

# Choo-Choo Signal

JUNE 2010 • A SELF-HELP NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS

## Walk4Hearing 2010 a Success!

### Member news

- Happy belated **May** birthdays to: **6-Sam Nalley; 17-Becky Chester; 21-Warren Barnett; 28-Annette Drake; 31-Claire Overmyer.** Happy **June** birthdays to: **2-Dick Twitchell; 24-Tom McCombs; 24-Ron Vickery; 27-Betty Soward**

### Calendar of Events

- June 15 - Health Fair at Shallowford Post Office, 6am-6pm
- July 10 - Veteran's Health Fair at the Nat'l Guard Armory on Holtzclaw, 9am-3pm
- July 22 - Senior Technology Expo at Brainerd UMC, 8am-12pm
- August 14 - Annual Potluck Picnic at ChattState, 5-7pm
- October 2 - Go!Fest at the Zoo, 9am-3pm

### Next captioned play is June 24

Mark your calendars for June 24 at 7pm when the Main Stage captioned production of Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" will be presented at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre. See page 3 for details.

Mayor Littlefield reads the special proclamation in honor of the Walk.



Photographer Jason Moon

At right, Sarah Samarin & friend walk.



Photographer Terry Watson

Caleb Massengale of the Step N' for Caleb team



Photographer Jason Moon

Bea Lyons is all smiles...the day went GREAT!



Photographer Jason Moon

Magical Music Machine owner and sponsor Conni Blankowski provided face painting that was VERY popular!



Photographer Laqueta Soule

## Preventing hearing loss

(Information published in June 2010 Woman's Way provided by Better Hearing Institute -BHI)

As your newsletter editor, I am always trying to find information to pass along. I came across this article while dining recently. It has some good advice.

- **Take quiet breaks (to give ears a rest)**  
(Ears can be safely exposed to 85 decibels (dB) for up to eight hours per day, however the maximum time of safe exposure to 100dB is just 15 minutes!)
- **Don't purchase front row seats** (see rationale in previous bullet - concerts are often 115dB and above!)
- **Stop going places where raised voices are the norm**
- **Protect your ears regularly**  
(Get foam, silicone or pre-molded earplugs with a minimum noise-reduction rating [NRR] of nine dB - but most products have a minimum rating of 22 dB)
- **Don't be patient if you suspect hearing loss**  
See an ENT if you experience changes or suspect hearing loss

### Now for the myths associated with hearing loss and treatment...

- *I have one good ear and one bad ear...* the good ear isn't really normal! BHI says roughly 90% of hearing loss patients need hearing aids for BOTH ears.
- *Hearing loss is for the elderly...*BHI says only 35% of people with hearing loss are over age 64. Nearly six million people in the US between ages 18-44 have some hearing loss and more than one million are school age.
- *My doctor would have told me if I had hearing loss...*BHI says only 14% of physicians routinely screen for hearing loss during a physical.
- *Hearing loss is normal for my age...*BHI says it's not normal for anyone, no matter what age.
- *Hearing loss is untreatable...*perhaps that was true in the past, but technology has changed that according to BHI. Though surgery might not be the answer, BHI says 95% of people with sensorineural hearing loss can be helped with hearing aids.

To learn more about hearing loss, visit the Better Hearing Institute Web site at [www.betterhearing.org](http://www.betterhearing.org)



## News bits

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has launched a Web site to advise consumers on how to benefit from hearing aids. Copy and paste the following url into your browser: [www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm185723.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm185723.htm)

## Planning a trip to NY?

In January 2010, following an 18-month pilot program involving 13 taxis, New York taxi's were authorized by the city to have induction loops installed. This means you can use your telecoil to converse with the driver, etc. in the cab. Spearheaded by the Hearing Access Program and Janice Schacter, a former attorney who has a child with hearing loss and took up this cause because she was distressed, "to discover that how few public facilities are accessible to people with hearing loss." Encouraging looping of the approximately 13,000 taxi's in NYC will be daunting, but she will have the backing of the Taxi and Limousine Commission who will encourage owners to install the loops which cost about \$250-\$300 each. Go Janice!



From the Hearing Journal: Taxi riders in NY will soon be regularly seeing this notice about the loop system in the vehicle

## Clip & save

During Chattanooga HLAA's recent participation in the Health Fair at ChattState, I picked up this "Know your Numbers" handout, prepared by Dr. Billy Arant of Erlanger. (< is less than; > is more than)

Waist (circumference).....men <37.....women <33

BMI.....<25

(Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight)

Blood Pressure .....<120/80 mm Hg

Fasting Blood Sugar .....<100 mg/dl

TG (triglycerides) .....<150

TC .....<200

(The cholesterol test is a quantitative analysis of the cholesterol levels in a sample of the patient's blood.)

HDL-C (good Cholesterol) .....men >40.....women >50

LDL-C (bad cholesterol).....<100 mg/dl

Uric Acid.....<6.0 mg/dl

(Uric acid is a waste product normally present in the blood as a result of the breakdown of purines. Excessive amounts of uric acid can cause crystals to form in the joints and cause gout.)

