

# Choo-Choo Signal

Hearing Loss  
Association  
of America  
Chattanooga Chapter

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

## Outreach expanding - Web site developed

### Outreach report

Summer has been BUSY for HLAA. Just prior to the convention on June 15, **Dick & Nelda Twitchell, Bea Lyons, Susie Collins, Dave Trayer** and **Betty Proctor** participated in an employee fair at the Shallowford Post Office for postal employees.

The Veteran's Fair at the Armory on July 10 was not air-conditioned, but luckily our table was near one of the huge fans for a somewhat cooler experience. Nine veteran's requested more information and should be getting the newsletter beginning this month. **Betty Proctor & Bea Lyons** volunteered.

On July 22, Signal Center presented their annual Senior Technology Expo at Brainerd United Methodist Church. **Dick & Nelda Twitchell, Bea Lyons, Susie Collins** and **Betty Proctor** volunteered at the HLAA table.

**NEW!** W4H photography coordinator, **Teresa (Elwartowski) Moon**, is busy developing a Web site for our chapter and has been making steady progress on it. For those of you who are inspired by the Internet and all that it offers, see our new site at <http://hearingchattanooga.org/>. Remember that it is under construction, but you may check it out and send Teresa an email with your suggestions or comments to [teresa.elwartowski@gmail.com](mailto:teresa.elwartowski@gmail.com). We'll keep you up-to-date on its progress each month. See page 3 to view its home page.

### Calendar of events

- August 14 - Annual Potluck Picnic at ChattState CBIH-cafe, 5-7pm
- August 19 - Captioned play, "The Producers," see page 3 for details.
- Sept. 19 - First regular HLAA fall meeting, 2pm, Ronald McDonald House
- October 2 - Go!Fest at the Zoo, 9am-3pm

### Member birthdays

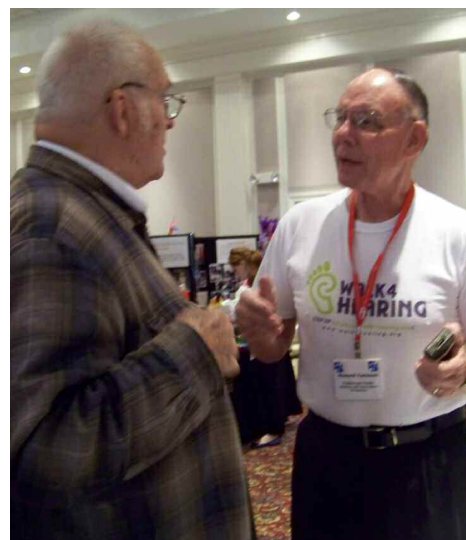
- Happy July birthdays to: **2-Charlie Kitchings & Cathy Harrison; 10-David Harrison; 12-Becky Walls; 14-Sam**



*Bea Lyons discusses hearing loss and veterans with Tyrone Webster of Columbia, TN during the Veteran's Fair on July 10.*

*At right, Dick Twitchell explains telephone technology to a visitor at our table during the Senior Technology Expo on July 22.*

*Below, Chattanooga HLAA member Bill Lawson is surprised at a birthday party hosted by the Twitchell's to celebrate his 85th birthday!*



 **WALK 4 HEARING™**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

Walk4Hearing will be  
May 14, 2011.

McBride; 18-Bill Lawson; 24-Cindi Caroland & Shari Koeper; 28-Robbie Reep and 29-Frances Andrews

## Pushing for National membership!

By Betty A. Proctor, editor

As a team leader of the chapter, I am privy to the list of names who are national members in our area. Although I never asked for this information before, when the 2010 Walk4Hearing was in the planning stages, I wanted to perhaps contact some people who were national but not local members for their support.

Remember, statistics say that about 35,000 people in Chattanooga have hearing loss...well we have 19 national members and 51 local supporters. *Where are the other 34,930+ people?* 11 of these local supporters are national members, meaning 40 local supporters are not a member of national and only eight are national members and not local.

If you recall, several years ago, the national office requested that the term "member" be applied ONLY to members who have joined HLAA (national). By extension, once a person pays their \$35 membership fee to the national office, they automatically become "local members" and also are eligible to receive discounts on a variety of products and to the convention (if you apply as an early bird by Dec. 31), receive the award-winning *Hearing Loss* magazine six times each year and more.

Locally, the "dues" money received by "members" is known as "chapter support fees" and shown on mailing panel of the newsletter each month. There IS a difference.

