

HearSay

The Official Newsletter of HLAA-PA

Volume 17 Issue 2

Summer 2018



MESSAGE FROM NANCY

By Nancy Kingsley, State Director



This issue includes a very important card, and we need your response in order for you to continue to receive

HearSay. We are very proud of HearSay, which just received HLAA's 2018 newsletter award. We are grateful to our editor, Don Groff, our marketing director, Lee Williams, our writers, and our advertisers. For years, we've mailed HearSay without any charge, and our mailing list has expanded to over 2000 recipients. Unfortunately, printing and mailing costs continue to increase, but contributions to HLAA-PA have not kept pace, so

we can no longer provide free printed copies. The card in this issue offers readers a choice between receiving HearSay free by email or making a donation in order to receive the print edition. Don notes that there are many advantages to the free email version, including the following:

- Read anywhere on your computer, tablet, or smartphone.
- Adjust the font size to suit your vision.
- Save the issue in an easy-to-find format.
- Forward the issue to other interested persons.
- Extract information for other uses.
- Use the links to access online resources.

Please be sure to respond so we can continue to keep you informed about issues affecting Pennsylvanians with hearing loss!

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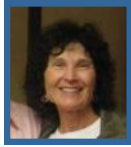


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Pennsylvania State Office
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STATE HAPPENINGS AND OUTREACH

By Carolyn Meyer, Outreach Coordinator

The Advisory Council welcomes 2 new members: Lynn Mather and Mike Miles. Other members on the Council are Bill Best, Mitch Bilker, Linda Eggleston, Don Groff, Nancy Kingsley, Dale Long, Carolyn Meyer, Bill Pfeifer, Kay Tyberg, and Lee Williams. Please feel free to come to meetings as a guest and participate with any questions. Contact any of these members with your concerns.

**AWARDS**

Congratulations to the following award winners:

Kay Tyberg: for the 2018 Hamilton Relay Better Hearing and Speech Month Recognition Award. Recipients are recognized for strong leadership, volunteerism, and involvement within the community.

Saul Britchkow: for The Diana Bender HLA A 2018 National Scholarship Award. This award presented by HLA A-PA.

HLA A CONVENTION AWARDS

Don Groff: 2018 State Newsletter Award: Don is editor of HearSay and HLA A-PA webmaster. Don has also created an email version of HearSay thereby enabling the state to deliver news to a broader audience at minimal cost. This will be an important asset to HLA A-PA in the future as we consider providing only the electronic version.

Bill Best: 2018 Community Service Award. Bill has completed the N-CHAT T program and has visited and demonstrated technology at many HLA A chapters, symposiums, and Expos. As a consumer trainer, he has exhibited the skills and knowledge necessary to train others impacted by hearing loss. He has been a presenter at HLA A national conventions.

These awards will be presented at the HLA A convention in Minneapolis.

We applaud these people for their hard work and commitment as volunteers!

WHAT IS NEW:**HLA A HAS A NEW LOGO!**

Have you noticed? Your chapter has a corresponding new logo which can be found on the HLA A national website, hearingloss.org. If you are creating new information for your chapters please use this revised logo.

NEW CHAPTERS :

Potential Lackawanna(Scranton) and Erie Chapters
Linda Eggleston is working to establish a new chapter in Scranton and has 7 interested people. Sam Trychin is pursuing the possibility of a chapter in Erie. Sam has

recently been appointed to the PA Council on Aging. If you know of any people who might be interested in either of these chapters, please contact Nancy Kingsley kingsley@hlaa-pa.org or Linda Eggleston eggleston@hlaa-pa.org who will direct your information to the appropriate people. We are working to establish HLA A presence in these areas of the state.

HLA A-PA HAS AN UPDATED WEBSITE

Have you visited the updated hlaa-pa.org recently? It has a calendar of events that needs your input. The calendar can include chapter meetings, HLA A events--- but the webmaster needs your input. Send your information about events of interest to Don Groff at calendar@hlaa-pa.org. It also lists open-captioned live theatre performances. Don needs your contributions to make this an effective resource for all with hearing loss in the state.

