

MAY/JUNE 2018

hearing life

THE MAGAZINE FOR BETTER HEARING

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by Gary Shapiro,
president and CEO
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On page 13 of the March/April 2018 issue of *Hearing Life* we identified the facility at which Bailey Wesolowski had his hearing test performed as Children's Memorial Hospital. However, this is the former name of the hospital, it is now called the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. We apologize for any inconvenience caused by this error.

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We're issuing a challenge to inform a million ears about the importance of hearing health during the month of May, Better Hearing and Speech Month! Join us in our MillionEar Challenge and you'll be raising awareness while **helping to fund research by the Hearing Health Foundation** that will continue to benefit ears for years to come.

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ABOUT HAAA

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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When Mr. Fixit Can't Fix It

BY BARBARA KELLEY

Our friend's wife recently passed away. Gene, her grieving husband, told me with clenched teeth, "Eileen spent the last few years in pain. I am an electrical engineer and I couldn't fix her pain... *I couldn't fix her pain!*"

Around this same time another friend told me about his mother, a long-time member of HLAA, who has since passed away. "My father was an engineer and he tried to come up with any kind of technology to help my mother, he was always hooking something up, trying something new. He never gave up trying to fix her hearing."

Does any of this strike a chord even in a remote way? I know from my own experience that those who love us want to solve the problem and when they can't they feel frustrated, and sometimes guilty. Instead of just saying, "Honey, I feel your pain, talk to me, I am here," they try to leap to a solution. Don't mistake this for insensitivity, it is love in its most practical form.

The hearing loss journey is a family journey. Sometimes it might be easier to isolate ourselves and not engage, but people are meant to live in community. Whether your family consists of those you are related to or a few trusted friends, they are also affected by your hearing loss. It's not your fault, and it's not something they can fix.

When communication breaks down, so often do relationships. Some days are better than others. But our families are with us, wavering from fear to hope, right along with you. You have to be patient with yourself, be patient with them. Not many people have a chance to take a course in hearing loss and what to do and how to react. That's where HLAA has always entered the picture. We can't tell you and your families how to feel, but we can help.

Wanna Get Away to a Land Where It's Okay Not to Hear Well?

I have a few options for you:

HLAA2018 Convention: Many make this a family vacation. This year we are in the heart of hospitality—Minneapolis. For your family members, think of this: your

mom, dad, sister, brother or friend with hearing loss enjoys all the workshops and entertainment in a completely hearing-accessible place where no one is left not to understand when people are talking. In the meantime, you can wander the Exhibit Hall with them and see all the new technology, go off and explore the city, join them for one of our social events, and see your loved one enjoy his or her time in a place where it's okay not to hear well. You might even find some friends yourself who understand your point of view.



HLAA Chapters: We know not everyone can get to the Convention, but we have a network of chapters across the country where you can meet others just like you. Some of our chapters offer hearing expos, day-long educational events, or regular meetings where you can learn from others and not feel like you are the only one on the planet with a hearing loss.

HLAA Walk4Hearing: We are in 18 cities this spring and fall. Be with others just like you all walking together for various reasons—to create awareness, raise money for local programs in the community (many of our chapters are supported this way), and to encourage our friends and family to get their hearing screened (#screenURhearing). Or maybe you just want to meet people. Walk day is an experience that can't be beat. Bring your families—especially the kids—and join others along their hearing loss journey.

When you engage with HLAA through one of our events or become a member to receive *Hearing Life*, you and your family are not alone. Spread the good word, leave this magazine with a friend or in a waiting room somewhere. Sign up for the free online *Hearing Life e-News* and keep in touch with HLAA.

I hope I meet you somewhere along your journey. **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.

HLAA Celebrates the Big 3-0!

BY DAVE HUTCHESON

I think we can all agree that in the nearly four decades since Rocky Stone founded Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (SHHH)—as HLAA was known then—we have experienced many highs and lows (although the highs far outnumber the lows), reached numerous milestones, and marked several notable dates.

One of those dates is April 4, 1988. For it was on that Monday morning Rocky introduced the new editor of the *Shhh Journal*, the venerable magazine we now know as *Hearing Life*. While the publication and the organization have seen many changes since then, one thing has remained a rock-solid constant for both, as the new editor Rocky had the good sense to hire was a young woman by the name of Barbara Kelley.

When Barbara took over the reins of the magazine, little did anyone know—and I think it's safe to say that included Barbara herself—that she would go on to hold that position for 28 years. And the only reason she let go of her baby was to accept the position of HLAA Executive Director in 2016. (That's when yours truly was handed the keys to the magazine. No pressure there.)

Learning From the Master

While Barbara did not—nor does she now—have a hearing loss, she had the rare good fortune to learn about the “invisible condition” (hold onto that term for a minute), as Rocky called it, directly from the master. She worked closely with him until he retired as executive director in 1993, but they maintained a strong friendship right up until his passing on August 13, 2004—another notable date, albeit a more somber one, in our history.

Because of her relationship with Rocky and all she learned from him, I dare anyone to find someone who does not have a hearing loss but who understands the plight of those who do better than Barbara. In fact, I would argue that over the years Barbara has given thousands of people the support they need to live successfully with hearing loss—single-handedly.

Rocky had an incredible influence on Barbara, as he did on most people he met, from what I understand. She has a passion for helping people with hearing loss;

a passion that probably wouldn't have been possible without the foundation Rocky laid for her, which has probably contributed heavily to her longevity.

SHHH Welcomes New Editor



Barbara Kelley

With this issue of the *Shhh Journal*, Barbara A. Kelley takes charge of *Shhh*. She is the third editor of what has become a highly popular publication. Barbara will make it even better.

With a BA degree in English and a public relations and advertising background, Barbara brings new and needed qualities to SHHH. Poised, articulate and possessing a good sense of humor, she had her mettle tested shortly after her arrival when the now infamous fire struck SHHH. Her conduct and contribution during that day and those that followed marked her as a “regular gal” and a “Jill of all trades.”

The next time you visit SHHH headquarters be sure to take a few minutes to chat with “The Editor.” Meanwhile keep her posted with your letters, articles and other items of interest.

Welcome to the SHHH family Barbara!

—R.S.

Rocky Stone introduced Barbara to the world in the July/August 1988 issue of the *Shhh Journal*.

An Invisible Condition

So it was upon his retirement that Barbara, along with several other prominent people in our organization's history, compiled and published all of Rocky's columns from 14 years of the *Shhh Journal*. That book, "An Invisible Condition: The Human Side of Hearing Loss" (there's that term again) was published in 1993. You can download an electronic copy of "An Invisible Condition" from our website at hearingloss.org/about-us/founder.

In fact, shortly after I was hired in October 2015 Barbara handed me her *personal* editor's copy of the book (again, no pressure) and encouraged me to read it. I did, and even though I have a hearing loss (I'm single-sided deaf), I learned—a lot—about hearing loss from reading Rocky's words.

What struck me fast and hard was that Rocky had such a powerful impact on people because he thought—nay, he *knew*—that living successfully with hearing loss had little to do with breakthrough technology or the latest research. Living successfully with hearing loss wasn't about treating it as a medical condition; it was about treating it as a human condition. Quality of life was not based on a device or medical research, it was based on people and relationships.

I believe the key to Barbara's success and longevity is that she lives and breathes the organization's mission—more specifically, Rocky's mission. She puts the person first and "the invisible condition" second.

So on behalf of the HLAA staff, our members, and all those whose lives you have touched over three decades, I say congratulations Barbara, but moreso, *thank you* for all that you have done on behalf of people with hearing loss.

You know, come to think of it, maybe there is a bit of irony in the term "invisible condition." For if we can—as exemplified by Rocky and Barbara—focus on making people *more* visible and the "condition" *less* visible, I



One of the several honored guests at Barbara's 30th anniversary celebration on April 4 was Ahme Stone, Rocky's wife, who said, "Barbara and Rocky were a great team. She may not have known it but Rocky expected her to be a part of the HLAA family for a long time. And so it was. He put a lot of trust in her, and rightfully so. Congratulations on 30 years, Barbara!"

think we would all be on our way to a more successful life—with or without hearing loss.

Oh—the celebration? That's easy. We had a surprise party for her. Barbara loves parties. **HL**

Dave Hutcheson is the HLAA director of marketing and communications and editor-in-chief of Hearing Life. You can reach him at dhutcheson@hearingloss.org.

You know, come to think of it, maybe there is a bit of irony in the term "invisible condition." For if we can—as exemplified by Rocky and Barbara—focus on making people *more* visible and the "condition" *less* visible, I think we would all be on our way to a more successful life—with or without hearing loss.

A Word to Our Veterans

BY DON DOHERTY

The HLAA2018 Convention is right around the corner and your Board of Trustees will be holding its second meeting of 2018. I invite everyone to attend the open Board of Trustees meeting on Wednesday, June 20, 4:30 p.m. in the Minnehaha Room at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis.

I look forward to speaking with as many members as possible during the HLAA2018 Convention. The social aspects of our organization provide for the development of lifelong friendships. The entertainment this year will be a special treat and our keynote speaker, Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)TM, will be simply phenomenal. I know many members particularly like the Exhibit Hall where you can see and try out many of the new technologies that are available for people with hearing loss. If you have never attended an HLAA



PHOTO © CINDY DYER

Convention before I urge you to make every effort to do so. Treat yourself and attend, you will not be disappointed. And don't forget that veterans who have never attended an HLAA Convention are given a first-time free registration.

Help for Veterans

While on the topic of veterans, I am often asked, "How can I get help for my hearing loss from the VA [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs]?" or "Can I get hearing aids from the VA?" The answer isn't always a simple yes or no. It is a process that requires a medical evaluation and might be different at each VA facility.

The process works like this. If you are a veteran who has been honorably discharged you must first register with the hospital from which you are seeking care. (You

can call and ask where the nearest Registration Office is if you don't know.) You will then be photographed and issued a bar-coded ID card. You likely will be asked to fill out various forms during the registration process.

Once this data is entered you will have an electronic record that is accessible by any hospital in the VA network. If you are in need of medical care, you might need to see a medical professional right away, otherwise you will probably be assigned a clinic and a primary care physician. You will then be given an appointment for a medical examination.

The medical evaluation is the time to bring up any hearing issues you have. After the medical evaluation you will be given an appointment to see an audiologist for an audiogram to determine the type and degree of your hearing loss. If a hearing aid is recommended it will have to go through the Prosthetics Department for approval, and a determination will be made if the hearing loss is service connected.