Before the advent of email, PDFs and the Internet, we put out a black and white newsletter that was copied and mailed monthly to about 100 people, at considerable cost. Following our conversion to the use of email that allows PDFs to be sent electronically, our newsletter count is close to 350 people. We are reaching more people, businesses and organizations than ever before. We do mail 28-30 newsletters for people who are chapter supporters and prefer a paper copy, but most people receive it electronically, saving the chapter a lot of money! (If you currently receive a paper copy but wouldn't mind converting to an electronic copy, just let me know.)

When we began the Walk4Hearing two years ago, our financial outlook really became brighter. Some of the other chapters in

## Why join HLAA?

### Chattanooga HLAA first time convention attendee shares her experience...

I would like to express my appreciation for the wonderful opportunity to attend the HLAA National Convention in Milwaukee, WI. From the moment I arrived at the convention I noticed the many helpful accommodations and assistance. Starting from the front desk, through all the meeting rooms, lobby and social activities which were fully equipped with assistive devices. It was clearly a stress-free experience; how I wish all my days were that accommodating!!



I was very impressed with all the information and materials; which included a convention workbook that provided information on all the workshops, vendor information and service and education programs from the entire weekend. It was wonderful to have the resource material from the workshops I was unable to attend. The workshops I attended focused on effective communication skills. Stress Related to Hearing Loss/Minimizing Stress by Managing Situations and Oneself, by Samuel Trychin was fantastic!

An important technique I have learned is that I can improve my communication skills by first understanding all the factors involved in communication breakdown and effective solutions. I'll admit it's not always easy for me to practice effective communication skills; however now I have the tools with which to make a positive effective effort.

It was especially exciting for me to attend my first convention in my home state. After having spinal meningitis as a child and experiencing hearing loss my parents were faced with a decision to send me to Flint, MI to a school for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students or to be mainstreamed into the public school. Fortunately, I was able to stay home; however coping with my hearing loss has always been a challenge for me. Two years ago, I decided to engage and learn more about my hearing loss. My parents have passed away but I felt their presence so strongly that weekend. Saturday night festivities featuring a polka band was definitely a sign from heaven that my parents were celebrating with me. Prost!!

I highly recommend attending the national convention. It is a weekend tailored to our needs plus valuable information, fun activities and above all genuinely friendly, understanding and supportive people!

*Thanks again! Sara Rhein*

Tennessee also were thrilled to build up their treasury just by raising money for the Walk because they received a 35 percent share of the money they brought in.

So what does this mean? Just because we raise money through the Walk does not mean we can do without your support. The Walk money is used to support and promote education, advocacy and accessibility in the community, for YOUR benefit as well as for anyone else with hearing loss. The team leaders met on July 23 to discuss the upcoming programs for the year as well as put together proposals for use of funds that will be presented at the September 19 meeting.

And yes, national does get 50 percent of the money we raise for the Walk, but we get a lot of benefits from them in return, not to mention increased visibility and standing in our community.

But, it was not that long ago that national was in dire straits financially. While supporting the local chapters as best they could, national was drowning in a sea of red, literally. The Walks became a MAJOR fundraiser for them and in turn for the chapters who chose to par-

ticipate. What also happened is that long-time SHHH/HLAA volunteer and then employee Brenda Battat finally felt ready to take the reins of the organization. HLAA, collectively, has benefitted greatly from her leadership and knowledge.

Why tell you all this? Because the organization needs YOUR support as a national HLAA member. I want to encourage YOU to fill out the form below and mail your \$35 membership fee or go online to pay TODAY.

Let's help make OUR chapter a LEADER in the number of national members!

\_\_\_ 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!



**Hearing Loss  
Association  
of America**



# THE PRODUCERS

The Mel Brooks Musical

Captioned Performance: Thurs., August 19 • 7 p.m.

Congratulations to these students on their academic accomplishments! Now is the perfect time to complete registration plans for fall 2010. For more information call Chattanooga State at 423-697-4404 or visit [www.chattanoogaastate.edu](http://www.chattanoogaastate.edu).



OUR NEW WEB SITE!

<http://hearingchattanooga.org/>



Marion County resident & Chattanooga HLAA Walk4Hearing committee member Susie Collins accepts a \$250 sponsor check from Kimball Walmart assistant manager Jason Turner. Chattanooga & Marion County members also worked at the 2010 Combread Festival and earned an extra \$150 for the Walk4Hearing. Yeah, Susie!



Newfound friend from Atlanta and first-time convention attendee Elizabeth Mayton made a ton of new friends during her first convention experience and was excited to be a part of this year's fun. Almost 800 people attended the Milwaukee Convention. Make your plans NOW to attend the 2011 convention in Washington, DC, June 16-19.

# Transformational...a personal story

Bevin K. Baker is the 16th Commissioner of Health for the City of Milwaukee who is responsible for the health and well being of Milwaukee residents. He was one of the guest speakers during the opening session at the convention and had a special message to convey to the audience...

