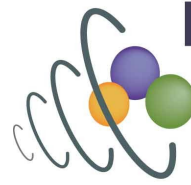


HearSay

The Official Newsletter of HLA-PA

Volume 11, Issue 2 Summer 2012



Hearing Loss
Association
of Pennsylvania

MESSAGE FROM NANCY

By Nancy Kingsley



Our Eastern PA HLA banquet on April 29 was just one of the many ways that HLA-PA provides information, support, and advocacy to help people with hearing loss. We've presented several employment conferences, with another in the works for next year, to provide guidance on accommodating the communication needs of hard of hearing employees. We recently assembled an assistive device demonstration kit for our outreach events, so people can see and try equipment that makes it easier to function effectively with a hearing loss. We have a table at the Farm Show in Harrisburg each year, making its

400,000 visitors aware of our services. Our members give presentations about coping with hearing loss, provide one-on-one guidance, and serve on state advisory boards to obtain services for Pennsylvanians with a hearing loss. We publish this newsletter, which is distributed to 2200 people, and maintain a website at www.hla-pa.org to provide updated hearing loss information. We also advocate for increased communication access, including movie theater captioning, which is now coming to our state. In order to continue our work on these and many other projects, we rely on donations, bequests, Walk4Hearing contributions, and grants. Your contributions will make life easier for Pennsylvania residents with hearing loss. To donate, make your check payable to HLA-PA and send it to HLA-PA, 4 State Rd. #109, Media, PA 19063.

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STATE HAPPENINGS*By Carolyn Meyer***THE HLA-PA ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICE (ALD) DEMO KIT IS HERE!**

The HLA-PA Advisory Council is excited to announce its ongoing project of the past year. It has long been our idea to have our own HLA-PA Assistive Listening Device (ALD) Demo Kit for members to use when exhibiting at Outreach events or when providing PowerPoint presentations to chapters or communities with persons who have hearing loss. In addition, we often have staff enrichment development programs where an ALD Demo Kit would be a great asset. Diana Bender applied to the Barra Foundation for a grant and was notified that the state would receive a grant of \$2,000.00. A committee was assembled, with Alan Kutner as the Chair, to then do the work to proceed with this project. As of today, we have all the equipment we need, 2 fitted suitcases on wheels to enable users to transport the equipment with ease, and all the equipment in place. Harris Communications, Inc. very generously donated the majority of the equipment, with one item donated by Weitbrecht Communications, Inc., and one by Lifetone Safety. The largest expense was to have the suitcases custom-made. Additional expenses will be to maintain the equipment and to pay for shipping to different areas of the state. Mainline Trophies donated the plaques needed for the cases. Within a few weeks, you will see on our website, www.hla-pa.org, all the information describing the approximately 20 items in the cases and how you can borrow the kit. The ALD Demo Kit will only be available for loan to HLA-PA members residing in and, for use in, the state of Pennsylvania. Diana Bender, Don Groff, Nancy Kingsley, Carolyn Meyer, Donna Schumacher were on the ALD Demo Kit Committee. Watch for more details in the Fall Issue of Hearsay and some pictures of the "ALD Kit in Action"!

**OUTREACH**

March 6: FOCUS GROUP MEETING at Einstein Medical Center, Philadelphia, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging.

HLA-PA was invited to express concerns and provide expertise on issues relating to the long-term care of the aging and disabilities communities of PA. With an active interplay from many agencies, we were able to express our interest on topics such as transportation, living accommodations, and access in public venues for those with hearing loss. Carolyn Meyer and Lee McIlhenny represented HLA-PA. The information provided will be used to shape the 2012-2016 PA State Plan on Aging.

March 21: Steve Schultz attended his first meeting as a newly-appointed Public Member of the Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board. The Board's purpose is to review the performance of the relay services system in Pennsylvania; identify improvements in areas such as regulation, relay service, customer service, equipment and outreach; provide feedback on related projects; and provide guidance and advice to the Pennsylvania PUC for further action. There are currently three Public Member vacancies. If you are interested in applying, please contact Steve at bfschultz@aol.com or 717-761-3632.

April 10: The North Central District Recreational Coordinators, a group of individuals responsible for organizing recreational activities in long-term care facilities in the Lycoming County area, contacted Claudia Dewane and Steve Schultz to present a two-hour Continuing Education Program on Hearing Loss. There were approximately twenty recreational coordinators in attendance, several of whom had a hearing loss. The attendees were interested in learning about the different types and causes of hearing loss; what assistive listening devices were available; and what they could do to facilitate the comfort and participation of their respective guests in planned activities.

April 14: CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA. SECOND ANNUAL FAMILY CONFERENCE: PLANTING

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

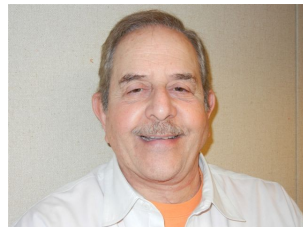
THE SEEDS FOR SUCCESS: SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH HEARING LOSS

HLA-PA exhibited to over 100 attendees, distributing literature as part of our national incentive to support parents using resources provided on the website, www.kidsandhearingloss.org . Carolyn and Joe Meyer represented HLA-PA at this event and provided one-on-one support to parents. Beth Ann Rejonis has currently been working with a teen group from CHOP as an extension of our interest in promoting a relationship with these families. CHOP is an alliance team in our PA Walk 4 Hearing.

