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Volume 29, Number 5 published monthly except July and August January 2016

JANUARY Calendar

Tuesday, January 5, 2016

11:00 am - Refreshments/Social Time
11:30 am – Announcements/Business Meeting
12 Noon – 1 pm – Program Speaker

7:00 pm – Refreshments/Social Time
7:30 pm – Announcements/Business Meeting
8:00 pm – 9 pm – Program Speaker

Tues., Jan. 12th – BOD meeting, 7-9pm
1st floor Conf. Room, Al Sigl Center
Tues., Jan. 19th - PAC meeting, 7-9pm, ASC

SAVE THESE FUTURE DATES

Tues., Feb. 9th – BOD meeting, 7-9pm, ASC
Tues., April 19th - PAC meeting, 7-9pm, ASC
Tues., April 19th - “Cochlear Implant Group”
from 5:00-6:30pm; St. Paul’s Vestry Room

WEATHER – During the winter, the rule to follow for cancelations of meetings is: IF THE ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT IS CLOSED, OUR MEETINGS ARE CANCELED. (No other notification will be made.)

Hospitality Duties for January:

Daytime Meeting – Carol Bradshaw, Barb Law
Evening Meeting –J. Claus, G. Graham, B. Law
Board of Directors –Carmen Coleman, Art Maurer

Please sign up to help when the “Refreshment Sheet” goes around!

*Welcome back members, and,
WELCOME ALL NEWCOMERS TO HLAA!*



JANUARY PROGRAMS

Tues., Jan. 5th Daytime Meeting 11:00 am

YOU CAN ADVOCATE FOR HEARING ACCESSIBILITY – Bob Sickmond

Even in Rochester, hearing accessibility could be improved. **Bob Sickmond** will discuss ideas, examples, and ways that HLAA-Rochester Chapter members can make the area a better place for people with hearing loss. By being "star advocates," we can raise community consciousness enthusiastically and assertively. This presentation is based on HLAA executive director Anna Gilmore Hall's article, "It's a Fact: The Squeaky Wheel Gets the Grease" (Hearing Loss Magazine, March/April 2015, pp 6-7) where she asserts that "advocacy is one of the most important functions of HLAA."

Retired from Eastman Kodak Company, Bob served 36 years in various positions in global and international distribution.

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Tues., Jan. 5th – Evening Meeting – 7:00 pm

COCHLEAR IMPLANT SURGERY -

Paul O. Dutcher, M.D., Otolaryngologist and Associate professor, University of Rochester Medical Center, Dept. of Otolaryngology

In a repeat presentation, Dr. Paul Dutcher, dean of Rochester cochlear implant surgeons, will explore the cochlear implant surgical experience. This program is recommended for anyone whose severe/profound hearing loss might make them a candidate for a cochlear implant.

Cochlear implants can be prescribed for children or adults with severe to profound hearing loss. Over twenty HLAA-Rochester Chapter members hear with cochlear implants, and most of them have been Dr. Dutcher's patients.

Cochlear implants do not restore "normal" hearing. Rather, they are prostheses which directly stimulate the auditory nerve in the brain, bypassing diseased or dead hair cells in the inner ear. Many implantees can understand speech, music, and a cacophony of ambient noises. Cochlear implants are the only devices that replicate a human sense.

Among topics Dr. Dutcher will cover are:

- What is a cochlear implant?
- When are you ready for one?
- Financial issues
- Criteria for candidacy
- CI team members
- Description of surgery before, during, after
- After-effects, good and not so good
- Programming ("mapping")
- Are two better? Which ear? Which manufacturer?
- Pediatric implants

Dr. Dutcher will answer audience questions. He is a long-time HLAA friend and our chapter's permanent Medical Consultant. As the Director of the Otology Center of Western NY, he has served on the UR Medical Center faculty since 1983.

HLAA-Rochester chapter meetings are held in the Parish Hall at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, East Avenue at Westminster Road, across from the George Eastman Museum. All programs are audiolooped and captioned. Those needing a sign language interpreter for an evening meeting should contact Linda Siple at 585 288 6744, a week in advance. (Interpreter available only for evening meeting.) Please note, this phone is only for those needing an interpreter.

