

## The Official Newsletter of HLAA-PA

*Support and Advocacy since 2001 for Pennsylvanians with Hearing Loss*

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HLAA-PA welcomes articles of interest to the hearing loss community for publication in HearSay, as well as suggestions for topics. Send e-mail to [editor@hlaa-pa.org](mailto:editor@hlaa-pa.org)

### DISCLAIMER

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

### Nancy's Message

By Nancy Kingsley, HLAA-PA State Director

For some time, there has been discussion of a possible connection between untreated hearing loss and dementia, but studies were small and inconclusive. Recently, a large observational study confirmed the connection and showed that hearing aids reduced the risk of dementia. Since hearing aids are not widely used by those who could benefit from them, public health polices are needed to increase their usage.

The study included data from 437,704 people and found that those with untreated hearing loss were 42% more likely to develop all forms of dementia during the follow-up period, but those with hearing loss who used hearing aids had the same lower risk as those without hearing loss. While hearing loss is known to lead social isolation and depression, which are also associated with an increased risk of dementia, it appeared that only 11% of the reduction in dementia risk was related to the effect of hearing aids on psychosocial factors. The data came from the UK Biobank and the results were published in The Lancet Public Health.

Hearing loss begins to increase after age 40, which is also when the brain changes start that later result in dementia. One possible explanation for the connection is that hearing loss requires the brain to use resources needed for other cognitive purposes. Another is that the lack of auditory input may result in the degeneration of auditory processing regions of the brain and reduce cognitive function.

Further studies are needed to determine how hearing loss affects brain function.

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### State Happenings

by Carolyn Meyer, Outreach Coordinator

### STATE HAPPENING

Spring and summer are busy times for us all as chapters plan events outdoors as well as in the confines of usual meeting places. Days are long and filled with light ,a welcome change of seasons. We see many chapters winding up the year.

### CHAPTERS IN THE NEWS

The HLAA Pittsburgh Chapter met on Thursday May 18 from 7-9 PM. The meeting was held on Zoom and open to the public. The presenter was Jamie Katz, AUD,F-AAA, CCC-A. Most of

his experience has been in the hearing aid manufacturing sector with emphasis on technology, education, and product training ,sales and marketing, business development as well as national sales management. He is a Research Audiologist in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders within the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh where he will be directing activities that support hearing aid research as well a clinical consumer education on Over the Counter hearing aids. To contact the chapter email [HLAP.news@gmail.com](mailto:HLAP.news@gmail.com)

The MontCo chapter had an informal meeting in early June to include discussions of several topics to include Auracast appeal to those with normal hearing; Google LiveTranscribe; Open Captions at movie theaters; LiveListen on iPhones with HA streaming; The ability to play Youtube at lower speeds(settings). Members enjoyed the informality of these rap sessions.

### **PICNIC TIME!**

MontCo invites you and your friends and families to the MONTCO ANNUAL PICNIC on Sunday, July 30 at Fort Washington State Park, 12 noon until 4 PM. Rain or shine! They have reserved a covered pavilion near a playground. There is no cost except they ask you to bring a potluck dish to share for lunch. Bottled water will be supplied <https://www.visitpa.com/region/philadelphia-countryside/fort-washington-state-park>

Please RSVP by July 15 to: Kathy Harral at [k.harral@verizon.net](mailto:k.harral@verizon.net) Please provide the number of attendees and the dish you will be bringing to share. Updates at [hlaamcc.org](http://hlaamcc.org)

### **ChesCo Mortimer Bauer Scholarship Award Ceremony June 8**

ChesCo presented its annual scholarship award to Jimmy Scherer, a student who has sensorineural hearing loss. Jimmy will be attending Duquesne University this fall with a major in music technology, focusing on the cello. ChesCo first awarded this scholarship in 2017 for students in Chester County high schools who had hearing loss and were seeking higher education. When Mortimer Bauer, a devoted member of the chapter passed away, donations in his memory from family and friends were added to this scholarship fund. The Scholarship is named after Mortimer Bauer. Every year the chapter has an award ceremony and presentation of the award. This year it was June 8 with an ice cream social as part of the ceremony!

### **Joe Meyer Memorial Grant Awards 2023**

This year the committee gave two awards to two outstanding students. The first to Yaduraj Choudhary of Downingtown, PA, a student who has had hearing loss since he was diagnosed at 7 years old. He was motivated to start a non-profit “Three Tiny Bones” (named after the three middle-ear ossicles he was missing) with the aim of destigmatizing hearing loss and educating youth about healthy hearing).

The second recipient is Shyla Keeler of Quakertown, PA who utilizes cochlear implants and was implanted at 13 months old. She is pursuing a career in the health care field, specifically Radiography. Because both candidates were so qualified the committee decided to award them both. The Meyer Grant Award was established in 2018 with donations in memory of Joe Meyer, a long-time member and friend of HLAA.

