oral Program for Children with Hearing Impairments in Redford, Michigan. He is also excited about all the support he receives from his family and friends as they walk along with him.

Julie finds planning for the Walk to be an exciting time too. They do things such as send out emails to recruit others to join their team, design buttons for teammates to wear, and figure out where they can get lunch afterward for 25 people. The Walk4Hearing also gives the Tackett family a chance to talk about the resources and assistance made available from HLAA and brings awareness to hearing loss.

Julie concluded, “For Ben, Walk day is a lot of fun. Whether it’s the balloon animals, face painting, or running around the bounce house, he usually has a big smile on his face. As his parents, we love seeing how far he has come and personally, for us, the Walk is a celebration of his journey.”



Team Ben has been participating in the SE Michigan Walk4Hearing for five years.

Team Stavac–New Jersey

Lauren (15) and Christopher (13) Stavac both have bilateral hearing loss. Their mother, Karen, and her husband Chris were of course unprepared when they found out that their kids had a hearing loss and would need to wear hearing aids. Karen said, “As any parent would do, I began to research all I could about hearing loss. I attended conferences and reached out to all my resources in Hunterdon County [New Jersey].” Karen has been a strong advocate for Lauren and Christopher to ensure they have the necessary equipment and accommodations to excel in school.

The Stavac family became aware of the Walk4Hearing in 2009 and they didn’t miss a beat in getting a team registered for the 2010 Walk. For them, it was the reassurance in knowing there was a national organization that focused on making communities aware of hearing loss.

In explaining what that first Walk day was like Karen said, “It was a fun and exciting day for all of us. Lauren and Christopher were able to see other children who wear hearing aids just like they do. It might not seem like a big deal to most, but for Chris and I it was a huge deal, and very emotional. Lauren and Christopher had such a fun day getting their faces painted and lining up right in front when the official ribbon was being cut to start the Walk! We met wonderful families, who we see every year, along with all the people who organize and make the Walk4Hearing a huge success year after year.”



Team Stavac has been participating in the New Jersey Walk4Hearing since 2010.

Team Stavac started with their family of four. Over the years the team has grown to 20 people, most of whom are family and friends. The Stavacs participate every year because, as Karen says, “It is like a reunion to see the families we have met, but we also look forward to meeting many of the new families that attend. We raise money from family, friends, and local merchants, knowing that the contributions will be used toward research to help other children reach their goals. Lauren and Christopher already know that they can do anything!”

Join Us for a Walk at the HLAA2018 Convention!

June 22 • Minneapolis, Minnesota

After a full day of workshops why not take some time to stretch your legs and get moving! Step up with the Walk4Hearing and join us for a relaxing walk around the Minneapolis area. We’ll circle back to the Hyatt Regency where you can freshen up, grab some dinner and prepare yourselves for an evening with Mandy Harvey! Walkers will receive a Walk4Hearing t-shirt and bottled water. More details to come. **HL**



Sadie and Aaron Palker—Connecticut

Nine-year-old Sadie Palker and her 7-year-old brother, Aaron, both failed their newborn hearing screening. This meant their parents, Stacey and Todd, had to learn how to navigate this new terrain, not knowing the obstacles they were about to face.

Stacey said, “My husband and I were—rather, are—strong. We worked tirelessly at closing all the loops and felt we were in the best hands with wonderful caring providers. We visited our audiologist for routine fittings and worked with therapists at CREC Soundbridge (an educational program that helps promote listening and speaking in children with hearing loss) for what seemed like forever.



The Palker family has been participating in the Connecticut Walk4Hearing for seven years.

Step Up and Get Your Hearing Checked!

#screenURhearing

This year, our Walk4Hearing call to action is “Get Your Hearing Checked!” Untreated hearing loss affects overall health in negative ways—falls, isolation, anxiety, depression, and now, a link between untreated hearing loss and cognitive decline.

Take charge of your hearing health. Anyone can experience hearing loss and hearing screenings can detect a potential

hearing loss. Hearing screenings are done by a hearing health care professional and by some community organizations such as the Lions Clubs and some doctors. If a screening shows signs of hearing loss a complete hearing evaluation by an audiologist or otolaryngologist is needed to put you back on the right track to better hearing health!

Let us know that you, or someone you care about, is taking charge and getting a hearing screening by tweeting **#screenURhearing!** This encourages others to take action for their hearing health.

Get Your Hearing Checked at a Walk4Hearing Near You!

We will be offering free hearing screenings at our Walk4Hearing locations this year. For more information about getting your hearing screened at a Walk, go to Find a Walk on the Walk4Hearing website, **walk4hearing.org**, and select the Walk closest to you.

Why Get Your Hearing Screened?

The most important reason for having your hearing screened is to look for signs of a possible hearing loss. Hearing loss can be gradual and not always noticeable at the beginning. Early detection is an important step to preventive care in managing your overall health. **HL**





2018 Walk4Hearing Dates and Locations

Spring Walks

May 12	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
May 12	Westchester/Rockland, New York
May 19	Hartford, Connecticut
May 19	Milford, Michigan
June 9	Long Beach, California
June 10	Littleton, Colorado

Fall Walks

September 23	New York City, New York
September 30	Buffalo, New York
September 30	Chicago, Illinois
October 13	Louisville, Kentucky
October 14	West Windsor, New Jersey
October 14	Cary, North Carolina
October 14	San Diego, California
October 20	Washington, D.C.
October 21	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
October 28	Brighton, Massachusetts
November 3	Mesa, Arizona
TBD	Houston, Texas



“I felt extra lucky to be married to a pediatrician. But, it turned out he had little experience with patients with hearing loss. Nonetheless, he very quickly became our go-to medical resource. We became full-force advocates and sought out all the knowledge we could to help and advise anybody who needed it.”

When the Palkers learned about the Walk4Hearing, they immediately knew it was something they needed to be involved in. They walk because it allows Sadie and Aaron to feel supported and empowered as well as to know that they are not alone. They see other kids with hearing aids or cochlear implants, and the Walk is a vehicle of relief when they see others just like they are. As an added benefit, the Walk, through local alliances, has allowed the Palkers to give back to CREC Soundbridge since the providers and staff there have helped them through so much and lifted them up at their weakest moments.

Stacey concluded, “The Walk4Hearing is an amazing reminder of strength, with the community coming together to fight for education, improvements in technology, and advocacy. We walk because no change ever happens on its own; change happens when a community comes together and works together.” **HL**



Ronnie Adler and Ann Rancourt are the HLAA national Walk4Hearing managers. Ronnie can be reached at radler@hearingloss.org and Ann

can be reached at arancourt@hearingloss.org.



IN YOUR EAR

Should you have to pay through your nose to hear through your ears?

Over the past 30 or so years, I have tried different brands of hearing aids and have had several upgrades. But it was time to replace them once again. So, I visited a VA clinic. No, not a clinic in the state of Virginia. Rather, I visited an audiology clinic in a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs building.

This might seem to indicate that I have given up on my private sector hearing aid provider. I haven't exactly given up, yet at my last visit to my nearby provider, I did experience sticker shock...as in, *Let's stick'r in his ear, and shock his wallet.*

State-of-the-art hearing aids are priced higher than the pen and ink art of Van Gogh. It seems that supposedly "affordable" personal sound amplification products (PSAPs) are primarily advertised in "junk" mail—and if that doesn't give you a clue to the quality, nothing will.

Medicare will pay for the test to *validate* a hearing loss, yet won't pay for hearing aids to treat it. Products