Hearing Loss Association of America is a nationwide organization dedicated to advocacy, education and support for people with hearing loss. For more information visit www.hlaa-rochester-ny.org. or telephone 585 266 7890.

Hearing loss is a daily challenge you can overcome. You do not have to hide your hearing loss. You do not have to face hearing loss alone. The HLAA meeting is free and open to all community members interested in hearing loss.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Cindy Kellner



Kudos to Barb!

A good friend of mine and fellow HLAA-Rochester Board member told me how she recently had been to a Wegman's pharmacy that was purportedly looped. She looked to find which specific cashier was

looped and unfortunately she could not find the recognized signage for the loop. It took a moment and an inquiry before the problem was solved. Barb took care of her business but Barb, being an advocate for those of us with hearing loss, did not stop there. Instead, she proceeded to educate those around her about the importance of the hearing loop to a hard of hearing person and how important it is to have the loop sign in a place where all can see it. She didn't leave until she was satisfied that the problem was solved hopefully for good. All I can say is good for her!

I do not want to pick on Wegmans. The company, in my opinion, deserves an A+ for all they have done for the hearing loss community. However, no one or no company is perfect. Clearly unless you have walked in a hearing loss person's shoes you

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN (continued)

cannot fully appreciate how vital and important a hearing loop is to many of us who are fortunate to have a T-coil in our hearing aids. What then logically follows is the need to have clear recognizable signage indicating the presence of the accommodating loop. One without the other just doesn't work.

Unfortunately Barb's recent experience at Wegmans is far from unique. Rather, it is very typical. I have lost track of how many times I have inquired about assistive listening devices and drawn a blank look from the person I am speaking to. All too often I hear--"I am not sure I know" or "I'm just not sure where it is or how it works." Worse yet are the other typical responses: "I'm sorry. I'm not sure if we do or don't" or "I'm not sure what you are talking about." Obviously all of this is so frustrating. To a hearing loss person, all of these responses are totally unacceptable. What these responses mean is that we will not hear and consequently will be denied a meaningful experience. That is just not right, nor is it fair. And, in many instances, it may not be legal.

Another scenario that drives me bonkers is to go to a venue that is said to have an assistive listening device only to find out that it is broken or the person in charge does not know how to operate it. Again, this does absolutely nothing to help the person with hearing loss. All this missed opportunity does is cause frustration. I know. It has happened to me way too many times. In fact, I would venture that this is, in fact, the norm and that is just not right.

We need to change this and we all need to be involved in implementing this change. I have recently decided that I am no longer going to be "Ms. Nice." I am sick of saying "okay" or "I understand." No, those days are over. I am going to be a bit of a pain. I am going to insist on speaking with someone who knows the situation and hopefully is also in a position of some power to implement the needed change. Like many of you I am guessing, I pride myself on being a nice person and generally I avoid confrontation as much as possible. My mantra has been "Don't sweat the

small stuff." Well, I have concluded that not being able to hear is not small stuff by any means. I have now committed to going out of my comfort zone and seriously showing my displeasure, disappointment, annoyance and frustration. If it means a mini scene, so be it. I want to hear!

Too often companies, in order to be in compliance with laws, have actually installed assistive listening devices or systems. What unfortunately follows is that the FM system or headphones or whatever, is put on a shelf and forgotten. Batteries die and equipment can become quickly obsolete. Staff is clueless. This is not right. Unfortunately, the burden is on us to cause the change. We should always inquire about available accommodations and educate, educate, educate. We all know how ignorant and insensitive the hearing world can be. We need to put a stop to this, one step at a time.

Inquire and don't stop until you get an acceptable answer. You are not being unreasonable. Express your disappointment and frustration. Request a follow-up discussion if need be. And, finally, don't stop until your questions are answered and you are satisfied. If you are not satisfied or worse yet, ignored, spread the word. Let us at HLAA-Rochester know about your experience. Maybe we can help or maybe a lawsuit is in order. Who knows? We must follow Barb's lead and take action. Otherwise the changes we need and desire simply will not occur. Wegmans did it. Regal Cinema did it. The Dryden did it, as well as Geva and the Rochester Broadway Theatre League and so very many more. It can happen and work for us.

