

Choo-Choo Signal

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

HLAA fall meetings begin September 19

Calendar of meetings/events

- Sept. 19 - First regular HLAA fall meeting, 2pm, Ronald McDonald House: Convention 2010, how we were inspired!
- Sept. 30 - Captioned performance of "The Fantasticks," 7pm, Chattanooga Theatre Centre
- Oct. 2 - Go!Fest at the Zoo, 9am-3pm
- Oct. 17: Educational panel about kids and hearing loss
- Nov. 6 - 2010 Statewide Workshop for Teachers, Parents, and Other Professionals Serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children; 7:30am - 2:45pm (cst), at the Tennessee School for the Blind in Nashville, Tennessee
- Nov. 21: Cochlear Implants
- Dec. 11: Holiday Party
- Dec. 16: Captioned performance of "The Christmas Story," 7pm, Chattanooga Theatre Centre
- Jan. 16: New technology, Audiology Services
- Feb. 20: Disability laws
- Feb. 24: Captioned performance of "The Diary of Anne Frank," 7pm, Chattanooga Theatre Centre
- March 12: Walk4Hearing Kickoff Brunch
- March 20: Coping with hearing loss
- April 14: Captioned performance of "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," 7pm, Chattanooga Theatre Centre
- April 17: Clarity products
- April 30/May 1: Cornbread Festival Help (we get a donation to the Walk)
- May 14: Walk4Hearing
- May 19: Captioned performance of "The Women," 7pm, Chattanooga Theatre Centre
- June 16-19: HLAA Convention, Washington, DC
- July 7: Captioned performance of "Hairspray," 7pm, Chattanooga Theatre Centre



At top, vendors Audiology Services of Chattanooga personnel and bottom right; center: Betty White at Boomers & Seniors Expo; bottom: Johnson Audiology personnel spoke with thousands of visitors at the Expo. Audibel was a corporate sponsor of the event.

Advocacy efforts pay off

By Betty Proctor, editor

August 15 was a great day for Chattanooga when the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* sponsored the "Boomers and Seniors Expo." Special guest and former "Golden Girl," Betty White graciously took the stage to talk and answer questions from the audience.

What was a real treat for many was a study in frustration for me (and I'm sure many others) who have hearing loss. Watching the big screen overhead, I couldn't help but think how much more enjoyable this would have been had it been captioned.

Later that evening, while it was still fresh in my mind, I decided to write to Jason Taylor, president of the *Times Free Press*, about my feelings and to offer help and support from our HLAA chapter at future events to make sure they are accessible.

After a few days, I was quite thrilled to receive his response. He stated that he was very appreciative of my suggestions and had actually thought about just that as he stood in front of thousands of people. He also said that one of his staff would be contacting me. The very next email I opened from his events coordinator, Angela Doggett thanked me for making them "aware of the need to provide a way for those with hearing loss to be able to enjoy the event as well."

So, as we anxiously await a request for assistance in accessibility planning at their next event, keep in mind that if you don't speak up, nothing will happen. We want to help solve accessibility issues, not point fingers. Be kind, be courteous and offer your assistance!

Member birthdays

- Happy **August** birthdays to: **5-Brian Drake; 8-Danny Drake; 12-James Sewell; 14-Dorris McBride; 15-Joyce Casey; 16-Diane McCombs; 20-Susie Shimel; 23-Dave Trayer.** **September** birthdays include: **11-Lana Newton and Sam Nalley; 25-Carrie Harvey; 27-Margie Ulrich.**



MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

Walk4Hearing will be
May 14, 2011.

Hearing loss in U.S. adolescents more prevalent

Published online in Vanderbilt News

Hearing loss is now affecting nearly 20 percent of U.S. adolescents age 12-19, a rise of 5 percent over the last 15 years, according to a new Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) study co-led by Ron Eavey, director of the Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center and the Guy M. Maness Professor in Otolaryngology.

Eavey, who conducted the study with former Harvard colleagues Josef Shargorodsky, Sharon Curhan, and Gary Curhan, said the results are troubling because hearing loss in adolescents is on the rise and researchers don't have any hard evidence to explain why.

"What jumped out at us was the fact that hearing loss increased a lot," Eavey said. "Overall it went from 15 percent of adolescents to 20 percent of adolescents."

"You already are looking at one in 20 adolescents who has a notable hearing loss and one in 5 is showing signs that they are on the route to having hearing loss."

The study compared hearing tests conducted as part of the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III), 1988-1994, and NHANES 2005-2006. NHANES III examined 2,928 participants and NHANES 2005-2006 examined 1,771 participants, 12-19.

The prevalence of any hearing loss increased from 14.9 percent in 1988-1994 to 19.5 percent in 2005-2006.

"One could have hypothesized the opposite," Eavey said. "There are vaccines out now that can stop bacterial meningitis and they also help get rid of some cases of ear infections, so that incidence is down."

"The knee-jerk answer that one might conclude, although supporting data is not clear, is that the increase is caused by loud volume."

Hearing loss in young persons can compromise social development, communication skills and educational achievement, according to the authors.