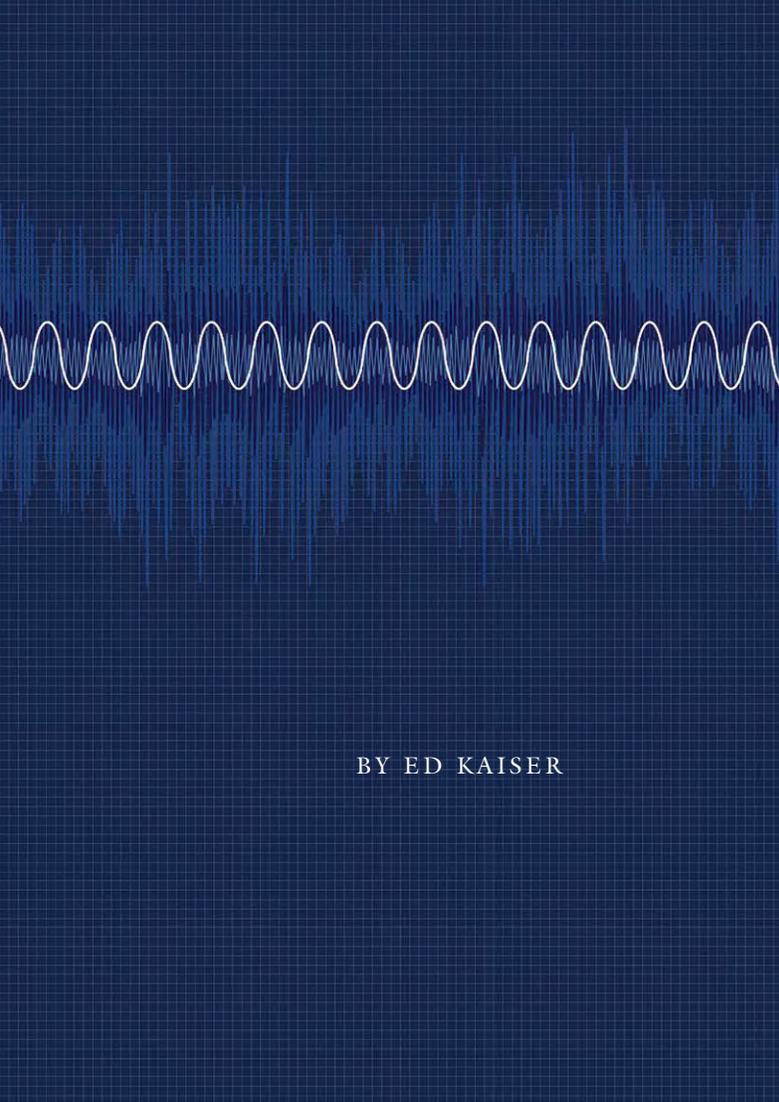
will claim in their ads that it is the *perfect solution for you*. Oh, but it will cost you an arm and a leg to get it. There's definitely something wrong with the logic of that trade-off.

Many health insurance plans might reimburse you for a loss of a particular sense. Such covered losses are usually due to a broken nose, a stick in the eye or numbness. Ahh, but lose your sense of hearing? Not covered.

Hearing aids are excluded, as are treatments needed because of illegal street drug use, participation in Russian roulette and various acts of stupidity preceded by, "Yo...Bubba...watch this!" Senses which are diminished or lost due to choices are reasonably excluded. Hearing aids excluded? Hmmph...like any of us chose to have a hearing loss.

Finally, unless you can join in a class action suit against a heavy metal band, you are likely to foot your own bill for hearing assistance.

My wife accuses me of high-frequency selective hearing. She's not referring to the frequency of sound, rather it is the frequency of me denying that I can hear her.



BY ED KAISER

This has caused me to investigate low-cost hearing aids. I found one brand that claimed to *never miss a sound*. That’s physiologically impossible for most folks who have a hearing loss. There are sound frequencies which my ears—aided or not—cannot pass to my brain. My wife, Sue, accuses me of high-frequency selective hearing. She’s not referring to the frequency of sound, rather it is the frequency of me denying that I can hear her.

Aside from that, it’s not simply a factor of decibel amplification to offset my hearing deficiency. Regardless of the TV ad, snooping in on gossip from across the room is not realistically achievable. Unless, of course, you have a big red “S” on your chest.

Speaking of superpowers, I found an option to purchase a “Rechargeable Bionic Aid.” I’m not exactly sure whether “Bionic” refers to Steve Austin’s or Jaime Sommers’ cloned ears. The ad did not mention whether the outer ear could be ordered in either masculine or feminine appearance. However, I shouldn’t worry about that. No doubt they are masculine looking—after all it is Lee Majors’ company. Hey, I don’t make this stuff up. I just report what I read.

Oh, and the “rechargeable” nomenclature does not mean it’s a plug-in unit. Nope! No more overnight charging on the dresser. With these, the charging is solar-powered through a small mat of panels wired directly to the hearing aids. And where do you imagine these panels might be implanted? Here’s a hint: Do not use sunblock on your scalp.

By the way, “scalp” has a double meaning in purchase of the “Bionic Aid.” The prominent, large, bold price in the ad is \$14.95...along with “+\$5.49 S&H” in very tiny italics. Also in an infinitesimally small, grayscale font is this almost imperceptible text, “This unbelievably low \$14.95 (+\$5.49 S&H) offer” is followed by, “only four easy payments.” Okay, so “Bionic” is not realistic either.



With inexpensive directly proportional to *credible* and virtually no hope for insurance coverage, I headed for what I hoped to be a viable option. Maybe the VA will pay for them. After all, I was in the Army artillery. It’s likely that the explosive concussion of cannon fire had a detrimental effect on my hearing. Not to mention the detrimental effect of getting my ear chewed off many times by my drill sergeant. When I met with the VA doctor, I suggested my drill sergeant as a potential *cause and effect*, I quickly realized his sense of humor was AWOL. I sure hope my failed attempt to get him to smile doesn’t hurt my chances of getting hearing aids through the VA. Otherwise, I’ll end up paying through the nose to hear through my ears. **HL**



Ed Kaiser views life as one funny event after another. He is challenged with hearing difficulties as well as difficulties controlling his mind that insists on developing humor in the most mundane occurrences. Buttonwood Press, of Haslett, Michigan, has published “Laughing at Life,” “Laughing in Stitches,” and “Laughing While Shopping,” which are collections of Ed’s funny short stories. Segues to these laughable tales include “?s (???) of the day”—such as the one in the subtitle of this article. Ed and his wife Sue reside in Williamston, Michigan. He can be reached at EdLaughing@yahoo.com.

Whether you are classified as a disabled veteran or not, if you have served in the military, contact your local U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs representative to see if you are eligible for free hearing aids, accessories and supplies.

The Air Carrier Access Act and You

BY LISE HAMLIN



According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) “is a law that makes it illegal for airlines to discriminate against passengers because of their disability. The Department of Transportation is responsible for enforcing the ACAA, which applies to all flights to, from, or within the United States.”

Under the ACAA, passengers with disabilities who identify themselves to the airline are entitled to access at the airline’s ticketing and information counters, at the gate, at the baggage counter and on board.

People with a hearing loss are entitled to access to all the audible communications provided in a way that can be understood. So at the gate, for example, airline staff should repeat all the information that is needed and allow individuals with hearing loss to pre-board.

If you plan to travel with a service animal, it pays to check in with your airline before you arrive at the airport.

In 2016, DOT established a negotiated rulemaking (Reg-Neg) committee—the ACCESS Advisory Committee—to negotiate and develop proposed amendments to the Department’s disability regulation on three issues: Whether to require accessible in-

flight entertainment (IFE) and strengthen accessibility requirements for other in-flight communications; whether to require an accessible lavatory on new single-aisle aircraft over a certain size; and whether to amend the definition of “service animals” that might accompany passengers with a disability on a flight. The committee included

representatives from consumer organizations as well as representatives from the airline industry.

After months of negotiations, the ACCESS Advisory Committee reached an agreement to improve the accessibility of in-flight entertainment and of lavatories

on single-aisle aircraft. Airlines today generally do not provide in-flight entertainment with captioning or audio descriptions. Under this agreement, certain movies and shows would be displayed on such aircraft with captioning to provide access to passengers with hearing loss. Also, audio-described entertainment would be available to enable people who are blind to listen to the visual narration of movies and shows. Airlines would be permitted to display content that is not closed captioned or audio-described only if non-captioned or described versions are not available from the airline's content provider.

The Department had plans to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) based on this agreement in July 2017. However, we have recently learned that the rulemakings are currently being reviewed in the Office of Management and Budget and a rulemaking schedule has not yet been established.

The Committee was not able to reach agreement on service animals. A rulemaking schedule for service animals will be published in the near future. However, there have been reports that some passengers are claiming they are boarding with trained service animals, when in fact the animal is an untrained pet. The result has been an increase in incidents, including animal urination or defecation, biting and aggression, barking, growling, or animals lunging. Delta Air Lines decided to act even before the new rules are out. They have issued new requirements for travel on their airline:

- Customers traveling with a trained service animal will be required to submit a signed Veterinary Health Form and/or immunization record at least 48 hours in advance of travel.
- Customers traveling with an emotional support animal or psychiatric service animal will be required to submit a signed Veterinary Health Form and/or immunization record, and an Emotional Support/ Psychiatric Service Animal Request form, which requires a letter prepared and signed by a doctor or licensed mental health professional and a signed Confirmation of Animal Training form at least 48 hours in advance of travel.

- Delta is not accepting “exotic or unusual service or support animals.”

We expect other airlines to follow with similar rules until DOT issues final rules on the topic. If you plan to travel with a service animal, it pays to check in with your airline before you arrive at the airport.

If you want to learn more or if you have a complaint, visit the DOT website at transportation.gov/airconsumer. **HL**



Lise Hamlin is director of public policy at HLAA and can be reached at lhamlin@hearingloss.org.

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Our Half-Century Journey Through Hearing Loss

BY MERV DANIELS, WITH BEV DANIELS



Facing challenges together leads to a deep commitment to help others.

