

HearSay

The Official Newsletter of HLAA-PA

Volume 15 Issue 2

Summer 2016

Hearing Loss
Association
of America
Pennsylvania State Office

MESSAGE FROM NANCY

By Nancy Kingsley, State Director



One of our responsibilities as people with hearing loss is to educate others about how to communicate effectively with us. (Of course, that means that we need to know this ourselves!) Here are some helpful strategies for communicating with a person who has a hearing loss:

- Get the person's attention first
- Face the person
- Be sure the light is on your face, not behind you
- Avoid noisy backgrounds (turn off the TV, etc.)
- Speak a little slower and don't shout

- Don't cover your mouth
- Rephrase rather than repeating

It's also important to remember that when people are speaking, they are thinking about what they want to say, not about how they are saying it, so it's easy for them to forget these pointers even after they've been told. They're not being purposely insensitive to your needs, so be patient about reminding them whenever it's necessary.

Consider using an agreed-upon signal (such as raising your hand) to remind someone to slow down, etc. This enables you to convey the reminder without interrupting, thus putting both you and the speaker at ease.

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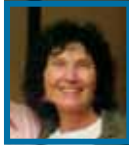
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State Happenings and Outreach

By Carolyn Meyer



The Advisory Council wishes to extend its condolences to its member Steve Schultz whose wife, Barbara, passed away this spring. In the years Steve was President of the Capital Region Chapter, Barbara was always there to give support. For those of you who volunteered at the Farm Show, you'll remember Barbara at the HLAA exhibit table informing bystanders of all that HLAA had to offer them. We will all miss Barbara.

2016 CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIPS

Judy Shugarts of the Chesco Chapter is the recipient of the Diana Bender HLAA National Convention Scholarship.

Steve Bremner of the Center City Philadelphia Chapter is the recipient of the Milton R. Gottlieb Memorial HLAA National Convention Scholarship (a one time award presented with donations given in his memory to HLAA-PA)

Both Judy and Steve are first-time attendees to the convention, so we look forward to hearing their impressions of the convention in the next issue of HearSay.

CHAPTERS HELPING CHAPTERS

As we all know, it is a difficult task to find programs for our meetings. However, within our chapters we have valuable resources among our own members not to be overlooked.

April 14: Carolyn Meyer (Co-President, Philadelphia Chapter 1 /Suburban/Northeast) presented "**Hearing Better with Hearing Loss**" to the Center City Chapter. The presentation is targeted to get participation from the audience. It encourages a lot of interplay among those attending to share their own experiences as they deal with their hearing loss. (meyer@hlaa-pa.org)

June 1: Don Groff (President of the MontCo Chapter) will be the presenter at the Philadelphia Chapter 1 meeting. His topic: "**Hearing Better in Public Spaces**". Don discusses devices that can be used to feel more comfortable with hearing loss in many types of situations, including your own living room. Don has given this program at other chapters as well.

In the past year Dr. Emilio Cortez, husband of MontCo member and former President Patty Cortez, has given presentations at chapter meetings as part of his work on the "Turn Down the Volume" Committee. As part of his presentation, he distributes materials explaining the harmful decibel levels that we face today

in many venues. He shows samples of headsets that are offered to young children to prevent their exposure to loud noise.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs Alan Kutner(kutner@hlaa-pa.org) and Kay Tyberg (tyberg@hlaa-pa.org) encourage HLAA members to advocate wherever possible for arts access. They hope this fall to distribute to chapters a survey flyer to find out what movie and live theatre captioning issues you have experienced in your area. Recently a complaint was called to their attention, and a response to the theatre in question was followed up on behalf of this person experiencing this complaint. They hope that you will contact them if you have encountered any of these issues. In addition, if you are advocating for access in venues where there is none, do contact Alan and Kay to help guide you through the process.

CHAPTERS SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES

Does your chapter do this in any way? Philadelphia Chapter 1 does local outreach and also is scheduling a "Coping with Hearing Loss" presentation open to the community at their library meeting location this fall. It is a way to thank the library for donating their meeting space to the chapter for the past years. The ChesCo chapter has been involved with health fairs. The MontCo chapter has a permanent loop installed in their meeting room in the Jeanes Library, and Don Groff explained to the staff and visitors how the loop works and its benefits. The Bucks chapter has participated in many Health Fairs. Please do let us know how your chapter has served your community. You can contact Carolyn Meyer (meyer@hlaa-pa.org) to share this with other chapters in the next issue of HearSay. Helpful tip: If you have the opportunity to meet with a group in a small room, it may often be more productive, as Health Fairs are often noisy and hearing is difficult for visitors as well as for our own HLAA members.