If service connection is established there could be disability compensation based on the severity of the loss. If you have any medical records from your time in the service, especially related to hearing loss, this would be a good time to find them. I hope this explanation encourages all veterans to take advantage of the benefits they earned.

I hope to see you in Minneapolis.

Semper Fi. **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 chairperson@hearingloss.org.

There's Nothin' "Minne" About Minneapolis!



BY NIAZ SIASI

Still looking for that perfect vacation spot this summer? We've got just the place—the HLAA2018 Convention in Minneapolis! Your dream vacation package includes:

- **Fun:** Laugh the night away with new and old friends alike at the Get Acquainted Party
- **Thrills:** See “America’s Got Talent” star Mandy Harvey perform and also catch a production of the classic *West Side Story*, complete with captions and hearing loop, at the Guthrie Theater.
- **Experience:** Gary Shapiro, a sought-after speaker and president and CEO of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)TM at the Opening Session
- **Discover:** Stroll the Exhibit Hall to see the newest products for hearing loss and attend the many educational workshops
- **Relax:** Explore the gorgeous city of Minneapolis on your own or reserve a spot on the Twin Cities Highlights Tour. (Tickets purchased separately)

Registration Deadline—May 31

Be sure to register for the Convention if you haven't already! You can find the registration form on page 17. After May 31, online registration will be closed, but you can still register onsite.

Leadership Workshop: *Leading with Passion*

Presented by Karen Putz

Wednesday, June 20 • 2 p.m.–4 p.m.

We are excited to announce that Karen Putz will be presenting this year's Leadership Workshop, *Leading with Passion*. Karen's workshop will cover a variety of topics including leadership goals, volunteer engagement, communication and igniting your passion to be the best leader you can be.



Karen Putz

Karen is known as “The Passion Mentor” and is the author of “Unwrapping Your Passion, Creating the Life You Truly Want.” She works as co-director of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infusion at Hands & Voices and has been featured on ESPN, PBS, CNN, and others.

Karen will be giving away a few signed copies of her book so you don’t want to miss this session! Make sure to check back on the Convention page for more details about this workshop.



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Thank you, sponsors! We appreciate your generosity and commitment to making HLAA2018 Convention a great success.

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Open Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, June 20 • 4:30 p.m.–6 p.m.

Come hear about the goals and priorities set by the HLAA Board of Trustees for the upcoming year.

State and Chapter Awards Reception & Ceremony

Wednesday, June 20 • 7 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

Sponsored in part by Hearing Help Express



This evening event will honor state and chapter leaders across the country for their dedication to HLAA and who work tirelessly to make a difference in their communities. Refreshments and light fare will be served.

National Awards Breakfast & Ceremony

Thursday, June 21 • 9 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

Sponsored by CapTel Captioned Telephone



The National Awards Breakfast and Ceremony will recognize individuals and organizations who have done honorable work in the hearing loss community.

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening

Thursday, June 21 • Noon–1:30 p.m.

The HLAA2018 Convention will officially open at noon on Thursday, June 21. Hear from Executive Director Barbara Kelley as you make your way into the Exhibit Hall to visit exhibitors and explore all of the newest technology for people with hearing loss. The Exhibit Hall will be open until 5 p.m., so feel free to explore until then or attend one of the afternoon workshops (workshop schedule is available on the Convention page). A complete list of exhibitors and sponsors will be available in the *Program and Exhibit Guide*, the mobile Convention app and on the Convention web page.

Newcomers Session

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

Calling all Convention first-timers! This session will be helpful in getting you started at your very first HLAA Convention. Learn how to make the most of your Convention experience.

Opening Session

Thursday, June 21 • 5:15 p.m.–6:30 p.m.

Sponsored by Consumer Technology Association Foundation



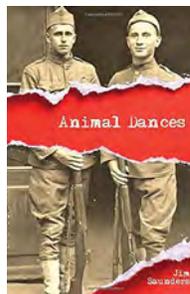
We are honored to have Consumer Technology Association (CTA)TM President and CEO Gary Shapiro deliver the keynote address at this year's Opening Session. Known for being a powerhouse in the consumer technology industry, Shapiro has helped direct policymakers and business leaders on the importance of innovation in the U.S. economy, and ensures that technology is accessible to people with disabilities. CTA is also the owner and producer of CES (Consumer Electronics Show)—the world's largest technology event.

Book Signings

"Animal Dances"

By James Saunders

Thursday, June 21 • 4 p.m.–5 p.m.



By blending eyewitness accounts contained in letters, with historical fiction, "Animal Dances" creates an engaging and exciting story of a young man conscripted into war, who discovers an unknown capacity to be bold and decisive, while enduring unimaginable hardship. Before the war Fannie and Harry cavorted carefree and rebellious, with indecent

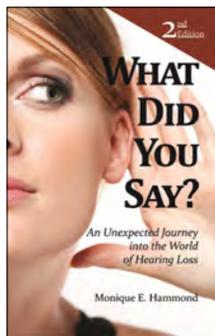
abandon to the ragtime beat of the "Animal Dances." That is a distant memory now as Harry struggles to survive the devastation of the Western Front, while driving a wagon carrying lethal cargo. Back home, his family grapples with a killing flu, and Fannie seeks to ease her fear that Harry will not return from the war. Surviving the searing yellow gas, Harry returns home to find nothing the same and only his war buddies save him from horrible memories. As life passes, Harry asks if it could have been different. This is a WWI story beyond the trenches where men toil in constant danger, in a conflict that will impact them for a lifetime.

"Animal Dances" will be available for \$14.99.

“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” 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? An Unexpected Journey into the World of Hearing Loss” will be available 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.



“Images of an Invisible Disability” is based on author Nan Edith Johnson’s reviews of about 200 films, made-for-TV movies, episodes, or series having a character with a hearing disability. She assesses these images according to the actual-lived experience of hearing disability, 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 for \$29.95.

Research Symposium, *Listening in Noise*

Friday, June 22 • 9 a.m.–Noon

We are delighted to have the following professionals and researchers presenting at the Research Symposium this year.

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*.

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*.

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*.



Andrew J. Oxenham,
Ph.D.



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



Norman Lee, Ph.D.



DeLiang Wang,
Ph.D.



Nima Mesgarani,
Ph.D.

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 *Towards Solving the Cocktail Party Problem*.

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*.

Mobile Convention App

Sponsored by CTIA



Download the HLAA2018 mobile Convention app 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.

Get Acquainted Party

Thursday, June 21 • 8:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m.

Sponsored by CaptionCall



You bet your sweet bippy—this year’s Get Acquainted Party will feature the sights and sounds of one of America’s most beloved sketch-comedy television programs, Rowan & Martin’s Laugh-In. Grab your brightly-colored mini-skirt or bell bottoms, go-go boots, and head scarf because you’ll want to fit in! The party would not be complete without music, skits, frosty malts and shakes and flashy costume awards. Don’t miss this exciting kickoff to the HLAA2018 Convention set in where else but “beautiful downtown Burbank.”

Workshops

Educational workshop tracks include:

- Advocacy
- Hearing Loss in Health Care Settings
- Hearing Assistive Technology
- Hearing Aids & Cochlear Implants
- Living with Hearing Loss

There will also be an exciting lineup of workshops in the State and Chapter Development Room. These sessions will be on a wide variety of topics for state and chapter leaders but are of course open to all attendees.

You can find the full workshop schedule for both educational and state and chapter workshops on the Convention page.

As in past years we will be using IFuzion by ICapApp to display the captions on the same screen as the PowerPoint slide in each workshop. IFuzion eliminates the “tennis game” effect, looking from one screen to the other.

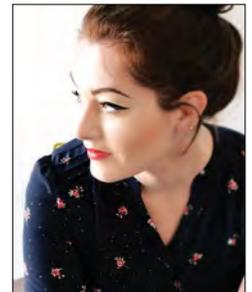
Need a sign language interpreter during the workshops? Please send requests to **convention@hearingloss.org** by June 1.

An Evening with Mandy Harvey

Friday, June 22 • 8 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

We are excited to have singer, songwriter and motivational speaker Mandy Harvey perform along with her band at the Convention! Mandy has a hearing loss, but never let that get in the way of being Simon Cowell’s “Golden Buzzer” winner and being one of the top five finalists in season 12 of “America’s Got Talent.”

Read more about Mandy and all her accomplishments and talents on her website at mandyharveymusic.com.



Mandy Harvey

West Side Story at the Guthrie Theater

Saturday, June 23 • 7 p.m.–11 p.m.

Sponsored by Contacta

Come see a production of 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. Buses will begin departing the hotel at 6:00 p.m.



Explore the Beautiful City of Minneapolis

Sunday, June 24 • 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

ALDs provided by Williams Sound

You can’t travel all the way to Minneapolis and *not* see all the gorgeous sights! 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 (ALD) when you book your tour online. Williams Sound will be providing the ALDs during this tour.

Convention Walk4Hearing

Friday, June 22 • 5 p.m.–7 p.m.

After a full day of workshops, take some time to stretch your legs and raise awareness for hearing



loss. Step up and join us for the HLAA2018 Convention Walk4Hearing. We will walk to the Stone Arch Bridge and circle back to the Hyatt Regency (3 miles) where you can freshen up, grab some dinner and prepare yourselves for an evening with Mandy Harvey! A shorter route is available for those who would rather do a quicker walk. Walkers will receive a Walk4Hearing t-shirt and bottled water. Be sure to meet us outside the main hotel entrance at 5 p.m.

Thank You to Our Veterans

We appreciate your service! HLAA is offering a complimentary registration for veterans and their caregivers who are attending their first HLAA Convention as a small token of our gratitude. Please download and complete the Veterans Registration form (located on the Convention page).

Host Hotel: 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 rooms 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.

HLAA
Hearing Loss Association of America
2018
CONVENTION
MINNEAPOLIS, MN | JUNE 21-24, 2018

HLAA2018 Convention
June 21-24
Hyatt Regency Minneapolis
1300 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55403

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. Go to bit.ly/2DtCXt5 to book the shuttle.
- **Light Rail:** Take the Blue line 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 stop. Go to metrotransit.org/imap/map.aspx for more information. Rate: \$2.50
- **Uber/Lyft:** Uber or Lyft are other convenient options to get to and from the airport and around the city. All you need to do is download load the app on your smartphone, enter your destination, confirm the number of seats you need, and confirm your pickup location. Visit uber.com or lyft.com for more information.