Don't misunderstand me. I am not advocating that you change your mantra to "I'm mad as hell and I am not going to take it anymore"--although frankly I would not blame you if you did. How about "I am very frustrated and want to be able to hear and be included. I am going to seek the changes I need and deserve"? Take a few steps outside your comfort zone and go for it. Together, I honestly feel we can make a difference.

I hope you enjoyed the holidays. Be well.

RBTL LIVE THEATRE--- CAPTIONED!

All performances are **Sunday, at 1:00 pm**

March 13, 2016 – Beautiful
April 17, 2016 – Matilda
May 15, 2016 – Dirty Dancing

Tickets become available 6 weeks in advance of each show. Request seats in “open captions” viewing section.
Call 222-5000; email, info@rbtl.org.

GEVA Theatre Offering Captioned Plays!

All performances are **Saturday, at 2:00pm**

Jan. 16, 2016 – Miracle on South Division St.
Feb. 20, 2016 – To Kill a Mockingbird
April 2, 2016 – A Moon for the Misbegotten
May 7, 2016 – The May Queen

Call the Box Office at 232-4382. Ask for seat in the “open captions” viewing section.

We Welcome All Donations

Please make your check payable to: HLAA-Rochester
HLAA is a 501©(3) organization.
Mail to: Ms. Joanne Owens, 1630 Woodard Road,
Webster, NY 14580

Be sure to designate:

This donation is: In Memory of; or, In Honor of;
or, Birthday congratulations.

And who to send the Acknowledgment to. Thank you.

HAIKU

By Carolyn Coit Dancy

Winter:

the scent of wood smoke
from a neighbor's chimney
falling snow

**For Your Donation to HLAA:**

Phyllis & J. Stuart MacDonald Estate
Dr. Ruth P. Oakley Estate
Mary Tuckley Estate
United Way contributors

In Memory of Phyllis MacDonald:

Tom and Deb Taylor

Donation Above Membership:

Laura Chaba, Mary Chizuk, Kathleen Curre,
Jennifer German, Ginger Graham, Patricia Irr,
Rabbi Raphael Kanter, Judith McMillan,
John McNamara, Joanne Miller, Sue Miller,
Elaine VanderBrook

Thanks to all who have renewed their membership.
If you haven't yet, please consider a donation when you renew
your membership. Thanks so much!

**DONATING HEARING AIDS
TO THE LIONS CLUB**

By Michelle Gross

If you have used hearing aids to
donate, please address the package to:

John McNamara, Au.D.
Ontario Hearing
2210 Monroe Ave.
Rochester, NY 14618

Put on the lower left corner of the package:
"Finger Lakes Region Lions Club Hearing
Foundation"

(Cleaning tools, cases, most accessories, etc. have
virtually no value and are discarded.) Aids that are
usable are cleaned and checked and made ready for
sending to the Lions Club for qualified recipients.

You can get a receipt for your donation (for tax purposes)
but you must request it. And, thanks for considering
donating your used aids.

BOOK REVIEW

Bouton, Katherine “*Living Better with Hearing Loss*” (New York, Workman Publishing, ©2015) paper \$14.99

Author Katherine Bouton has emerged as an advocate for people with hearing loss in her second book, “*Living Better with Hearing Loss.*” This is a triumph. In her first work, “*Shouting Won't Help,*” she still seemed to struggle with coming to terms with her deafness.

“*Living Better with Hearing Loss*” is the most current book on the market about hearing loss, with citations and data from 2014 and 2015. It is less an autobiography than a guide for the individual with hearing loss. In five sections Ms. Bouton covers: Facing facts (get help and how to do it); Love and work (family, employment and romantic issues, including tales of her own career mistakes as her deafness worsened); Travel and leisure (parties and socializing); When hearing aids aren't enough (cochlear implants, loops and the Roger pen); and Changing the way we think about hearing loss (Dangers of denial and ignorance).

