

HLAA-NJ NEWS, VIEWS & DATES – DECEMBER 2015

Compiled by Joel Strasser, APR, Fellow PRSA, President-Elect and Public Information Officer, Hearing Loss Association of NJ (HLAA-NJ)



Happy, Happy

The officers, trustees, and all board members of the Hearing Loss Association of America's New Jersey State Association extend to all our members, friends, families and supporters all best wishes for a very Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa and all other Season's Greetings as well as a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!!!!



Renewed Focus on Looping, Accessibility Highlighted at Annual Meeting, Future Agenda

With a guest speaker advocating strong measures to influence property owners, library officials and museum directors to embrace looping and accessibility, a new HLAA-NJ administration committed to improving looping and accessibility throughout New Jersey, and a NJ state civil rights director who has offered to assist, HLAA-NJ seems to be at the beginning of a more sustained campaign to provide looping and other accessibility features for various facilities across the state.

Keynote speaker Janice S. Lintz told attendees at the November 15 annual meeting that we have to act as both individuals and as a group since multiple State and Federal laws give us the basic right to demand accessibility at practically all appropriate group venues in NJ. She suggested that HLAA activists keep telephone logs of their various contacts to get the proper listening aids installed. Joel Strasser, our newly-elected president, has already moved to compile lists of potential installers, looping vendors and other looping experts and advocates, and will shortly move to ask HLAA-NJ members to suggest or nominate facilities they feel are urgently in need of looping installations. HLAA-NJ is already compiling a list of interested HLAA members interested in working on this committee, and all interested members are encouraged to contact Joel if they are interested in working on these initiatives, at joel.strasser@hearingloss-nj.org. At the same time, Joel has been in direct contact with Craig Sashihara, New Jersey's director of Civil Rights in the state administration.

HLAA-NJ is also working closely with HLAA colleagues in nearby New York to hopefully develop joint strategies and tactics as well as plan joint advocacy events. Also being considered is an accessibility directory which will eventually list and describe facilities and events with looping, captioning and other accessibility aids for people with hearing loss.

Those interested in working on various elements of the new looping and accessibility effort are encouraged to provide information on potential vendors, installers, committee members, targeted facilities to be identified for eventual contact (along with names and contact information by which to reach their respective managements). Until separate chair people are in place for each element of the looping program, please contact Joel Strasser with information for the above efforts, or until a meeting is called to provide more details of the program.

HLAA-NJ Annual Meeting in November Results In Newly-Elected Officers and Mini-Exhibition

Joel Strasser has been elected president of HLAA-NJ, effective January 1, 2016, while Dr. Ann Marie Olson was chosen as vice president. At the same time, Joleen Marsillo has been elected corresponding secretary, Wayne Roorda has been re-elected recording secretary and Judy Heimbach will serve as HLAA-NJ's treasurer. At the annual meeting on November 15, the new officers and trustees were selected for the coming year and beyond, while almost 60 attendees at this year's annual meeting were treated to a Mini-Fair exhibition of various hearing loss-related vendors and providers showcased their products and services.

Featured speakers at this year's 2015 Annual Meeting included Janice S. Lintz, CEO of Hearing Access & Innovations, a successful advocate for hearing access, who discussed strategies HLAA-NJ leaders as well as ordinary people can use to get hearing access and services. She spoke in some detail about loop systems, the currently favored low-cost method of making hearing accessibility available to large groups of citizens or residents in auditorium or group settings, and how individuals or groups can get them in their areas. Before hearing Ms. Lintz, the annual meeting group heard welcoming remarks from Dr. David Alexander, director of New Jersey's Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, a unit of the State's Department of Human Services.