In 1963, at the age of 23, I failed my first hearing test, given by the local draft board of the U.S. Army. But the tester thought I was faking it—and they needed to fill their quota with a war on the horizon—so I was passed and worked as a medic in Germany and Fort Benning, Georgia. Two years later, I returned to civilian life.

A few months into my old job, my boss pulled me aside and said co-workers had commented I was acting distant or unresponsive. Because my boss had grown up with parents with hearing loss, he thought maybe my hearing was the problem. I had it tested and a hearing loss was confirmed.

Shortly after, I was fitted with my first hearing aid. What a life-changing difference—all because my boss recognized the signs of hearing loss! Being able to hear helped me be more sociable and outgoing, and one night at a roller rink, I was able to chat with the beautiful woman who would become my wife.

I married Bev in 1966. Our son was born on Father’s Day 1968, and our daughter in 1971. My hearing began to decline in the 1970s, and I had a stapedectomy

operation on my left ear to treat my hearing loss. A few months later I had the same operation done on my right ear—but it led to a complete loss of hearing in that ear. There is a less than one percent risk of this happening, so this was quite a blow.

Still, life moved fast, so with my left hearing ear I started work at Walt Disney World, a dream job. In Orlando, we began to attend HLAA Chapter meetings but my hearing continued to decline and I needed to use increasingly powerful hearing aids and assistive listening devices. I started attending classes for speechreading as the hearing loss was affecting my ability to communicate at Disney and elsewhere.

In the late 1990s, the unthinkable occurred: a total loss of hearing in my “good ear,” my left, at age 58. Nothing could have prepared me for the trauma of going from the hearing world one day to a world of total silence the next. I tried a type of stapedectomy surgery, but it was unsuccessful.

The overwhelming realization that I could not hear to fully interact or communicate with family, friends, and co-workers was devastating. I felt out of touch with the everyday things that had previously been a part of my life.

We are committed to sharing our experiences, to advise and help others who are on their own journey with hearing loss and those closely associated with them. We want to help people understand and work through issues related to hearing loss, and to let them know they are not alone.

I knew I would no longer be able to function at work and had to take early retirement to face the psychological and emotional effects of a totally different lifestyle.

Bev was committed to making me hear again. Through her research she learned about the cochlear implants (CIs), and in 1998, I was implanted. After four weeks of recovery, it was time to be programmed and turned on. A miracle! I could hear again.

Bev and I sat down in the middle of a noisy hospital cafeteria looking at each other across the table, talking to each other, one on one, spontaneously for the first time in two years. I said, “Couldn’t we have picked a more quiet, out-of-the-way place for this?” But now as I think back, what better place than the center of the wonderful noisy environment of a lunchtime cafeteria to celebrate?

When Bev and I recall all the difficulties we faced, we could see that it wasn’t just my problem, or hers, but a shared journey. We decided to commit ourselves to helping others who also are coping with hearing loss. Besides becoming members of HLAA, we established a support group for people with hearing issues, at Disney. Eventually it became part of the HLAA Orlando Chapter.

At our first HLAA Convention in 1999, Bev received the Family Involvement Award for her dedication to supporting and encouraging me and others who experience hearing loss. While at the convention, we also learned about a program developed by the California School of Professional Psychology in San Diego that helps community groups develop better communication strategies for those with hearing loss and their families and friends.

To Bev and I this confirmed what we had experienced: the need to learn skills and strategies to prevent and reduce the communication challenges associated with having a hearing loss. We traveled to San Diego for a training session and came home with all the ingredients to put together a six-week workshop that we conducted for two years in Winter Park, Florida at the Center for Independent Living, a nonprofit that helps people with disabilities.

Dark clouds rolled into our lives once more when Bev was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2003. Now it was my turn to support her as she faced surgery and chemotherapy. She is now a 14-year cancer survivor.

In August 2012, I experienced total hearing loss again. Because of the otosclerosis (an overgrowth of bone in the inner ear) and other potential complications, implanting my right ear with a CI risked leading to permanent loss of balance. It was too high of a risk. We checked back with our original CI surgeon in Miami who did my implant in 1998, and he agreed to do a reimplantation in my left ear—also risky but our only option for remaining in the hearing world.

When I woke up from the surgery with my head bandaged and my eye taped up, I realized my face was paralyzed. The risk of damaging my facial nerve plus the otosclerosis meant that of the 24 typical electrodes that are inserted with a CI, my doctor could only do 14, and just eight are active.

My eye and paralysis, fortunately, recovered after eight long months, and what is so amazing about the CI is that even with only eight active electrodes I can hear and function in the hearing world. My biggest challenge is the understanding of speech, which has been severely affected. As a result, I rely on all of the assistive listening technology available to help fill in the gaps, including a voice recognition smartphone app and TV and telephone captioning. I also advocate for others to take advantage of FM and IR systems as well as hearing loop systems.

We continue to stay involved with the HLAA Orlando Chapter. I have a hard time coming up with words to express the feelings we have for the friends we gained through this organization. They are family. When you are going through a life-changing transition, it is vital that there are people in your life ready and willing to support you.

We are committed to sharing our experiences, to advise and help others who are on their own journey with hearing loss and those closely associated with them. We want to help people understand and work through issues related to hearing loss, and to let them know they are not alone. **HL**

Merv and Bev Daniels live in Florida. They have been members of HLAA since 1997 and are co-founders and past presidents of the HLAA Orlando Chapter.

This article was originally published in the Fall 2017 issue of Hearing Health magazine, the quarterly publication of Hearing Health Foundation. Learn more at hhf.org.



SILENCED

BY MARY LI

Cutting through the water with quick kicks and swimming straight down to the deep end, 12 feet below. Touching the drain and hooking a finger into the center of it to anchor and prevent myself from floating up. Counting to 60 as the trapped air ballooned in my lungs and ears, and the weight of the heavy water took away all sound.

Waiting a second or two longer than those 8-year-old lungs could handle, I knew I had to get back up. The

compressed air came out in bubbles from my mouth and I was relieved to see the swirly blue sky above the surface. As I climbed out of the pool, water would sometimes trickle out of both ears. Other times, it got stuck. Bending over and letting my head fall between my knees and then slowly rising up, I could hear and feel the crackling sound of trapped water in my head. Hopping on one foot with my ear toward the ground, the water popped out.

In My Own Words

I was born with a severe hearing loss. At the same time, there was something about complete silence that intrigued me. A place that was void of all sound—like the bottom of a swimming pool, or in a closet. I was alone with the silence. There was no struggle to hear, it was peaceful. Above water, letters got lost in words and words got lost in sentences. My family said I had my own words. That was cute. Those were Mary’s words. Spaghetti was “spasetti,” refrigerator was “refridedater,” mosquito was “mosiqitamomo.”

In school, complete sentences went above my head but into the ears of other children in class. So I daydreamed when it was too difficult to hear. I didn’t get the good grades in school like my big sisters. They all got A’s on their report cards. I sometimes lost my report card.

We moved when I was in fourth grade. The classrooms were smaller and there were only about half as many kids as my old school. My teacher sent home a note that said I needed eyeglasses and speech therapy. I got to leave my regular class to go to a room for speech therapy. The teacher would point to words on paper and sound out soft letters like r, s, k, and t. She told me to watch her mouth as she pronounced each sound and then I had to repeat the sound. This time, each letter matched the

A New World Opens Up

School got harder and as a result I left high school early to finish at a community college. I barely passed the classes I needed to get my GED, but I also discovered that art classes opened up a whole new world because they were more visual. I could do things such as painting, ceramics and drawing on my own. Dance classes and loud music that sent out strong bass tones allowed me to feel the rhythm vibrate through the wood dance floor. And in art classes I could express myself without words.

I didn’t want my own kids to miss out on any of their words. So I finally went to an audiologist and she could tell from my speech that I was born with a hearing loss. My left ear starts picking up sound at 80–100 decibels. An airplane taking off is around 90 decibels. My right ear is better, it starts picking up sound at about 45 decibels. Normal speech is around 30 decibels. That explained so much, and at 41 years old I got my first pair of hearing aids.

Looking back, does what we do see and hear become part of us and shape who we are? With all the gaps and silence it was easy to feel that I missed out and was perhaps left out—an outsider. It boiled down to finding other ways to cope and survive. I learned to find my own way, and perhaps there is a strength in that.

There was something about complete silence that intrigued me.
A place that was void of all sound. I was alone with the silence.
There was no struggle to hear, it was peaceful.

way her mouth moved. But to connect sound to speech I needed my eyes too.

No one remembers the results of the hearing test I took in public school. People would ask me to repeat words as my words didn’t always sound familiar to them, and kids in class would sometimes laugh when I answered the teacher. I pretended to understand words I didn’t hear since one of my sisters grew tired of me saying “what” all the time. Eventually watching people’s mouths and lipreading got easier. I would play games as a passenger in the car and try to decipher what people in other cars were saying.