As a long time writer and editor for the *New York Times* and other authoritative publications, Ms. Bouton writes for the educated reader. Eschewing jokes, her factual presentations and interviews with experts are straightforward, easy to understand and nontechnical. Useful inclusions are the glossary of terms and very current bibliography of books and online sources in addition to thorough notes for each chapter.

Ms. Bouton is the secretary of the national Board of Trustees of Hearing Loss Association of America. She urges people with hearing loss to contact HLAA and credits the organization in transforming her from an angry, despondent victim to an advocate.

Her book is a desirable addition to public and medical libraries.

--reviewed by **Janet McKenna**



WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Our Chapter website is: www.hlaa-rochester-ny.org. **Michelle Gross** is our Web Master. The website for HLAA National is: www.hearingloss.org. Congratulations! Our Rochester Chapter has won the National Award for best Website.

(submitted by *Janice Schacter Lintz*)

“Hearing Loss—the Forgotten Disability”

www.huffingtonpost.com/janice-s-lintz/hearing-loss-the-forgotte_b_7896184.html

CAPTIONING OF MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS WILL BE CONTINUED !

Great news from CaptionCall! Our Daytime and Evening monthly meetings will continue to be **captioned**.

The captioning is done remotely by Alternative Communication Services—it is flawless, plus the people doing the captioning are from all over the country! It's amazing to see the words almost instantly on the screen as soon as they're spoken. The service cost is \$3,000 a year and it is being paid by CaptionCall for the 5th year in a row...such an incredible gift to our chapter.

CaptionCall has been a blessing in providing true access for everyone in our chapter...and we thank you!

We also owe a huge debt of thanks to **Bruce Nelson**, and **Tim Whitcher** for overseeing the technical set-up needed for this service. Without their dedication in attending all meetings, this would not happen!

IF YOU MOVE

Please don't forget to notify **Margaret Cochran**, at 178 Crossover Rd., Fairport, NY, 14450, or, via email at, mc23@rochester.rr.com, even if your change of address is a temporary one.

HLAA is charged for each piece of returned mail, which the Post Office will not forward. When you return, we will resume sending to your local address. Thanks.

BIRTHDAYS – 90 YEARS AND OVER...

Everyone: please let me know if you're one of our special Chapter members who will reach the spectacular age of 90 years, or more. If you agree, we'd like to announce it in our Newsletter. It is important to let me know right away as our Newsletters are written 2 months ahead. Thanks, Ginger
ggraham859@frontiernet.net; or, (585) 671-2683

**NEW PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS**

By Suzanne Johnston

The purpose of the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) is to furnish professional advice and support in order to promote the development of a credible and effective HLAA organization in the Rochester area. Following is more information on new PAC members:

Margaret (Peg) Pepe-O'Brien

I was raised in the NYC suburb of Eastchester, and attended the College of Mount St. Vincent in Riverdale (Bronx) NY. I attended graduate school at SUNY Binghamton, while teaching high school English, and graduated with a Master of Arts. I moved to the Rochester area in 1977 with my husband, Michael, who teaches Mathematics at Monroe Community College.

I worked for Monroe County Government from 1977 until my retirement in July of 2008. In 1992, I became Monroe County's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance Manager and Trainer, with responsibilities for making/ensuring that all County facilities and business practices were accessible, as well as for training the entire County workforce in the ADA, and for resolving all disability related complaints of employees and customers. Later I assumed additional EEO and Affirmative Action responsibilities. Along with a citizen committee, I was involved with the planning and execution of the accessible design features of Frontier Field. Independently, I presented at many conferences on Titles I, II and III of the ADA.

For the last 27 years my husband and I have resided in Pittsford. Since my retirement in 2008 my volunteer involvements include current memberships on the County of Monroe/City of Rochester Council for People with Disabilities, the Rochester Chapter of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster, the Patient and Family Advisory Committee of Highland Hospital, and Co-Chairperson of the Sherwood Homeowners Association, and, now HLAA. (Peg Pepe-O'Brien)

WORDS OF WISDOM

(submitted by Sue Miller; on wall in Brighton Library)

Tell me and I forget.
 Teach me and I remember.
 Involve me and I learn.