Exhibitors at the Mini-Fair staffed display tables for their products and literature, with their internal experts and proprietors who answered questions posed by visitors and attendees. Exhibitors included:

- **NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** - services and resources

- **NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** – regional agencies, services and resources
- **NJ Division on Civil Rights** – services and resources
- **NJ Theatre Alliance/ Cultural Access Network** – captioned & accessible performances/arts resources
- **EmCom System** - induction loop demonstration
- **Sprint CapTel** - captioned telephone services and demo
- **CaptionCall** – captioned telephone and service
- **"Ask the Audiologist"** – professional audiologist Dr. Ann Marie Olson was available to answer questions
- **Cochlear Implant (CI) Support Group** - HLAA-NJ members with CIs answered questions
- **Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)** – information, resources and events

HLAA-NJ's mission is to create awareness of hearing loss issues in the state of New Jersey. It is dedicated to developing a statewide network to address outreach, advocacy legislative and equal access issues that impact people with hearing loss.

For information about HLAA-NJ, the New Jersey state association of the Hearing Loss Association of America, please contact HLAA-NJ President Linda Schaab, or President-elect Joel Strasser at info@hearingloss-nj.org. Or, visit the website at www.hearingloss-nj.org or the HLAA's website at www.hearingloss.org

Chapter News for December

HLAA-Paterson Chapter will hold its inaugural first chapter meeting and open house on **Saturday, December 19, 2015** from 1:30 to 3:30 PM at the Paterson Main Public Library, 250 Broadway, Paterson, NJ 07501. Thereafter, all meetings for 2016 will be held on the 3rd Saturday of each month, with sessions now set for January 16th, February 20th, March 19th, April 16th and May 21st. The Hearing Loss Association of America is the nation's leading organization representing people with hearing loss. With 48 million (20 percent) of all Americans having some degree of hearing loss, making it the third major public health issue after heart disease and arthritis, attendance is encouraged by those with hearing loss or who have a family member with hearing loss, would like support from others in the hearing loss community or want questions answered about hearing loss. As President of the chapter, Sharieff Bugg says that "the journey to our upcoming Open House was filled with many bumps in the road, but we did it. We worked hard to plan, train, and develop the structure of our chapter, and look forward to introducing our wonderful leadership team to the community and sharing our platform for the 2015-16 calendar year. We also look forward to any suggestions, support and resources that can assist us in serving our local deaf and hard of hearing community."

HLAA-Morris County Chapter's Second Annual Holiday Party will be held **Saturday, December 5th**, from 4 to 8 PM, at Mary Ellen Marmo's home at 300 Main Street, Apt. 811, Little Falls, NJ. The Chapter has also announced that its January meeting will be held **Saturday, January 9th** at Summit Speech School. Coffee and conversation is 10:00 to 10:30 AM, and the presentation is from at 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. The topic is "***Hearing beyond the ear...more goes on than you think!***" given by two well-known audiologists, Karen Kushla and Craig Barth.

In addition, HLAA-Morris County seeks to attract 18 - 35 year olds so they can start their own group. Please pass this information on to anyone in that age group. Questions may be directed to Pat.Dobbs@HLAA-NJ.Org.

HLAA-Middlesex County Chapter, which meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, except for July and August, will hold its next meeting on **Tuesday, December 15th** at 7:30 PM and will be our annual Christmas Party covered dish event. Janet Tekley once again graciously offered to hold the party at her home, 1004 Tooz Place, South Plainfield. Directions to Janet's will be given in our own Newsletter. If you would like to attend please contact Marie Nordling by e-mail: manord63@yahoo.com and check for the menu up to date. We wish all a very Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, Happy Holidays. Marie Nordling, Coordinator

HLAA-South Jersey Shore Chapter puts meetings on hold during the winter months, and will pick up in the Spring. They continue doing advocacy and online support and personal meetups. Interested participants are encouraged to make further contact with Carolyn Richards at Carolyn.richards@hearingloss-nj.org

HLAA-Bergen County Chapter plans no regular general membership meetings for the immediate future while the Chapter works to install a major looping system in its traditional meeting place, the Ethical Culture Society building in Teaneck, NJ. Until the looping project is complete, the Chapter welcomes participation from those interested in the local Bergen County looping effort, as well as contact from interested potential members and leaders, who are invited to contact Ken Keuhlen at kbk1011@hotmail.com

CHRISTMAS CAPTIONED LIVE PERFORMANCES IN NJ

By Arlene Romoff

Below is a listing of the Open Captioned performances at the five theaters in NJ that provide one open captioned performance per production. All of them provide

discounted ticket prices. To order tickets, call the box office and request to be seated in view of the captioning - and be sure to request their discounted price.