Accepting my hearing loss took me a while, but now I use my weaker ear to help me buffer things I don’t care to hear, and I don’t mind losing words every now and then. **HL**



Mary Li resides in Honolulu, Hawaii.



OTOjOY Loopbuds

OTOjOY LoopBuds are telecoil-enabled earbuds that allow you to access the sound from any hearing loop worldwide with your smartphone. Simply download the LoopBuds app, walk into a looped venue, and receive crystal clear audio directly through your earbuds without the need for a hearing aid.

The LoopBuds iOS app (Android in development) allows you to adjust the volume, the balance between left and right ears, and offers several equalizer profiles to customize your listening experience. LoopBuds can also be used like regular earphones to listen to music or make phone calls. OTOjOY LoopBuds were recently honored with a CES Innovation Award and an Edison Award.

Purchase a pair for yourself or a loved one at LoopBuds.com. Loopbuds have a retail price of \$75 but use coupon code "HLAA2018" to receive a \$5 discount!



Alango Technologies— BeHear NOW

Enhance your all-around hearing whenever you need to with BeHear® NOW. While it looks and works like an advanced Bluetooth stereo headset, BeHear NOW also functions as a personal hearing amplifier. It enhances sound in various situations, such as in-person conversations, meetings, outdoor activities, live and streamed music, phone calls, watching TV, and more.

You can customize BeHear NOW using a smartphone app, which includes a built-in hearing test, simple controls for hearing adjustments in real-time, headset behavior settings, and more. The app also controls advanced options such as ListenThrough™ (awareness of important ambient sounds through music) and EasyListen™ (slowing down incoming speech during phone calls for improved intelligibility). A high-capacity, rechargeable battery enables BeHear NOW to operate for more than 15 hours in Hearing Mode. Visit WearAndHear.com for more information.



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Panasonic KX-TGM430B

Hear every word loud and clear with the full-featured Panasonic KX-TGM430B amplified cordless phone. Expandable to six handsets, this easy-to-use home phone solution is ideal for everyone affected by mild to moderate hearing loss. The phone's volume boost amplifies caller voice volumes up to 40 dB while a one-touch slow talk feature automatically slows down fast talkers as you converse and play back voicemail.

To enhance calling ease, the system provides adjustable tone settings plus an adjustable ringer volume up to 100 dB. Flashing red LED lights on the base unit and handsets alert you of incoming calls visibly. Also, you can sync up to two smartphones to make and take amplified calls on your mobile phone from anywhere in the house. This whole-house phone system also includes white-backlit LCD screens, enlarged dial pads, power backup, speakerphone, talking caller ID in English and Spanish, talking keypad and phonebook, nine speed dials, 250-number call block and intercom.



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It's no wonder CaptionCall is considered the Gold Standard in IP CTS. Learn more at **CaptionCall.com** or 1.877.557.2227.

Know of a Looped Theater?

HLAA Member Jerry Bergman has been compiling a list of theaters and auditoriums across the country with hearing loops installed. It has grown to include 134 theaters in 28 states!

You can find the complete list on **hearingloop.org**. On the left column click on "Theaters, courts, and auditoriums." At the bottom of that page there is a link to the list.

If you know of any looped arts or entertainment venues not yet listed, please send names and locations to Jerry at **jerbergman1@me.com**.

Mention of goods or services in articles or advertisements does not constitute Hearing Loss Association of America endorsement, nor should exclusion suggest disapproval.

Feature Your Product Here!

Featured Products listings are first-come, first-served and will be limited to one placement per company in each issue. All annual advertisers will receive one complimentary placement. Discounts do not apply for multiple placements. HLAA reserves the right to edit submissions for Featured Products to ensure grammatical accuracy.

For more information about Featured Product listings contact Keegan Hudson at Blue House at **keegan@bluehouse.us**.



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Do You Need Help Beyond Your Hearing Aid or Cochlear Implant?

Use of hearing assistive technology (HAT) is one important way for consumers to live better with hearing loss. However, there is a substantial lack of understanding about available technological solutions.

HAT includes assistive listening systems (such as FM, hearing loop systems, and infrared), telecommunications products and services (such as captioned telephones and relay services) and alerting devices (such as alarm clocks and smoke detectors that use loud audio alerts, vibrating receivers and/or flashing lights). There are also equipment distribution programs, state assistive technology programs and other helpful resources that can be beneficial.

The HLAA national office receives many inquiries about HAT, yet has no hearing assistive technology expert on staff available to field those calls. In response to this need, HLAA has created a new service called HAT HELP. Supervised doctoral level audiology students from the University of Washington and Gallaudet University are now available to answer your technical assistance questions. Simply write to hat_help@hearingloss.org and you will receive an email response to your question.

It's Not Rocket Science: Hearing Loss, Technology and Strategies for Everyone

BY BRAD INGRAO



Who, What, Where, When: Understanding the FDA Lingo of Hearing Aids

Over the past few years we have seen a rapid uptick in advancements in hearing aid technology and advocacy efforts on behalf of people with hearing loss. Due largely to the efforts of organizations like HLAA, people with hearing loss now have access to more information about hearing aids and more options to obtain them. But as with everything, this coin has two sides.

On the advocacy side, having more options and information is a good thing. The flip side of that is the potential for the information and options to be misunderstood and misapplied. In this article I'll attempt to clarify the language the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses to describe and regulate hearing aids.

Definitions

In 2009, the FDA issued guidance providing specific language to define the types of devices currently available to Americans with hearing loss. Devices covered in that document include hearing aids and personal sound amplification products (PSAPs). Per that guidance, a hearing aid is, “a sound-amplifying device intended to compensate for impaired hearing.”

PSAPs, on the other hand, “are not intended to make up for impaired hearing. Instead, they are intended for non-hearing-impaired consumers to amplify sounds in the environment for a number of reasons, such as for recreational activities.”

The Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017, signed into law by President Trump on August 18,

2017, will create a third (and FDA-regulated) category of hearing devices between traditional hearing aids and PSAPs. These devices are intended for hearing improvement, but for use only by those with mild to moderate hearing loss. The framework of how these will be labeled, regulated and dispensed is still being built, but HLAA has been, and will continue to be, directly involved, and will update members via our website, social media and our bimonthly magazine, *Hearing Life*.

You'll notice that I've used the word “intended” several times already. This is key within the FDA framework; devices regulated by the FDA are evaluated and labeled based on their performance compared to the suggested use when they were submitted. This does not, of course, mean that these devices are never used in other situations, it just means that claims and FDA labeling can be used only to vet these intended uses.

What the FDA Does and Doesn't Do

Most people incorrectly assume the letters “FDA” on a product always mean it has been endorsed by the agency. In fact, the FDA is much more of a recordkeeping body than the watchdog many would like to believe. The different classes of FDA notification are described below. To avoid possible misinterpretation, I've left the language verbatim from the FDA website, but will discuss how this applies to hearing aids at the end of the list.

FDA-listed medical devices: A medical device is FDA-listed if the firm that manufactures or distributes the medical device has successfully completed an online listing for the device through the FDA Unified Regis-

tration and Listing System (FURLS). (While it is the manufacturers that typically list medical devices, they are not the only entities responsible for doing so.)

510(k)-exempt medical devices: Medical devices that do not require FDA review before being marketed are considered “510(k) exempt.” These are mostly low-risk, Class I devices (those that present the least risk and thus have the least regulatory control) and some Class II devices (slightly more risk and regulatory control) that have been determined not to require a 510(k), or premarket notification (named for a section in the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act), to provide a reasonable assurance of safety and effectiveness.

These devices are exempt from complying with premarket notification requirements subject to the limitations on exemptions; however, they are not exempt from certain general controls. For example, 510(k)-exempt devices must:

- be suitable for their intended use
- be adequately packaged and properly labeled
- have establishment registration and device listing forms on file with the FDA
- be manufactured under a quality system (with the exception of a small number of Class I devices that are subject only to complaint files and general recordkeeping requirements).

Cleared medical devices: These are devices that the FDA has determined to be substantially equivalent to another legally marketed device. A premarket notification—the 510(k)—must be submitted to the FDA for clearance. A 510(k) is most often submitted by the device manufacturer.

Approved medical devices: These are devices for which FDA has approved a premarket approval (PMA) application prior to marketing. This approval process is generally reserved for high-risk medical devices and involves a more rigorous premarket review than the 510(k) process.

What All This Means for HLAA Members

Since all non-implantable hearing systems are technically lower risk, they may not fall into the “approved” category, at least not in their current version. Hearing aids may have gone through the entire approval process at points of major differences like the first digital hearing aids, or the introduction of technologies like frequency lowering. Newer products, however, are likely to fall into the category of “substantial equivalence” compared to existing products and will therefore just need to be listed.