Benjamin Franklin

Newsletter Deadline

Saturday, December 31st
(for the February Newsletter)

Email: ggraham859@frontiernet.net

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT GRATEFUL

By Felicia Ellsworth

Dear Ms. Kellner, I would like to thank you and the Rochester Chapter of HLAA for the scholarship and recognition at your annual dinner this summer.

I'm currently a freshman at Wash U in St. Louis and I'm loving it. The school has provided great support to me in the form of an FM system and note taker for several classes. I would highly recommend this school for anyone with a hearing loss. Please share with the Rochester Chapter my sincerest appreciation for the generous support they have provided me.
 Best regards, Felicia Ellsworth
 (Pittsford Mendon Class of 2015)

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK !

By Cindy Kellner

Are you on Facebook? If so, please be our friend. We currently have **260** friends and we want more. Find us at: **Hlaa Rochester Ny**

BRIEF HISTORY OF OTOLOGY (EAR: GREEK) *(excerpt from HHTM website)*

By Elise de Papp, M.D.



As early as 1500 BCE, Egyptians correlated temporal bone battle wounds with hearing and speech problems, and they wrote about “the hard of hearing ear,” tinnitus and dizziness.

500 BCE Greeks wrote about air waves moving through the ear and hitting the brain in a specific site responsible for hearing. They were interested in the shape of the cochlea. Aristotle went further with the idea that air waves moved through a space in the inner ear--a concept not far removed from today’s knowledge. Hippocrates was interested in ear infections and their relationship to the rest of the body.

Romans built upon the Egyptian and Greek knowledge with studies of tinnitus, foreign bodies and surgery for atresia of the external ear canal. After the fall of Rome (476 CE or AD) until the Renaissance, minimal medical knowledge was added.

RIT/NTID Dyer Arts Center offers exhibits on Black Deaf innovators

Deaf missionary Andrew Foster honored; various pieces from Black Deaf artists on display

(submitted by Vienna Carvalho)

“Unfolding the Soul of Black Deaf Expressions”—a first-of-its-kind exhibit featuring more than 100 works of art from more than 30 Black Deaf artists runs thru Feb. 27. A two-day symposium will be held Feb. 26 and 27. Pieces stem from a variety of artistic media including paintings, photography and drawings.

“One of the goals of the Dyer Arts Center is to display exhibits promoting cultural groups at least once a year,” said Tabitha Jacques, gallery director. “This season, we are proudly featuring the magnificent work of Black Deaf artists. Not many people know about Andrew Foster’s work and

successes, other than those who are experts in deaf culture or deaf history. For more info, go to:

Dyer Arts Center [website](#), [Facebook page](#) or Instagram page, [@dyerartscenter](#). Gallery hours are 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 1–5 p.m., Saturdays. The gallery will be closed Dec. 23–Jan. 3 for the winter holidays.

HEARING LOOP ADDED

(submitted by Cindy Kellner)

The University of Rochester Interfaith Chapel was recently renovated and is now equipped with a hearing loop.

Subjects of Feb. 2nd Chapter Meetings:

Daytime: “Untreated Hearing Loss; Sudden Loss; Aural Rehab – Kendra Marasco

Evening: “VESID/Workplace Issues – Dan Brooks

RAFFLE – FOR OUR WALK4HEARING!

You missed it! At our December daytime chapter meeting, **Carol Loftus** put together a grand basket of goodies that was raffled off....bringing attention to our upcoming Walk4Hearing, Sunday, Oct. 2nd. The basket contained soup from Trader Joe’s, TJ crackers & cookies, Andes mints, tea, cake, candle. And won by **Charlie Treat!** Watch our Newsletters for future info on the Walk in October.

VENUES WITH ALS OR CAPTIONING

By Tim Whitcher

Have you seen a movie or a show that has an Assistive Listening System or Captioning system and would like to share your experience with your fellow members? Did your church or synagogue install or upgrade such a system, and you’d like to make that known?