Paper Mill Playhouse - Millburn, NJ – 973-376-4343

<http://www.papermill.org/about-us/audience-info/accessibility-info.html>

A Christmas Story - Sunday, December 20 at 7 PM

A Bronx Tale - Sunday, March 6 at 7 PM

Pump Boys and Dinettes - Sunday, May 1 at 7 PM

West Side Story - Sunday, June 26 at 7 PM

George Street Playhouse - New Brunswick, NJ – 732-246-7717

<http://www.georgestreetplayhouse.org/accessibility.php>

Open-captioned performances for patrons with hearing impairments follow below:

Nureyev's Eyes: February 20; 2 PM

Sex With Strangers: March 26; 2 PM

My Name is Asher Lev: April 30; 2 PM

McCarter Theater - Princeton, NJ—609-258-2787

http://www.mccarter.org/VisitorInfo/VisitorDefault.aspx?page_id=32

Tickets are a discounted \$25 each

A Christmas Carol - Sunday, December 13 at 1 PM

A Piano Lesson - Saturday, January 30 at 3 PM

The Mousetrap - Saturday, March 19 at 3 PM

All the Days - Saturday, May 21 at 3 PM

Two River Theater - Red Bank, NJ—732-345-1400

<http://www.tworivertheater.org/about/accessibility.php>

Tickets are a discounted \$25 each

<i>A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum</i>	Saturday, December 5 at 3pm
<i>Lives of Reason</i>	Saturday, February 6 at 3pm
<i>Ropes</i>	Saturday, March 19 at 3pm
<i>Pericles</i>	Saturday, May 7 at 3pm
<i>I Remember Mama</i>	Saturday, June 25 at 3pm

State Street Theater – New Brunswick, NJ – 732-246-7469

Write to: Jackie.neill@co.middlesex.nj.us

Reserved seat tickets are \$7.00 each

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat – Saturday, December 26 at 2 PM

For open captioned performances in NYC, one must register with TDF at their website - www.tdf.org and click on Accessibility Programs and follow instructions. Tickets need to be ordered in advance and are mailed. <https://www.tdf.org/nyc/33/TDFAccessibilityPrograms>

NEWS from HLAA-NATIONAL:

ADVOCACY

HLAA Remains Committed to 100 Percent of all Cell Phones Being Hearing Aid Compatible

HLAA has worked with industry and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on the issue of Hearing Aid Compatible (HAC) phones. When mobile technology moved from analog to digital in the 1990s, it created a huge barrier for people with hearing loss in that suddenly people with hearing loss who could use analog wireless handsets were faced with interference when they held the newer digital phone to their ear. We reported on this in the November 6 issue of *HLAA in Action* (online *HLAA e-News*). Read the whole story.

The *HLAA e-News* mentioned above is a great source for breaking news as well and news from the national office. Be sure to sign up for the free newsletter [here](#).

Video Relay Service

On November 3, 2015, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposing to temporarily freeze certain video relay service (VRS) rates. The NPRM also seeks comment on the following measures to enhance VRS: (1) impose a stricter speed-of-answer standard; (2) adopt a limited trial of "skills-based routing"; (3) authorize providers to use qualified deaf sign language interpreters; (4) authorize the use of at-home interpreters under certain conditions; and (5) permit the assignment of ten-digit numbers for video phones used by hearing individuals.

Comment due dates will be announced when they are set by publishing the NPRM in the *Federal Register*. Read the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking [here](#).

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Hearing Tracker Survey

Based on the recommendations of a recent report by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), Hearing Tracker is conducting a survey on whether or not consumers support over-the-counter hearing aids. Check the national website for survey details.