We can modify noise exposure, and that's where I think we can at least try and put some brakes on, whether it is coming from noise-induced hearing loss or not," Eavey said. "We are looking at the front wall of an epidemic and we can help to prevent the loss to allow the kids to enjoy their ears and their great music a lot longer."

Eavey, who also chairs the Department of Otolaryngology, said parents and children should



News from Beth Humpert...

Just want to share a brief report after having the brain stem implant stimulated and adjusted - I CAN HEAR! It mostly sounds like beeps and static, with some musical notes thrown in every now and then. Very interesting to listen to conversation and be able to better comprehend through lip-reading than before, when I heard no beeps!

Other sounds I can 'hear' are banging pots, knocking on doors and ringing phones. WOW! My brain will be adapting for quite awhile to its new sensations of sound. I hope that in future days I will have conversation with many of you, and your words will help me grow in my ABI use and in my ability to connect with people. THAT is the main goal for all this 'hearing' work.

The other amazing thing is that the hole in my eardrum is all healed up. Big praises to God!

Thanks so much for all your support through this surgery saga. Hope to stay in touch.
Love, Beth

HLA of Knoxville Chapter NEW meeting location

Where: Mercy Medical Center West (Turkey Creek), Classroom 3, Women's Pavilion

Address: 10820 Parkside Drive, Knoxville, TN 37934

When: 2nd Thursday of every month except June, July, & August

Time: 7 - 9 p.m.



pre-set their electronic music devices to somewhere between one-half and two-thirds maximum volume because any sound over 85 decibels (dBs) exceeds what hearing experts consider to be a safe level, and some MP3 players are programmed to reach levels as high as 120 dBs.

"As parents, we can't hear how loud their music is when they have the earbuds in so this is an important step," he said. "I can tell you that if you hear the music coming from their headphones it is too loud, but an easier way to know for sure is to preset the device. This will still allow them to listen to and enjoy their music but will safeguard against ear-damaging volume levels."

At right, news of Susie Collins' Rocky Stone Scholarship appeared in Grandview Hospital's newsletter.

Collins awarded scholarship



Susie Collins

Grandview "Pink Lady" volunteer Susie Collins was recently awarded one of two national \$500 Rocky Stone Scholarships to attend the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) national convention in Milwaukee.

Collins, who is hearing-impaired, is heavily involved in HLAA's mission and is a member of the Walk4Hearing committee.

Have you recently earned any accolades? If so, share them with **Intensive Share**. Send an email to [Jamie Lawson@CapellaHealth.com](mailto:Lawson@CapellaHealth.com) or call ext.3425.



Captioned Performance: Thurs., Sept. 30 • 7 p.m.

The Fantasticks! tells the story of a young man and the girl next door, whose parents have built a wall to keep them apart. The youngsters nevertheless contrive to meet and fall in love. Their parents, meanwhile, are congratulating themselves, for they have erected the wall and staged a feud in order to achieve, by negation, a marriage between their willfully disobedient children.



HCAA Chattanooga Walk4Hearing funds making a difference!

By Betty Proctor, editor

It's been almost a full year since the first captioned play premiered at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre. Using some of our Walk4Hearing funds from 2009, we purchased a \$4,500 electronic LED captioning board as a community gift, housed at the Centre. Linda Hershey wanted to learn this skill and volunteered to provide the captioning for the first year.

Jan Belk told me via email that the captioned nights were one of the most well-attended nights for every main stage play. Does this make you think of "build it and they will come?" It should!

As we enter the new 2010-2011 theatre season, Walk4Hearing sponsor, Warren Barnett of Barnett & Company, has signed on to sponsor the captioned plays and Linda will continue in her role as paid captioner "extraordinaire" so that people with hearing loss or deafness can continue to enjoy the visual arts in Chattanooga.

George Quick stated, "We just finished a completely sold out run of *The Producers*, with more than 3,600 people attending. Thank you for your support. It was terrific to see so many people at each and every show.

He continued, "That's not to mention all of the wonderful theatre artistry and magical moments on our stages this year, great sets, costumes, lights, music, dance, acting and directing. I'm thrilled and honored to be leading such a dedicated, talented and enthusiastic group of volunteers and professionals to bring exciting and accessible theatre to the Chattanooga Community. We also added real-time captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing this year and thanks to the Chattanooga HCAA and Barnett & Company, we'll be continuing that service in the 2010-2011 season."



George Quick & Jan Belk were all smiles at "The Producers."

Now, on the heels of success, comes another opportunity. Rex Knowles and Sherry Landrum, the husband and wife team who head up the theater department at Chattanooga State were two of the attendees at the captioned showing of "The Producers." Rex described the evening and caption options as "great!" Following the production, Bea Lyons, Linda Hershey & I had a chance to chat with them about the possibility of captioning their annual presentation of "The Nutcracker Christmas Carol." Excited, you bet!

As we go to press on this newsletter, it looks like this could be a very real possibility and one more way to open the world of the arts to the community. Stay tuned!



Theatre goes Linda Dagnan, Bea Lyons, Linda Hershey and Susie Shimel at "The Producers."