ATTENTION HLAA CONVENTION ATTENDEES

Valerie Stafford –Mallis, our new Director of Chapter Development, is anxious to meet you. There are 3 workshops on Saturday, June 25 in the Chapter Development Room. Delegates from your chapter should surely meet Valerie. We hope that, if there is not enough response at the convention, she will visit Pennsylvania in the fall on a scheduled day if possible. Chapter leaders will be advised by Nancy Kingsley. If you want to contact Valerie yourself with questions chapters@hearingloss.org.

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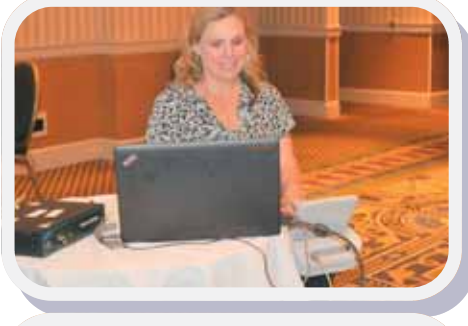


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PENNSYLVANIA WALK4HEARING!

Put it on your calendar!

The Kick Off: **Sunday August 21, 2016 from 12 noon until 2 PM**

Spring Mill Ballroom in Conshohocken
1210 E Hector St, Conshohocken, PA 19428

This Kick Off event is free to all guests and includes food, games for children, and team information folders and posters and everything you need to be successful in your fundraising.

The Big Day: : **PA Walk 4 Hearing: Date: Sunday October 9, 2016**

The Navy Yard
4747 South Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA

10am - Registration/Check-in
11am - Walk begins
Distance: 5K (3.1 miles)

Any questions? contact Walk Chair:
Ronnie Adler
radler@hearingloss.org

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MUSIC FOR A WEDDING SHOULDN'T BE DANGEROUSLY LOUD

A list of wedding preparations is often overwhelming for prospective newlyweds, so wedding helpers are recruited to make every detail of a wedding as perfect as possible. Wedding-day celebrations often include music, but when music is too loud, you and your guests may experience hearing loss. The problem of loud music is rampant and has contributed to the growing number (currently 48 million) of Americans who suffer from hearing loss.

At this time, there are no loudness restrictions in the U.S. for recreational activities and sites such as weddings, sporting events, racing car events, night clubs, restaurants, concerts, exercise classes, theme parks, skating rinks, and movies.

Many bands and disc jockeys play music at over 100 decibels (dB) of loudness.

If you're not wearing earplugs, 100dB can cause permanent hearing loss in just 15 minutes.

A tell-tale sign that music is too loud is needing to shout to the person next to you just to be heard.

Hurting ears, ringing in the ears, and having to talk louder than usual are indications that excessive loudness has damaged many of the tiny hair-like sound detectors known as stereocilia. Once human stereocilia are damaged, the damage is permanent. Noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) is often gradual and insidious. Although hearing may seemingly return to "normal" within hours or days after exposure to dangerous decibel levels, this does not mean that hearing loss has not occurred. Extensive damage to stereocilia can require hearing aids, assistive listening devices, and sometimes surgery.

Consistently setting the volume level on your TV much higher than midway may be an indication that you have already lost some hearing and need to be especially mindful of protective measures to keep from losing more. (When in doubt, confer with your doctor, who will probably suggest that you get your hearing tested.) Since we are all the potential

targets of dangerous decibel levels, we need to be decibel-wise:

**BE DECIBEL-WISE:
UNDER 85
KEEPS HEARING ALIVE.**

When interviewing bands or disc jockeys for a wedding, insist that you want the music to be no louder than 80dB, then be prepared for disappointed faces. Since many musicians and disc jockeys are used to playing very loud music, and since many of them have already lost hearing, 80dB may not seem loud enough; an alternative plan would be to make earplugs available to your guests.

In many exercise classes, the battle for controlling the volume is ongoing. Participants with normal hearing often insist that the music is too loud, whereas participants who have lost hearing, often including the instructor, want the music loud. Nevertheless, fitness facilities such as the YMCA should adhere to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines that music be played no louder than 85dB. If music at a wedding or other event is played at 91dB, hearing loss can occur after two hours of exposure.

The louder the music is played and the more guests that are present, the louder people must talk, which adds to the total loudness.

You may want to appoint a wedding helper to monitor the music's loudness and remind the band or disc jockey to turn down the volume as needed. Also, by having some soft music played, you can help to lower the prevailing loudness and give your guests a respite from potentially dangerous decibel levels.

