



March 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, March 14, 2020

Topic: Dave Reimers, retired police officer, will speak about "What to do when a police officer asks you to pull over." Dave is a member of our chapter and often brings his famous crab dip!

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: *The Basics of Understanding Hearing Loss: Signs, Causes & Remedies*

At our Feb. 8, 2020 meeting, our guest speaker Dr. Anish Thakkar, Au.D., audiologist in private practice at Hearing Zone in Oakland & Alameda, CA, presented a detailed overview of the signs, causes & remedies for treating or dealing with hearing loss (HL). Dr. Thakkar double majored in International Studies & Japanese at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill and then earned his Doctorate in Audiology at UC San Diego. After completing his residency at the UNC Hearing & Communication Center and working abroad in Tokyo, Japan, he returned to California 3 years ago to join Hearing Zone, where he now conducts hearing evaluations, diagnoses hearing loss problems, and



determines the need for and availability of the appropriate hearing aids (H/A's) and assistive listening devices (ALD's) for his patients.

Signs of Hearing Loss:

Dr. Thakkar initially identified some of the usual signs or symptoms of hearing loss:

- * Friends & family stating you don't hear well
- * Difficulty hearing common sounds (phone, TV, etc.)
- * Frequent need for repetition or clarification
- * Speech sounding "muffled" or unclear

Ear Anatomy & Types of Hearing Loss:

Dr. Thakkar then described the ear's anatomy & the different types of HL:

Conductive (5%): Caused by obstruction of sound as it travels through the outer/middle ear. In some cases, this type can be corrected by surgery or medicine.

Sensorineural (95%): Caused by degeneration of cells in the inner ear (cochlea), a.k.a. "nerve deafness." This type of hearing loss is typically permanent & not medically treatable, but is usually treated with amplification (hearing aids).

Mixed: Combination of conductive & sensorineural hearing loss.

Hearing Loss Connections/Causes of Hearing Loss:

Hearing loss has been connected to several wellness & health factors: 1) Falling or abuse that results in injuries; 2) Loud noise exposure; 3) Diabetes; 4) High fever/scarlet fever; 5) Ototoxicity from certain medicines; 6) Osteoporosis; 7) Cardiovascular disease; 8) Depression; 9) Smoking; 10) Alzheimer's & dementia

Research has established that we hear with our brains since auditory processing occurs mainly in the brain, not the ear. Furthermore, older adults generally have more difficulty hearing in noisy or complex environments, regardless of hearing status, but hearing loss listeners do worse all the way around.

Communication Strategies for Coping with Hearing Loss:

Hearing loss can negatively affect communication: 1) Need for repetition; 2) Interruptions; 3) Long silences; 4) Misunderstandings; 5) Sudden topic changes; 6) Superficial conversation content; 7) Frustration; 8) Anger; 9) Blame; 10) Shame. Non-specific responses ("What?", "Huh?" or bluffing) are often not very effective.

However, there are several effective strategies which rely on the 4 parts of communication:

The Speaker: 1) Speak slowly & loud enough, but don't yell; 2) Enunciate & speak clearly; 3) Make sure your mouth & face are visible; 4) Avoid speaking & chewing at the same time; 5) Don't speak from another room.

The Message: 1) Repeat important keywords; 2) Rephrase; 3) Keep syntax simple; 4) Avoid pronouns – be specific; 5) Use 2 shorter sentences instead of 1 long one.

The Environment: 1) Limit background noise; 2) Move to a well-lit area; 3) Get rid of distractions/multitasking; 4) Have good visibility of the speaker; 5) Stay close – within 4-6 feet.

The Listener: 1) Use amplification (hearing aids); 2) Develop speech-reading abilities; 3) Increase concentration & lower anxiety levels; 4) Maintain a positive attitude; 5) Anticipate vocabulary or content.

Purchasing Hearing Aids (H/A's) & Assistive Listening Devices (ALD's):

Do some research in seeking HL assistance:

- Who is providing you service? (licensed audiologist/medical professional vs. hearing aid dealer/dispenser).
- Is the provider using best practices? (real-ear audibility verification; safe & effective programming).
- What are you paying for? (bundled vs. unbundled; service plan; provider's availability; warranty coverage).



Summary:

- ✓ Get your hearing tested regularly! Medicare covers comprehensive evaluation (but not hearing aids yet).
- ✓ Know that real hearing occurs in the brain, so be willing to invest in your brain by learning new skills.
- ✓ Take the lead & inform others of your hearing difficulties, as well as your specific needs.
- ✓ Communication is a two-way effort between the speaker & listener, so model good communication.
- ✓ Be patient, respectful and considerate of your communication partners, while keeping a sense of humor.
- ✓ Never say, "Never mind . . ." Instead, be a self-advocate & develop an assertive communication style.
- ✓ Maintain healthy ears on the back end, while protecting your hearing by safe practices on the front end.



For More Information or Questions:

Visit www.hearingzonedoctors.com; contact Dr. Thakkar at info@hearingzone.com or you may call him at (510) 444-9771 (Oakland) or (510) 865-8113 (Alameda).

~ Kathy Fairbanks

Bay Area Walk4Hearing is coming soon! On Sat., May 30, 2020, all walkers participating in the Bay Area Walk4Hearing will meet at the Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach, 8th Avenue/Otis Drive, Alameda, CA for a 5K walk (about 3 miles). You can form your own team or join the HLAA East Bay Chapter "Hear-Oh's" at this URL:

http://hlaa.convio.net/site/TR/Teamraiser/BayAreaSanFranciscoWalk?team_id=48636&pg=team&fr_id=2638

HLAA Convention 2020 to be held in New Orleans this year! June 18 - 21, 2020.

Register now!

A General Package includes:

- Exhibit Hall Grand Opening, Thursday morning, June 18
- Opening Session, Thursday evening, June 18
- Research Symposium, *The Latest on Tinnitus Research*, Friday morning, June 19
- Get Acquainted Party (GAP) – Off-site Event, Friday evening, June 19
- HLAA2020 Convention Walk4Hearing, Saturday morning, June 20
- Awards Ceremony and Reception, Saturday evening, June 20
- Unlimited entry to Exhibit Hall and Socials
- All workshops, demo presentations and featured speakers

You can register at this URL: <https://web.cvent.com/event/98a29ede-5620-491f-8106-5c37a0f943a1/regProcessStep1:fba6b4ae-0beb-42fe-a61b-f7c515ee8da8>

The convention hotel is the New Orleans Marriot, 555 Canal Street, New Orleans.

The Keynote Speaker is David Owen, who is a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and author of the new book *Volume Control: Hearing in a Deafening World*. David will address the medical, emotional, and social aspects of hearing loss, along with some surprising revelations about technology and hearing aids. He will explore the incredible possibilities of technology assisted hearing and give us hope for a better future for treating hearing loss.

Don't miss it! It should be a great learning experience, plus you get to tour New Orleans! Did someone say jazz, beignets and crawfish?

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:** *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. HLAA members can join the hearOclub to have batteries delivered to your home! Use the coupon code **HLAAMember** 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 email her at 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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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/>

**WALK4HEARING IS COMING TO THE BAY AREA MAY 30, 2020! WE NEED YOUR HELP!
PLEASE CONTACT SUSAN FITZGERALD IF YOU CAN HELP! Susanlj29@gmail.com**