Need a quick and free way to get around Nicollet Mall? Look for buses marked “Free Ride” and pay no fare when boarding along Nicollet Mall. The following routes are the buses you will want to use:

- **Route 18:** Nicollet Ave—South Bloomington
- **Route 10:** Central Ave—University Ave—Northtown
- **Route 59:** Ltd Stop—Blaine—Hwy 65—Central

Visit metrotransit.org/free-ride-buses for more bus information.

Follow us for Convention Updates

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

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



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

What does a General Package include?

- ✓ State and Chapter Awards Reception & Ceremony, Wednesday, June 20
- ✓ National Awards Breakfast & Ceremony, Thursday, June 21
- ✓ Exhibit Hall Grand Opening, Thursday, June 21
- ✓ Opening Session, Thursday, June 21
- ✓ Get Acquainted Party (GAP), Thursday, June 21
- ✓ Research Symposium, *Listening in Noise*, Friday, June 22
- ✓ Unlimited entry to Exhibit Hall and social events
- ✓ All workshops, demo presentations and featured speakers

Select your registration package below:

<p>REGULAR – by 5.31</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member \$315</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member Couple/Family \$499</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Non-member \$389</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student \$195</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Non-member Student \$225</p>	<p>ONSITE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member \$350</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Member Couple/Family \$575</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Non-member \$425</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student \$225</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Non-member Student \$250</p>
<p>DAILY PACKAGE – by 5.31</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Thursday \$150</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Friday \$150</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Saturday \$150</p>	<p>DAILY PACKAGE – ONSITE</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Thursday \$200</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Friday \$200</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Saturday \$200</p>

Registration total: \$ _____

RSVP for events included in General Package:

State and Chapter Awards Reception & Ceremony 6/20 ___ YES ___ NO Extra tickets \$15 x ___ \$ _____

National Awards Breakfast & Ceremony 6/21 ___ YES ___ NO Extra tickets \$25 x ___ \$ _____

Get Acquainted Party 6/21 ___ YES ___ NO

Event Tickets: (Not included in the General Package)

FRIDAY, JUNE 22	
<i>An Evening with Mandy Harvey</i>	
Member	\$ 45 x _____ \$ _____
Non-member	\$ 55 x _____ \$ _____

SATURDAY, JUNE 23	
<i>West Side Story at the Guthrie Theater</i>	
Member	\$ 35 x _____ \$ _____
Non-member	\$ 45 x _____ \$ _____
Purchase by 3.31 to guarantee a ticket	

Tickets total: \$ _____

Dietary Needs:

Primary Attendee: ___ Vegetarian ___ Low Sodium ___ Diabetic ___ Gluten Free
Second Attendee: ___ Vegetarian ___ Low Sodium ___ Diabetic ___ Gluten Free

Are you a young adult (ages 18-30)?

Yes: ___ No: ___

Communication Access at HLAA2018

HLAA will continue to employ real-time captioning during every plenary session and workshop in addition to hearing loops in all rooms. Sign language interpretation is available during plenary sessions and **by request** for workshops. All requests must be sent to convention@hearingloss.org by **June 1, 2018**. Please see the Convention page for more information.

Membership

Select Membership Type

- New Individual \$35 per year Couple/Family \$45 per year
 Renewal Student \$20 per year (enclose copy of student I.D.) Professional \$60 per year

Would you like to make a contribution to HLAA?
Contributions help support the information, education, support, and advocacy efforts of HLAA throughout the year.

Membership total: \$ _____

Registration total: \$ _____

Tickets total: \$ _____

Contribution total: \$ _____

PAYMENT TOTAL: \$ _____

Registration Information

Primary Registrant (Name as it will appear on badge) _____ Secondary Registrant (Name as it will appear on badge) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email _____

Payment Information

Check payable to *Hearing Loss Association of America* or Visa AMEX MC Discover

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ CSC Security Code _____

Cardholder's Name _____ Cardholder's Signature _____

Billing Address (If different than address above) _____

Mail form and payment to:
Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814

Or, fax your form to:
301.913.9413

Questions? Call or email us at:
convention@hearingloss.org
Phone 301.657.2248

CANCELLATION POLICY

- The following policy applies to refunds of registration fees:
- Cancellation between **May 1 and May 31, 2018**: Refund = 50% of registration fees and event tickets.
 - **No refunds will be made after May 31, 2018**. Cancellation must be received in writing.
 - Cancellation date will be determined by USPS postmark or email receipt date.

Please see hearingloss.org/content/convention for news and updates as well as the Code of Conduct policy.

How the Tech Industry is Making Life More Audible—and Accessible—for Americans

BY GARY SHAPIRO

One of the great joys of my life is seeing the many ways in which technology has the power to heal bodies and restore health. As president and CEO of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)[™], I've been fortunate to have a unique perspective on the most dynamic, cutting-edge aspects of the tech industry. I'm a passionate tech enthusiast, and what I love most is how tech changes—and even saves—lives.



CTA President and CEO Gary Shapiro will be delivering the keynote address at the Opening Session at HLAA2018 Convention in Minneapolis on Thursday, June 21.

Last year was a landmark for the consumer tech industry. For years, CTA has advocated for over-the-counter (OTC) hearing devices. According to a 2014 CTA study, nearly half of online U.S. adults surveyed said they live with some level of hearing loss.

And while you could walk into a drugstore and buy a pair of reading glasses without a prescription, you couldn't purchase hearing aids the same way. Instead, you'd have to pay for an expensive visit to the doctor to get a prescription, and then spend anywhere from \$1,000 to \$6,000 on the hearing aids themselves. The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) regulatory framework for non-prescription hearing devices, known as Personal Sound Amplification Products (PSAPs), prevented millions of Americans with mild-to-moderate hearing loss from getting the affordable help they want and need.

That is all about to change.

Lower Cost, Better Access, More Choices

The passage of the bipartisan Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017 means Americans will soon have access to lower-cost, FDA-regulated wearable hearing devices that will be available over the counter. These devices will also broaden the market and increase innovation, giving consumers a greater selection of products as they decide how best to manage their hearing loss.



Apple has worked with manufacturers to create hearing aids and sound processors designed specifically for iPhone and iPad.

CTA also developed high-performance standards for PSAPs to make it easier for consumers to pick products that will work for them. We're excited to see the market for PSAPs and over-the-counter hearing devices expand. According to market research by CTA, sales of PSAPs are expected to grow 53 percent in 2018.

That, however, is just the beginning.

In the last year, the number of game-changing hearing-enhancement devices on the market increased dramatically—in large part due to the extraordinary work of CTA member companies. Apple, for instance, teamed up with various manufacturers to develop iPhone- and iPad-compatible hearing aids that allow users to monitor battery

I'm a passionate tech enthusiast, and what I love most is how tech changes—and even saves—lives.

life and adjust settings from their phones. The company also created a feature known as “Live Listen,” which uses the microphone on your phone to amplify a speaker so you can hear with your Apple hearing aids. Bose crafted headphones that amplify conversations so you can hear in noisy situations. And Etymotic created a PSAP that performs essentially the same function, allowing consumers to hone in on conversations despite noise or distance.

Other CTA members have introduced new and exciting updates to the hearables market (hearables are smart devices worn in the ear), which becomes more sophisticated and connected each year. Startup company Nuheara continues to enhance the sound quality and comfort of its Bluetooth IQbuds. Hearing aid manufacturer Starkey Hearing Technologies offers a line of hearing aids and PSAPs, covering a wide range of styles and helping consumers with varying levels of hearing loss. Qualcomm, responding to the growing market for hearables, developed a new SoC (System on a Chip) series for earbuds and other hearable products designed to lower power usage by 65 percent.

And the CTA Foundation—whose mission is to link seniors and people with disabilities with technologies to enhance their lives—has partnered with the Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing, supporting efforts to

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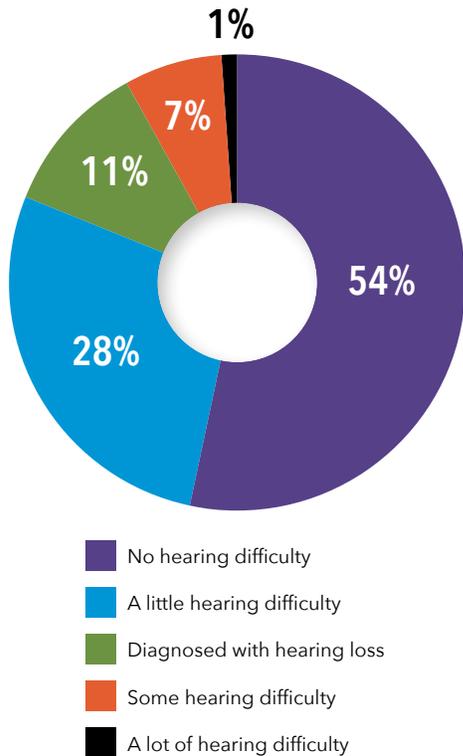
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Source: “Personal Sound Amplification Products: A Study of Consumer Attitudes and Behavior,” CEA Market Research Report, August 2014.

look at how lower-cost, readily-available devices, such as PSAPs, could improve the lives of older adults with hearing loss.

Innovation and Technology at CES 2018

We also saw a plethora of new hearables at CES®—the world’s largest technology innovation event—this year.

Olive Union, a Korean startup, exhibited its smart hearing aid that works in tandem with its app. The app allows consumers to perform a brief, three-minute hearing test to determine the proper settings for the hearing aid and monitor battery and volume through their phones. Oticon showcased its new HearingFitness

app, a companion to its Opn hearing aids, that lets users track their hearing health and make the most of their hearing aids’ capabilities. ReSound debuted its new LiNX 3D—a smart hearing aid that, along with several other remarkable capabilities, can be adjusted remotely by a user’s hearing care professional, removing the need for an in-person visit.

In addition to these kinds of devices, the market continues to grow for another product that incorporates listening and speech: digital assistants. CES featured a range of digital assistants, each offering unique features. These products—such as Amazon’s Alexa, Google Assistant, Samsung’s Bixbi and Apple’s Siri—have revolutionized how we communicate and organize our lives by switching the main interface from text to voice. What’s more, these digital assistants offer features for users with hearing loss. Alexa can work together with Bluetooth speakers so individuals can hear the device’s responses and communicate with it fully. And Siri can connect to “made for iPhone” hearing aids.

We’ve known for quite some time about technology’s remarkable ability to connect us with information, our loved ones and the world around us. But these innovations make clear that connectivity also helps all of us *interact* with the world around us.