Since implantable hearing systems such as a cochlear implant, a bone conduction implant or a middle ear implant pose higher risk to the patient, they will require greater FDA scrutiny and will likely need to go through the entire approval process.

Wrapping Up

Many people want some external body to help them answer the age-old question, “What’s the best hearing aid?” My longtime mentor and former *Hearing Loss Magazine* columnist Dr. Mark Ross would say there is no “best” hearing aid, only the one that meets your individual needs. The key is finding a compatible hearing care professional. The FDA is there to ensure that the products marketed to treat hearing loss do no harm, and that the claims made by their manufacturers can be proven. After that, it’s really up to each of us to find that hearing care professional who will work with us to best define our needs and find technologies that meet them.

I’ll be addressing these topics in future columns and always welcome suggestions and requests.

You can find more information on the FDA website at [fda.gov/medicaldevices/deviceregulationandguidance](https://www.fda.gov/medicaldevices/deviceregulationandguidance). **HL**



© MARISA SARTO

Dr. Ingrao has been involved with HLAA for more than 20 years and is known as an early adopter of technologies, a computer geek and an author and lecturer who makes complex topics understandable. He’s been around hearing loss his entire life and has several family members with hearing loss.

This series of articles by Brad Ingrao, Au.D., aka “Doc Otoberblock,” is designed to address technical questions about hearing technology, hearing science and strategies to better communicate with hearing loss in non-technical terms that are accessible to everyone. It is presented as a donation to HLAA by the author in memory of his uncle Angelo, a professional musician who found a second career in hearing care after a near-total hearing loss, and his father Joe, the mild-mannered pharmacist who supported his brother’s career transformation. Dr. Ingrao credits both for teaching him the value of patient-centered care and listening to customers before acting.

Most people incorrectly assume the letters “FDA” on a product always means it has been endorsed by the agency. In fact, the FDA is much more of a recordkeeping body than the watchdog many would like to believe.



The Ultimate Smart Home Technology for People with Hearing Loss

BY LINDSEY BANKS

Smart homes are no longer a thing of the future, they are a thing of today. Smart home technology is not only making life more exciting for all those who use it, but it can also make life more convenient, more connected, a little safer, and a lot simpler for people with hearing loss.

Smart home technology is one of the fastest growing technology gadget categories available today. HGTV now gives away a “Smart Home” to one lucky winner each year, and the annual CES conference is full of new smart home innovations. It is likely that most everyone owns or uses at least one smart home product or device today.

Smart home technology is not only making life more exciting, but it can also make life more convenient, more connected, a little safer, and a lot simpler for people with hearing loss.

Smart home products wirelessly connect to another smart device or wireless gadget that would otherwise have no connection. For example, a refrigerator with a camera inside that connects to your smartphone. It seems silly, but it’s a reality. Instead of forgetting something at the grocery store that you thought you had in your refrigerator, just look at your smartphone and view the inside of your fridge using

Wi-Fi and your phone’s camera. Today it’s a convenience but one day we might feel like we can’t live without it. While all the smart home products and technology can be useful in one way or another, for this article I am going to highlight those that people with hearing loss might find the most useful.

Smart home security systems can send an alert to your phone in the case of a break-in, a water leak, a frozen pipe, carbon monoxide, smoke, or fire situation. Plus, if you’re using one of the Bluetooth-enabled or Made for iPhone hearing aids, that audio alert can come directly through your hearing aids so you are sure not to miss it.

Smart Home Security Systems

Through the If This Then That (IFTTT) network you can also set up an automatic call or text alert to send to a neighbor, family member, or other emergency contact if carbon monoxide or smoke is detected in the home by your smart security system.

IFTTT is a cloud-based network that allows you to connect two devices, or applications, with one another to create new connections and experiences. They call these connections “applets.” The two devices would be the smart security system such as the Nest Protect and a smartphone text or call service.

Also, through the IFTTT network you can have all your lights turn on or begin blinking in your home if there is

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an intruder or if a carbon monoxide leak is suspected to be sure you are woken up from sleep without having to worry whether you'll hear the alarm. I suspect all the lights coming on in the house would also scare away an intruder!

Smart Doorbells

A smart doorbell with audio/video feeds allows you to see and hear who is at the door before you answer it. If you can lipread or use sign language, you can communicate with visitors without having to rely on audio. And if you're afraid you might miss the doorbell ring altogether you can have an alert sent right to your smartphone.

Through the IFTTT network and an internet-connected hearing aid you can receive an audio alert in your hearing aids when someone rings your smart doorbell, even when you are away from home.

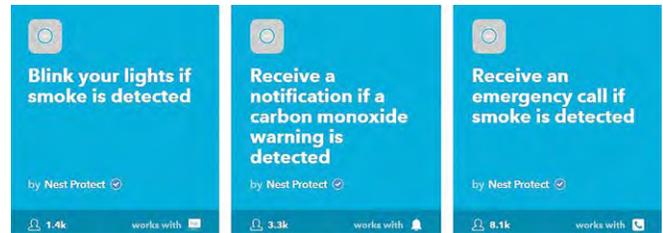
Smart Lighting

Customizing your lighting allows you to receive better visual cues from the person you're trying to listen to. Imagine that you are hosting a dinner party at your house and struggling to understand the conversation in the dimly lit dining room. With smart lighting, you can use your smartphone to change the brightness or hue of the lights to improve your speechreading ability without having to interrupt the conversation or even leave the table.

You can also connect your smart lightbulbs to your home security system, smart doorbell, smart oven, phone, or other alerting device or appliance. This would give you a visual lighting alert if something is occurring in your home that you need to be made aware of, without relying on the audio cues. For example, if you want to be sure you know when the oven timer beeps without worrying about missing it you could connect your smart oven to your smart lightbulbs through the IFTTT network to have the lights blink when the oven alarm goes off. Or, imagine never missing a phone call in your home by connecting your smart lightbulbs to blink whenever there's an incoming call.

Smartphone Text Alerts

If there is a concern about an elderly person with hearing loss who is living independently, smart home gadgets can help them keep their independence longer. Relatives can be automatically informed of everything that is going on within the house via a text message alert, such as when the person turns their smart oven on or off, or starts brewing coffee with their smart coffee pot, or even when the battery is getting low on their hearing aids.



There are many ways an IFTTT network can benefit people with hearing loss.

Smart Media Experience

With the newer wireless Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids, you can set up a complete media system in your home for a better TV or music listening experience. Using a Bluetooth adapter that works with your hearing aids, you can stream a stereo audio signal from your TV or sound system wirelessly through your hearing aids. Streaming direct to your hearing aids helps improve the sound quality by overcoming the effects of distance, noise, and reverberation in the room. If you don't yet have hearing aids, using an alternative smart Bluetooth TV device with headphones can give you the same effect.

Smart Hearing Aids

Many smart hearing aids exist today, allowing you to connect to apps to do things such as stream phone calls, audiobooks, and music, as well as check on the status of the hearing aid battery or locate your lost hearing aids on a map. Recent hearing aid releases from ReSound and Signia also allow you to connect remotely with your hearing health care professional for real-time adjustments of your hearing devices.

With smart technology, the possibilities are endless. You can get creative connecting these devices in ways that make them more useful to you and the needs of your particular hearing loss, and allow you to experience a more convenient, connected, and safer home environment. **HL**



*Lindsey Banks Au.D., is a graduate of the Doctor of Audiology program at the University of Florida. She has experience as an audiology extern at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hospital, as a clinical audiologist and tinnitus specialist at a multi-site ear, nose, and throat practice, as well as in the hearing aid industry working as an account manager for a global hearing aid manufacturer. She has authored a book titled, The Ultimate Consumer's Guide to Buying Hearing Aids. Dr. Banks is the owner and primary medical reviewer for **EverydayHearing.com**.*

Experience the Biggest and Artsiest Town on the Prairie!

BY NIAZ SIASI



Need a place where you can reunite with old friends, meet new ones, learn about the latest technology and research for people with hearing loss, AND have a little downtime to relax and enjoy some entertainment? I know just the place—the HLAA2018 Convention!

Early-bird Registration Deadline—March 31

The Convention is just around the corner and you don't want to miss getting discounted registration rates. Register by **March 31** and start preparing yourself for an exciting week in Minneapolis!

Hyatt Regency Minneapolis

1300 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55403

All plenary sessions, workshops and events (with the exception of *West Side Story*) will take place at our host hotel. Be sure to reserve your room at aws.passkey.com/go/HLAAMPLS18 or call 612.370.1234 and say that you are with the HLAA2018 Convention group. Deadline for reservations is **May 29**.

