



January 2020

Renew your membership to our local chapter for only \$15 a year! 3 ways to renew: pay at the Reception Desk, see Len Bridges, our Treasurer, at a meeting, or send your renewal with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail to: East Bay Chapter, HLAA, P.O. Box 12484, Oakland, CA

94604-12484. See back page to sign up and support National HLAA.

MEETING INFORMATION FOR SATURDAY, January 11, 2020

Topic: Dr Peg Lisi, Audiologist at Pacific Hearing in Menlo Park. She has over 20 years' experience as an opera and classical singer and is currently a member of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. Because of her musical background as well as her research in music-related hearing loss and its secondary effects, she brings a unique perspective on hearing for musicians and music lovers alike.

Schedule:

9:00 a.m. - Set up: We always love to have you come early to help!

9:30 a.m. – Refreshments, coffee and tea will be served. Those who volunteered to bring snacks don't forget!

10:00 a.m. - Meeting starts: Introductions, Announcements, speaker.

NOTE: Meeting is captioned, and the room is looped. You won't miss a word! Use the hearing loop system by turning your hearing aid(s) to the Telecoil (T-coil) setting. Thanks to Peter Townsend, Steve Ulrich and the team for setting up our room, the audiovisual, and the captioning. **11:30 a.m. - Meeting adjourns.**

How to find us: Come to the Fabiola building, 3801 Howe Street, Oakland. Free parking is available across the street, in the Kaiser parking structure. From the garage, walk across Howe Street and go into the Fabiola building. Take the elevator down to the ground floor and go to Room G26. For directions to Kaiser, call 510-752-1000.

HLAA-EB will post to the California State Association webpage and our website.

Check out our website: <http://www.hearinglosseb.org/> **Contact us:** info@hearinglosseb.org

MEETING NOTES: *Struggles & Strategies in Coping with Hearing Loss*



Dale Davis

At the December 14, 2019 meeting, HLAA-EB Chapter Leader Dale Davis led a lively discussion with our members who were encouraged to participate by talking about their struggles & strategies in coping with hearing loss (HL). The discussion began with some open-end prompts: What has it been like for you to have a hearing loss and any particular struggles or challenges that you have experienced in coping with day-to-day situations? What strategies and resources do you have for coping and living your life with a hearing loss?

Struggles: Several struggles or challenges in coping with hearing loss on a day-to-day basis are described below:

- Reluctance in acknowledging your hearing loss and delay in getting a hearing test or hearing aids (HA's).
- Embarrassment when needing to frequently ask other people to repeat themselves.
- Being brushed off with “just forget it” when you say “I can’t hear you” or “please repeat what you said.”
- Afraid of being misjudged & mislabeled as “not a good listener” or even “incompetent.”
- Becoming isolated, invisible, and disconnected in your relationships with other people.
- Ignoring, bluffing, or responding inappropriately if it’s not clear what is being asked or said to you.
- Becoming tired & stressed out from the extra work that it requires to listen & participate in a conversation.
- Difficulty of “retraining” others to speak up louder and slow down when talking.
- Struggling to hold conversations in social situations where there is a lot of background noise.
- Dealing with not only a hearing loss, but also other visual or physical impairments.
- Trouble understanding speech in person & on the phone, especially that of soft or fast speakers.
- Failing to recognize danger when you can’t adequately hear people & events in your surroundings.



M. Sanchez

Strategies: Strategies & suggestions for successfully coping and living with hearing loss are summarized below:

- ✓ Take control of your situation by getting your hearing tested and accepting your hearing loss.
- ✓ Be assertive in speaking up and letting others know about your specific hearing needs.
- ✓ Research before purchasing Hearing Aids (HA's) or Assistive Listening Devices (ALD's) on the market.
- ✓ Require that t-coils be installed whenever you are getting new hearing aids (HA's).
- ✓ Position yourself in a quiet location or seating with good lighting in noisy public settings.
- ✓ Sit near someone who can help translate or interpret what is being said in noisy events or group meetings.
- ✓ Request captioning, assistive technology & written handouts matching what is spoken at large group meetings.
- ✓ Consistently practice good listening techniques, such as paying attention, focusing, & using visual cues.
- ✓ Move closer to hear people who ask a question or make a response in large group settings.
- ✓ Wear “Please Face Me” buttons or use other signals to identify that you have a hearing loss.
- ✓ Encourage speakers to articulate slowly & clearly, rephrasing, & using facial expressions & gestures as cues.
- ✓ Ask speakers, when necessary, to use paper & pen to write it down, as an “emergency hearing aid.”
- ✓ Apply “the friendly approach” by being kind, patient, & respectful in “retraining” others & yourself.



George Chin

- ✓ Utilize ear plugs or other protective barriers at loud work or social events that may contribute to your HL.
- ✓ Wear your HA's regularly to help slow down or stop the progression of your HL.
- ✓ Rely on reputable professional experts to provide assistance in selecting, fitting & adjusting your HA's.
- ✓ Continue to have regular hearing tests & check-ups so you'll catch any changes in your hearing in a timely manner.
- ✓ Be an advocate for yourself & others who are living with a hearing loss.