The last year was a standout year for hearing tech, and I’m eager to see what the next decade will look like—how it will make our world more audible, more accessible and more enjoyable for all. CTA looks forward to continuing our strong partnership with the Hearing Loss Association of America and its members as we champion affordable, accessible technology hearing solutions. **HL**



Gary Shapiro is president and CEO of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)TM, the U.S. trade association representing more than 2,200 consumer technology companies, and author of The New York Times best-selling books, “Ninja Innovation: The Ten Killer Strategies of the World’s Most Successful Businesses” and “The Comeback: How Innovation Will Restore the American Dream.” His views are his own.

Connect with him on Twitter: **@GaryShapiro**.

We’ve known for quite some time about technology’s remarkable ability to connect us with information, our loved ones and the world around us. But these innovations make clear that connectivity also helps all of us *interact* with the world around us.

CES Has a History of Making History



BY KRISTY LINKOUS

CES® is without a doubt the world's largest exhibition for all things consumer tech. It is impossible to deny that, in this age of constant technological evolution, our lives are not ruled by electronic devices. Whether you are using your phone to check the weather and daily news headlines or

CES—many times—bringing the latest in technological advancements and innovation to thousands of attendees.

Just this year, at CES 2018, nearly 4,000 set up in the largest showroom in CES history to present their breakthrough technologies to more than 180,000 attendees. More than 60,000 of those attendees traveled internationally

to become part of technological history. In excess of 130 million Snapchat posts were made inside the exhibition, and more than four million official videos were posted to Twitter. The growth since its inception is tremendous to say the least, going from 14 exhibitors to thousands.

Not only has the number of exhibitors drastically increased, show attendance has grown exponentially as well, from 17,500 in 1967 to hundreds of thousands in 2018. While the growth is incredible, the impact that CES has had on influential companies and eager attendees is undeniable.

Innovators of the future are constantly inspired by CES as it is one of the most diverse gatherings of entrepreneurs in the world. Whether you are there to promote the next big thing or to

have a hands-on experience with the latest in technological advancement, there is so much to see and do. Each convention brings forth a new group of companies and individuals that will help make our lives more inclusive and exciting. Year after year at CES technologies are introduced that will in some way shape the future to make it easier for us to communicate, learn, and grow as consumers and ingenious creators. **HL**

Kristy Linkous has been an intern at HLAA since September 2017. She graduates from the University of Maryland University College in May 2018 with a bachelor's degree in communication studies. Kristy also writes for Indie Band Guru, a music review blog and artist development company.



a digital camera to record clips of your life today that will eventually turn into some of your most treasured memories, consumer electronics are all around you. CES has been in operation since 1967, and just wrapped up its annual convention in January of this year in Las Vegas.

From the beginning, CES has been dedicated to bringing consumers information about the technologies that will help to make life easier and more accessible. Many companies have introduced their innovative products at CES since its beginning, including the first VHS VCR in 1975, the first plasma display television screen in 1999, internet gaming as presented by Microsoft and Sony in 2001, and countless others. History has been made at

Last Call for N-CHATT!

BY LISE HAMLIN



We are now recruiting for the last class of the N-CHATT (Network of Consumer Hearing Assistive Trainers) program. N-CHATT brings together groups of consumer volunteers who are eager to learn more about hearing assistive technology (HAT) then use that knowledge to train others in their local community.

N-CHATT is supported by a five-year grant and as we head into the final year of that we are seeking a new group of trainers to join this terrific program. The training is comprised of an online course consisting of eight modules, three webinars, an in-person, three-day training session in the greater Washington, D.C. area, and another in-person meeting at the HLAA2019 Convention.

N-CHATT grew out of a clear need—consumers with hearing loss and the people who work with them simply do not have enough information about the devices and technology that can make living with hearing loss easier or better. Those devices can be anything from an assistive listening device to a visual and tactile alarm clock to an app that provides speech-to-text to captioned telephones. There are many products available, but not enough people who know about them.

For those of you who are regular readers of *Hearing Life*, you know N-CHATT is a program HLAA has been hosting in a partnership with Gallaudet University and the American Institutes for Research for the last four

years. We are thrilled we've been able to be part of the learning experiences of one passionate group of trainees after another. When these trainers have completed their grant-year presentations, some will join the ranks of trainers who agree to continue providing presentations by request in their local area.

We want to grow the number of people who are training others about hearing assistive technology for the final year of our grant. If you are interested in hearing assistive technology and have experience training others, you could be part of the next group of consumers that helps spread the word about HAT.

The N-CHATT application process will open on May 14, 2018 and close on July 9, 2018.

To learn more about N-CHATT, visit hearingloss.org/content/n-chatt-training or email N-CHATT@hearingloss.org.

If you would like to have an N-CHATT trainer come to your meeting visit hearingloss.org/content/schedule-session to see if there is a trainer near you.

We look forward to hearing from you. **HL**



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



From Black and White to Technicolor

Making Music More Accessible to People with Hearing Loss

BY THOMAS KAUFMANN

I felt like I was about to go on a first date. I had no idea what to expect. This was definitely one of the most exciting moments of my life. I repeated what I was going to say in my head. Was this really happening? Was I really about to discuss with ODESZA, one of my all-time favorite music artists, how to collaborate to promote better hearing accessibility at music events?

When I walked into the backstage area of the Santa Barbara Bowl, wondering how it could possibly get any better than this, I reflected on how I got to this point. How, in just five years, did I go from a nerdy graduate student to being the founder of a technology start-up dedicated to making the world a better place for people with hearing loss? It all started with music.

The Inspiration

Music has been an integral part of my life since I was a teenager. At 13, I bought my first DJ equipment, and at 15 I had the opportunity to play my first paid wedding gig. Then when I was 17 I filled in for a friend at a nightclub.

A year later, it all came together and I started my own entertainment company to play at weddings, nightclubs and corporate events. As the company grew, so did the events, and before I knew it I was regularly booking more than 40 DJs and musicians to play at high-class corporate events for clients, such as Audi, IKEA, and T-Mobile, among others. The high I felt from strategically guiding people on a musical journey throughout their evening was addicting. I never wanted the rush to stop.

However, as it often happens, life had other plans. In addition to running my entertainment business, I worked as a freelancer for a patent law firm. I was presented with the opportunity to spend a summer interning at the University of California, Santa Barbara, a long way from my home in Germany.

At the end of the internship, I was recruited into the Ph.D. program in chemistry. I had a mere eight weeks to essentially “cancel” my life in Germany and move to the United States. My business partner took over running the day-to-day operations of our booking agency and, while I tried to return to play shows as much as I could, the extensive travel soon became too much and I decided to sell the company. Now with a strong focus on science and very little music, my life lacked color and vibrancy. I felt like my once colorful, dynamic world, full of the layers of musical creativity from artists, had faded into just black and white.

This Changes Everything

One morning in early 2012, however, all of this changed. I was having breakfast with a group of friends in Santa Barbara. One of my friends, who is a professional photographer, was complaining about his ears still ringing from the concert he was shooting the night before at the Santa Barbara Bowl, a 4,500-seat amphitheater. He was standing right in front of the loudspeakers to get the best shots of the band. Shocked, I asked him, “Well, don’t you use earplugs?” When he responded, “No, they muffle the sound,” I was speechless.

After years of working in music, I knew the importance of protecting your hearing. To date I have never left the house without my custom-fit earplugs, which I showed everyone at the table. None of my friends were even aware such a product existed.

These comfortable silicone pieces, equipped with a special filter, are known as “musician’s earplugs.” Unlike typical foam earplugs, they preserve the clarity of sound and essentially turn down the volume of everything around you. That way, you can still enjoy the music and

understand people talking to you without damaging your hearing from loudspeakers or other loud noises.

Almost weekly, when I was working different events, I would be stunned and frustrated when people asked me to turn up the volume. Did they not realize how loud it already was? Did nobody ever teach them that they were risking noise-induced hearing loss? After explaining the importance of hearing protection to my friend I realized there’s another important piece to the puzzle: People probably have no idea what they’d be missing out on if they lost their hearing, even if only to a small extent.

A New Business is Born

Our breakfast ended with a simple question by one of our mutual friends: “Well, why don’t you start a business with that idea?” Unable to stop thinking about this challenge, I dove straight into market research about hearing protection, audiology, and hearing aids.

I learned that, unlike in Germany, where hearing devices are treated as a way to enhance the quality of life, the hearing aid industry in the United States is much more medically focused, where people with hearing loss are treated more like they have a disease. Shortly thereafter, I was introduced to the president of the HCAA Santa Barbara Chapter. She had just returned from the HCAA Convention, where she learned about hearing loop technology for the first time.

A hearing loop is an assistive listening system that takes sound from a venue’s sound system and sends it directly and wirelessly to a listener’s hearing aid or cochlear implant without any distortion, echo, or background noise. All the listener hears is crystal-clear sound, as if they were sitting right on stage next to the presenter or musician. Almost like being immersed in a cloud of music, it allows all the nuances and layers in the piece to be fully captured and revealed.

Raising Awareness of Hearing Loops

While hearing loop technology has been in widespread use in Scandinavia and the United Kingdom for decades, only a few regions across the United States had started adopting it. In fact, at that time not a single location in the Santa Barbara area was equipped with a hearing loop.

We decided to partner with another local nonprofit organization to raise awareness and start installing the technology in venues around Santa Barbara. The impact it had was unbelievable. Within a few years, we had achieved our goal of making Santa Barbara the most hearing-friendly city in the state of California and received the Santa Barbara Mayor’s Award for Outstanding Effort in 2014.



PHOTO © A. ARTHUR FISHER

ODESZA's Clayton Knight (far left) and Harrison Mills (far right) experience sound with OTOjOY's LoopBuds. Also pictured are OTOjOY's founder and CTO, Thomas Kaufmann (center right), and its head of outreach and advocacy, Micah Thomas (center left).

Ever since we started out, our primary goal has been to spread awareness about the lack of accessibility for individuals with hearing loss and to educate people about available technology options. Almost every time we demonstrated a hearing loop with someone's favorite piece of music they were in tears. In fact, one woman

described that if she used "just" her hearing aids, she would hear the world in black and white, only gleaned the facts and information. With the help of a hearing loop, however, her world would instantly change to technicolor, and she could hear levels of emotion and musical nuances that she hadn't perceived in years.

ODESZA's Rising Star

Harrison Mills and Clayton Knight met when they were freshmen at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. However, they didn't start collaborating in music until their senior year. It was only shortly before they graduated in 2012 that they formed ODESZA.