Room Rates

Single Occupancy:	\$195
Double Occupancy:	\$195
Triple Occupancy:	\$220
Quadruple Occupancy:	\$245

State and Chapter Awards Reception & Ceremony

Wednesday, June 20 • 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

This evening event will honor state and chapter leaders across the country for their dedication to HLAA and who work hard to make a difference in their communities.

National Awards Breakfast & Ceremony

Thursday, June 21 • 9 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Sponsored by CapTel

The remainder of the awards will be presented at the National Awards Breakfast & Ceremony on Thursday morning. The national awards will be presented to individuals and organizations who have done honorable work in the hearing loss community.

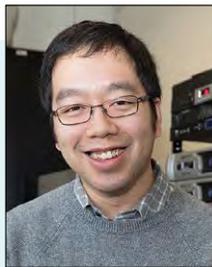




Andrew J. Oxenham,
Ph.D.



Evelyn Davies-Venn,
Ph.D., Au.D.



Norman Lee, Ph.D.



DeLiang Wang,
Ph.D.



Nima Mesgarani,
Ph.D.

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening

Thursday, June 21

The Convention will officially open at noon on Thursday. Hear from HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley as you make your way into the Exhibit Hall to visit familiar exhibitors, discover new ones and learn about the latest technology for people with hearing loss. The Exhibit Hall will be open until 4 p.m. A complete list of exhibitors and sponsors will be available in the *Program & Exhibit Guide*, the mobile Convention app and on the Convention page of the HLAA website.

Newcomers Session

Thursday, June 21 • 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

This session is for first-time HLAA Convention attendees. Attend this session to learn about the technology in use at each session, the highlights of each day, and how to make the most of your first Convention experience!

Research Symposium, *Listening in Noise*

Friday, June 22 • 9 a.m. – Noon

We are fortunate to have top researchers and professionals to present the Research Symposium, *Listening in Noise*.

Andrew J. Oxenham, Ph.D., professor in the departments of Psychology and Otolaryngology at the University of Minnesota and scientific co-director of the Center for Applied and Translational Sensory Science (CATSS), will serve as moderator of the symposium and present *Listening in Noise: Challenges and Opportunities*.

Dr. Oxenham will outline the “cocktail party problem,” review physiological changes associated with hearing loss, relate these changes to the perceptual challenges in everyday listening and discuss current and future approaches to solving this issue.

Other presenters include:

Evelyn Davies-Venn, Ph.D., Au.D., assistant professor in the department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Minnesota and director of the Sensory Aids and Perception Lab, will present *Understanding Individual Variance in Hearing Aid Outcomes in Quiet and Noisy Environments*.

Dr. Davies-Venn will present studies that have evaluated the effect of audibility, spectral resolution, working memory and presentation level on explaining variance in speech recognition for listeners with hearing loss along with the clinical implications of these findings.

Norman Lee, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology, St. Olaf College, will present *Looking for Sensory Solutions to Common Hearing Challenges in Non-human Animals*.

Dr. Lee will discuss his study, “Frogs Exploit Statistical Regularities in Noisy Acoustic Scenes to Solve Cocktail-Party-like Problems.” In addition, he will talk about his research on directional hearing in flies and how they have been a model system for developing directional hearing aids along with challenges in developing biomimetic-based hearing aids that will work in natural noise environments.

DeLiang Wang, Ph.D., professor of the Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences and the department of Computer Science and Engineering, Ohio State University, will present *Toward Solving the Cocktail Party Problem*.

Dr. Wang will present examples and research regarding a new formulation that implicates that the cocktail party problem is open to modern machine learning techniques. He will describe recent algorithms that employ deep neural networks (DNNs) for supervised speech separation.

Nima Mesgarani, Ph.D., associate professor of the Neural Acoustic Processing Lab, department of Electrical Engineering and Neurobiology and Behavior Program, Columbia University, will present *Robust Speech Processing in Human Auditory Cortex*.

Dr. Mesgarani will demonstrate research and findings where invasive and non-invasive neural recordings from human auditory cortex are used to determine the properties of robust speech processing in the human brain. He will also explain the implications of these findings to solve the issue of hearing in noise.

An Evening with Mandy Harvey

Friday, June 22 • 8 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Join us for a delightful evening with singer, songwriter and motivational speaker Mandy Harvey! Mandy has a hearing loss, but never let that get in the way of becoming one of the top five finalists in the 12th season of “America’s Got Talent.” Mandy, along with her band, will provide the audience with a wonderful experience through her soulful voice.



Mandy Harvey

West Side Story at the Guthrie Theater

Saturday, June 23 • 6:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

You won’t want to miss this! Come watch the greatest love story ever told at the beautiful and contemporary Guthrie Theater. The performance will be looped and captioned. Sign language interpretation will be available by request (email nsiasi@hearingloss.org). Transportation to and from the Guthrie Theater will be provided.



Twin Cities Highlights Tour

Sunday, June 24 • 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

You can’t travel all the way to Minneapolis and not see the gorgeous sights of the city! Minneapolis is filled with exciting attractions, culture, recreation and entertainment. During this three-hour tour, you will explore Minnesota’s charming capital city of St. Paul, see Minnehaha Falls, drive along Summit Avenue, catch a glimpse of the beautiful Minneapolis skyline and more!

Be sure to reserve your spot today for the Twin Cities Highlights tour by clicking the link on the Convention page. Please indicate whether you will need an assistive listening device when you book your tour online. The deadline for reservations is **June 15**.

Workshops

All sessions and workshops will have CART and hearing loops, making HLAA2018 the most hearing accessible educational event in the country. Speakers will present workshops that focus on an array of topics including advocacy, hearing assistive technology, living with hearing loss, hearing aids and cochlear implants, and our newest track this year, hearing loss in health care settings. Sign language interpretation is available during plenary sessions (Opening Session, State and Chapter Awards Ceremony & Reception, National Awards Breakfast & Ceremony, and An Evening with Mandy Harvey) and by request for workshops and *West Side Story* at the Guthrie Theater. Send requests to convention@hearingloss.org by **June 1**.

Convention Walk4Hearing

Friday, June 22

After a full day of workshops, you will want to take this time to stretch out your legs and get moving. Step up with the Walk4Hearing and join us for a relaxing walk around the area as we circle back to the Hyatt Regency where you can freshen up, grab some dinner and prepare yourselves for an evening with Mandy Harvey! Walkers will receive a Walk4Hearing t-shirt and bottled water.

Mobile Convention App

Sponsored by CTIA



Download the mobile Convention app from your app store and hold the entire Convention in the palm of your hand! Through this app, you will be able to create your own schedule, view presenter bios, read about exhibitors and sponsors, and more.

Demo Room Presentations

Interested in seeing a product up close? Then the Demo Room is the place to be. These one-hour long presentations by representatives of exhibiting companies are a great way to get a more in-depth look at a product or service, while also having the opportunity to follow up with the company in the Exhibit Hall.

Get Acquainted Party

Thursday, June 22
8:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Sponsored by CaptionCall

Join us on opening night as we reunite with friends and acquaintances, let loose, and enjoy some light fare and entertainment as we kick off another great Convention!

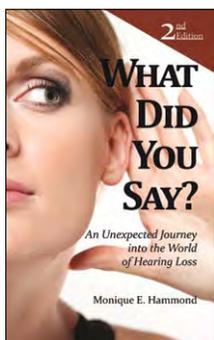


Book Signings

What Did You Say? An Unexpected Journey into the World of Hearing Loss—2nd Edition

By Monique Hammond

Friday, June 22 • Noon – 1:30 p.m.



What Did You Say? An Unexpected Journey into the World of Hearing Loss—2nd Edition is the book author Monique Hammond wishes she had when she was coping with and trying to understand her own sudden hearing loss. Within four hours, she had gone deaf in her left ear. The incident turned her life upside down.

Monique weaves together her story with a wealth of information: how we hear, causes of hearing loss, types of hearing loss, audiology tests, tinnitus, Ménière's disease, the basics of hearing technology, feelings and emotions, support groups, resources, and checklists are among the many topics discussed in the book.

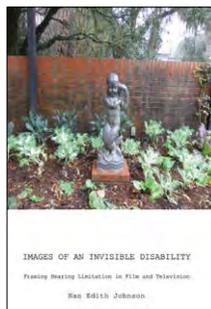
What Did You Say? provides readers with the information to understand their conditions, be involved with their care, persevere, and become their own patient advocates.

What Did You Say? will be available to purchase for \$10.

Images of an Invisible Disability: Framing Hearing Limitation in Film and Television

By Nan Edith Johnson

Saturday, June 23 • 12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.



Arising from an internal cause, a hearing disability in people generates no external physical signs. Thus, directors and screenwriters of films and TV programs have made this invisible disability visible by resorting to physical and behavioral stereotypes of deaf and hard of hearing characters. This book is based on

Nan Edith Johnson's reviews of nearly 200 films, made-for-TV movies, TV episodes, or a TV series having a character with a hearing loss. She assesses these images according to the actual experience of someone with a hearing loss, the accessibility of the show to hearing disabled audiences, and changes in these factors over the nine decades covered in her filmography.