### **NEWS AND VIEWS:**

Time for a personal story from a member Lynn Mather, a member of the Montco chapter, has some insight to share with readers. Her hearing aid was in need of repair to some wiring that the original dealer and dispenser said could not be fixed. She was informed that the Salus Ear Institute provided hearing aid repair service. When she went for her appointment they were receptive and the end results were positive. She now has a functional hearing aid. She wanted me

to share this with you all. HLAA has partnered with Salus University at the Walk 4 Hearing and many other HLAA events.. Dr. Blaha attended her appointment and was very instrumental in describing the problem and then described the services that the Salus University Institute provides. As many of you know, The Pennsylvania Ear Institute is the on-campus training clinic for Salus University’s Osbourne College of Audiology. Thank you, Lynn, and if you have some personal story to share please reach me at meyer@hlaa-pa.

**NATIONAL HLAA CONVENTION JUNE 29-JULY 1**

By now many of you have scheduled plans to attend the convention at the Marriott. Now we would like to hear from you when you return. Please send me your comments on the workshops and plenary sessions. And for sure—have a great time in “The Big Easy” .Meet new friends and renew old acquaintances.

**PA WALK4HEARING: SUNDAY OCTOBER 15**

Here we go again. The location is once more at the Philadelphia Naval Yard. It is never too soon to talk about the Walk or think of being a volunteer. Want to be on the committee? Contact Ronnie Adler [radler@hearingloss.org](mailto:radler@hearingloss.org)

Please see articles in this newsletter reviewing the Lunch and Learn in Harrisburg and the One Day Conference April 29, 2023.

Have a safe and healthy summer and take time to breathe and relax!

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**HLAA PA One Day Regional Conference**

By Mike Miles.

HLAA chapters in southeast Pennsylvania held a one-day conference covering various hearing loss related topics on Saturday, April 29, 2023. The facility was fully accessible with a hearing loop, and ASL interpreters and captioning were also provided for all presentations. The conference was funded by the Chester County, Montgomery County, and All Generations HLAA L’AAHl chapters. In addition, a grant was received from the Louis N. Cassett Foundation. There were 65 attendees from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland.

The presenters were Gael Hannan and Linda Kozma-Spytek. Gael is a renowned author, humorist, and speaker on hearing loss issues. As a leading international advocate, she has a mission to help people better understand life with hearing loss. Gael covered several hearing-related topics, including her favorite – bluffing.

Linda is a consultant and professional adviser to HLAA on technology. She also does work in the areas of hearing aid compatibility and Bluetooth wireless connectivity for hearing devices. Her presentation covered the latest exciting updates for Bluetooth technology and what they mean to those with hearing loss.

Based on feedback from attendees, the conference was a huge success. The topics and speakers were very well received, and the number one positive comment was having the ability to meet others with similar hearing loss experiences. Plans are already being made for another conference in 2024.

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**2023 Lunch and Learn**

By Nancy Kingsley

On May 7, HLAA-PA resumed its Lunch and Learn program for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic forced cancellation of numerous activities. This year’s event (which ran

from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) was held in a new location, the Penn Harris Hotel in Camp Hill.

Approximately 40 attendees enjoyed a hot buffet followed by two presentations. First was a hearing aid features panel with Daniel Kalish, a Phonak account manager, and David Shuttleworth, an account executive for Starkey Hearing Technologies. Audiologist Lori Leiman, who selected the panelists, served as the moderator. Wendy Davis, the marketing and outreach director for the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) gave the second presentation, during which she discussed PATF's free and low-cost loans for the purchase of hearing aids and other hearing loss technology. Wendy became an advocate as a result of her children's and husband's hearing losses, and she is the entertainment chair for the HLAA-PA Walk4Hearing.

I handled arrangements with the hotel and various other responsibilities. The planning committee also included the Capital Region Chapter's president, Augusta Spandler, and its professional advisor, Lori Leiman, who is with HearingLife in Camp Hill and serves on the state's Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ACDHH). HLAA-PA Advisory Council members Mike Miles and Bill Best were on the committee as well. Mike served as registration coordinator and raffled off two items (all attendees were given free raffle tickets), and Bill assisted with the audiovisual setup, including laying out the hearing loop. Susan Durkovic provided CART, and the interpreters were Nicole Ramos and Lentha Zinsky.

Both presentations were accompanied by PowerPoint slides, and audience questions were welcomed. In addition, attendees had the opportunity to browse among the exhibits provided by HLAA-PA, the Capital Region Chapter, and each of the four presenters. A good deal of helpful information was provided at this enjoyable event.

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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  
6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320  
Rockville, MD 20852

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.*

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### 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)  
Editor: HearSay and HLAА-PA Website Don Groff (groff@hlaa-pa.org)  
Advocacy: Nancy Kingsley, Chair (kingsley@hlaa-pa.org)  
Outreach Coordinator: Carolyn Meyer, Chair (meyer@hlaa-pa.org)  
ALD Demo Kit: Bill Best, Chair (best@hlaa-pa.org)  
Chapter Coordinators: Mike Miles, Eastern PA (miles@hlaa-pa.org), Dale Long, Central PA (long@hlaa-pa.org), Teresa Nellans, Western PA (nellans@hlaa-pa.org)

**Link to online version: [tiny.cc/HearSay20232](https://tiny.cc/HearSay20232)**

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