May 23: Riddle Hospital Geriatric Excellence Initiative: "Aging and Awareness Open House" on May 23 from 8 AM – 3PM. Marcia Finisdore and Alan Kunter exhibited for HLA-PA at this event designed to educate staff on a wide range of current and best practices in managing the needs of older adults. Attendees were given a "passport" for all exhibit representatives to sign in order to qualify for CEU credits. An excellent opportunity to "spread the word" about hearing loss and senior citizens.

CAPTIONED MOVIES, FINALLY BECOMING A REALITY

By Alan Kutner



I am delighted to inform everyone that Regal Movie Theaters is finally bringing equal access to the deaf and hard of hearing on all of their movie screens. For several years, we had promises from Regal and the other major movie chains that captioning movies were about to begin, but it never did. Now it has.

In April 2012, Regal captioned every one of its movie screens at the Regal Edgemont Square, Regal King Of Prussia and Regal Plymouth Meeting. Each movie, with the exception of 3-D which technology is yet to be developed, is captioned all day long every day and immediately upon being distributed to movie theaters. You may want to read that again because

while promises were made, promises were never kept. However, you can now "hear" movies at these three theaters. Regal will be rolling out captioning at all of its theaters throughout the country over the next twelve months; Regal has promised that it will complete its captioning of all of its theaters by February or March 2013.

Regal has also partnered with Sony to introduce "access glasses" in order to bring closed captions, wherever you are sitting, into the movie theater. This is a new kind of technology that places the words directly in the viewer's field of vision so one does not have to constantly look at the bottom of the screen where closed-captioning is often found, as in television captioning. The idea behind these glasses is that the viewer will see something that resembles open captioning, with the words placed directly on the movie screen in a very bright green color. In addition, these glasses can show text in six different languages, and include features for the blind and visually impaired which will provide extra audio detail about what is happening on the screen.

Cinemark Movie Theaters, the third largest movie chain in the United States, has already captioned all of its theaters throughout the country. I am personally familiar with the theater in Somerdale, New Jersey as well as the theater in Wilmington, Delaware. Both are excellent theaters. Cinemark is using a different technology called CaptiView. Three lines of text are seen on the device which is placed in the viewer's cup holder; the words scroll as the actors speak. CaptiView is a very popular method of captioning and will be seen in many theaters.

Advertise Your Business in Hearsay
Hearsay, the official newsletter of the Hearing Loss Association of PA, will soon be running advertisements in each issue. Don't miss this opportunity to reach over 2,000 Hearsay subscribers. For further information, please email hearsayad@hla-pa.org.

2012 PA Walk4Hearing®

Sunday, September 23, 2012
Ridley Creek State Park

WHERE: Pavilion 11B, Ridley Creek State Park, Newtown Square, PA
WHEN: 9:00 Registration
10:00 Walk Starts

KICKOFF PARTY

WHERE: King of Prussia Firehouse
King of Prussia, PA
WHEN: Sunday, July 29
11:00 am – 1:00 pm

More information: www.walk4hearing.org or contact our walk chair, Ronnie Adler at RADler@hearingloss.org



HAMILTON RELAY 2012 BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH AWARD

Congratulations to Carolyn Meyer for receiving this year’s Hamilton Relay 2012 Better Hearing and Speech Month Award for the state of Pennsylvania!

In addition to chairing the banquet committee, Carolyn is the HLA-PA Advisory Council’s outreach chairperson, the Philadelphia chapter president, and a member of the Walk4Hearing committee, the Mayor's Commission on People with Disabilities in Philadelphia, and the Independence Starts Here committee for arts access. In 2005, she won the Spirit of HLA award, in 2009, the HLA advocacy award, and in 2010, the HLA-PA Walk recognition award.

Please join us in congratulating her for this significant achievement!



Diana Bender (left) was honored on her retirement as HLA-PA State Director at the annual HLA-PA Banquet. Seen with Diana is Brenda Battat, HLA Executive Director

Having a wonderful time and renewing friendships at the annual HLA-PA banquet are (from left to right) Grace Pfeifer, Carolyn Meyer, Lois Armon, Nicole Groff.



Pictured above from left to right: Lauren Cramer of Hamilton Relay, Carolyn Meyer, Alan Kutner.