Homocysteine .....<9.0 umol/L

(Homocysteine is a naturally occurring amino acid found in blood plasma. High levels of homocysteine in the blood are believed to increase the chance of heart disease, stroke, Alzheimer's disease, and osteoporosis.)

CRP .....<1.0 mg/dl

(C-reactive protein: A plasma protein that rises in the blood with the inflammation from certain conditions.)

## New lip-reading class begins July 6

David Harrison is starting lip reading classes on Tuesday, July 6, 2010 at 10 a.m. at Ridgeview Baptist Church at 6 N. Moore Road (at Brainerd Road) in Chattanooga, TN. Call to register early at 423-624-1669 or visit his Web site: [www.letmypeoplehear.com](http://www.letmypeoplehear.com).



# The CRUCIBLE

the masterpiece by Arthur Miller

**Captioned Performance: Thurs., June 24 • 7 p.m.**

Written in the early 1950s as a response to McCarthyism, when the US government blacklisted accused communists and questioned playwright Arthur Miller himself, *The Crucible* is based on the actual events that, in 1692, led to the Salem Witch Trials. The production won the 1953 "Best Play" Tony Award. A year later a new production was mounted and the play became a classic. Directed by Chuck Tuttle.



## Hearing aids and satisfaction factors

Recently, I read an article in one of my hearing journals stating that more than 65% of people are fitted incorrectly for their hearing aids. Therefore, even though hearing aids are better than they have ever been, the majority of people are dissatisfied with their hearing aids. Striving for better fittings is a goal of most hearing professionals and this article listed all the reasons for bad fittings. (Note: Although the physical comfort in or behind the ear is important in a fitting, this article was talking about the electronics of the hearing aids and the choices being made regarding this technology. "Fitting" has two main components: how it feels and how it sounds!)

This article brought out all the fitting mistakes dispensers make. It added another "fitting" component: How practical is the hearing aid to the user. Right up to the top of the list of mistakes made is: "Incorrect choice of hearing aid formulas." Hearing is really complicated and is influenced by many factors: where the listener is, how far away is the signal trying to be heard, how much "echo" is in the room, what are the competing signals interfering, the type of severity of the hearing loss, and the biggest factor of all...the human brain of the person wearing the hearing aid. To address these issues, hearing aid manufacturers place into the hearing aids differing fitting formulas. Here are a few names of them: NALv5, MAL-NL1, DSLI/O, e-STAT, DSLv5, Berger. Each formula causes the hearing aids to react differently to in-coming sounds.

Here is what happens when someone is fitted with hearing aids: ideally, they should be connected to the hearing aids and the dispenser's computer so that they can listen as the fitting occurs. The software in the dispenser's computer automatically selects the "de-fault" formula for that hearing aid, and that hearing loss. It is the software's "best guess" on how the individual wants to hear. The soft wear or the hearing aid has no idea what the person wants to hear and where they want to hear it. Here is where it gets really interesting: We all perceive sound differently even if we have identical hearing losses. (Which is why my

favorite song or music is not your favorite song or music!). Therefore, many times the "de-fault" formula is not appropriate and should be changed to a different one. It requires the dispenser to know what all these formulas do and don't do!

Fortunately, some manufacturers are adding a feature to their hearing aids called: "data logging, or data learning, or sound learning, or sound logging." As the person wears the hearing aid, it records the listening environments, it records how the user changed the hearing aid, it records the volume settings preferred by the listener. Using that information, the dispenser can change fitting formulas and make adjustments in the hearing aid to make the hearing aid "practical" and comfortable for that individual.

The article brought out that many dispensers do not use these features or do not know how the fitting formulas change the hearing aids. The user blames the hearing aids instead of the dispenser. And hearing aids gain a bad reputation.

Hearing aids are getting smarter and smarter and some of the best research right now is coming out of a lab in Australia. This lab feels that a hearing aid should be and could be like a pet dog which can be trained to the individual. For example, a hearing aid records what the person is listening to; the changes that person made to the hearing aid so that they heard better; and automatically makes the same changes when the same situation occurs again. In other words, a hearing aid that searches for the best formula for that individual's listening preferences at that instant in time. Predictions are that this digital technology will be placed into hearing aids by manufacturers in a very short time. Personally, I can't wait!

Now, if hearing aid manufacturers will keep me from making stupid mistakes by not checking for thin-tubes tips in someone's ear canal, I will be a happy camper.

---Margie Littell Ulrich, CCC-A, Clinical Audiologist

## Wrapping up a successful Walk...



As chair for the 2010 Walk4Hearing, I can truthfully say we had a GREAT walk! Here are some of the facts:

- 300+ walkers and volunteers (an increase of 100+ participants over 2009)
- Approximately \$24,000 raised (preliminary)
- Nine Alliances received a portion of the funds raised (\$2,790.40 – preliminary)

Funds raised by alliances must be used to benefit people

with hearing loss. Benefits can be in the form of direct or indirect support that may include supplies, equipment, information materials, technology or other.