In September 2012 the Seattle-based duo released their first album, *Summer's Gone*, to much acclaim. They released their second studio album, *In Return*, in 2014. The album featured the song "Say My Name" which earned a nomination in 2015 for Best Remixed Recording, Non-Classical at the 58th Annual Grammy Awards.

More accolades followed when ODESZA released their latest album, *A Moment Apart*, in 2017. Featuring guest singers Leon Bridges, Regina Spektor and RY X among others, *A Moment Apart* was nominated for Best Dance/Electronic Album at the 60th Annual Grammy Awards, and the single "Line of Sight" was nominated for Best Dance Recording. In

addition to the Grammy nominations, the album also reached #3 on the Billboard Top 200 Charts and #1 on the Top Electronic/Dance Albums Chart.

On the heels of the album release, ODESZA announced the 2017 *A Moment Apart* Tour. The world tour has been selling out around the globe, including large venues like the STAPLES Center in Los Angeles and Barclays Center in New York.

ODESZA is continuing the tour in 2018, with dates throughout the U.S. and abroad. They will



PHOTO © A. ARTHUR FISHER

ODESZA's Harrison Mills (left) and Clayton Knight (right) performing at the Santa Barbara Bowl during their *A Moment Apart* Tour. Photo Credit: A. Arthur Fisher

be performing at the popular Coachella Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California in April, as well as playing two sold-out shows at Colorado's renowned Red Rocks Amphitheater in June. At

the end of June the tour heads overseas with stops in France, Germany, Spain and Japan, among many others.

ODESZA has enjoyed a meteoric rise to success in less than six short years together. To date, they have racked up 31 Hype Machine #1s, more than one billion combined Spotify and YouTube plays, and in excess of one billion plays



PHOTO © TONJE THILSEN

ODESZA's Clayton Knight (left) and Harrison Mills.

on Pandora.

But in what might just be the highlight of their career, on January 9, 2018 NBC chose ODESZA's single, "Corners of the Earth" from *A Moment Apart* as the official anthem of the 2018 Winter Olympics, held this past February in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

For more information about ODESZA, including upcoming tour dates, visit the band's website at odesza.com. **HL**

Let's Make People's Ears Smile

As soon as she said this, I thought about my own connection to music and how I had felt exactly the same way during the brief time when music wasn't a large part of my life. With that, I knew that I had to bring this joy to other people's ears. Enter OTOjOY, the company I started to raise awareness about hearing loss and create innovative hearing technology that "lets people's ears smile."

Since starting OTOjOY in 2012, we have expanded beyond Santa Barbara to serve most of California and Arizona, and are only continuing to grow, with a specific emphasis on increasing access to music, film, and art.

While we find that places of worship, universities, and government buildings are adopting the technology at rapid rates, it seems that movie theaters, music festivals, and concert venues are slower to install hearing loops because they are generally viewed as places for entertainment, not for accessing information. Furthermore, organizations tend to not recognize their lack of accessibility, since hearing loss is not a visible limitation and many affected individuals do not speak up about their need for accommodations due to the stigma that's still associated with hearing loss.

At OTOjOY, we've been dedicated to changing that. We want people with hearing loss to be able to go to concerts, live shows, and music festivals with their friends and families without the hassle of dealing with venue staff to borrow an assistive listening device that might or might not work, leaving their ID for a deposit, and trying to find a place to return it after the show, when everybody else is already on their way out.

We want venues to understand the need for assistive listening technology, even when they think they "have a great sound system and it's loud enough." We want to ensure that hearing professionals educate their clients about hearing loop technology, sell devices that are equipped with telecoils so they are compatible with hearing loops, activate this life-changing feature, and teach their clients how to use it, something that is rarely done today. We want to change the way music events are perceived by individuals with hearing loss by increasing awareness and educating the public about what it's like to have hearing loss.



PHOTO © A. ARTHUR FISHER

LoopBuds allow smartphone users to access the sound from a hearing loop system without the need for a hearing aid or cochlear implant. The LoopBuds iOS app enables customization of the listening experience.

Collaborating with ODESZA

Our journey through the music world has allowed us to provide our technology at some of the largest music festivals in the country, including Coachella, Stagecoach, and the Oregon Eclipse Festival. When traveling to present our innovative vision and technology at professional conferences, serendipitously, our paths with ODESZA have crossed three times in the past year.

When we invited a few attendees of the 4th International Hearing Loop Conference in Berlin, Germany to experience ODESZA's concert when it was sent directly to their hearing aids through a loop, their jaws dropped. It was then that we learned about ODESZA's inclusive message of wanting to make their shows more accessible to all their fans and allow them to be fully immersed in their music.

Just like ODESZA, we believe that anyone should be able to enjoy the full experience of their favorite artists' music and absorb all the emotion and depth of sound that comes with it. One way we know how to do that is by asking all of you to help by self-advocacy and education.

At the next show or performance you go to, ask if there are assistive listening devices available. Communicate the need for them and educate others. The more we come together to advocate for access for individuals with hearing loss, the more likely it is that we will create real, sustainable change in favor of increased accessibility to all people in our communities.

So, I ask you to join me, ODESZA, the Santa Barbara Bowl, HLAA and everyone else in the U.S. who works tirelessly on behalf of people with hearing loss to realize a time when everyone's world can go beyond just black and white to being fully, wonderfully and deeply technicolor. **HL**



PHOTO © ROBERT REDFIELD

Thomas Kaufmann is the founder and CEO of OTOjOY. He holds a German diploma degree in Physics and a Master of Science degree in Chemistry from the University of California Santa Barbara. With a passion for music and the desert, he now calls

Phoenix, Arizona his home. Learn more about OTOjOY at otojoy.com.

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The Walk4Hearing Is Serious Fun for Alliance Ear Community

BY MELISSA TUMBLIN

The HLAA Walk4Hearing allows people with hearing loss, their friends, family, and local and national organizations to come together to raise awareness and funds for the hearing loss community. The Walks give people a chance to make unforgettable memories, to meet others like themselves, and to enjoy a day filled with fun. In addition to the significant impact made by individuals and teams who participate, the support and involvement of both local and national organizations is integral to the success of a Walk.



One way for organizations to get involved is by becoming a Walk4Hearing Alliance. Alliances are local 501(c)(3) nonprofits such as educational programs, schools, hospitals, hearing health care-related groups, or any organization with a charitable goal of offering services and programs to people with hearing loss. They work in conjunction with the local HLAA Walk4Hearing organizers to help make the Walk a robust community event. The Walk is also an opportunity for an Alliance to promote its benefits and services and the funds they raise go toward supporting local programs as well as those offered by the Alliance.



Ear Community is a charitable nonprofit organization that helps children and adults who are born with microtia and atresia. It began as a Facebook support group on May 20, 2010 after my daughter Ally was born in 2009 with microtia and aural atresia in her right ear. The condition also left her with a moderate to severe hearing loss in that ear.

But I wanted to do more; I wanted to find a way to raise awareness of microtia and atresia and educate people in the hope of making things easier for the next family who has a child born with this condition. I also wanted to help people learn more about hearing loss and how to better understand

More About Microtia and Atresia

Microtia is a congenital deformity affecting the outer ear (pinna) where the ear does not fully develop during the first trimester of pregnancy. A microtia ear is often smaller in size, can have a peanut-shaped appearance, have only a small nub or lobe present, or be completely absent at birth. Microtia can affect one ear (unilaterally) or both ears (bilaterally) and occurs in approximately one out of every 6,000-12,000 births. The right ear is more commonly affected.

Microtia is often accompanied by atresia, also known as aural atresia, a condition in which the external auditory ear canal is either absent or closed. The malformation of the middle ear bones (incus, stapes, and malleus) may be affected, including the narrowing of the ear canal, known as canal stenosis.



Ear Community Board of Director Member Kristy Smith and her daughter Olivia of Team Our Nemos sporting their National Microtia Awareness Day t-shirts at the Arizona Walk4Hearing, which takes place every November.

the effects it can have on peoples' lives, and to help families connect with each other so they can share their experiences and realize that they are not alone.

In 2012 I started Ear Community as a nonprofit organization to help as many people as I could who are born with microtia and atresia, as well as their families and loved ones. In just a short time we have been fortunate enough to have helped thousands of these people.



Becoming a Walk4Hearing Alliance

Ear Community became a Walk4Hearing Alliance in 2015. We promote the Walk among our members and form teams across the country to raise funds and awareness. We use the money raised from the Walk4Hearing in many ways. It helps pay the cost to ship donated hearing devices to those who need them and also pays for appointments and fittings for Baha recipients. (A Baha is a bone conduction hearing device.) In addition, the funds help find audiologists who are willing to be trained in programming the Baha and ensuring they have the equipment necessary to help their patients.

Educating people and helping them understand different types of hearing loss can really help the general community be more accepting. People affected by microtia, aural atresia and hearing loss also want to have a community to belong to and enjoy coming together at the Walk4Hearing. The HLAA Walks are amazing in the way they bring so many wonderful organizations and their teams together, all who support hearing loss and who want to make a difference on a local or national level.

The Walks Are Serious Fun for Ear Community

The Ear Community Alliance teams take their walks very seriously, but also manage to have fun at the same time. Ear Community's Team Cutie Pies participates in the Long Beach (California) Walk4Hearing every June. They bring together families and teachers from a local deaf and hard of hearing school district program called P.I.E.S, located in North Orange County. Team Cutie Pies has had a Walk4Hearing team for the past four years and includes the Bayan and Orozco families along with one of the county's teachers, Elizabeth Desloge.

Another Ear Community Alliance team is Courtney's Crew, who walks and participates in the New York City



Walk4Hearing every September. Courtney Muchow was born with microtia and aural atresia and wanted to organize a team to help raise awareness. This past September, Courtney fractured her ankle but still managed to walk with a smile because it means so much to her. Courtney's Crew includes her friends Sammy, Madi, Katherine and her family. They always have a great time and enjoy spending the afternoon in the city.

Ear Community Board of Director Member Kristy Smith said, "Getting involved with HLAA has been truly amazing and a blessed opportunity to meet new people, raise money and spread awareness. There are so many people who need to know that HLAA is here to support anyone of any age with any type of hearing loss, and that Ear Community is here to help those who have microtia and aural atresia."

