



Featured Presentation

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

**NOON - 1:00 PM AT ST PAUL'S PARISH HALL
AND ON ZOOM:** Report by Attendees of the HLAA Convention

The 38th National HLAA Convention was another smashing success. Indianapolis, Indiana is a beautiful city and a perfect place to host a national convention.

Rochester was well represented with twelve attendees. The venue was classy and the workshops top-notch...educational, enlightening, and inspiring. Several of our local attendees will discuss some of their experiences and what they learned.

Please plan to join us on Tuesday, September 9th (second Tuesday) to hear from those who attended this outstanding event. It will be a great way to kick off the new program year...and for those if you who didn't attend the picnic, well...we can't wait to see all of you!

President's Message

It is my pleasure to write this message today as your new Chapter President. I admit it is also with a small amount of surprise that I find myself in this position, and I will understand if you are equally surprised!

I have found in life that things tend to happen not always when you are most ready for them, but instead when they are ready for you. It was with that spirit that I took this leap and volunteered to serve as President when the need presented itself. I assure you I will do my best to continue the great work of those who have served before me. I thank our immediate past-President, Suzanne Johnston, for serving with such skill and enthusiasm. She is a very tough act to follow! I am comforted by the fact that she is still very much involved in the board and her expertise continues to be utilized by all of us.

It is difficult to put in words how dedicated and talented this entire group is. I would not be taking this leap without such a great support system in place. I can as-

(Continued on page 2)



Additional September Meetings and Programs

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM IN PERSON, ST PAUL'S VESTRY ROOM: HOPE Session: 'Hearing Other People's Experiences': Joe Kozelsky CCC/A:

Prospective, new, or experienced hearing aid users informally share their experiences, questions, and hearing loss journeys.

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM AT ST PAUL'S PARISH HALL: Conversation and light refreshments.

11:30 AM - NOON AT ST PAUL'S PARISH HALL: Chapter announcements and business meeting.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ON ZOOM: Board of Directors Meeting

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM ON ZOOM: Cochlear Implant Group. See page 4 for details

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

10:00 am - 2:00 pm - ASSISTIVE DEVICE DEMONSTRATION CENTER. Technology Team. In person. Lifespan, 1900 South Clinton Avenue. See Page 4 for details.

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm ON ZOOM: HLAA Book Club
See back cover for details.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

8:00 - 9:00 pm on Zoom: *Hear Together*. Kristin Bergholtz CCC/SLP./Carly Alicea Au.D/Ph.D. For parents and caregivers of Deaf/hard of hearing children. See page 2 for details.

Please check our Chapter Website
[hearinglossrochester.org](https://www.hearinglossrochester.org) for any changes

Thank you to our members who are bringing refreshments to our September meeting: Art Maurer, Sue Miller, Nicholas Sprague, and Kathy Sweryda.

President's Message

(Continued from page 1)

sure you that the board of HLAA Rochester is filled with some of the most dedicated and knowledgeable people you will ever meet in the world of hearing loss. We are truly lucky to have such people working together for this cause.

You may be wondering how I found myself in this position, so I will share a little background information.

I currently work as the Deputy Chief Clerk of Monroe Supreme & County Court, and back in 2018 we happened to have a visit from some members of HLAA Rochester. I admittedly was not familiar with the group, but we were eager to show off some of our assistive listening devices, along with the steps we'd taken to make the courts more accessible to those with hearing loss. Among the visitors that day was Sue Miller. This led to the first time (but not the last!) where I had the pleasure of witnessing Sue's extremely effective powers of persuasion! If she asks you to do something, you will quickly find yourself wanting to do it! Before I knew it, I was serving a term on the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) for HLAA. As a parent of a child with congenital unilateral hearing loss, this was really a great fit and I was thrilled to do whatever I could to assist such a worthy group.

After my PAC term ended, my wife Rebecca served on the PAC, and not long after that, she and I joined the HLAA Board of Directors. It was during our time on the board when we realized just how much work this group does and we are still amazed at all they have accomplished. I have been most impressed with the Healthcare Task Force's efforts to improve the hospital experience for those with hearing loss as well as the group's efforts to make hearing loops and assisted devices more readily available in houses of worship.

It is for these reasons that I am honored to lead this wonderful group, and I can't wait to see what we accomplish in this program year.

