

HearSay

The Official Newsletter of HLAA-PA

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MESSAGE FROM NANCY

By Nancy Kingsley, State Director



Our Lunch & Learn topic for this year is **legal rights of people with hearing loss** (details are elsewhere in this issue). Hard of hearing people are often unaware of their rights or reluctant to advocate for them. Often all it takes is a simple request. When you ask for an accommodation (such as CART or an assistive listening system), it's important to be polite. If the initial response is unfavorable, explain that the accommodation is legally required (houses of worship and private clubs are exempt).

If you are refused, the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Human Relations Commission are state agencies that can help with advocacy, and the nonprofit Disabilities Rights Network of Pennsylvania can provide information and file lawsuits in certain cases. Much effort was involved in getting disability rights laws passed, and such laws have made our society far more accessible. A brief description of these laws is in the following government publications:

<http://www.ada.gov/cguide.pdf> and

<http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/CVAA-access-act.pdf>. To learn more, attend our "Lunch and Learn" on May 3rd!

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State Happenings and Outreach*By Carolyn Meyer*

HLAA-PA has a full schedule as we move into spring. In order for this column to truly reflect “state” happenings, I urge you to send me news from all parts of the state. If it is a chapter project or local event that is of interest, please send it to me at meyer@hlaa-pa.org so we can see what is current in your area. Go to the HLAA-PA website, www.hlaa-pa.org, as a resource for information throughout the state.

HLAA-PA’s Exhibit At The Farm Show A Success Despite The Weather!

Steve Schultz, who has meticulously coordinated HLAA-PA’s exhibit over the past years, explained that there were at least 500,000 visitors to the show. Steve noted, “Although the early part of the week may have been slow because of the weather, on the last Saturday, there was such a large crowd that there was concern for passenger jams in certain places in the complex.” Kay Tyberg, President of the Lycoming Chapter and volunteer at the HLAA-PA booth showed her enthusiasm with the following comment. “I think a big applause and thank you should go to Steve Schultz for doing an excellent job in planning, arranging and preparing for the PA Farm Show!” (see pictures on page 3)

Congratulations to Alan Kutner and Steve Schultz!

Alan Kutner received the 2013 Marcia Finisdore Advocacy Award for his effective advocacy campaign for captioning in movie theaters. Alan was formerly the HLAA-PA captioning committee chairperson, repeatedly corresponding with all four major theater chains in Pennsylvania, requesting captioning. As a result, Pennsylvania was among the first areas to have access to captioned movies. Alan also helped HLAA-PA to obtain and organize an

Assistive Device Kit to enable members and others to gain effective information on assistive technology to improve their hearing in their daily lives. Alan is treasurer of the HLAA Delaware County chapter, and Board Chairperson for the Deaf-Hearing Communication Centre in Swarthmore, PA.

Steve Schultz, President of the Capital Region Chapter of HLAA-PA, will receive the 2014 Spirit of HLAA Award at the HLAA National Convention in Austin, Texas.

We applaud both Alan and Steve for their hard work and commitment to improve the lives of those with hearing loss!

Independence Starts Here : Accessible Theatre Performances For Those With Hearing Loss

This is a reminder that captioning and ASL interpreters are available in many areas near you on specific performance dates. For the list of these events see www.phillyfunguide.com/access or sign up for the email newsletter which automatically informs you of upcoming shows that have OC, ASL, or AD (audio description for the blind). You can sign up for the email by going to www.art-reach.org and going up to the tool bar under “programs” to find the email sign up form. The Fulton Theatre in Lancaster, also, has specific captioned performances, please see www.thefulton.org. If your area of the state is providing these accessible performances, please notify our HLAA-PA webmaster, Don Groff, at groff@hlaa-pa.org so that he can include the information on the state website. Why not encourage your chapter to attend a play as a group? If you go, when ordering tickets, always mention that you have a hearing loss and request to be seated so that you can see the caption screen or ASL interpreters.



***The Diana Bender HLAA National Convention
Scholarship Application Form 2014***

Please check your Winter issue of HearSay or go to our state website to get the form if you are interested in applying for the scholarship for the HLAA Convention June 26-29 in Austin Texas. Applications are due by April 7, 2014. They can be emailed to scholarship@hlaa-pa.org or mailed to Mitchell Bilker, HLAA-PA Scholarship Committee Chair, 821 Rosehill Drive, King of Prussia, PA 19046. Email is preferred.

***PA Walk 4 Hearing October 5, 2014 : The Navy Yard
on South Broad Street, Philadelphia***

On February 10th The Walk Committee held its first meeting at Ronnie Adler's home to begin work on the 2014 PA Walk. Are you interested in being on the committee? All are welcome. Contact Ronnie at radler@hearingloss.org.

Outreach

January 13: Diana Bender and Marcia Finisdore gave a presentation at St. Thomas of Villanova Church on Lancaster Ave. in Rosemont. There were 30 people in attendance. It was a lively group of Senior Citizens who had a lot of questions. This presentation was provided by the Parish Nurse who learned about it at a monthly meeting of Parish nurses.

February 25: Bill Best, our HLAA-PA Assistive Device Coordinator, demonstrated a variety of assistive and alerting devices in the HLAA-PA Demo Kit to the Lebanon Chapter members and visitors at Cornwall Manor. Bill will be presenting the evolution of the kit and our success in using it in PA in the State/Chapter Development Room at the HLAA convention in Austin in June. If your chapter or community group is interested in this presentation, please contact Bill at Best@hlaa-pa.org.