Two years ago, Kristy started her own team, Our Nemos, at the Arizona Walk4Hearing to help support both HLAA and Ear Community. This past November, Kristy was interviewed at the Arizona Walk4Hearing about microtia and aural atresia where she also spoke about National Microtia Awareness Day. "Being part of both organizations has helped confirm that this is where I belong. I enjoy being part of Arizona's hearing loss community, bringing families together, and showing other families to be proud and support our children with little ears." **HL**



Melissa Tumblin is the founder and executive director of Ear Community and mom to Alyssa "Ally" Tumblin, who was born with microtia and aural atresia in her right ear. She is also the founder of the Microtia and Atresia Support Group on Facebook.

Melissa is a past board member for the Hands & Voices Organization and a past council member for the Parent Advocacy Family Council for Children's Hospital Colorado (Bill Daniels Center for Children's Hearing). She has spoken at many microtia and atresia surgical conferences, has presented at EAA (Educational Audiology Association) conferences and has also been featured in AudiologyOnline and Healthy Hearing. Melissa has more than 15 years' experience in marketing medical device equipment. For more information visit earcommunity.org.



Courtney's Crew participates in the New York City Walk4Hearing every September.



Team Cutie Pies takes part in the Long Beach Walk4Hearing every June.

A Psychological Tool for Managing Tinnitus

The Power of Creating Useful Narratives

BY MICHAEL A. HARVEY

Tinnitus, as most of us know, is when one perceives sound in one or both ears when none is actually present. Since the causes of tinnitus are often unknown, people sometimes “fill in the blanks” by creating their own personal explanations for the question, “Why me?”

For example, Sue reported that, “Although my audiologist told me my tinnitus could be due to the ototoxic medicines I was taking, I know the real cause—my repressed anger. Therefore, she began indiscriminately unleashing her anger at the slightest provocation.

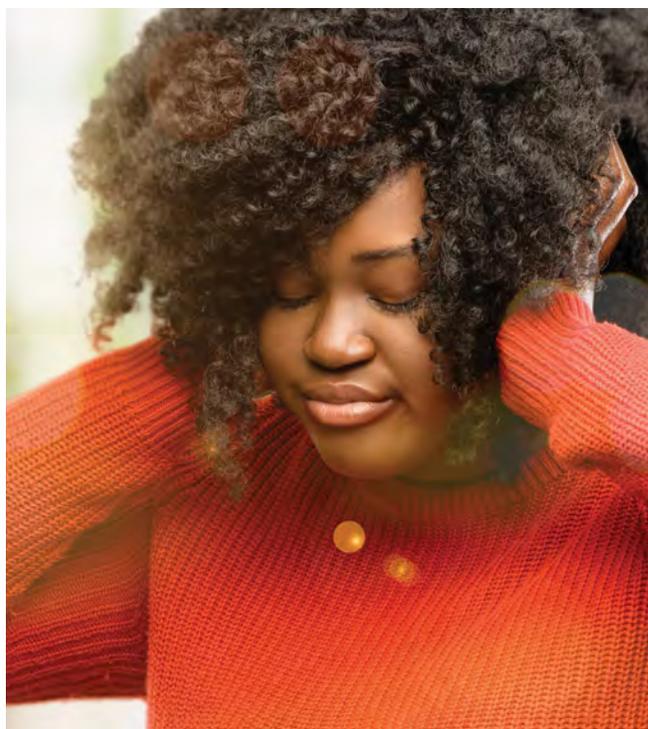
As another example, Mary was convinced that her tinnitus was because of a parasite from a “health food kick” that she was on many years ago, so she follows a rigid dietary regimen that prevents her from eating outside of her sterilized kitchen.

Finally, John told me that he was trying to *forgive himself* for having tinnitus. He was convinced that the clanging in his ears was divine punishment for having committed a transgression against God in a past life (an extramarital affair). Hence, he compulsively prayed, often several times an hour.

Explanatory Narratives

Although many people with tinnitus simply accept the fact that frequently there is no known cause, I routinely meet people who mitigate this uncertainty by constructing so-called “explanatory narratives” to answer the question, “Why me?”

These narratives—such as repressed anger, a parasite or a past life transgression—could be medically



indefensible, and might even seem preposterous, but they cannot be objectively disproven. Indeed, they do not come from an objective place. Our experiences do not exist “out there” as an empirical, or observable, entity. Rather, we incorporate our experiences into our own personal, invented storyline. In the language of narrative therapy, we *story* our experiences.

I’m reminded of a child who was learning how to become a baseball umpire, so he asked three umpires for

their advice. The first umpire said, “I call them as they are.” The second said, “I call them as I see them.” The third umpire said, “They are as I see them.” We are all “third umpires.”

It is not uncommon for people to adopt explanatory narratives that somehow put the blame on themselves. Although these self-blame narratives might cause feelings of guilt and shame, paradoxically, their perceived clarity could be psychologically comforting.

For example, it is common for parents to blame themselves for having a disabled child, as in the case of a mother who was convinced that, “My ambivalence about being pregnant caused my baby’s cerebral palsy. I feel horrible about this, but at least I know the reason.”

Self-blame explanatory narratives can also provide one with a sense of control. To the extent that an individual believes they caused their own tinnitus, they might also believe they have the power to actualize a cure. For example, by eating carefully, expressing anger, or praying.

Self-perceived empowerment contrasts with the common feelings of helplessness experienced even when one learns that up to 90 percent of tinnitus sufferers can obtain some relief, even though there is no known cure.

The Effects of Storying Our Experiences

The ways in which people understand and interpret their health-related issues—their storyline—makes a considerable difference as to how they affect that person’s life. How we story an experience determines how we feel, which in turn determines how we behave.

Sue, Mary, and John would have endured significantly less suffering had they not storied their tinnitus with themes of self-loathing. Sue attributed her tinnitus to suppressed anger—she felt internally “blocked,” so she spewed anger at every opportunity. Mary attributed her tinnitus to fastidious dieting—she felt habitually anxious, so she deprived herself of enjoying novel foods outside the confines of her kitchen. John attributed his tinnitus to divine punishment—he felt guilty, so he compulsively prayed.

However, the most debilitating psychological effect was their self-denigration when their strategies failed. They admonished themselves for not trying hard enough, and thus tried more. This became a vicious cycle that not only failed to provide relief, but caused increased stress, anxiety and depression which, in turn, exacerbated their tinnitus.

I Think, Therefore I Am

The good news is that although we do not choose tinnitus, we have the ability to choose how we story our experiences. We don’t have to “add insult to injury” by creating debilitating explanatory narratives about tinnitus.

This harkens back to a well-known excerpt of the Serenity Prayer, a hallmark of many 12-step programs:

*God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.*

If the veracity of a particular explanatory narrative cannot be proven or disproven, it behooves one to summon the courage to change their narrative to one that is psychologically useful.

As psychologist Deborah Khoshaba advised, “Be sure the story you wish to tell about what happens to you gives you many options from which to carve out the next chapter of your life.” Or as author Toni Morrison put it, “You wanna fly? Then you’ve gotta give up the sh*t that weighs you down.”

Rabbi Harold Kushner was confronted with this task. Before his 3-year-old son was diagnosed with a devastating disease that causes rapid aging, Kushner believed that the world was a fair place. God rewarded and protected good and punished evil.

His son’s death made it impossible for him to hold on to those beliefs. As he re-storied his faith, he worked on his book “When Bad Things Happen to Good People,” first published in 1981 to great acclaim. Kushner modified his theological explanatory narrative to conclude that since God is not omnipotent, sometimes bad things happen to good people.

Maybe It Just Takes a Better Story

I asked John how his belief about a past life event causing his tinnitus has weighed him down. He disclosed how initially his explanatory narrative had given him a sense of control; offered him a cure for tinnitus by prayer. He then chronicled how that initial comfort had morphed into him feeling “besieged” by an endless cycle of praying and self-condemnation for not praying hard enough or long enough.

John had realized that this cycle took over his marriage, his parenting, his free time—in short, how it had subjugated his entire life. I admitted that I did not have the wisdom, ability or moral right to disagree

Our experiences do not exist “out there” as an empirical, or observable, entity. Rather, we incorporate our experiences into our own personal, invented storyline.

with his narrative, but then I asked a pivotal question: “Given that it can’t be proven or disproven, would you be willing to come up with a better narrative that’s more useful to you; one that would help you live a

“Be sure the story you wish to tell about what happens to you gives you many options from which to carve out the next chapter of your life.”

more fulfilled life?” He nodded.

It was a while before I saw John again, but he came into my office one day with a beaming smile. He told me that he “took a deep breath” before finally telling his audiologist that he used to think his tinnitus was divine punishment for having had an extramarital affair in

a past life. She did not exude a demeaning attitude, as he had feared, but instead validated his feelings with, “I now understand why you disagreed with me that it was probably caused by head trauma.”

John then told me that he and his audiologist had the “best session ever” and agreed on a revised tinnitus narrative: that its cause was a severe head trauma that happened in one of his past lives. We both laughed. Most importantly, John no longer felt culpable and therefore no longer viewed tinnitus as a punishment. Toward the end of that “best session ever,” he informed his audiologist that he would begin the Tinnitus Retraining Therapy that she had suggested many times before. **HL**



Michael A. Harvey, Ph.D., A.B.P.P., is a diplomate in clinical psychology with a private practice in Framingham, Massachusetts. Dr. Harvey is also a faculty consultant at Salus University in Elkins, Pennsylvania. His most recent books are “The Odyssey of Hearing Loss: Tales of Triumph” and “Listen with the Heart: Relationships and Hearing Loss,” both published by Dawnsign Press. Dr. Harvey welcomes your feedback at mharvey2000@comcast.net.

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HAAA Increases Public Awareness with Connected TV

BY NANCY MACKLIN

Soon after the release of the report, *Hearing Health Care for Adults: Priorities for Improving Access and Affordability* by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS) in June 2016, HAAA took the lead on Recommendation 11: Improve Publicly Available Information on Hearing Health.

With the help of several partner organizations HAAA is issuing a call to action to “Get your hearing checked!” You will see this in many of our communications as well as at the 2018 Walk4Hearing events, many of which will have a hearing screening van. You can follow the conversation on Twitter with the hashtag **#screenURhearing**.

HAAA compiled a list of resources developed by experts in the industry on such topics as age-related hearing loss, noise and how to prevent hearing loss. The resources are in the Helpful Links section of our new website at hearingloss.org/hearing-help/helpful-links.

While “Get your hearing checked!” is an important message, we believe the time is right to educate consumers on many different topics related to hearing loss. As we get closer to seeing over-the-counter (OTC) hearing devices become a reality it is even more important for HAAA to disseminate educational content on a larger scale. It is critical that people know what to do if they suspect they have hearing loss, what assistive devices and technologies are available to help them in the workplace, the effects of untreated hearing loss...the list is endless.