Nicholas Sprague
President

Open Door Mission Collection

The Open Door Mission, a Christian Rescue Mission in Rochester, transforms lives by restoring hope through essential resources. Our chapter proudly supports this vital cause. Please bring gently used items to our monthly meetings—Marlene Sutliff and Bill Marshall will deliver them on our behalf as a meaningful act of service from our members.

"HOWALS" Project

Houses Of Worship with Assistive Listening Systems

Hearing Accessible Worship at Christ Church, Pittsford

By The Rev. Suzanne Johnston, Deacon

If you struggle to hear during worship services, you may want to visit Christ Church Pittsford (Episcopal). Christ Church Pittsford ('CCP') offers ease of listening through hearing accessible worship in both the nave (main worship space) of the church as well as in the Fellowship Room ('Winifred Collin Room') at the church. Hearing in the nave as well as the Fellowship Room is available via a telecoil/loop system, which is accessed directly through a consumer's hearing aids (most aids include this program).



If you have questions regarding access to the system, you may speak with The Rev. Kevin Gore, the Rector/Priest, The Rev. Suzanne Johnston/Deacon, or Mary Thor, Sexton, or call the church office at (595) 586-1226. Primary/Holy Communion Sunday services are at 9am during the summer, and, beginning September 7, 2025, at 8:00am and 10:00am. CCP also offers live streaming of the 10:00am services via the Web. Check out their website at www.christchurchpittsford.com. Additional weekly services are available per the information on their website.

Check out our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/christchurchpittsford/>

Christ Church Pittsford is located at 36 South Main St. in the Village of Pittsford. We look forward to seeing you!

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Hear Together Supports Parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Hear Together is a virtual support group for parents and caregivers of deaf or hard-of-hearing children. This month, speech-language pathologist Kristin Bergholtz, CCC/SLP, and audiologist Carly Alicea, Au.D./Ph.D., will discuss issues concerning D/HOH children.

The group meets on Zoom every 4th Tuesday of the month beginning on September 23rd. Register at kristinbslp@gmail.com.

To HLAA-THANK YOU!

As many of you may be aware, I spent part of June, with others from “Hearing-the-Call”, providing audio-logical services and free hearing aids to a poor remote community in Chibombo, Zambia. HLAA’s support of Hearing The Call Zambia has already made a profound impact on many children in that region. Because of contributions like HLAA’s, we have begun the incredible process of building a school/clinic to train local Zambians to become audiologists.

These Zambian professionals will be qualified to provide the critical step necessary to identify hearing loss early in children, so that amplification and support can be provided and they can have an opportunity to learn and succeed. It also creates an opportunity for a community to have their hearing health care needs addressed where otherwise it would go untreated.

As you know, this is the first step towards creating a system that will give children and those in the remote regions of Zambia a chance to be educated, employed and socially engaged in their community.

As we move forward we will be continuing our efforts to provide housing for visiting instructors, essential



Dr. John McNamara speaks at the groundbreaking of the Village of Hope audiology school/clinic. In June.

diagnostic equipment, and most importantly scholarships so local residents can afford to attend college.

From the bottom my heart I thank you for caring about and providing hope for the future of so many hearing impaired individuals. To follow our progress and future plans, please visit www.Hearingthecall/Zambia

John McNamara, Au.D.

Captioned Entertainment Around Rochester



JCC Center Stage - Tickets and information are available at www.jcccenterstage.org or (585) 461-2000. Please specify “Captioned Area”. Tickets are \$35-40 with discounts for JCC members, full time students and seasonal subscribers. All captioned performances are on Sundays at 2 pm.

The Little - The Little Theatre provides options for people with hearing loss, including hearing amplification headphones in all theaters. The hearing amplification headphones can also be used for descriptive listening.

Theatres 1, 2, 4, and 5, are equipped with Hearing Loop Systems. Personal captioning devices are available for all theaters. Please inquire at the box office.

The Little offers open caption screenings when available. Open captions mean captions are visible to everyone, and cannot be turned off. Open caption screenings are currently shown on Thursdays, along with the first matinees on Sundays (please note some films do not have an open caption version). You can find Open Caption shows via thelittle.org (listed in the showtimes on each film page), and on social media.