**EASTERN PA HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION BANQUET
SHOWS HLA-PA'S "CAN-DO" SPIRIT**

Nancy Kingsley

Almost 100 people attended HLA-PA's seventh annual Eastern Pennsylvania Hearing Loss Association banquet on April 29, 2012. Participating chapters included Adams-York County, Bucks County, Capital Region, Chester County, DelHOH, GenX, Lancaster County, LEBHOH, Lycoming County, Montgomery County, and Philadelphia. Thanks go out to the banquet committee: chairperson Carolyn Meyer (who served as MC) and members Gay and Richard Balsam, Diana Bender, Alice Dungan, Marcia Finisdore, Don Groff, Nancy Kingsley, Alan Kutner, Marianne and Martin Lock, and Joe Meyer. Tables from the following vendors lined two walls of the banquet hall: Advanced Bionics, CaptionCall, Clarke Schools, Cochlear Americas, Hamilton Relay/CapTel, Loop America, Med-El, and PIAT. CART, interpreting, and a loop assistive listening system made the event fully communication-accessible.

Marcia Finisdore, HLA-PA's first state director, presented the 2011 Finisdore advocacy award to Bill Pfeifer. Bill was born with a hearing loss, and about 10 years ago, he discovered Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People, now HLA-PA. He started a chapter in West Chester and has served as its president ever since. Bill was on the organizing committee of the first employment conference in 2003; has worked on the organizing committee for every Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing; was conference co-chair from Pennsylvania for the four-state conference in Harrisburg in 2006, and in 2009, he became the HLA-PA treasurer.

Keynote speaker Brenda Battat, the HLAA executive director, gave an update about the organization's recent activities and also spoke about access to affordable hearing healthcare. HLAA has joined 18 other organizations to push for hearing health care and hearing aid coverage in the essential health benefits plan of the Obama health care plan. Currently, hearing aids are sold via bundled services and consumers don't know what the individual parts cost, so HLAA is pushing for itemization, which would enable consumers to

choose what they want to pay for. HLAA also supports looking into other service delivery models, such as hearing screening via a computer or mobile phone app.

Lauren Cramer, Hamilton Relay's Pennsylvania outreach coordinator, presented her company's community leader award to Carolyn Meyer. (See separate article).

HLA-PA State Director Nancy Kingsley presented a plate inscribed "Diana Bender—Advocate, Advisor, Educator—HLA-PA State Director" to HLA-PA's former state director, in honor of her many services. Despite being diagnosed with a progressive hearing loss at age 10 Diana went on to earn a doctorate in organic chemistry. In 2009 she was elected to the HLAA board of trustees and was just elected president. In Pennsylvania, she served as the president of the Montgomery County HLA chapter from 1997 to 2001 and has been the editor of its newsletter since 1997. She has been part of the HLA-PA Advisory Council since the state office originated in 2001, serving as state director from 2004 to 2010. Diana was a member of the Pennsylvania Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, serving as secretary for three years. She also served on the Telecommunications Relay Board and was its chairperson for three years. In 2010, Hamilton Relay selected her as its first hard of hearing community leader.

The HLAA Advisory Council recently established the annual Diana Bender HLAA National Convention Scholarship Award to enable deserving Pennsylvania residents with hearing loss to attend their first HLAA convention, and Diana announced the first scholarship recipient, Dom Spino of Greensburg, who is a member of the Pittsburgh chapter. He has three children, one of whom also has a hearing loss. Dom was unable to attend the banquet but sent a letter in which he promised to become an effective advocate and ambassador for those dealing with hearing loss.

To receive HearSay, the HLA-PA newsletter, complete and mail this form to the address below. Subscriptions are free; however, HLA-PA is a not-for-profit organization run exclusively by volunteers, so we are grateful for donations. Donations are tax-deductible.

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Enclosed is my tax-deductible, contribution of \$ _____ to support HearSay.

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I cannot donate but would like to receive HearSay.

Mail to: Marcia Finisdore
4 State Road, #109
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Michael and Debra Naso

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Carolyn and Joe Meyer in honor of the anniversary of
Ann and Alan Cohen

Memorial Gifts in Memory of Victor Baker

Carol Amengual

Tom and Carmela Gormley

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Clare Werba

Frances D. Conway

John T. Herr and family

John and Mary Lou Baker

Mary Tarbel

*We gratefully acknowledge the donors and contributors who
make it possible to continue this publication*

**HLA-PA is the all-volunteer 501(c)3 state office of
Hearing Loss Association of America providing
advocacy, information, education and support to
Pennsylvanians with a hearing loss.**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

Assist the HLA-PA State Director by serving on the Advisory Council or one of its committees. The Council meets periodically in Manheim, PA (1 hour from King of Prussia) but committees conduct most of their business by e-mail and occasionally meet in various parts of the state. If you think you would like to serve on the council or any of its committees, please contact one of the state leaders listed here:

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Government Affairs:

Steve Schultz, Chair (schultz@hla-pa.org)

Outreach:

Carolyn Meyer, Chair (meyer@hla-pa.org)

Chapter Coordinators:

Debra Cannon, Eastern PA (cannon@hla-pa.org)

Dale Long, Central PA (long@hla-pa.org)

Teresa Nellans, Western PA (nellans@hla-pa.org)



Marcia Finisdore (right) presents the 2011 Marcia Finisdore Award for Advocacy to Bill Pfeifer of HLA-Chester County.