- 15 monetary sponsors (\$8,950), 12 in-kind – goods & services (\$1,733)
- A new member of our chapter from South Pittsburg, Susie Collins, was instrumental in bringing a large group of walkers, including children, from Marion County. Susie was awarded one of two Rocky Stone Scholarships and a chapter scholarship to attend the national convention in June.

Other participants came from Dalton, Rome, Jasper, Maryville, Knoxville and Atlanta as well as the greater Chattanooga area.

- The LED Electronic Captioning Board purchased with 2009 funds and housed at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre provided a glimpse of what our chapter can provide to the community to enhance the lives of people with hearing loss.

**We have already scheduled the Walk4Hearing next year, May 14, 2011, and hope for an even greater success.**

Chattanooga is still the first and the only Walk4Hearing site in the State of Tennessee; we are proud of that fact and the awareness of hearing loss issues that the Walk4Hearing brings to the community and area.

## 2010 local support as of 6/13/10

Larry & Jane Akers (past due).....	
Frances Andrews (11/10).....	\$10
Lillian Barnett (11/10).....	\$10
Jeff Bonnell (1/11).....	\$10
Mrs. Walter Brissenden (12/10).....	\$25
Dot Carter (1/11).....	\$10
Cindi Caroland (past due).....	
Susie Collins (1/11).....	\$10
Brian & Annette Drake (3/11).....	\$15
Mary Elam (2/11).....	\$10
Marilyn Fisher (11/10).....	\$10
Steven & Sharon Fritts (4/11).....	\$15
Provash Ghosh (3/11).....	\$10
Winnie Hargis (2/11).....	\$10
David & Cathy Harrison (1/11).....	\$10
Carrie Harvey (past due).....	
Elaine S. Hill (11/10).....	\$10
David, Debbie & Alexis Ingram (2/11).....	\$15
Raymond Jenkins (past due).....	
Taber Jenkins (11/10).....	\$10
Katy Jones (9/11).....	\$20
Helen & Charles Kitchings (11/10).....	\$15
Bill Lawson (11/10).....	\$10
Bea Lyons (11/10).....	\$10
Nita Martin (8/10).....	\$10
Dorris & Sam McBride (2/11).....	\$15
Tom & Diane McCombs (11/11).....	\$15

Elaine Moniz (1/12).....	\$20
Lana & Bud Newton (11/10).....	\$15
Marge Pasch (12/10).....	\$10
Max & Vivian Putnam (12/10).....	\$15
Betty Proctor (2/11).....	\$10
Robbye Reep (12/10).....	\$10
Sara & Dan Rhein (3/11).....	\$15
Terri Rice (past due).....	
Peggy Anne Rogers (4/11).....	\$10
David Saluk (past due).....	
Jim & Joan Sewell (2/11).....	\$15
Laqueta Soule (12/10).....	\$10
Betty Soward (3/11).....	\$10
Dave & Myralin Trayer (3/11).....	\$15
Nelda & Dick Twitchell (12/10).....	\$15
Howard VanZant (1/11).....	\$10

If your support fees are past due, please remit as soon as possible.

Individual fees are \$10 while family fees run \$15. You may pay your fee at the regular meeting or mail it to our PO box shown on mailing panel of this newsletter. The chapter survives because of your generosity! Not a member? See box at right and pay your fees to become one!

(Date next to name indicates when membership)

Treasury-to-date: \$8,572.29

## HLAA Membership

HLAA is committed to creating awareness of hearing loss issues.

### Local Support Benefits:

Newsletter, membership directory, special mailings, educational info, support, National HLAA information

Memberships are good for one calendar year.

To become a member, sign up below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ HLAA Chattanooga Chapter, circle one:

**\$10** individual, or **\$15** family, **mail to:**

PO Box 25254, Chattanooga, TN 37422-9992

\_\_\_ HLAA National Dues, **\$35**

Includes Hearing Loss magazine subscription, **mail to:**

HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Suite 1200

Bethesda, MD 20814 or visit [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org) and pay online!

### CHOO-CHOO SIGNAL Published monthly - Betty A. Proctor, Editor

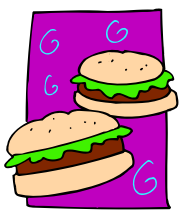
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## HLAA (formerly SHHH)

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## Picnic is August 14 • 5-7pm



All members, friends, Walk4Hearing sponsors and alliances are invited to our annual potluck picnic on August 14 at ChattState in the CBIH building cafe.

Meat and dessert will be provided. Please bring a salad or side dish to pass.

All utensils, plates and cups, ice and drinks also will be provided.

We want to use this time to thank our Walk4Hearing sponsors and alliances by recognizing them with a certificate.

Please email me at [baproctor1@comcast.net](mailto:baproctor1@comcast.net) or text me at 423-605-6981 if you can attend. We will need a headcount by August 10.