The REV (Merry-go-Round) Theatre in Auburn has a state-of-the-art Assistive Listening System, which makes use of FM to transmit sound over radio frequency directly to the listener’s ear. While the overall system is FM, they also have individual induction loops for each device. For information about the REV Theatre’s productions, see <https://therevtheatre.com/>



GEVA Theatre Center - Open Captioning for patrons with hearing loss is provided during the 1st Saturday matinee and both performances of the final Wednesday of each Wilson Stage Series production, and the first Saturday matinee of each Fielding Stage Series production. When booking your seats, mention your interest in open captioning in order to secure the most advantageous view of the display on the right of the stage.



RBTL Live Theater - Open Captioning, made possible by HLAA, is offered during most 1 pm Sunday matinee subscription performances of the Broadway Season, and select other performances. A text display scrolls words in synchronization with the dialogue and lyrics of the show. Reserve seating in view of the captioning screen in advance or request open captioning for unlisted events, 585.222.5000 or mail@rbtl.org.

Roc Cinema has a hearing loop and some Saturday matinee movies are open-captioned.

OFC Creations Theatre at Winton Place has an M system and receivers with hearing loops for T-coils.

Other Theaters - Regal Theatres, Cinemark Theaters, AMC Theaters, and Movie 10 all indicate on their websites that they have closed captioning devices available by asking at the box office. The Strand Theater in Brockport, has individual displays on goosenecks available.

CHAPTER 1. HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS?

Excerpted from "HEARING, HEARING LOSS AND HEARING AIDS; A Primer and Handbook for Consumers," A book in progress, by Joe Kozelsky, Audiologist

In the early stages, hearing loss is elusive. Before we go on, however, we ask: What are some of the most searing words in the English language? Has anyone ever heard these?

- "Forget it."
- "Never mind."
- "It doesn't matter."
- "It's not important."

It's not the content that's important, it's the contact.

Indeed, often the missed utterances are unimportant and inconsequential. However, these unheard or incompletely heard comments are really a social contact. They are a reaching out to someone, rather than sharing important information. What really hurts then, is the lost contact, rather than the lost content. These words can be searing. They imply that the listener is not trying hard enough, or paying attention, or worth the effort to make sure that what was said was heard.

The above comments are often made with a negative voice tone leaving the recipient dangling and feeling frustrated. If there is failure in these instances. It seems that it would fall to the party that uttered the unexpected comment not the person who wasn't ready for it. No one can always be on the alert in case someone might say something at any moment. Yet, it is the recipient who gets the blame, not the person who unexpectedly makes the comment.

Hearing loss can be invisible.

In the beginning stages, the effects of hearing loss are more annoying for those around the person with the hearing loss than for the person with the hearing loss. Comments such as "Forget it," and "Never mind" are heard more frequently. It is likely these encounters occur because of the invisible nature of the impairment. The individual with the hearing loss does not look as if they have a problem. Others often fail to remember this, thinking that if only they paid better attention, he or she would hear better. After all the recipient heard them before.

Early Hearing Loss is Elusive.

Often the person with early hearing loss begins to fault their communication partners and others thinking that if only people were to speak as well as they used to, they would not have a problem hearing them. The problem is with the others because when they do make an extra effort to be heard, everything is perfectly audible.

Decreased listening distance.

This situation is complicated by the primary effect of hearing loss which is to cause a decrease in effective listening distance. In the earliest stages there is a subtle difference between being in and out of effective listening distance. As such, the effects of early hearing loss are virtually imperceptible and these subtle changes of effective listening

distance are easily overcome by others simply through repetition, or a slight increase of voice levels.

In the beginning stages if the individual speaking is just a little bit closer, hearing is easy, and it seems perfectly normal. An additional complicating factor is that some voices are inherently more audible than others, so in the initial stages the difficulty is not with everyone, just a few people. It is natural to think that if only their communicating partners spoke the way they used to they would be hearing better.

Another subtle change might be in the adjustment of the volume of the television. Initially, the increases in the loudness of the TV are so slight they are not bothersome for others. However, over time the TV gradually becomes too loud for the others, but it is "just a little bit sharper" for the person with hearing loss. The problem is, it keeps happening time after time, always needing to be just a little bit sharper than it was before. After a while, the effect of each instance of "a little bit clearer" has become a great deal louder for the others whose hearing levels have not changed.