JACOB RIDES AGAIN

Jacob's Ride returns to Altoona, PA on June 9. Jacob's Ride is dedicated to raising funds for deaf and severely hearing-impaired individuals who cannot afford a cochlear implant. His mission creates awareness of issues faced by the hearing loss community as he rides his bike cross-country. In Altoona, he attends a minor league baseball game where HLA A will have a booth again. For details on this year's ride, check his website jacobsride.org. Jacob usually greets HLA A members so if you want to attend, please let Kay Tyberg (tyberg@hlaa-pa.org) know you will be there. Kay needs volunteers to man the booth so please contact her if you can help. Take the family out to the ball game!

COMING THIS FALL IN HEARSAY

A Joe Meyer Memorial Fund will be established, thanks to the many contributions that have been made in memory of Carolyn's husband, Joe. Watch for details in the next issue of HearSay.

HLA A-PA WALK4HEARING;

Sunday October 21 at the Philadelphia Navy Yard
There will be no Kickoff event this year as the Walk Committee embarks on a community outreach to encourage new participation on Walk day and perhaps, gain some new members on the Walk Committee. For further details please visit walk4hearing.org and click on "Find a Walk" to reach the Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing.

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Penn Audiology within the Department of Otorhinolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery at Penn Medicine provides comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and treatment for people with all types of hearing loss and balance problems.

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<http://www.pennmedicine.org/otorhinolaryngology/patient-care/clinical-programs/audiology/>

HYBRID COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

Cochlear implants are the only technology that can restore a human sense, and they have changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world. Although these implants were originally reserved for those with essentially complete hearing loss, recent advances in technology and surgical approaches have made implantation a possibility for those with increasing levels of remaining hearing.

In general, hearing loss progresses more rapidly in high frequencies than in low frequencies. This is a result of the way the cochlea (the organ of hearing) transmits the sound that comes into the ear into electrical signals that the brain uses to create the perception of sound. In some people, the hearing loss has progressed so far in the high frequencies that hearing aids no longer provide adequate benefit, but low frequency hearing remains. For these people, a combination of electrical stimulation from a cochlear implant to replace the high frequencies and more traditional amplification to boost the low frequencies can provide better hearing than either modality alone. This has been referred to as hybrid or electric acoustic stimulation (EAS).

One of the risks of cochlear implantation is that any remaining hearing may be lost at the time of surgery or in the subsequent months. This is due to the fact that the structures of the cochlea are very delicate and can be damaged by simply placing the electrodes during surgery. Even if the electrodes are able to be placed without damaging these structures, there may be an inflammatory response that causes hearing loss following surgery. New electrode designs, surgical techniques, and medical treatments have greatly reduced this risk, making hybrid implants possible. However, the loss of hearing at the time of surgery is common enough that it needs to be considered when deciding whether a hybrid implant is appropriate for a given person.

The surgical techniques that are used for this type of implantation are collectively referred to as “soft surgery” and include the methods used to remove bone around the cochlea, the speed with which the electrodes are placed, and how far they are inserted. The electrodes that are chosen for this purpose are generally shorter and softer than those used for traditional cochlear implant candidates. These electrodes are less likely to cause damage when placed but may not provide the same level of stimulation as more traditional electrodes in the cases where hearing is not saved. Additionally, medical treatment such as steroids may be given to help

reduce the chances of hearing loss from inflammation following surgery.

Multiple clinical studies have shown that patients with some residual hearing are able to understand speech better with combined electric and acoustic stimulation than with electric stimulation alone. Patients with hybrid or EAS hearing also report a more natural sound when using their implants. However, if a patient must rely only on electric stimulation alone (because they do not have residual hearing), the longer cochlear implant electrodes provide better outcomes than shorter ones. The risks and benefits of these tradeoffs should be carefully considered and discussed with an experienced cochlear implant audiologist and surgeon; and each potential implant candidate should weigh these choices carefully before deciding which system is best for them.