Please contact Tim Whitcher at hlaa.rochester@yahoo.com with the info that you’d like to share. (Please mark your email to Tim’s attention.) Likewise, if you have a question regarding such a venue, please contact Tim.

HLAA SUCCEEDS IN MAKING HEARING LOSS VISIBLE TO THE CDC

Reprinted from the HLAA website-

<http://www.hearingloss.org/content/hlaa-succeeds-making-hearing-loss-visible-cdc>

In August 2015, when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued the results of a survey that asked questions for the first time about disabilities, we were stunned to find that people with hearing loss were entirely left out.

HLAA sent letters to the CDC and to the White House, issued a media release, and an action alert asking consumers to express their thinking of CDC's survey. Many of you sent emails with compelling stories, making it clear we should have been counted from the start.

As a result, CDC contacted HLAA. We learned that CDC has been working for years with states to collect health care data under the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey. In 2013, for the first time, CDC included questions regarding disability in BRFSS. They tell us that they excluded people with hearing loss because the survey is done via telephone; they were concerned that the population with hearing loss would be undercounted as a result of their collection method. We find this unacceptable. Clearly, people with hearing loss have access to telephones: hearing-aid-compatible cell phones, phones with volume control, captioned phones, Video Relay Service, and even the old TTYs. In addition, had they been truly concerned that people with hearing loss that do not own phones, they could have changed the data collection method. Instead of under-representing us, they chose not to count us at all, rendering us invisible once again.

In our talks with CDC, we were asked to write a letter of support for inclusion of a question on hearing loss in upcoming surveys, which we provided. We have since learned that there will be a question seeking to find people with hearing loss in the 2016 survey. It is a start.

However, the question that was approved by the CDC, "Are you deaf or do you have a significant hearing difficulty?" does not go nearly far enough. If you are a public health official trying to tease out information about the health of your community, one would think it would make sense to make the most of the opportunity. It just makes sense to learn whether health care needs of residents who are deaf are different from those who have significant hearing difficulty. We have asked that this question be reconsidered and revised.

HLAA also asked that the CDC's marketing materials for this survey make it clear that until 2016, they have only a piece of the picture of health in the disability community. HLAA also asked to be part of a cross-disability advisory council to ensure that mistakes like this never happen again. It has been said before, and truly is applicable in this case, "nothing about us without us." This would never have happened had we been there when decisions were being made.

We are continuing to work with the CDC. They have been open to our suggestions and we feel while not all issues have been resolved; we are making a good start. We have you to thank for that. Your voices were heard.

If you would like to voice your opinion, please contact media@cdc.gov (contact information supplied in CDC report) or Maria_M_town@who.eop.gov (this email address is recommended by National). Let your voice be heard!

This award-winning Newsletter of the Rochester Chapter of HLAA is published monthly except for July and August.

Editor and Publisher.....Ginger Graham
Computer Consultant,
Webmaster, and Writer.....Michelle Gross
News Releases, and Writer.....Janet McKenna
Research Assistant.....Ginny Koenig
Photographers.....Art Maurer, Al Suffredini

Ten Things to Know about the Americans with Disabilities Act *(submitted by Al Suffredini)*

1 - Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act. You've probably heard a lot of buzz lately about "the ADA" and its 25th anniversary in 2015. But do you know what it is?

2 - The ADA was [signed into law on July 26, 1990](#).

3 - The ADA National Network - It's important to know your rights under the ADA and there are many [resources](#) that can help you get a better understanding.

4 - What Employers Need to Know. Employers must understand their obligations under [Title I of the ADA](#), [The ADA](#) and the [ADA Amendments Act of 2008](#) cover all aspects of employment, from the hiring process to pay, training, lay-offs and beyond.

5 - Rights with Rover and Fido. People with disabilities may use a service or emotional support animal for a variety of reasons.

6 - Pregnancy and the ADA. Women expecting a new bundle of joy may be [protected under the ADA](#), the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#) and the [Pregnancy Discrimination Act](#).

7 - Accessing Health Care. Proper health care leads to improved quality of life for people with disabilities, and the ADA requires doctors and hospitals to provide equal access to health care to all Americans, regardless of disability.