Images of an Invisible Disability: Framing Hearing Limitation in Film and Television will be available to purchase for \$29.95.

Transportation

The Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport is about a 20-minute car ride to the Hyatt Regency. There are a few ways to get from the airport to the hotel:

SuperShuttle: Enter code **2849L** to receive a discount shuttle ride from the airport to the Hyatt Regency. Visit bit.ly/2DtCXt5 to book your shuttle.

Light Rail: Take the Metro Blue Line (metrotransit.org/imap/map.aspx) from either Terminal 1 or Terminal 2 to the Nicollet Mall stop. Please note that the hotel is about a 15-minute walk from the Nicollet Mall stop. Fare: \$2.50

Uber/Lyft: Uber or Lyft (uber.com and lyft.com) are another convenient way to get from and to the airport and around the city. All you have to do is download the app to your smartphone, enter your destination, confirm the number of seats you need, and confirm your pickup location.

If you need a quick and inexpensive way to get around Nicollet Mall free bus rides are available. Look for buses marked “Free Ride” and pay no fare when boarding along Nicollet Mall. The following routes are the ones you will want to use:

- Route 18: Nicollet Avenue—South Bloomington
- Route 10: Central Avenue—University Avenue—Northtown
- Route 59: Limited Stop—Blaine—Highway 65—Central

Be sure to visit metrotransit.org/free-ride-buses for more information on the buses.

Follow us for Convention Updates

- On Facebook at [facebook.com/HearingLossAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/HearingLossAssociation)
- On Twitter: [@HLAA](https://twitter.com/HLAA) and use [#HLAA2018](https://twitter.com/hashtag/HLAA2018)
- On Instagram: [@hearinglossassociation](https://www.instagram.com/hearinglossassociation)
- Subscribe to *Hearing Life e-News* (the link is on our homepage)

Be sure to keep checking the Convention page at hearingloss.org/content/convention. **HL**



Niaz Siasi is the HLLA meeting planner. She can be reached at nsiasi@hearingloss.org.

Moving? Don't forget to let us know!

If you are an HLLA member and will be making a move, whether it's permanent or just to get away for the winter, be sure to let us know so we can keep our records up to date. We wouldn't want you to miss a single issue of *Hearing Life*. Updating your information is easy and there are several ways to do it:

- 1) Send an email to membership@hearingloss.org. Be sure to include your name, new address, and if it's a seasonal move, the dates that you will be at the alternate address.
- 2) Through the **HLLA Online Portal**. If you have not used the Portal before you will need to set up an account. It's free and takes only a few minutes. The Online Portal allows you to update your profile, make a donation, view your giving history and manage your email preferences for receiving information such as our *Hearing Life e-News*, press releases, and the latest information about the conventions, Walk4Hearing, upcoming webinars, and advocacy initiatives. Just go to bit.ly/hlaaportal and it will take you through the process.
- 3) Call us at **301.657.2248**.

A few important things to remember:

- It can take up to two business days for our records to be updated, even if you use the Online Portal.
- The mailing list is sent to our mail house approximately two weeks prior to the mail date, which is typically the first week of the month of the issue (i.e., the March/April issue would be mailed the first week of March). The magazine is not forwarded due to the way it is mailed, so please let us know a *minimum* of three weeks prior to the address change. However, if you miss the notification deadline, email membership@hearingloss.org or call **301.657.2248** and we will be happy to send you a copy.



The Shaping of Sustainable Careers Post Hearing Loss



Toward Greater Understanding of Adult-Onset Disability, Disability Identity, and Career Transitions

BY DAVID C. BALDRIDGE AND
MUKTA KULKARNI

World over, people often assume that having a severe disability means underemployment or unemployment, and loss of sustainable and meaningful identities and relationships. When disability strikes young, successful professionals, many people even see the situation as hopeless.

In a recent study published in *Human Relations*¹ we showcased how adult-onset hearing loss does not need to mean the end of successful careers, professional identities, and meaningful relationships. In fact, such disabling conditions can mean the beginning of new and even more fulfilling chapters in one's professional life.

In the study, 40 individuals who were diagnosed with adult-onset hearing loss outlined how they re-crafted or maintained successful careers when faced with dramatically changed biology. These people often initially had trouble accepting that they had changed, at least in terms of their ability to hear, and many saw themselves as victims.

Initial responses included trying to hide their hearing loss by bluffing as if they could hear and by self-isolation. Some recounted that they did this because they feared having an identity of “deaf equals dumb.” Over time, however, these individuals chose to remain successful by embracing their new hearing limitations, continuing to see themselves as successful professionals first, and often using the very limitations to become or remain successful.

Several study participants recast their disability as an asset. For example, one person worked with the federal government on Equal Employment Opportunity projects, another taught war veterans, older people, and others with hearing loss about telecoils, cochlear implants and other assistive listening devices, and yet another changed his focus from being a lawyer who helped corporate clients to helping individual clients with civil rights issues.

Our study participants were also able to craft their jobs and careers to focus on and maximize the use of their abilities and were able to minimize the impact of their disability.



Often such success was attributed to help from an organization such as the Hearing Loss Association of America, which helped individuals overcome their internal discourse of lower productivity or feeling like a victim. The study thus extends our understanding not only of disability as ability first but also helps defamiliarize extant notions of ableism in workplace contexts.

Our study participants were also able to craft their jobs and careers to focus on and maximize the use of their abilities and were able to minimize the impact of their disability. New networks that included people like themselves were also important, and again organizations like HLAA played a critical role in helping people broaden their knowledge and networks. **HL**



Dr. David C. Baldrige is a Newcomb Fellow and associate professor of management at the Oregon State University College of Business and is also a research associate for the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). He earned his Ph.D.

in management from the University of Connecticut and his MBA in finance from the University of Michigan. His research interests include diversity and inclusion, in particular in relation to disability and age, access technology utilization, disability accommodation, and career success and sustainability. His research has appeared in many leading management publications. David is also a longtime member of HLAA. He can be reached at david.baldrige@bus.oregonstate.edu.



Dr. Mukta Kulkarni is an associate professor and the Mphasis Chair for Digital Accessibility and Inclusion at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore. She has been a member of the Confederation of Indian Industry's National Committee on

Special Abilities and continues her attempts to understand workplace inclusion of persons with a disability. She has published papers in journals such as Academy of Management Journal, Human Resource Management, Journal of Organizational Behavior and The Leadership Quarterly. Dr. Kulkarni can be reached at mkulkarni@iimb.ernet.in.

¹ Full article citation: Baldrige DC & Kulkarni M (2017). The shaping of sustainable careers post hearing loss: Toward greater understanding of adult onset disability, disability identity, and career transitions. *Human Relations*, 70(10): 1217–1236. DOI: 10.1177/0018726716687388



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New Online Support Center for Older Adults with Cochlear Implants



KDH Research & Communication (KDHRC) is an Atlanta-based organization that creates programs and designs evaluations to improve the health of youth, families, and communities.

KDHRC, in collaboration with HLAA, is developing the online Cochlear Implant Support Center: Resources for Older Adults. The Cochlear Implant (CI) Support Center will be an innovative and practical web-based resource to help older adults with CIs:

- improve their communication skills
- develop skills to effectively use their CI
- manage challenging hearing environments.

The support center will also include information for family members and friends of older adults with CIs.

Once complete, KDHRC will evaluate the CI Support Center with older adults with at least one



cochlear implant and family members or close friends of older adults with at least one cochlear implant.

We Need Your Help!

KDHRC is now seeking adults ages 60 and above with at least one cochlear implant as well as family members or close friends of older adults ages 60 and above with at least one cochlear implant to participate in a research study.

Participants will be asked to review either a prototype website or an e-book (PDF) and take two online surveys about their experiences. Participation should take between 2-5 hours, depending on the amount of time you spend reviewing the materials.

Each participant will receive \$25 for taking part in the first survey and \$25 for participation in the second survey. All information collected during these surveys will be kept confidential.

Interested?

If you are interested in finding out more about the CI Support Center and to complete the interest form go to bit.ly/interestfm. **HL**

Contact Melody Simpson at msimpson@kdhrc.com or 404.968.8013 (call or text) if you have any questions.

Connect with KDH online:

- Website: kdhrc.com
- Facebook: facebook.com/kdhresearch
- Twitter: twitter.com/kdhresearch
- More CI resources on Facebook: facebook.com/CochlearImplantResources



KDH RESEARCH &
COMMUNICATION

America Is Getting in the Hearing Loop

BY STEPHEN O. FRAZIER

HLAA leaders could have been singing the old Steve Allen lyrics, “This could be the start of something big” when, in partnership with the American Academy of Audiology, they kicked off the Get in the Hearing Loop (GITHL) campaign in 2010. Back then there were just a few formally organized efforts, such as Loop New Mexico and Loop Wisconsin, promoting awareness and the availability of hearing loops in public places. But only in Michigan, thanks to the groundbreaking work of Dr. David Myers of Hope College, and at many of the nation’s HLAA Chapter meetings did hearing loops have any real presence.