What is Connected TV?

Connected TV, or CTV, is digital video content streamed through a television. CTV does not require an internet-enabled TV (a smart TV), viewers can stream content to their sets using internet-enabled streaming devices like Roku, Amazon Fire stick or a video game console. (Source: adage.com).



HAAA Partners with CaptionCall to Deliver CTV Content

HAAA recently partnered with CaptionCall to produce three new educational videos for CTV: Recognizing Hearing Loss, Hearing Loss and Your Overall Health, and IP CTS (Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service).

Are You a CTV Partner?

HAAA is currently seeking partners to create a playlist of co-branded educational videos that will air on Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and Roku. Do you have educational videos that you would like to distribute to a larger audience? We can do that! There are a variety of packages available to suit your budget and marketing objectives. If you are interested in partnering with HAAA on a CTV playlist, reach out to Nancy Macklin. HL

Nancy Macklin is director of external affairs at Hearing Loss Association of America. She can be reached at nmacklin@hearingloss.org or 301.657.2248.

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Life is Calling

Coping with Hearing Loss and the Challenges of Hearing Aids

BY CARL N. RENTSCHLER



Hearing is the partner to speaking, and when hearing is compromised the challenges of effective communication greatly increase. The old adage, “You don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone” certainly applies to hearing. What is taken for granted at a young age can turn into a significant nemesis at an older age. Hearing deficiencies can have a pronounced effect in one-to-one communication, group settings, and telecommunications.

Hearing aids provide help for those with hearing loss, but they are by no means a panacea. It is very common for people to liken hearing aids to eyeglasses, believing that with hearing aids they should be able to hear everything and that their hearing will be completely restored, just as sight is with glasses.

This, unfortunately, is far from the truth. Most people with hearing aids, even those with the best digital models,

will tell you they still struggle with hearing issues. The initial challenge is to become accustomed to the devices, which often takes considerable time. Group settings typically present a major challenge for people with hearing aids since you are often hearing a distant voice instead of the person immediately next to you.

Listening to a speaker in a room can be a challenge because sound waves are not captured as well with hearing

aids as they are with the ear alone. Hearing aids can be a great asset to people with hearing loss but it takes understanding and patience to realize their full value.

I would like to relate some of my experiences and challenges in communications as someone with age-related hearing loss. I have been a member of the Toastmasters International public speaking organization for more than 35 years. Over time I have had to make adjustments as my hearing worsened. There is no perfect remedy to overcoming hearing loss and the challenges of hearing aids, but there are steps that can be taken and tactics that can be used to make difficult situations better.

Challenges

The most prevalent challenge people face in dealing with hearing loss and the use of hearing aids is being able to understand others. Hearing aids improve overall sound quality but do not always improve distinction. As my hearing loss progressed, I quickly learned there are two facets to this. First, the volume must be loud enough to capture the sounds; but second, and more importantly, I quickly realized that being able to distinguish words was an even greater challenge.

Consonants vs. Vowels—Distinguishing consonants tends to be more of a problem than distinguishing vowels for people with hearing loss. Being able to hear vowel sounds will alert you that someone is speaking, but it's the consonant sounds that give speech meaning and help you distinguish one word from another. Without being able to hear subtle differences between consonants, words like “cat” and “hat,” “parrot” and “ferret,” and “show” and “throw” can be hard to differentiate. I have to admit I've made some embarrassing misjudgments in what I thought I heard versus what was actually said.

Gender—There can also be gaps in communication when speaking with someone of the opposite gender. For myself, female voices are far more of a challenge than male voices and I understand the opposite is true as well. In jest I have heard it said that this is part of a divine plan to keep peace between aging couples. If couples can't hear each other, they won't fight.

Groups—Group situations, particularly in large rooms, pose significant challenges. I recently gave a speech to a manufacturing company's sales force, and we were located in a large room. I was fine in giving the speech, but I struggled when it came to answering questions. With some of the questions I had to physically leave

the podium and walk into the audience to hear and understand what I was being asked. Other meeting participants helped me along by raising their voice when they asked their question.

Older structures, such as places of worship, were not designed with acoustics in mind. These venues can be particularly difficult as the sound tends to echo and hearing aids typically do not self-adjust for these situations very well.

Remote Communications—Remote communication methods such as conference calls and video conferences can present unique challenges for people wearing hearing aids. Volume in such media is typically set for those with normal hearing, making it difficult for people with hearing aids. The added complication is that people on the speaking end of a conference call might be located too far from the phone's speaker. The resulting fluctuating volume can be extremely vexing and frustrating.

How Loud Am I Speaking?

One of my greatest challenges when adjusting to my hearing aids some years ago was determining the volume of my own voice. I would unknowingly start speaking softer because I felt I was loud enough. This continues to be a challenge for me when making speeches. In a recent speech to a sales group, I felt my voice was booming, yet people in the audience were motioning for me to increase volume. I have learned that the best guidance in this area is to get input from those around me.

Dealing with Perceptions

While age is the most common cause of hearing loss, it can be brought on by many factors. Statistics show that about 1 in 5 people above the age of 12 and 1 in 3 people above the age of 65 has some degree of hearing loss.

Hearing aids can be helpful, but they are certainly not a cure-all. This means that there may be gaps in communications because some parts of a conversation or speech are either not heard or are misinterpreted. I personally have to sometimes ask people to repeat parts of a conversation. Some people do not recognize this as the outcome of a medical condition and thus express frustration or even make light of the situation.

I was on the tennis court recently and struggling to hear parts of the conversation. When I asked one gentleman to repeat what he said he barked that I should turn up my hearing aids and then started to laugh. After a pause, I responded that, “If you think my hearing loss is funny, if I had a heart attack you would really get a good belly laugh.” This quieted the situation.

Another common experience for someone with hearing loss is being left out of conversations. Some people simply do not want to deal with someone who might require “special” accommodations to communicate. This is particularly frustrating.

The other side of this is people who recognize you have a hearing deficiency and try to compensate by speaking loudly. It seems some shout as though they are trying to reach you at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. This is very embarrassing, especially in a group setting. People often don’t realize that hearing loss is a medical condition and not an attention or mental shortcoming.

What Can Be Done to Facilitate Better Communication?

Given that hearing aids are not the perfect solution additional steps must be taken to ensure effective communication. This can involve a combination of different strategies and tactics, including body positioning, additional assistive listening devices, and working with those around you to provide assistance. However, living with hearing loss can still be frustrating, so most importantly it is essential to keep a positive attitude.

Positioning is Key!—Studies have shown that about 55 percent of communication is non-verbal, therefore every effort should be made to take advantage of body language. Your position in relation to a speaker’s is key to achieving this. Hearing can be greatly enhanced by considering your environment and taking steps to strategically locate yourself.

Most times this means positioning yourself as close to the speaker as possible. For a Toastmasters meeting I always make sure I arrive early and sit in a front row seat, or at least close to the lectern. The same applies to public venues or places of worship. I have found that proximity to the speaker is a critical step to ensuring I get the most out of my hearing aids.

Being close to the speaker also helps in getting the most out of non-verbal communications. For meetings around a table, I try to locate myself as close to the middle of the participants as I can. This is not always possible, but at least I make it a goal. In the case of conference calls, I try to position myself near the speakerphone.

Restaurants are notoriously bad for effective hearing because of sounds coming from different directions. Even the best digital hearing aids that claim to be able to filter sounds still cannot provide sufficient localization in a restaurant to clearly hear those around you. In making dinner reservations, I often ask the restaurant to seat us in the quietest area possible. I have found that most

establishments will do their best to honor this request, although often the quietest location is still annoyingly loud.

Even small group settings require attention to positioning for best hearing. For example, if I am taking part in a two- or three-person conversation I make sure I am always facing the person speaking. This means I might have to shift position as different people talk, but it allows me to get the most focused hearing and greatest benefit out of body language.

Electronic Tools Can Help—Modern hearing aids provide the ultimate in hearing technology and offer many options to enhance hearing ability. Volume control is standard on nearly every model, and this feature is a huge help in difficult situations. Most of today’s hearing aids are equipped with a telecoil, or t-coil, which allows the wearer to connect to a hearing loop system.

A hearing loop, also called an induction loop, consists of a wire that circles a room and transmits an electromagnetic sound directly to a hearing aid through the t-coil. Hearing loops work perfectly for me, but unfortunately few buildings or rooms are equipped with them. Most times there will be a sign indicating that a hearing loop has been installed.

Modern hearing aids offer options to address different situations, and many automatically adjust to them. Some models reduce background noise so the wearer can focus on speech and conversation. More advanced hearing aids are able to connect wirelessly to electronic devices such as smartphones, TVs and more. I have found that even with the most advanced options there are still many challenging situations.

One example of hearing assistive technology I use frequently in group environments is a small microphone that works in conjunction with my hearing aids. The mic is in the form of a pen, so it is fairly inconspicuous. I place the pen on the table where the conversation will take place or can even locate it at the lectern in a large group setting such as a Toastmasters meeting. The microphone is “paired” with my hearing aids by pushing a button and transmits enhanced sound to my hearing aids that would otherwise sound distant. I have found this accessory to be a very effective means to improve the capabilities of my hearing aids.

Don’t Be a Closet Hearing Aid Wearer—I can remember how vain I was when I got my first hearing aids. I would ask my barber to style my hair so it covered them. I didn’t want people to know I wore hearing aids because of the stigma that I perceived went along with them. Somehow I thought that people would see me differently and put me in a different class.

I have since overcome my vanity and now openly display my hearing aids. I let people know that I have a hearing loss and would appreciate it if they could speak in a louder voice. I have found that most people are very receptive and will try to help. In one speaking engagement I made the audience aware that I might have a difficult time hearing their questions, and they were very supportive in helping me. I regret that I went through a period of being a “closet” hearing aid wearer since I have found that most people will be accommodating in trying to help me hear better.

Conclusions

Hearing loss is a significant problem for millions of people, and in many cases it worsens with age. People can become extremely frustrated when they aren’t able to engage in speeches or conversations because they get only snippets of what is being said. Hearing aids are often prescribed as a means to improve hearing, but they are not a cure-all.

It is possible to stay engaged in conversations and communicate more effectively, but it requires both effort and action. These actions can involve adjusting your hearing aids, moving closer to the speaker, additional accessories or hearing assistive technology, or asking those around you for assistance. And since a large part of communication is non-verbal it could require several of these elements to stay involved.