Rex Knowles and Sherry Landrum were really excited about the captioning and hope to bring it to their plays as well.

Is hearing loss a disability?

As published on the Better Hearing Institute Web site
Sam Diehl, J.D. - Attorney, Gray Plant Mooty, Minneapolis, MN

Your rights under disability laws depend on whether your hearing loss is considered a legal "disability." Various laws use different definitions of disability, but the most common legal definition is the one used by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A hearing impairment is considered a disability under the ADA if:

1. it substantially limits a major life activity;
Example: Hearing is a major life activity.
2. it substantially limited a major life activity in the past;
Example: Your hearing used to be substantially impaired but is now improved due to surgery or an assistive device.
3. you are regarded (or treated) as if your hearing impairment was substantially limiting.
Example: You use an assistive device that improves your hearing so that you are no

longer substantially limited in a major life activity, but you are nonetheless treated differently because your employer believes you to be substantially limited.

This determination is made on a case-by-case basis. It's important to note that if you use "mitigating devices", such as hearing aids, cochlear implants, or other equipment that improves your ability to hear, these must be considered in determining whether you have a disability under the ADA. However, strategies that compensate for hearing loss, such as lip-reading or sign language, are not considered mitigating measures. This may change if the proposed ADA Restoration Act (HR3195) is passed. Then mitigating situations may not be considered. It is important that people with disabilities lobby for this or a similar restoration of the original intent of the ADA.

State and local laws and other federal laws may use a different definition of disability, but the ADA's definition is helpful to identify the

factors necessary to determine if you are considered to have a disability under the law.

IF MY HEARING LOSS IS CONSIDERED A DISABILITY, WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

You have a number of employment, public accommodations, transportation, education, and communication, among other, rights under state and federal laws. While this article focuses on federal laws, many states and local areas have separate protections for people with disabilities. They are often similar to federal laws, but there can be important differences regarding who is covered by the law and what protection the law affords. So it is important to consider applicable state and local laws in addition to the federal laws discussed in this article. Rights for children in grades kindergarten through 12th grade are covered under another federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). See the Better Hearing Institute Web site for more information.

www.GoFestChattanooga.org
423-425-6311

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Annual picnic draws cool crowd

The annual HLAA picnic was held indoors in the CBIH cafe at Chattanooga State on August 14, on a very special, and very hot day: Dorris McBride's birthday! Dorris was surprised with a cake and ice cream on her (fill in the blank) birthday. In true ladies fashion, she was not giving up her age! At left, Nelda Twitchell and Dorris with her cake.

Above, Steve Collins does some important "reading" while wife Susie, Steve and Karen Powell, Lana Newton and Nelda Twitchell listen to attendee Jana Massengale talk about her son Caleb who has a hearing loss. Caleb was featured in the July/August issue of Hearing Loss magazine.

Walk4Hearing fund requests to be heard on Sept. 19

By Betty Proctor, editor

Team leaders met on July 23 to plan the upcoming meeting topics for 2010-2011 and discuss suggested proposals for use of the 2010 Walk4Hearing funds.

Keep in mind that the following suggestions are just that...suggestions. The floor will be open for discussion and then the chapter will vote on fund use. YOU have the opportunity to provide input and make decisions, so don't miss this meeting!

Proposals include:

- Permanent looping of the Ronald McDonald Community Room
- Permanent looping of the Chattanooga Resource Development Room
- \$2,000 in continued support for captioning of the CTC plays
- \$1,000 Deaf/HOH building seed money for the establishment of a new center used by people with hearing loss
- \$2,000 to Marion County in support of children with hearing loss (possible scholarships - discussion to follow)
- \$500 college scholarship to Chattanooga State HOH student
- \$500 college scholarship to UTC HOH student



Childhood hearing loss facts

- The vast majority of hospitals now offer newborn hearing screening before discharge from the hospital.
- All children should be screened for hearing loss before 1 month of age.
- 85% of all children experience at least one ear infection.
- Second-hand smoke in the home increases the risk of middle ear infections and respiratory allergies in children.
- Infants may begin to use hearing aids as early as 2-4 months of age.
- Federal laws mandate that all school districts must provide specialized education to children with hearing loss.
- Even a mild hearing loss can seriously impact a child's ability to learn in a school environment.

A Wiki for parents developed by Marcia Finisdore, former president of the HLAA Board of Trustees and a parent of children with hearing loss. This is a place where parents can find unbiased information to empower them to make decisions for their children. To see the Wiki and to refer parents to it go to www.kidsandhearingloss.org. This is an ongoing project so if anyone has articles, pictures, or profiles of families that to add to the Wiki, please send it to Marcia at marcia@kidsandhearingloss.org. We welcome your feedback.



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2010 local support as of 9/14/10

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: TBA at meeting

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 and pay online!

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HLAA (formerly SHHH)

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

Next meeting: Sept 19

Sunday, Sept. 19, 2pm in the Ronald McDonald Community Room.

Topic: Convention 2010 - how we were inspired!

Discussion about 2010 Walk4Hearing fund use

Fellowship and refreshments, all are welcome!
Meetings captioned and loop system in use.

See you there!