A free app called a "decibel meter" is available for both iPhone and Android. After you have downloaded this app, you can check it for accuracy by talking into it in a normal speaking voice. You should be getting a reading somewhere between 60 and 70dB.

If you choose to use earplugs, here is the proper

(Continued on page 7)

way to insert them:

Use the fingertips of both hands to roll the earplug to the size of a toothpick. Roll very gently at first and then gradually use more and more force. Next, put your left hand over your head, lift your right outer ear up and back, and insert the earplug. Hold the earplug in place for 15 seconds as it expands. Now roll another earplug for the left ear, put your right hand over your head, lift the left outer ear up and back, insert the earplug, and hold it in place for 15 seconds.

Natural hearing is too precious to squander, and noise-induced hearing loss is preventable.

-Emilio Cortez, Ed.D.

For more information, refer to
www.dangerousdecibels.org,
www.hearingloss.org,
www.noisyplanet.nidcd.nih.gov
 or Google "How loud is too loud?"

Dr. Cortez is a member of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and co-chair of HLAA-PA's Turn Down the Volume Committee,.



REPORT OF THE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

Recently one of our HLAA members had trouble with the captioning glasses offered by the Regal movie theaters at her local theater in Warrington, Pennsylvania. Apparently the glasses were not being charged properly after each use and when she re-

ceived her glasses, they either did not work or the battery ran out within the first half hour of the movie. In either event, she had to get up from her seat and see the manager, missing 5 to 10 minutes of the movie while the problem was addressed. Sometimes it was still not corrected. She wrote to the Regal Entertainment Group, but did not receive a response.

When we heard of this, your committee co-chairpersons (Kay Tyberg and me) took it upon ourselves to try to correct the problem. Two letters were sent to the general manager of the theater, informing him that we were very disappointed by the poor maintenance of these devices. There had been an important meeting among major theater owners and several national hearing loss groups in November 2014 that produced several joint resolutions, which required each movie theater to keep its devices properly maintained and to train the employees on the use and care of the glasses.

I am pleased to report that with the weight of HLAA-PA behind us, major changes were made at the theater. A new charging device was purchased and instructions were given to the employees as to how to clean and maintain each of their captioning devices. Our member has recently written to us expressing her gratitude for our intervention on her behalf. (Actually, we felt we were intervening on behalf of all persons with hearing loss.)

We were delighted by this successful conclusion, and we would be happy to help again if movie captioning is not working properly anywhere else.

- Alan Kutner



LUNCH AND LEARN 2016

What a wonderful way to spend the afternoon in celebration of HLAAPAs 15th anniversary as a state organization! Chartered in June of 2001, originally called SHHH, we have shown how the state organization has grown with 12 active chapters and an Advisory Council. In her

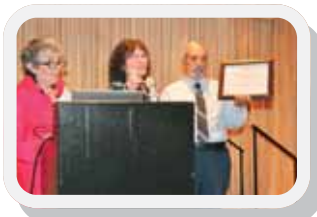
speech at the Lunch and Learn, State Director Nancy Kingsley described some of the projects and accomplishments in recent years of HLAAPAs.



Our keynote speaker, Dr. Victor Bray, Dean of the Osborne College of Audiology of Salus University, explained the major transition in the profession of audiology, including its objective to become considered a profession of healthcare providers. He proceeded in his presentation to discuss the various proposed legislative actions which will affect how we, the patients, may be affected when we seek care by audiologists. The different bills in Congress were described in detail to the audience as well as ways we can advocate by contacting our own congressional representatives to express our concerns. Dr. Bray's presentation gave us all a good perspective on what is currently going to affect those of us with hearing loss as we purchase services and hearing aids now and in the future.



Marcia Finisdore presented the Finisdore Advocacy Award to Emilio Cortez, who accepted with comments about his own

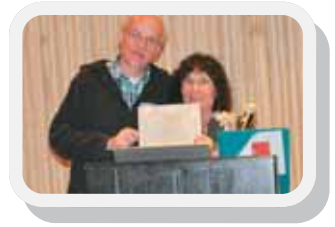


commitment to increase awareness of excessive noise situations that will expose people to harmful levels that may cause hearing loss. Diana Bender, State Director Emerita and member of the HLAAPAs Board of Trustees, presented the



Diana Bender HLAAPAs National Convention Scholarship Award to Judy Shugarts of the ChesCo Chapter.

Carolyn Meyer, HLAAPAs Outreach Coordinator, presented the Milton Gottlieb Memorial HLAAPAs National Convention



Scholarship Award 2016 to Steve Bremner of the Center City Chapter. Both awardees will attend the convention for the first time.