Survey on Banking for People with Hearing Loss

The World Institute on Disability (WID) and the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) are conducting a brief 10 to 15-minute survey about access to and use of banking and financial institutions for people with hearing loss. Results from this survey will be used to inform the financial and banking industry as to best practices to make information and services more accessible to people with hearing loss. No individual identifying data or characteristics will be provided to any outside agency, organization or business. All responses will be combined and no individual responses will be made available. After the completion of the study, all contact information will be destroyed. Check the national website for survey specifics.

Comments and Suggestions Welcome on an NIH Research Plan

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is developing a five-year NIH-wide research plan to define the priorities in the area of rehabilitation research that is intended to benefit individuals with temporary or chronic limitations in physical, cognitive, or sensory function that require rehabilitation care. NIH has issued a Request for Information (RFI) inviting public comment on the priorities specified in this plan. Check the national website for specifics.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

HLAA Board of Trustee Shari Eberts' blog post "I No Longer Feel Shame about My Hearing Loss" was published by *Good Housekeeping* on October 31, 2015. Read all Shari's posts on her blog Living with Hearing Loss.

HLAA Board of Trustee Katherine Bouton gave a lecture on October 30, 2015, to the faculty and graduate students at the Virginia Merrill Bloedel Hearing Center at the University of Washington in the Seminars in Hearing and Communication Sciences. Her subject was "Living with Hearing Loss: Why We Need a Cure." She mentioned HLAA as one of the ways patients can get support and education about hearing loss.

On Saturday Nov 14, 2015, Katherine was on a panel at the American Doctors of Audiology convention. The subject is how audiologists gain and retain the trust of patients. One of her suggestions is that they recommend HLAA to patients and join HLAA themselves as a way of showing partnership in the overall effort to better conditions for people with hearing loss. Read Katherine's blog "Hear Better with Hearing Loss."

CHAPTERS

Have We Heard from You Lately?

The national staff is on a search mission looking for HLAA Chapters. On November 5 an email went to chapters we have not heard from asking if they were still active.

Why is this important? We get hundreds of calls here at the national office from people looking for help and support locally. We always refer them to our chapters. If we don't have updated information from you, we can't do that with confidence that you still exist and will respond to them. Plus, we want to list you on hearingloss.org so everyone can find you.

Chapters should fill out the Chapter Update form and email it to chapters@hearingloss.org. If your chapter no longer meets just drop us a note and we will send you a chapter closing form.

If we do not hear back from chapters by **December 1, 2015**, we will remove them from the hearingloss.org "Find a Chapter" section and mark the chapter or state association as inactive in our database. We are doing our best to ensure that we are able to truly serve people who are looking for peer support at the local level, so we have to know if you exist.

On behalf of the HLAA Board of Trustees, the national staff and members everywhere, thank you to everyone who works hard in HLAA Chapters and State Organizations on behalf of people with hearing loss.

WALK4HEARING

Jacksonville, Florida, was the site of the last Walk4Hearing of the 2015 season, Saturday, November 7.

Thank you to all the volunteers, supporters and walkers across the country who have made the HLAA Walk4Hearing a resounding success in 2015. Not only has money been raised for national and local programs, but awareness about hearing loss has been created in 21 cities across the country. The Walk4Hearing has put hearing loss on the map! Find out more information about the Walk4Hearing.

Sponsorship opportunities are available now for the 2016 Walk4Hearing.

HLAA WEBINARS

Mark your calendar for the following free and captioned webinars. To join a webinar, go to the Schedule page and click the Join Webinar button. Or, in case you missed the live event, the webinars are recorded for playback on the national website

November 10, 2015 Noon – 1 p.m. Product Showcase Webinar: *hi HealthInnovations Improving the Access and Affordability of Hearing Health Care*

Presenter: Audiologist Diane Nens

Diane Nens joined *hi HealthInnovations* in 2012. Her roles include corporate leadership at *hi HealthInnovations* and serving as an audiologist in the Detroit area. She is an advocate for hearing health education and has been featured on numerous television and radio stations nationwide.