8 - Veterans and the ADA. Service members who have been seriously injured while on active duty in the U.S. military, whether experiencing a traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, hearing or vision loss or post-traumatic stress disorder, have rights under the ADA.

9 - Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery. [State and local governments](#) are responsible for helping their citizens prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

10 - Swimming Pools and Accommodation.

Find all this at:

<https://www.disability.gov/disability-connection-newsletter-july-2015/>

Education Department Announces New Guidance to Help Students with Disabilities *(submitted by Don Bataille)*

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the U.S. Department of Education has released new [guidance](#) to make sure that America's 6 million children and youth with disabilities have the same opportunity for a quality education as their nondisabled peers. The guidance clarifies that students with disabilities should not only have access to a [free appropriate public education](#), but also individualized education programs (IEPs) that ensure they receive high-quality instruction that prepares them for success in college and careers.

The Department is also sharing resources for parents and educators that can help students with disabilities succeed in school careers and life. These include a series of "[tip sheets](#)" for parents and a [new website](#) for teachers and families.

NATIONAL CONVENTION IN D.C.

By Ginger Graham and Sue Miller

Registration for Convention



State and Chapter leaders are encouraged to attend this year's [national HLA A Convention in Washington, D.C., June 23 – 26, 2016!](#) Our chapter can receive **four discounted registrations** for leaders, plus one delegate

registration for someone who might **consider serving in a leadership position.**

In addition, our Rochester Chapter Board of Directors has voted to [increase the Convention stipend to \\$500](#) for every **active** chapter member. So let's have an outstanding representation from the Rochester Chapter!

Check our chapter's award-winning website for further information at www.hlaa-rochester-ny.org. and watch for updates in our monthly award-winning Newsletters.

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NATIONAL CONVENTION IN D.C. *(continued)*

Hotel registration and Convention registration, go to: www.hearingloss.org/events/convention/hotel-

Hotel room reservations: Single/double \$199/night; Triple - \$229; Quad - \$249 (does NOT include 10% sales tax or hotel occupancy tax of 14.5%) <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/HLAA2016>, or call 202-483-3000 (follow prompts to reach Reservations), or call 1-800-HILTONS and book for the Washington Hilton. BE SURE TO MENTION THE GROUP CODE: HLAA. Cut-off date for reservations is May 31st.

Convention reservations: **Discounted rates available thru January 31st.** Increased rates start Feb. 1-May 31. For on-line and off-line reservations, see website. Full activity package: Individual member \$299; member couple \$499. First-time member \$269. Other “package” rates available; see website.

Rochester members planning to attend, please go to our website: www.hlaa-rochester-ny.org for the form to fill out to receive a STIPEND.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS FOR THOSE WITH A HEARING LOSS

By Steve Frazier, New Mexico Chapter HLAA

An organization named Social Security Disability Help (SSDH) is an informational website on Social Security benefits for those with a disability such as a severe hearing loss. They provide free information to people on the Social Security Disability process to help those with a disabling condition receive the financial support they need. They offer vast amounts of information, forums and, in some instances, even free consultations with attorneys if an individual has questions regarding their specific case. It is basically an advertising service paid for by the lawyers and advocates whose names are provided in response to user requests and it is not an attorney referral service. The information on their website is designed to inform people on how to navigate the confusing process of applying for either of the two types of Social Security Disability benefits.

Some Quick Disability Benefits Info: SSDH says that, in order to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), an individual needs to possess a specified number of work credits to qualify, meaning they must have paid Social Security taxes on wages long enough to qualify. Applicants must be considered permanently disabled, meaning that the person cannot sustain substantial gainful activity for at least 12 months.

An alternative to SSDI is Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which is a needs-based program that doesn't require work history. It has an asset limit that says an individual cannot own more than \$2,000 in assets (excluding the home and one vehicle) and \$3,000 asset limit for a couple. The individual also needs to be considered permanently disabled if under 65 years old, and if 65+, the person just needs to meet the asset limit requirements.