Exhibitors joining us for the afternoon were: Advanced Bionics, Caption Call, Cochlear Americas, East Coast Hearing Loops, MED-EL Corporation, PA Captioned Telephone Relay Service, TDDP, and Salus University. Bill Best exhibited the Assistive Listening Devices kit owned by HLAAPAs. Guests had time to visit the exhibitors throughout the afternoon.

We thank the Louis N. Cassett Foundation for a grant to cover our expenses to make this event such a success. We appreciate the donations from ADCO, Clear Sounds, Dry and Store, Harris Communications, and Serene Innovations who provided prizes for the raffle drawings. Finally, thank you all on the Program Committee—your time and commitment to volunteer has been what HLAAPAs is all about.

- Carolyn Meyer

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David C. Kelsall, M.D.,
Cochlear Medical Advisor

Dr. David C. Kelsall, a cochlear implant surgeon and medical advisor to Cochlear, the world leader in cochlear implants, answers questions about cochlear implants and how they are different from hearing aids.

Q: How are cochlear implants different than hearing aids?

A: Hearing aids help many people by making the sounds they hear louder. Unfortunately, as hearing loss progresses, sounds need to not only be made louder, they need to be made clearer. Cochlear implants can help give you that clarity, especially in noisy environments. If you suffer from high frequency hearing loss but maintain your hearing in the low frequencies, there is a solution called Hybrid™ Hearing that may be able to help as well. Be sure to discuss your options with a Hearing Implant Specialist in your area.

Q: Are cochlear implants covered by Medicare?

A: Yes, by Medicare and most private insurance plans.

Q: How do I know a cochlear implant will work for me?

A: The technology is very reliable. In fact, it has been around for over 30 years and has helped change the lives of over 400,000 people worldwide.

Q: Is it major surgery?

A: No, not at all. In fact, the procedure is often done on an outpatient basis and typically takes just a couple hours.

Q: Am I too old to get a cochlear implant?

A: No, it's never too late to regain access to the sounds you're missing

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For more information visit www.CochlearAmericas.com or click on the link below to find an informational meeting close to you. <http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/us/home/stories-and-community/events-calendar/cochlear-americas-events>

You should talk to your physician about who is a candidate for implantation with a cochlear implant and the associated risks and benefits of the procedure. ©2013 Cochlear Limited. All rights reserved. Trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of Cochlear Limited or Cochlear Bone Anchored Solutions.


Hear now. And always.



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Convention Highlights:


Keynote Speaker:
Jenny Lay-Flurrie, Chair of the Disability Employee Resource Group and Chief Accessibility Officer for Microsoft

Research Symposium:
Novel Approaches toward Addressing Hearing Loss – Ideas on the Cutting Edge
Moderator: Frank Lin, M.D., Ph.D.
Dr. Lin is an Associate Professor of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, Geriatric Medicine, Mental Health, and Epidemiology at Johns Hopkins

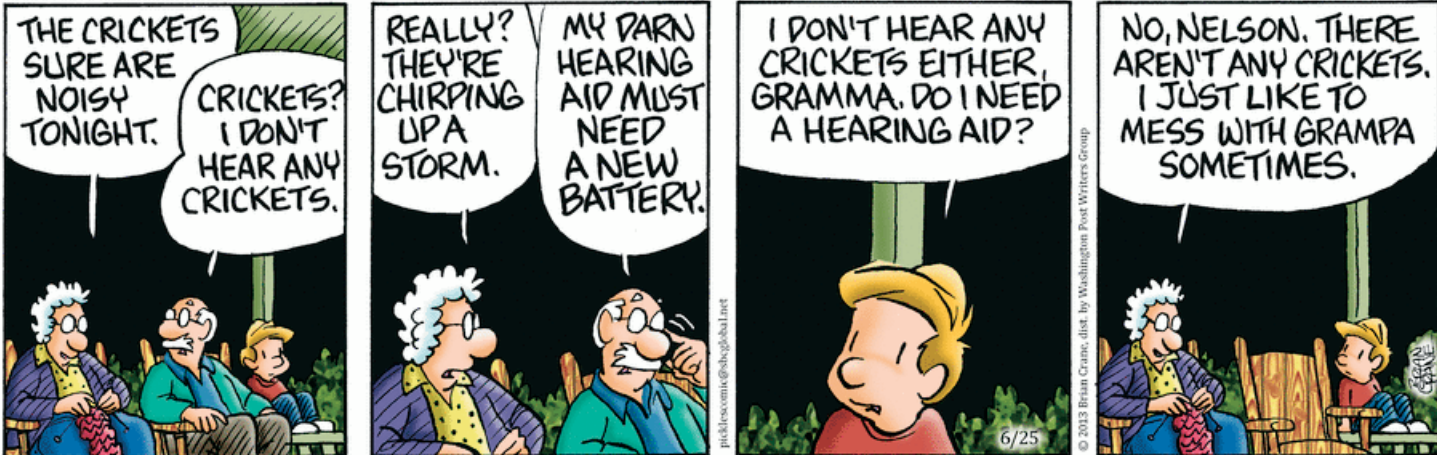


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Visit us on the web! hlaa-pa.org or scan this QR code on your smartphone, for latest news from HLAAPA, and a calendar of events.