The creation of the GITHL campaign really was the start of something big and it has inspired an impressive consumer-driven effort that stretches from coast to coast. There are now nearly three dozen looping campaigns sponsored by HLAA Chapters and State Organizations and a handful of other nonprofit efforts such as Loop Minnesota and Let’s Loop Tucson. Sertoma clubs around the country are promoting the technology as part of their national “A Sound Investment” campaign, often fully or partially funding the looping of local nonprofit venues.

Hearing health care offices are beginning to promote hearing loops on their websites and the technology is also being adopted by business and governmental entities with growing speed. In many communities, like Kearney, Nebraska (population 34,000) and Lawrence, Kansas (population 95,000), cities with no local HLAA chapter, HLAA members have successfully advocated for

hearing loops and now more than two dozen places of worship, theaters and other public places are featuring the technology in those two cities.

From Local to National

The Minnesota Governor’s signing of a Capital Improvement Appropriations Bill last May didn’t just appropriate money, it placed a law on the books requiring that future construction of, or improvements to, all state-funded gathering places equipped with a public address system must also be equipped with an assistive listening system using hearing loop technology. The Minnesota action was mirrored in New York City,



where the city council passed a similar requirement. Between the advocacy efforts of Janice Schacter Lintz, CEO of Hearing Access & Innovations, the HLAA New York City Chapter and others, New York City has become a poster child for the looping movement.

Beyond the new requirement to loop city-funded gathering places, more than 600 of the city’s subway information and fare kiosks have been equipped with hearing loops and all new taxicabs now feature loops. Several Broadway theaters have also been looped and others now offer neckloops as an alternative to headsets to use with their FM and Infrared (IR) systems. Loops can be found at ticket or information counters at Penn Station, Grand Central Station, the Metropolitan Museum and even Yankee Stadium. On the city’s website is a 17-page directory of looped venues compiled by the HLAA New York City Chapter that lists everything from drugstore prescription counters to memorial chapels.

On the West Coast, in May 2017 the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART), which serves the San Francisco Bay area, announced they would be including hearing loops in all new rail cars ordered for their system, and they have opened their first looped train platform. In the last year the statehouses in both Rhode Island and Arizona have had their legislative chambers and committee meeting rooms looped. Delta Air Lines has been testing loops at some of their gates in Detroit and Rochester, New York, and Virgin Atlantic Airlines added neckloops as an option instead of earbuds for watching movies on international flights.

Houses of Worship Take the Lead

Places of worship have taken the lead in adopting this technology for their sanctuaries, with well over 400 installations just in Wisconsin in less than a decade. This catches them up to Michigan, an early adopter that has a similar number of loop installations. Though exempt from requirements in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), untold thousands of sanctuaries in places of worship and hundreds of theaters and city council chambers have been fitted with hearing loops around the country since the GITHL campaign began.

Such venues as the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo, Michigan airports, the Oshkosh, Wisconsin Grand Opera House and the Milwaukee Intermodal Station (the inter-city train and bus station) have loops installed bringing the total number of looped facilities to more 1,000 in those two states alone. The 12,000 seat Breslin Center at Michigan State University has even been looped!

At the time the Get in the Hearing Loop campaign kicked off, loop and telecoil technology was given increased awareness through revisions to the ADA, which required that all assistive listening systems be hearing aid compatible. With current technology, only induction loops can meet the mandate that any gathering place like a theater or council chamber with a public address system must also have an assistive listening system. Further, that system must either be a hearing loop or 25 percent of the receivers must be equipped with neckloops if there is an FM or IR system installed.

For those not familiar with hearing loops, in its simplest form it is a copper wire that circles a room and transmits sound through an electromagnetic field to receivers in hearing aids and cochlear implants called telecoils. For those whose hearing aids are not equipped with telecoils (or who do not wear hearing aids), hearing loops work the same way as an FM or IR system—the user borrows a receiver and headset to access the system.

The looping of the west coast of Michigan was inspired by David Myers more than 20 years ago after he was introduced to the technology at a remote abbey in Scotland. Advocating for hearing loops in public venues is now a national consumer-led movement that’s changing the way people hear in those venues.

You can start a movement in your own community by doing something as simple as cutting out the “Ask for a Favor” form on page 45, signing it, and taking it to your audiologist or hearing instrument specialist so they, too, will Get in the Hearing Loop. **HL**

Steve Frazier is a Hearing Loss Support Specialist, former New Mexico HLAA state chapter coordinator, and chair of the Loop New Mexico Committee. He serves on the HLAA Hearing Loop Steering Committee and on the New Mexico Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board. His articles on hearing loss and noise control issues have appeared in Church Executive Magazine, Sound & Communications, Advance for Audiologists, Hearing Loss Magazine, Christian Science Monitor and others.

Advocating for hearing loops in public venues is now a national consumer-led movement that’s changing the way people hear in those venues.

Dear Provider,

Hearing loop and telecoil technology has dramatically improved my ability to hear in places I never dreamed of before. And I've also learned that:

- In a recent survey 85 percent of hearing aid users reported that they have and regularly use telecoils in their hearing aids.
- Those with hearing loss are six times more likely to use an assistive listening system that connects to a telecoil in hearing aids than one requiring earphones and a receiver.
- Bluetooth technology has many great uses but it won't help me or others hear in my place of worship, at the theater or in other public places of assembly, but telecoils, via hearing loops, can.
- Hearing loops are becoming the primary assistive listening system in more and more places of worship throughout the country and in such locations as legislative chambers, theaters and even in New York City taxicabs.
- The latest revisions to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandate that all new assistive listening systems be hearing aid compatible, and currently telecoils, paired with neckloops or a room loop, are the only technology that can meet that requirement.

With that information in mind, please allow me to ask for a small favor:

- If there's not already a hearing loop installed in your waiting area please consider installing one so everyone visiting can have an opportunity to experience the benefit that a hearing loop provides.
- Install a counter loop at the reception desk so clients can better hear the staff.
- Install a looped TV in fitting rooms to demonstrate how hearing aids with a telecoil can be adjusted for optimum performance with a loop.

Whatever you do, please consider joining the growing number of hearing care providers around the country who have started their own Get in the Hearing Loop campaign. Go to hearingloss.org/content/loop-technology or hearingloop.org for more information.

Cordially,

Harris Communications Supports HLAA N-CHAT Trainers with Assistive Technology Kits

Thanks to a generous donation from Harris Communications and several leading assistive technology manufacturers, trainers in the HLAA N-CHAT (Network of Consumer Hearing Assistive Technology Trainers) program will be equipped with additional hearing loss technology to demonstrate, including alarm clocks, personal amplifiers, neckloops, TV listeners, amplified phones and cellphone accessories.



Each trainer in the HLAA N-CHAT program will receive a kit that includes a ClearSounds CLA7v2 Amplified Power Neckloop accessory for cellphones, ClearSounds Quattro 4.0 LITE adaptive Bluetooth neckloop system, Geomarc CL7350 amplified TV headset, Sonic Bomb alarm clock, Williams Sound Pocketalker 2.0 personal amplifier, Panasonic Link2Cell KX-TGM430B amplified Bluetooth phone, and a Ditto Bluetooth Vibrating Cell Phone Signaler and Alarm—all packed in a quality carry-on roller bag provided by CaptionCall.

“Many people with hearing loss want to use technology to stay in the hearing world, yet they often don’t know what is available beyond hearing aids or cochlear implants. Companies like Harris Communications and all those who donated equipment enrich the N-CHAT program so our technology trainers can reach people and provide actual and practical listening experiences,” said HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley.

N-CHAT is a volunteer consumer train-the-trainer program. The goal of the N-CHAT program is to build a network of consumer trainers with the knowledge and skills necessary to train others impacted by hearing loss. Trainers assist others in the successful integration of hearing assistive technology to support individual hearing and communication needs at home, work, school, and the community.

The HLAA N-CHAT program is a partnership with Gallaudet University and the American Institutes for Research. It is being implemented under the Gallaudet-led Deaf/Hard of Hearing Technology Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC), which is supported by a grant (# 90RE5020) from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). **HL**

For more information about N-CHAT, e-mail N-CHAT@hearingloss.org or visit hearingloss.org/content/n-chatt-training.

For more information about Harris Communications, visit harriscomm.com or call 952.388.2152 (video phone) or 1-877-539-7445 (voice) to speak with a hearing loss expert.

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