George Fitzgerald

Resources on Hearing Loss (HL): Resources that may be of interest to individuals with HL are presented below:

- Haben Girma's book: *Haben: The Deaf Blind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*. www.habengirma.com
- David Owens's podcast & book: *Volume Control: Hearing in a Deafening World*. www.npr.org
- *Harris Communications*: Offering equipment, books, & multi-media on HL. www.harriscomm.com
- *Caption Call*: A phone with captioning at no cost with a professional HL certification. <https://captioncall.com>
- *Community Resources for Independent Living (CRIL)*: A free lending library of HL devices. www.crilhayward.org
- *U.S. Dept. of Veterans' Affairs*: Assistance for eligible veterans with a service-related HL.
- *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*: Federal law on legal rights & remedies for persons with disabilities.

~ Kathy Fairbanks

On the HLAA Advocacy Front: The US House of Representatives passed a bill on Dec 13, 2019, for Medicare coverage of hearing aids. Although this bill still has to go to the Senate for approval and there are more hurdles, this is an example of how HLAA National is working with Congress, Medicare experts and other hearing health organizations for you! Medicare created in 1965 expressly excluded hearing aid coverage. Now, there is hope this will be corrected.

In Memoriam: Bruce Harris, our HLAA-East Bay Chapter founder, passed away on September 15, 2019. He spent the day before with his wife Marilyn Reynolds and family celebrating her birthday. He casually said he was tired because he had pneumonia and needed a ride home. The next day he did not show up for church as expected and they went and checked on him. He had died in his sleep. That is the way to go - at 95 he had a good long run.

Marilyn suffered from ALS. It was a difficult journey for Marilyn because she was always so active and independent. Marilyn passed away on December 12, 2019.

Chris Harris (Bruce's son) and Karen Harris (Bruce's daughter in law) have planned a memorial celebration of their lives on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020, at 11 a.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Road, Kensington, CA. All who remember Bruce and Marilyn fondly are invited to attend. Please RSVP by 1/26/20 to Karen Harris 707-853-9162 or KHARRIS707@GMAIL.COM.

In lieu of flowers, they are asking that you donate to the Hearing Loss Association of America, East Bay Chapter at hearinglosseb.org or you can donate by sending a check to East Bay Chapter, HLAA, P.O. Box 12484, Oakland, CA 94604-12484 or at the chapter meeting (next one Jan. 11, 2020).

KUDOS to Peter Townsend for getting a hearing loop installed!

Peter mentioned a month or two ago that he had requested the manager of Sunset View Cemetery in El Cerrito where the memorial service for a colleague's husband was held to consider installing a hearing loop. The manager said he would and recently he called to tell Peter they had just finished installing the loop. Apparently, it is easy to use as it is part of their PA system and they also supplied 4 receivers similar to the ones HLA A-EBC have for people who don't have t-coils. Peter was told the cost was \$7500 which is quite a commitment. It consists of copper strips which are installed under the carpet. The manager said the timing was good since they were installing new carpet. Peter suspects the coverage should be very strong. Thank you Peter and Sunset View Cemetery.

ACT Theaters, The Geary and The Strand, in SF are now looped! The ACT received a grant from TDF providing Open Captioning for the 2019-20 season. More information about the productions can be found online at this URL: https://www.act-sf.org/home/box_office/1920_season.html. **OPEN CAPTION DATES:** *Wakey, Wakey:* Sat., Feb. 8, 2 p.m.; *Gloria:* Sat., March 14, 2 p.m.; *Toni Stone:* Sat., March 21, 2 p.m.; *Rocky Horror Show:* Sat., May 9, 2 p.m.; and *Poor Yella Rednecks: Vietgone 2:* Sat., June 20, 2 p.m. Sorry! Discounts expired Nov. 30.

HEARING AID BATTERIES! 17 cents apiece at Costco! Contact Gerry Niesar for more information. HLA A members and join the hearOclub to have batteries delivered to your home! Use the coupon code **HLA A member** online at hearclub.com or by calling 833.LISTEN-2 (833.547.8362).

DONATE USED HEARING AIDS and/or HEARING EQUIPMENT! See Dale Davis at a meeting or ddavis94605@gmail.com.

East Bay Leadership Team

The chapter is run by a Steering Committee, Leader Dale Davis, ddavis94605@gmail.com who also oversees the Membership Database.

Advocacy: Gerald Niesar, gniesar@nvlawllp.com

Outreach, Walk4Hearing Chair, National Chapter Coordinator/Liaison, Programs: Susan Jeffries Fitzgerald, susanlj29@gmail.com

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Technical/Audio Loop: Peter G. Townsend, peterg.townsend@gmail.com, Steven Ulrich

JOIN THE NATIONAL HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION!

Only \$45 for an individual or \$55 for a couple. This includes the Hearing Loss magazine in print and digital for one year.

For digital magazine copy only, an individual membership costs only \$35/year. Students are \$25/year.

Go to this URL to join today: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew/>

**WALK FOR HEARING IS COMING TO THE BAY AREA MAY 30, 2020! WE NEED YOUR HELP!
PLEASE CONTACT SUSAN FITZGERALD IF YOU CAN HELP! Susanlj29@gmail.com**