This is the program the parent or guardian of a child with a disabling condition would typically apply for based on the assumption that the child has not yet paid Social Security taxes. The Social Security Administration has a Blue Book of disorders and illnesses that is used to determine if someone is eligible to receive benefits. Section 2.08 of the Blue Book contains the criteria an individual would need to meet in order to be eligible. For a more detailed explanation of these programs, go to: www.disability-benefits-help.org or call: 857-366-7629

REASONS WHY SELF-HELP GROUPS ARE GOOD FOR YOU

By Brenda Battat, past Executive Director, HLAA

Self-help groups such as the Hearing Loss Association of America (www.hearingloss.org) and the Rochester Chapter (www.hlaa-rochester-ny.org) offer the following:

- Provide a community of people with hearing loss who understand and are sympathetic to your loss.
- Will help you understand your legal rights as a person with hearing disability.
- Will alleviate the despair and isolation of hearing loss through their support.

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SELF-HELP GROUPS *(continued)*

- Will help you to adjust and communicate your needs in a "hearing" workplace.
- Will share technologies beyond your hearing aids that will enhance your ability to function.
- Will educate you on technologies and strategies for ensuring your safety.
- Will show you how to stay tuned in to family conversations.
- Will suggest strategies for communicating in noisy situations.
- Will show you how to accommodate your hearing loss when traveling.
- Will empower you through exchange of knowledge, encouragement and the sharing of experiences.

CONDOLENCES

Our sincere sympathy is extended to:

Brian (Kathy) Fox for the loss of his mother October 11, 2015.

Laura and Steve Chaba for the loss of their daughter-in-law October 15, 2015



Sincere birthday greetings to Mary Agnes Decker, who will be 92 years young, on January 10, 2016. Congratulations and many more healthy and happy years!

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...

(submitted by Betty Jennings)

"Being DEAF does not make you DUMB, just as being HEARING does not make you SMART." *(author unknown)*

**UNSUNG HERO !**

Each of you brought a gift and placed it in the huge wrapped box. Many thanks for your generosity!

That box was carefully and beautifully wrapped by **Sue Miller**. The next step, however, is not easy, but each year **Marlene Sutliff** loads the box into her car, drives to the Open Door Mission, and unloads the heavy box as HLAA-Rochester's donation.

Many thanks, **Marlene**, for your care and concern every year at this holiday time.

A BIT OF HISTORY

In January 1993, the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday was observed in all 50 states for the first time. *(from D&C 1-18-15)*

**POINSETTIA POINTERS**

- Remove the foil from around the pot.
 - Place in a sunny window, but don't let the leaves touch the glass.
 - Allow the soil to dry between watering.
 - Keep the room temperature cool to prolong the period of blooming.
 - Don't fertilize while plant is in flower.
- (Old Farmer's Almanac)*

Mention of goods or services in articles or advertisements does not mean HLAA endorsement, nor should exclusion suggest disapproval.



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If You're New, This is for You.

More than 48 million people in the US have a hearing loss, which can hinder daily communication. By age 65, one in three Americans has a hearing loss. This invisible condition affects the quality of life of the individuals with hearing loss as well as family, friends, co-workers and everyone with whom they interact. HLAA believes people with hearing loss can participate successfully in today's world.

Founded in 1979, the mission of HLAA is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss through advocacy, information, education, and support.

HLAA is the largest international consumer organization dedicated to the well-being of people who do not hear well. HLAA publishes the bimonthly Hearing Loss Magazine, holds annual conventions, a Walk4Hearing, and more. Check out: www.hearingloss.org/.

To join, please see inside back page. HLAA has more than 176 chapters and 14 state organizations. Welcome!

Meetings are hearing accessible

We meet in St. Paul's Episcopal Church, East Ave. and Westminster Rd., across from the George Eastman Museum. Parking is available at the George Eastman Museum, if needed.

All meetings are audio looped and captioned. Interpreters are available on request *for evening meetings only*-- contact Linda Siple, 585 288 6744, or at lasnss@rit.edu, at least a week in advance.

(This phone number is only to request an Interpreter.)

Entrance to the meeting room is via the Westminster Rd. door, down the corridor to the end, into the large Parish Hall room.

Everyone, with or without a hearing loss, is welcome!