Mr. Baker began by praising the work that HAAA does as an association as incredible and commented that hearing loss is a major public health concern. He stated, "I don't think it gets the attention that it needs by the general society. And your advocacy is so important. So, when we get in to the number of 36 million people, that's nothing to scoff at. 17 percent of individuals experience some degree of hearing loss."

"We've got to work to deal with this whole notion of stigma. There's nothing more precious than one's health. Hearing is crucial to the well being and health of an individual, said Mr. Baker, "So we need to remove stigma altogether," he added.

"Many consider this to be the invisible handicap. I consider it to be a true gateway to physical and mental well being. And it is not a handicap, unless you treat it that way," stated Mr. Baker.

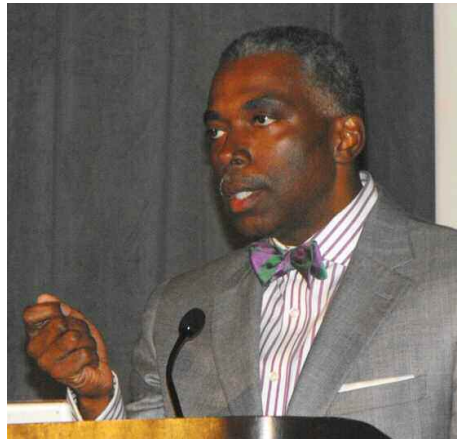
Stating some health advances, Mr. Baker said, "when we look at the human genome, we can unlock it now and we can look at(that) hereditary hearing loss."

Mr. Baker shared, "And we can begin to reduce that number. I'm very proud that here in May the State of Wisconsin passed legislation to look at mandatory hearing screening among newborns. Joining 31 other states (and I wish it was all 50) with that distinction. So, about 97 percent of all the newborn children in this state get that screening. But we need to join together with forces across this nation to make certain that all 50 states look at mandatory screening of our young infants to capture moments where we can begin to address hearing loss."

Concerning entertainment, Mr. Baker said, "And then let's talk about entertainment venues. One of the things that do you on vacation or when you travel and see friends, is to enjoy entertainment venues."

"I'm really pleased that today this is one (place) where you can enjoy the communication channels wide open, much because of your advocacy and concern but it should be that way when you go to an auditorium or movie theater or music hall, anywhere in America."

Targeting education, Mr. Baker stated, "Education, advocacy and all of the treatment that



*Bevin K. Baker, Milwaukee*

you are part of, is so important in changing the way we think about our health and the way we think about hearing loss."

He then went on to share a personal story, "Let me tell you why this is personal. I have the responsibility of this entire city's health. At first I tried to be a good husband and a good father, but about two and a half years ago my wife and I decided to go to Ethiopia. We decided that there were children in need and we wanted to go and get one and bring him or her back. We went through a long adoption process. We found a little boy in Ethiopia who had a lot of health conditions, one of the thing they told us he may have is we don't know what his hearing is going to be like. We know he has some other diseases, we brought him to this country and we brought him to the medical school here."

Relaying the story of his new son's testing, he said, "I sat in the booth with some audiologists for hours as they performed a battery of tests, that even I as a scientist was amazed. There is nothing more precious than knowing that you will be able to hear the first words that your baby says and he'll be able to hear you. They were to identify those issues and they were able to treat him. He turned three years old a few weeks ago, and I can certainly hear him and he can certainly hear me."

Mr. Baker added, "This is vital, that screening and that work. The other reason why it's important, I say this with all the sincerity of the world, that I want to make certain that every American can see with their eyes and hear with their hands and not have any stigma about that. I know that there are many of us who talk with our hands. And I taught my daughter, who is 12 years old that, about six or seven years ago, and she walked in to a post office and there was someone who had profound hearing loss, she said, 'Daddy, can I talk

to him?' I said, 'You certainly can.' I marveled at the notion that she went to the counter and she communicated to the person behind the postal counter and she said, "Daddy, I can certainly see with my eyes and hear with my hands." A huge smile came to this postal worker, and for the next six, seven weeks as she was five to six years old we walked over, we delivered mail even if we didn't have to so that she could have this interaction with this postal worker. And one day I went without her and he slipped me a little note. And he said, 'Thank you' for bringing a smile. She can hear perfectly, but she touched his heart that day."

"Then lastly, this life I've recognized that the most vivid colors sometimes show up in our dreams.

The most powerful words are often spoken in a whisper. So it's so important that you get to hear those whispers, that everyone who has hearing loss can hear those whispers. Last year, my mother passed away. She had hours to live, I caught a plane, flew to North Carolina where she had been in a coma after a heart attack. I was the last of five children to reach home."