Even with these advances, the first choice for the rehabilitation of hearing loss remains hearing aids. For the vast majority of patients even with significant hearing loss, hearing aids can provide significant benefit and save the cost and risks of a surgical procedure. However, as technology improves and surgical techniques advance, the benefits of cochlear implantation are becoming available to those with increasing amounts of residual hearing. The number of patients with hearing loss who are “too bad to be helped with a hearing aid, but too good for a cochlear implant” is getting smaller with each advance in implant technology.

Jason A. Brant, MD
Assistant Professor
*Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery,
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CLIMBING MOUNTAINS

HLAA-PA Marketing Director Lee Williams notes, *“One of the great benefits of volunteering at HLAA-PA is the opportunity to meet and work with some fantastic people who not only meet the challenges of their hearing loss but also know the good feelings that come from helping others. Caitlin Mosholder is one of those people. She is deaf, graduated from Gallaudet, lives in Pittsburgh, and works with deaf children at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. I met her at an event at Salus University about a year ago, when she was covering Pennsylvania for Hamilton Relay/CapTel. She has a love of life and a desire to help people that knows no limits, and she is inspiration to others who are dealing with the challenges of hearing loss. Her Facebook page has more information about her as well as some photos of her.”*

AAAAAAAAAAAA

Climbing mountains became a passion of mine for several reasons. I perceive mountains as a challenge, something bigger than me, which also applies to my experience with facing challenges as a deaf person. I conquer routes on mountains; I've struggled climbing to the top with some banged-up knees and skin abrasions on my hands, but I don't give up--I continue until I finish my route and reach the top. Climbing allows me to be free and have a complete sense of solitude; it's good for the mind, body, and soul, and I love the thrill and the adrenaline rush I receive. Most importantly, climbing brings positivity into my life when things get hard.

In the same fashion, as a person with hearing loss, I find alternative ways to succeed instead of feeling sorry for myself. When I reach the top, the view is worth every penny and I feel at peace. Over-

coming my challenges brings light to the future as I move forward in an optimistic way.

I chose to help children with hearing loss in the education field because I understand and feel their frustrations and challenges from experience. It brings so much joy to me when the students have access to their language and other tools that can assist them in furthering their education in the best way possible. I also get to live through their good experiences, especially when the students express their gratitude. This makes me feel like I made a difference in their lives during the most important stages of their childhood. My dream for them is to carry the confidence and knowledge that they have learned and create a wonderful life out of it, and possibly become great leaders for our community.

- Caitlin Mosholder



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Visit hlaa-pa.org, or scan this QR code on your smartphone for latest news and a calendar of events.



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Ask the Expert

COCHLEAR IMPLANTS – LIFE BEYOND HEARING AIDS

Straining to hear each day, even when using powerful hearing aids?

Feeling frustrated and sometimes even exhausted from listening? Whether it happens suddenly or gradually over time, hearing loss can affect you physically and emotionally. Being unable to hear impacts your ability to communicate with your loved ones, hear in noisy environments, talk on the phone, and may force you to become more reliant on your family members to interpret for you.

Cochlear implants work differently than hearing aids. Rather than amplifying sound, they use sophisticated software and state-of-the-art electronic components to provide access to the sounds you've been missing.



Thomas Roland, M.D.,
Cochlear Medical Advisor

Dr. Roland, 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 but clearer. Cochlear implants can help give you that clarity, especially in noisy environments. Hearing aids are typically worn before a cochlear implant solution is considered.

Q: Are cochlear implants covered by Medicare?

A: Yes, Medicare and most private insurance plans routinely cover cochlear implants.

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 450,000 people worldwide. For many people, cochlear implants are better than hearing aids in noisy environments.¹

Q: What does a cochlear implant system look like?