March 6: Carolyn Meyer and Alice Dungan presented "Coping with Hearing Loss" to the Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA, Ambler Area Branch as part of their Active Older Adult Program.

***HLAA 2014 Convention in Austin,
Texas!***

Our national convention will be held on June 26-29 at the Renaissance Austin Hotel in Austin, Texas. Registration is open! Visit <http://www.hearingloss.org/content/convention> for more information. We'll see you in Austin!



HearSay Subscription Info

To receive HearSay via email, please visit www.hlaa-pa.org and click "Get HearSay by e-mail." We would hate to see you go, but if you wish to discontinue your HearSay subscription, please send an email to Pam

Reiher at reiher@hlaa-pa.org, or send a note to her home address at:
305 Woodside Circle
Dresher, PA 19025

Kay Tyberg's Perspectives on Peer Mentoring

As a graduate of Gallaudet University's Class of 2013 Peer Mentoring Program, let me explain what is involved. A peer mentor is a deaf or hard of hearing individual who is trained to provide advocacy, education, guidance, information, and support to help other people with hearing loss adopt new coping methods. We explain how individuals can advocate for themselves and help them overcome communication barriers in family relationships, work environments, and the community. We know how to make client assessments and comprehend audiograms. We understand what the clients are going through with hearing loss, because we live with it every day.

Gallaudet's Peer Mentoring Program is a two-year certification program, with costs covered by a grant, in which students study hearing loss in our society, biopsychosocial aspects, audiology, assistive technology, and practical application of peer mentoring. The educational materials are provided by the assigned graduate student facilitator from the department of audiology. The group meets face-to-face at the orientation and at graduation. In between, students meet weekly on Gallaudet's online Blackboard chat for a couple of hours. We also do written assignments related to our readings. A phenomenal amount of reading is involved, but it was worth all the time and effort. There is much interaction between us and we bond well. Information about the program is at www.peers4access.org.

As someone who has had lifelong experience with hearing loss, I want to make sure that others with hearing loss do not have to go through struggles and discrimination due to lack of knowledge and failure to obtain appropriate communication. Every time I learn about something that no one shared with me until it was too late, I've thought, "Why wasn't I told about this before? Things could have been so different in my life!" There is a great deal more available to help with hearing loss today than in the past, but finding information is still a challenge. I want to tell others about the available options and watch people's faces light up when they see something work for them for the first time.

I have been fortunate to have experience wearing hearing aids, and, when I became profoundly deaf in 2008, a cochlear implant. In addition, I have had lip reading training and am knowledgeable in sign language. Therefore, I can relate to various individuals with hearing loss. However, peer mentors are trained not to base mentoring solely on their own experiences. We have to examine and listen carefully to each client's needs and take the appropriate action to assist him/her. Mentors need to be active listeners and not push their own views. Mentoring is not about sharing my hearing loss journey with someone but about listening to theirs. Mentoring is also about educating everyone. I learned the importance of having discussions about hearing loss in stores, at meetings, in schools, and in other public places.

I have helped several couples address their hearing loss issues. At first I was nervous, but the program provided excellent guidance in interacting with clients, and the satisfaction of knowing I helped someone is enormous.

Kay Tyberg, President
Hearing Loss Association of America Lycoming County Chapter



LUNCH AND LEARN: LEGAL RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS

Saturday, May 3, 2014 - 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Radisson Hotel Valley Forge, 1160 First Avenue, King of Prussia, PA

Join us for a delicious buffet and important information about legal rights and advocacy for people with hearing loss. HLAA Executive Director Anna Gilmore Hall and Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania attorney Rachel Mann will give valuable guidance, and exhibitors will provide helpful resources. CART (realtime captioning), ASL interpreters, and a loop will be provided.

For directions, call the hotel at 610-337-2000 or visit its website at <http://www.radisson.com/king-of-prussia-hotel-pa-19406/pavalley/area/map>

Cost: \$28.00 per person Registration deadline: April 26, 2014

Questions? Contact Nancy Kingsley at Kingsley@HLAA-PA.org

Please complete this form, make your check payable to HLAA-PA, and mail to Alice Dungan, 6906 Shalkop Street, Philadelphia, PA 19128-3217

Amount enclosed: _____ (\$28 per person)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, state, zip: _____

Email: _____

Names of additional attendees: _____

Name of HLAA-PA chapter you belong to (if applicable): _____

For our readers who receive HearSay via email, please print the above registration form and mail to Alice Dungan at 6906 Shalkop Street, Philadelphia, PA 19128-3217

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email: _____ Phone _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible, contribution of \$ _____ to support HearSay. Please make checks out to HLAA-PA.

I would like to remain anonymous.

I cannot donate but would like to receive HearSay.

Mail to: Bill Pfeifer
126 Cedarcroft Road
Kennett Square, PA 19348

About HLAA and its State Office, HLAA-PA

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), founded in 1979, 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 by providing information, education, support and advocacy. The national support network includes the Washington, DC area office, 14 state organizations, and 200 local chapters. HLAA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814
www.hearingloss.org

HLAA-PA is the all-volunteer state office of Hearing Loss Association of America. We were established in 2001 to carry out the mission of HLAA for Pennsylvanians with a hearing loss, their families and friends.

HearSay QR Codes!

Scan the code on the left to receive HearSay by email. Scan the code on the right to access HLAA-PA's website.



HearSay by e-mail



hlaa-pa.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

Assist the HLAA-PA State Director by serving on the Advisory Council or one of its committees. The Council meets periodically at locations convenient to its membership. 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:

State Director:

Nancy Kingsley (kingsley@hlaa-pa.org)

HearSay and HLAA-PA Website

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