November 18, 2015 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. *HLAA Town Hall Meeting*

Presenters: Margaret Wallhagen, Ph.D., HLAA Board of Trustees Chair, and Anna Gilmore Hall, HLAA Executive Director

The *Town Hall Meeting* was an opportunity for Anna and Meg to share some of the exciting activities occurring at the national level, as well as provide a forum to talk about opportunities and challenges occurring at the state and chapter levels. The *Town Hall Meeting* provided a forum for discussion with people who joined the webinar. Anna and Meg look forward to “talking and listening” with you on Wednesday, November 18th at 8 p.m. EST.

December 16, 2015 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. *Aging America and Hearing Loss: The PCAST Report Explained*

Presenter: Christine K. Cassel, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, National Quality Forum Dr. Cassel is one of 20 scientists chosen by President Obama to serve on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) and is co-chair and physician leader of a PCAST report to the President on future directions of health information technology. PCAST specifically looked at how to support older adults with mild to moderate age-related hearing loss, which affects nearly half of people over the age of 60 and has major health and social implications. The report found multiple factors that limit people's access to hearing technologies—most notably, the high cost of hearing aids, but also the challenges that consumers face in shopping for best value. PCAST recommended a few key federal actions that it believed could improve access and reduce cost, and Dr. Cassel will summarize those recommendations in the webinar. Read HLAA's response to the PCAST report on the HLAA national website.

HLAA CONVENTION 2016/IFHOH CONGRESS

There are Sponsorships for Every Budget!

The HLAA Convention 2016 Sponsorship/Marketing and Exhibit Opportunities prospectus has been posted on the Convention page of the national website.

Call for Papers Deadline – December 4, 2015 If you are interested in presenting a workshop, please see the Call for Papers page on the HLAA national website. For all educational webinars, your proposal needs to be submitted on the Call for Papers site; only proposals for the State/Chapter Development Room are to be submitted using the Call for Papers form.

AWARDS

Honor HLAA's finest by submitting an award nomination by **December 4, 2015**. Nominate a chapter, state organization or individual. All the information and applications are on the HLAA national website.

CONVENTION

The Call for Papers has officially opened for HLAA Convention 2016 and IFHOH Congress, a joint event expected to bring 2,200 people to the nation's capital, June 23-26. Interested in presenting a workshop? Go to <http://bit.ly/CallforPapers-EducationTracks> to submit your proposal.

Call for Papers – Deadline for Submission, December 4, 2015

See the information on the Call for Papers page about submitting your workshop proposal. This year we are using an online collection site for proposals for the educational workshops – the link to the site is on the Call for Papers page. The Call for Papers form for State/Chapter Development workshops is also posted on this page, and once completed must be emailed to Nancy Macklin. Should you have any questions, call Nancy at 301.657.2248 Ext. 106 or email Nancy Macklin.

Proposals for State/Chapter Development workshops must be submitted using a special form available from HLAA National (see their website).

Deadline for all proposals is **Friday, December 4, 2015**.

Registration for Convention

State and Chapter Leaders, again this year you can receive 4 discounted registrations for leaders **PLUS** one delegate registration which might be considered for someone being readied for a leadership position. Also, keep in mind that registrations will not be processed unless we have received a current State/Chapter Update Form on file. See

hearingloss.org/sites/default/files/docs/Chapter_State_Update_Form_fillable_v2.pdf

Keynote Speaker

Keynote speaker Jenny Lay-Flurrie was honored earlier this month as a White House Champion of Change. Jenny, who began experiencing hearing loss as a child, is now a Senior Director at Microsoft, leading the Trusted Experience Team (TEXT), which focuses on privacy, online safety, and accessibility. Read more about this dynamic speaker. Jenny will deliver her speech during the Opening Session on Thursday, June 24, 2016.

Washington Hilton Registration OPEN

Reserve your room online or call the hotel at 202.483.3000 (follow the prompts to reach Reservations), or call 1-800-HILTONS and book for the Washington Hilton. Be sure to mention the Group Code, HLAA. See details regarding rate on the Convention page.

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