Pickles



Panel 1: Grandma: THE CRICKETS SURE ARE NOISY TONIGHT. Grandpa: CRICKETS? I DON'T HEAR ANY CRICKETS.

Panel 2: Grandma: REALLY? THEY'RE CHIRPING UP A STORM. Grandpa: MY DARN HEARING AID MUST NEED A NEW BATTERY.

Panel 3: Grandpa: I DON'T HEAR ANY CRICKETS EITHER, GRAMMA. DO I NEED A HEARING AID?

Panel 4: Grandma: NO, NELSON. THERE AREN'T ANY CRICKETS. I JUST LIKE TO MESS WITH GRAMPA SOMETIMES.

pickles.com © 2013 Brian Crane, dist. by Washington Post Writers Group 6/25

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Never Miss Another Word

One thing that bugs me about the hearing loss establishment is its seemingly relentless optimism. “Just buy our hearing aid and you’ll never miss another word.” Yeah, sure. If you have a very moderate hearing loss and are scheduled to be executed tomorrow. The rest of you suckers will miss words all the time, especially as you age.

Advertisers, physicians, and audiologists all prefer to tell us that there’s an answer to all our hearing problems. They leave it to us to discover that the answers are usually less than what we need.

Our hearing aids are dandy in the doctor’s office, but then we step out on the street or into a restaurant and can’t hear worth diddly. I have thousands of dollars’ worth of hearing equipment, but I hardly hear a word at large family gatherings.

Ah, but there are all sorts of assistive listening devices, like captioned phones. True, but the captioning service often misses what the speaker says or gets so far behind that it’s not helpful. A new company called InnoCaption had better-quality captions on smartphones, but that service is currently on hold pending FCC approval of its 911 access. Captions at movies or on TV frequently leave out whole sentences, sometimes crucial ones, and some films are still not captioned at all. Captionfish, which locates captioned movies for us, nearly shut down last year.

Fifty years ago, Congress forbade Medicare to pay for hearing aids. Every so often a few senators or representatives try to change that, but so far

nobody has come close. Some new sources offer cheaper aids, but be careful to understand what you’re not getting (free visits for adjustments, for example) as well as what you are.

We’ve been told many times that *untreated* hearing loss can lead to cognitive decline. After reading about the latest findings by Dr. Frank Lin at Johns Hopkins and other researchers, I realized that you can skip the word “untreated”—our poor brains are so busy trying to make sense out of the garble they’re getting, of course our IQ goes down a few notches. Not to mention our increased chances for taking a fall.

We’ve also been told that there’s promising technology being developed. We’re not told that a lot of it might not pan out or won’t work for our situation, or may bear fruit only for future generations. So don’t hold your breath, Poopsie.

What am I advocating for in place of reflexive optimism? Not reflexive pessimism, but realism. Tell people up front that hearing loss is likely to be a very serious challenge for the rest of their lives. Tell them it is not curable, not fixable (hearing aids are not like glasses), and will probably get worse with time. But there are therapies and technology and steps they can take for themselves to combat the decline and help their understanding in many situations. Tell them that fighting against the dying of the sound is much more satisfying – and effective – than simply being a victim.

- Pat McGeever

**HearSay by E-mail**

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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 hearing loss, their families and friends.

DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed in HearSay are those of the authors. Mention of goods and services in articles and advertisements does not mean HLAA-PA endorsement, nor does absence suggest disapproval.

To reach readers of HearSay, contact Director of Marketing Lee Williams (leewilliams@hlaa-pa.org) for information.

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, and 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)

Editor: HearSay and HLAA-PA Website

Don Groff (groff@hlaa-pa.org)

Advocacy:

Nancy Kingsley, Chair (kingsley@hlaa-pa.org)

Government Affairs:

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

Outreach:

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

Arts & Entertainment:

Kay Tyberg, Co-Chair (tyberg@hlaa-pa.org)

Alan Kutner, Co-Chair (kutner@hlaa-pa.org)

ALD Demo Kit:

Bill Best, Chair (best@hlaa-pa.org)

Director of Marketing:

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

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