"I got there, I walked in to the room, there was a nurse there and a doctor. And they both marveled at the fact that I walked there and my mother's eyes opened for the first time in 46 hours."

"She moved, she gestured me toward her. I thought that she was uncomfortable and she moved and gestured me closer and closer. My ear was pressed up against her lips

and she whispered these words: She said 'Thank you, I'm so happy to see you,' and it was barely audible. Again, the profound nature of hearing, the most powerful words in her life to me as a son was, 'Thank you.'"

Filled with emotion, Mr. Baker shared, "And I was able to hear it. I thought for a moment what if I couldn't hear it. Hearing is so important. I missed the last 46 hours of her life but I heard the last 30 seconds. And it transformed me as a man."

He stated, "The work that you do is transformational. What this association does changes lives and even if you give someone 30 seconds of hearing, you have transformed their whole being."

In closing, he said, "This conference is now in your hands. This convention, I hope, will be a watershed moment when 800 people came together in a little city by a big lake and began to change the way that this nation thinks about hearing loss. I'm so proud to be here. You transformed my life in the work that you do. Thank you."



## HLAA announces new Board of Trustees president

Bethesda, MD: **Peter C. Fackler** was named president of the Board of Trustees of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). He officially assumed his new role with the organization at HLAA's Convention 2010 in Milwaukee in June. Other officers installed at the convention are: **Deb Charlea Baker**, vice president; **Michael**



**Stone**, treasurer; and **Diana Bender**, secretary.

Three new members joined the Board, including **Zachary La Fratta**, **Nancy Lelewer Sonnabend** and **Margaret I. Wallhagen**.

Prior to his retirement in 2003, Mr. Fackler's career spanned thirty years in higher education. He is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA). He has a bachelor's degree in economics from Duke University and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Michigan's Graduate School of Business. Fackler brings to the HLAA Board of Trustees

experience and expertise in finance, strategic planning, and marketing and development.

Mr. Fackler is a member of the Rochester HLAA Chapter, a bi-lateral cochlear implant recipient and has served as chair of the finance committee for the HLAA New York State Association, also serving as chair of three Walk4Hearing events (2007, 2009, 2010). Mr. Fackler has served on the HLAA National Board since 2006 and as treasurer from 2007 to 2010. Following the election Fackler stated, "I am humbled to be asked to serve and honored to have the opportunity. I will do my absolute best to serve you and HLAA well."

## Bea Lyons awarded HLAA advocacy award

(Editor's note: following are excerpts from the letter sent to the national office nomination Bea for the Advocacy award.)

The word advocate is synonymous with the name Bea Lyons. Bea has lived with a severe to profound hearing loss since childhood, so she naturally learned the art of advocacy at an early age.

- Awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by GPS in 1996
- Helped to establish the first Self Help for Hard of Hearing (now HLAA) group in Tennessee
- Has held every officer and committee chair position in the chapter and also served two terms on the National HLAA Board of Trustees
- Worked tirelessly with the city government of Chattanooga towards the establishment of an advisory committee for identification and solving of issues related to the special needs of the disabled community. She was instrumental in having real-time captioning provided for all meetings
- Served on the Insight Cinema Patron Advisory Board to help bring captioned movies to Chattanooga
- Instrumental in securing live captioning for local news TV broadcasts that has resulted in one local TV station providing daily captioning of local news on a weekdays basis and other TV channels providing captioning during inclement weather and other emergency situations
- Worked tirelessly writing letters, e-mailing and making phone calls to members of both the Tennessee State Legislatures and US Congress involving issues of hearing aid insurance legislation, new-born (infant) hearing testing and other issues
- Honored for her "meritorious service to the citizens of the State of Tennessee" through House Joint Resolutions No. 592 of the 104th Tennessee Legislature following her retirement from Chattanooga State with more than 30 years of service
- Provided community service and advocacy efforts having local, state and national impact



Bea Lyons accepts the HLAA Advocacy Award from Lise Hamlin, HLAA director of Public Policy and State Development.



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## 2010 local support as of 7/25/10

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: \$8,356.68

## 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

Choo-Choo Signal is written, edited and printed by the Chattanooga Chapter of Hearing Loss Association of America, formerly Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. Views expressed are those of chapter members. Permission to reproduce articles is hereby granted; however, credit and original information source must be cited. Mention of goods or services in articles or advertisements does not mean HLAA endorsement, nor should exclusion mean disapproval.



# HLAA (formerly SHHH)

CHOO-CHOO CHAPTER SIGNAL, c/o Betty A. Proctor, editor  
P.O. Box 25254, Chattanooga, TN 37422-9992

## 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.