Normal hearing

Here is an interesting perspective. Normal hearing thresholds are just above the level of molecular noise. That is, the noise that air molecules make randomly moving around. While this may be hard to believe, most of us have heard this soft level of molecular noise. Remember hearing the ocean in the seashell? What you heard was the randomly moving air molecules hitting against the inside of the shell. You can also hear this by holding a jar or a glass up to your ear. This is a good example of what it means to have normal hearing.

Furthermore, normal hearing is so sensitive that when people with normal hearing are placed in sound treated rooms, they can hear their blood rush, their neck creak, their clothing rustle, and other faint sounds. These sounds become noticeable after a few minutes. The reason that these sounds are not heard outside of a sound room is because environmental sounds mask (cover up) them.

It is helpful to keep in mind that "everyday hearing" is naturally easy. So, when hearing related problems seem to occur it is likely that hearing has changed, especially if hearing had not been an issue previously.

Unnoticed Changes in Hearing Ability.

It is helpful to think of the softer sounds that someone with normal hearing can perceive. They include leaves rustling, crickets chirping, back yard insects peeping, birds singing, clocks ticking, and so on. As hearing goes down the perception of these sounds diminishes so gradually that we are unaware that we no longer hear them, and so our perspective of "normal hearing" can change. Here is an example.

Anecdote: Edward. Edward was a long-standing hearing aid user. He mentioned that after he received his first set of hearing aids he and his wife were walking back to their car after leaving a movie theater. He stopped, looked around and said, "What IS that noise?"

It was the crickets. He had not heard them for so many years that he had forgotten all about them.

.....

Next month we will discuss the elusiveness of hearing loss in greater detail.

Assistive Device Demo Center

Our chapter proudly sponsors the Assistive Device Demo Center, offering members and the public a chance to explore the latest devices designed to ease hearing loss challenges. At our demo sessions, you'll find Signaling-alerting devices, Captioned telephones, and Personal assistive listening devices, with special focus on TV listening and noisy environments. Knowledgeable chapter members will be available to answer any questions.



Join us on the 3rd Thursday of each month, September through June! The next session is **Thursday, September 18th**, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at Lifespan, 1900 S. Clinton Ave. Sessions are free and open to everyone. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Our chapter offers hearing aid batteries at our monthly program meetings. You may purchase a pack of six for \$1.50, or an entire box (60 batteries) for \$15.00.

HLAA Rochester Cochlear Implant Group Meeting Schedule Set

By Pete Fackler

The HLA Rochester cochlear implant group will meet via Zoom on the following Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m.: September 17, 2025; November 19, 2025; February 25, 2026; and May 20, 2026.

The programs feature both outside speakers and pass-the-mic formats. Program content has proven useful for both new and experienced CI users and for people who are considering CI or who are just interested in learning more. The interactions among the group have been especially valuable and attendees include people from across the USA.

To be included in pre-meeting informational communications, please be in touch at cochlearimplant-group@gmail.com. Advance registration is required to receive the necessary zoom link

SAVE THE DATES!

JUNE 10 - 12, 2026 : NATIONAL CONVENTION, THE GALT HOUSE, LOUISVILLE, KY

OCTOBER 2 - 4, 2026: HLA-NYS CONFERENCE, HOLIDAY INN, SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

BIRTHDAYS

Happy belated Birthday in July to:

July 1 Suzanne Johnston
July 13 Donna Kelly
July 22 Art Nayrer
July 30 Barb Rice

Happy belated Birthday in August to:

August 4 Brian Fox
August 4 Beverly Garritano
August 7 Ann Cannarozzo
August 10 Margaret Cochran
August 10 Laura Chaba
August 18 Lisa Bailey
August 23 Bill Crowley
August 27 Carol Loftus

Happy Birthday in September to:

September 9 Jim McGrath
September 10 Marlene Sutliff
September 13 Julius Toenniessen
September 15 Janet McKenna
September 18 Nancy Meyer
September 23 Mary Ann Stager
September 25 Jenn Lowden

Assistive Device Demo Center wins Chapter on a Mission Award

At the National HLAA Convention in Indianapolis, the Rochester Chapter shared the *Outstanding Chapter on a Mission* Award with the Fox Valley Chapter of Menasha, Wisconsin.

Doug and Nancy Meyer represented our chapter in receiving the award.