A: There are two primary components of the Cochlear[®] Nucleus[®] System, the implant that is surgically placed underneath the skin and the external sound processor. Cochlear offers two wearing options for the sound processor, one that's worn behind the ear – similar to a hearing aid – and the new Kanso[™] Sound Processor which is a discreet, off-the-ear hearing solution that's easy to use. The Cochlear Nucleus System advanced technology is designed to help you hear better and understand conversations.



Call **1 800 354 1731** to find a Hearing Implant Specialist near you.

Visit **Cochlear.com/US/HLAA** for a free guide.

1. The Nucleus Freedom Cochlear Implant System: Adult Post Market Surveillance Trial Results, 2008 June.
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LIVE CAPTIONING NOW IN NEW YORK CITY THEATERS

Usually you have to turn off your cell phone when attending theater performances. But in many theaters in New York City, hard of hearing attendees leave their phones on to receive live captions of the performances. Using a newly developed app called GalaPro, they turn their phones to airplane mode, scroll down to the performance they are attending, and receive captions through the house Wi-Fi system. The captions appear on a black screen so as not to disturb other attendees, and their size is adjustable; the phone's airplane mode prevents interruptions from incoming phone messages.

GalaPro's technology uses a preloaded script of the show to teach its computer voice recognition of the words as spoken by the actors during the performance. If an actor stops speaking or skips part of the script, the app will follow along with him to caption the ongoing performance. In addition, the app provides audio description for blind and low vision patrons as well as subtitles in multiple languages for non-English speakers. Patrons who do not have a smartphone can see captions on a hand-held I-Caption device available from the theater.

It takes time for the script of a show to be translated into the app, so captions typically become available four weeks after opening night. Later this year every theater on Broadway will be using the app. The Theater Access website provides information on which shows offer live captioning in New York: theateraccess.nyc

This free app was developed by an Israeli tech startup called GalaPrompter. The Shubert Organization is an investor and board member and uses GalaPro in all its NY theaters. For its effort in developing and implementing GalaPro, the Shubert Organization will be awarded the 2018 National Access Award from HLAA at Convention 2018 in Minneapolis, Minnesota in June.

See broadway.news/2018/02/06/theaters-partner-galapro-app-offer-live-closed-captioning

- Diana Bender

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CONSIDERING A COCHLEAR IMPLANT?




Contact
Alexanna Rodgers MS, CCC-SLP
 Consumer Engagement Manager
 MED-EL Corporation
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alexanna.rodgers@medel.com

MEDITATION CAN HELP PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS

When I first tried meditation, I didn't like it and was ready to quit a yoga class that included a brief meditation session. Luckily, a dear friend persuaded me to try again, so I did. At that time, I was only interested because I wanted to learn how to relax; I never thought of using meditation to help me cope with my hearing loss.

I must confess that learning meditation was a definite communication challenge, because the soft-voiced instructor told the students to close their eyes while she explained the steps. Even though we were supposed to keep our eyes closed, I opened mine so I could speech read, which enabled me to understand what the instructor was saying. I learned how to focus on my breath as a way to prevent my mind from wandering, which helped me to relax.

It was not until I was taking a meditation class at the Kadampa Meditation Center in Glen Spey, New York that I had an "AHA!" moment and realized I could use meditation to help me cope with the stress from my hearing loss. I decided to meditate for about five minutes every morning, and this daily practice helped to alleviate some of my feelings of frustration. Don't get me wrong—I still get a little frustrated at times with having to ask people to repeat what they said or being in a very noisy place where it is difficult to understand conversations, but now I can meditate, which calms me.

Some helpful meditation references include *Meditation for Beginners* by Jack Kornfield; *Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World* by Mark Williams and Danny Penman; *Meditation for Beginners: 20 Practical Tips for Understanding the Mind* (zenhabits.net/meditation-guide); and the Kadampa Meditation Center website (kadampanewyork.org).

At the Hearing Loss Association of America Convention in Minneapolis, I will be giving a workshop, "How Meditation Helped Me with My Hearing Loss." After the convention, information about meditation will be posted on the blog ididnothearu.wordpress.com, which is in the process of being developed

— Linda Rusinko

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.

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

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