A positive attitude and taking action will go a long way toward enjoying effective communications and ensuring that hearing loss does not become a debilitating disability. **HL**



Carl Rentschler, P.E. is an engineering consultant with more than 40 years’ experience in engineering and management in the power and petrochemical fields. Mr. Rentschler is semi-retired and currently writes articles for various professional journals and magazines, and mentors young professionals. He holds a B.S. in civil engineering from Penn State University and an M. Eng. from Cornell University.



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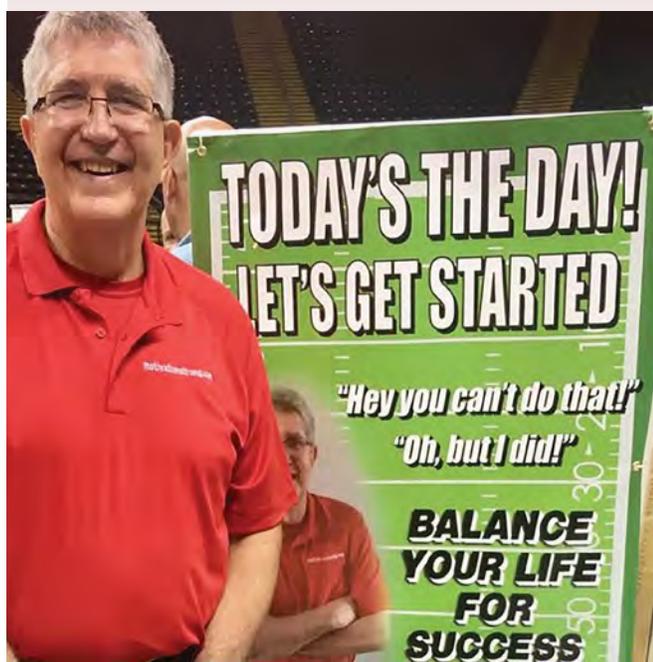
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New Workshop Opportunity for HLAA Chapters

BY MARK MAYS

After 36 years as a teacher and coach I would like to share some experiences about my lifelong hearing loss with HLAA chapters nationwide. “Hey, you can’t do that!” “Oh, but I did!” focuses on the obstacles I have encountered with hearing loss from infancy up to the present.

Mark will be presenting “Hey, you can’t do that!” “Oh, but I did!” at HLAA2018 Convention in Minneapolis at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 23. You can find more information on the Convention webpage at hearingloss.org/content/convention.



In this workshop you will hear how I was told many times that because of my hearing loss I would not be able to achieve most of my goals in life. But through the four priorities I developed when I was very young, I have had nothing but success when setting personal goals for myself.

As a student I was told that I would achieve average to below average grades. I enjoyed success in sports at both at the high school and college levels, but I faced obstacles because of my hearing loss that I needed to focus on if I wanted to continue my life as an athlete.

I will talk about how I was bullied in my elementary years because of hearing loss, but I will also share a turning point in my life when one of my teachers had such a profound impact on me that it helped me become the person I am today. And at different points throughout the presentation I will discuss various operations I have had on my ears and the problems they caused as an older adult.

I’ve been speaking to many HLAA Chapters in Ohio and have received very positive feedback about the workshop. The information I provide will show you that hearing loss can be a positive part of your life. The key is how well you take advantage of focusing on a great mindset each day of your life. Remember, I was told, “Hey, you can’t do that!” “Oh, but I did!” After this workshop I hope you will feel same way I do! **HL**



Mark Mays received his undergraduate degree from the University of Toledo in 1982 and his master’s degree in educational administration from the University of Daytona in 1988. Mark was diagnosed with a hearing loss in 1965 due to ear infections and childhood illness. He currently lives in Ohio with his wife and two children. Visit Mark’s website at motivationstrong.com for more information.

Interested chapters are responsible for presenter fee and travel expenses. Email chapters@hearingloss.org for details.

New Online Support Center for Older Adults with Cochlear Implants



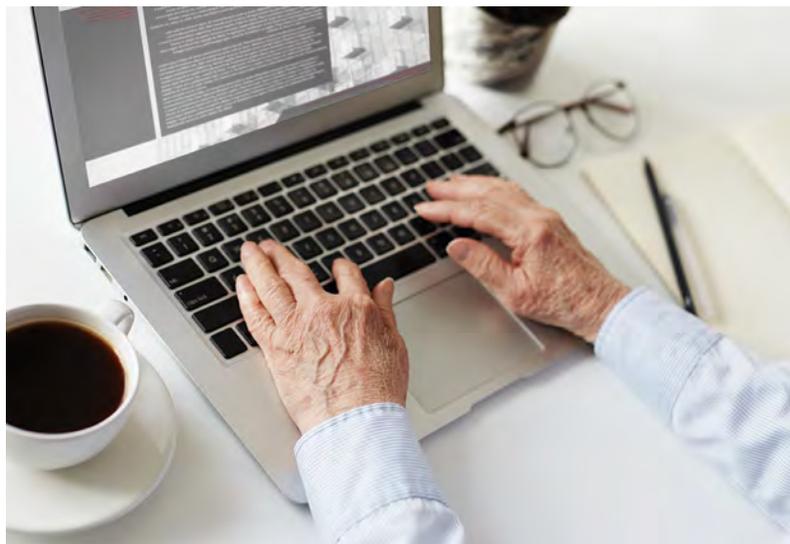
KDH Research & Communication (KDHRC) is an Atlanta-based organization that creates programs and designs evaluations to improve the health of youth, families, and communities.

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.

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
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- More CI resources on Facebook: facebook.com/CochlearImplantResources



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The LoopBuds iOS app (Android in development) allows you to adjust 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!



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Users might qualify for a free CapTel phone—learn more at capterl.com.

Aventho Bluetooth Wireless from beyerdynamic

The Aventho wireless is a Bluetooth-enabled headphone with sound personalization. Together with our partner Mimi Hearing Technologies, we created a solution where you can customize and adapt the sound reproduction of our headphones to the ability of your hearing. Through the free MIY app on your smartphone, a user takes a 6-minute hearing test and the results are saved to the headphones, mapping the way you hear frequencies and creating your personal hearing profile. The app also measures the duration and

The app also measures the duration and intensity of your daily listening and under the "Tracking" tab shows the percentage of your daily quota you have already reached.

intensity of your daily listening and under the "Tracking" tab shows the percentage of your daily quota you have already reached.

Along with the sound personalization, the Aventho wireless comes with other high-end features. The first is our Tesla technology that is contained in the

headphone drivers themselves. Tesla systems function using an impressively efficient operating mode and enables precise and distortion-free sound to be achieved, even at high output levels. A three-layer compound membrane is used to suppress breakup vibrations. Carefully selected acoustic fabric ensures distortion-free sound reproduction. Due to the higher efficiency, the low-impedance sound transducers of the Aventho wireless reach their full sound potential, even with low-output devices such as smartphones, tablets, and high-resolution players. Additionally, the tilted shape of the sound transducers produces a great spatial and transparent sound.

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audio reproduction available. Also, there are innovative touchpads integrated in the right earcup that allow you to control media playback and calls easily at your fingertips.

The Aventho wireless is priced at \$449 and available in black or brown. Also included is a carry bag and a 3.5mm cable which attaches to the left ear cup and can be connected to any device.

Experience the Aventho wireless by visiting us at HLLA2018 Convention in Minneapolis June 21-24, booth #216 or visit north-america.beyerdynamic.com/aventho-wireless-black-4219.html for more information.

One Less Fly

BY DAVID SELIGMAN

As of last Monday, there is one less fly in Madison, Wisconsin. The evening didn't start with that intention. My wife had just finished washing her face and I had just turned off the electric toothbrush when I turned to her and asked quizzically, "What's that noise?" She replied calmly, "There is a fly buzzing around in the bathroom".

I was astonished. I normally don't wear my two hearing aids as I get ready for bed. My wife, however, has very acute hearing so the fly buzzing around was not a new sound to her. I quickly closed the bathroom door preventing our droning intruder from escaping into our bedroom. I was still mildly amused by the fact that I could actually hear the buzzing as the fly darted around.

Between our oversized mirror and squinting eyes we could catch glimpses of "Mr. Fly" whirling around the room. I made an assumption that this fly was a "Mr." because of his brazen efforts to swirl all around us, almost daring us to react to his presence. I didn't think a female fly would be as aggressive. I made a mental note to Google "male and female flies" the next day. My wife was not happy at the prospect of Mr. Fly buzzing around in our bedroom all night.

"I won't be able to sleep tonight with that buzzing!" she complained. I promised her we would not open the bathroom door until our Flying Enemy Number One was "pacified." I am not sure she was comforted by my bravado.

In the meantime, I was so pleased that I could actually hear his whizzing wings. I had never heard such a clear, distinct buzzing sound from one fly. Oh, I have heard a swarm of mosquitoes on a summer night around a campfire. But never had I heard a single fly buzzing in such tight quarters.

Once my astonishment subsided, I decided that enough was enough and that Mr. Fly was not going to

leave our bathroom—alive. We redoubled our efforts at surveillance and focused on putting an end to his noisy aerobatics.

We stood a few feet apart, taking turns spotting and unsuccessfully swatting at Mr. Fly. He must have been aware of his hunted status because he refused to stop and rest anywhere. He flew impressive loops around the room. We could track him against the light-colored shower curtain or catch a glimpse as he soared over the white sink and counter but then lose him against cabinets. I could sense that while my wife was getting exasperated by Mr. Fly, for me, the hunt was exciting, as I was able to use not one, but two of my senses in the effort.

I don't think it was my hearing that detected Mr. Fly's intended path, but in a move that can only be described as a lightning quick jab that Spiderman would be proud of I caught Mr. Fly hard between my thumb and forefinger as he foolishly retraced his route over our bathroom sink. My wife immediately asked "What just happened? I don't hear him!"

"Me either," I said softly, "but not for the usual reason." I smiled and turned to show her my prize catch crushed between my fingertips. She was impressed. There was a moment of silence, not in tribute to the departed Mr. Fly but in quiet recognition that my hearing-aided ears had just done a good job. I couldn't wait to write up this adventure after a quiet night's sleep. **HL**

David Seligman has had a lifelong fascination with finding humor in daily life. His life experiences combined with his sense of humor bring a unique perspective in helping others understand and appreciate the challenges of living with a hearing loss. David is retired from the Wisconsin state government and currently works part-time as a special education assistant at a local elementary school in Madison, Wisconsin.





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