Unfortunately, due to the background noise in the room, we do not have a transcription, nor the audio of the citation. We do have Nancy's remarks.



She said, "What a privilege it is to accept this Chapter on the Mission Award on behalf of our Technology Team and Demo Center. Our tech team is comprised of several members who are dedicated to offering information about the latest assistive listening devices to all people with hearing loss. It has become a cornerstone of our chapter for 10 months of the year."



The Demo center is open to the public from 10am to 2pm in an easily accessible nonprofit location, Lifespan, staffed by volunteers and are very knowledgeable Tech Team members. Visitors receive guidance on device selection for their needs and/or problem solving with devices they already have. They are encouraged to try out any of the 30 devices displayed. It's intended to be a hands-on experience.



In accepting this award, it is with sincere gratitude for the national recognition it brings to our chapter. It underscores why HLAA Rochester is so proud of our tech team."

Did You Miss a Meeting?

Do you want to see it again

Videos of our Program Meetings are online:

<http://bit.ly/4fqb4lo>



SEEN at THE HLAA CONVENTION



MORE PICTURES AT [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/HLAA-2025](https://tinyurl.com/HLAA-2025)

Fun at the HLAA Annual Picnic

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HLAA Membership Information

Hearing Loss Association (HLAA)
 Rochester Chapter, Inc., a tax exempt
 and volunteer group, is a chapter of a
 national, nonprofit, nonsectarian,
 educational organization devoted to
 the welfare and interests of those who
 cannot hear well.

We are currently meeting in person
 and online via Zoom. See our website
 at **hearinglossrochester.org**
 to register for the online access.

While our primary focus is directed
 toward people with hearing loss, we
 welcome everyone to our chapter
 meetings whatever their hearing
 ability.

For more information, call

585 266 7890

or see
hearinglossrochester.org

Professional Advisors Sue Miller, Chair

2024-2026:

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 Technical - Charles Johnstone
 Legal - James Vazzana, Esq.

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#### **Newsletter**

Newsletter deadline: first day of the  
 month preceding the issue month.

Bruce & Candi Nelson, Editors  
 120 Cobblestone Dr.  
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 public health crisis

#### **As a Member, You Will...**

- Make an impact helping millions thrive with hearing loss
- Get *Hearing Life* seasonal magazine delivered to your home\*
- Get the latest in hearing news, events and action alerts each month
- Get involved in important local and national advocacy initiatives

\*Donations of \$45 and higher have option to receive Hearing Life  
 Magazine by mail.

To sign up, please visit

<https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/hlaa-membership>

or send your donation, with your name, address, phone number, and  
 email address (if any) to 6116 Executive Blvd, Suite 320,  
 Rockville, MD 20852

#### CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP FORM HLAA-ROCHESTER

Membership year: July 1 - June 30

All members receive the Rochester Chapter Newsletter!

☐First-Time Member ☐Renewal

**Membership Type:** ☐Individual \$10 ☐Family \$20 ☐Corporate \$50  
☐Veteran \$0 (Free lifetime chapter membership for veterans with hearing loss.)  
 Please state Branch of Service\_\_\_\_\_ *Thank you for Your Service!*

Please consider making an additional charitable contribution to maintain and  
 expand HLAA's work. ☐\$25 ☐\$50 ☐\$75 ☐\$100 ☐Other \$\_\_\_\_  
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# HEARING LOSS BOOK CLUB


LET YOUR MIND WANDER THROUGH BOOKS!

Join us for a captioned Zoom discussion of the book:

**Do You Have a Voice: Memoirs of My Journey with Deaf and Hard of Hearing People by Jane M. Biehl**

 **THURSDAY SEPT. 18**  **7:00PM-8:00 PM**

- Moderated by Jennifer Lowden, Director of the Chili Public Library and member of HLAA.
- Email [libraryladyjenn@gmail.com](mailto:libraryladyjenn@gmail.com) if interested in attending. A zoom link will be sent out a few days before the discussion.
- This book is available for purchase from Amazon.com



## **Our 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. Our chapter meetings will also be streamed on Zoom, with captioning. See our website at **[hearinglossrochester.org](http://hearinglossrochester.org)** to sign up for access to all future meetings. Please register at least 24 hours before the first meeting you wish to attend, so that you will receive the link by email.

*Everyone, with or without a hearing loss, is welcome to join our meetings online or in person.*