



February 2021 Newsletter

Renew your membership in our local chapter for only \$15 a year! Ways to renew: pay at our website on the "Donate" button in the upper right-hand corner; mail your renewal with your name, address, phone number, and

e-mail to: East Bay Chapter, HLAA, P.O. Box 12484, Oakland, CA 94604-2484. See back page to sign up and support National HLAA.

February 13, 2021, Meeting by Zoom! Zoom in and see your friends from HLAA-EBC.

Schedule: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet; Program: A conversation on the wisdoms of Gael Hannon: The Happy HOH. Hearing Loss Advocate. Writer. Speaker. Humorist. "*Hearing Loss Isn't Funny. But Living With It Can Be Easier.*"

Furthermore, we'll discuss excerpts from the video "Let's Make It Clear" by the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services.



Register for this free event here: www.hearinglosseb.org

After you register, you'll be sent the link to join the meeting.

Consider staying after the meeting for AfterWords – a chance to ask more in-depth questions, as well as discuss anything you want with fellow members!

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: *Take Control of Your Tinnitus*

At our Jan. 9, 2021 meeting, our guest speaker via zoom was Dr. Neil Bauman, Ph.D., better known as Dr. Neil, who is a hearing loss coping skills specialist, researcher, author, and speaker on issues pertaining to hearing loss (HL). No stranger to HL himself, Dr. Neil has lived with a life-long severe hereditary HL. He became an excellent speech-reader and started wearing transistorized hearing aids (HA's) at an early age. Over the years, Dr. Neil has progressed to the latest digital technology and practices numerous techniques to cope with being hard-of-hearing in a hearing world.



As the Founder and Director of the Center for Hearing Loss Help in Lynden, Washington, he has given presentations on a wide range of topics, including HL coping strategies, ototoxic drugs, tinnitus, hyperacusis, Meniere's disease and Musical Ear Syndrome. He provides education, support, and counsel to people experiencing hearing loss through his books, articles, e-Zine, presentations, phone and personal contacts. Today, Dr. Neil gave an informative presentation on tinnitus and how to take control of this hearing condition.

Tinnitus Sounds: Tinnitus is the perception of noise or ringing in the ears, not due to any external source that anyone else can hear, but may result in many different sounds being heard by the individual tinnitus sufferer. Tinnitus sounds that individuals experience may vary in type and degree from mildly annoying to extremely disruptive to one's sleep and/or daily life activities. Here are some examples of possible tinnitus sounds:

- Ringing
- Roaring
- Banging
- Clanging
- Clicking
- * Blowing
- * Whistling
- * Rumbling
- * Beating
- * Humming
- * Pulsating
- * Hissing
- * Buzzing
- * Whooshing
- * Drumming
- * Fluttering
- * Sizzling
- * Shrieking Noise
- * Owls Hooting
- * Rushing Water
- * Bells Ringing
- * Radio Static
- * Breaking Glass
- * Running Chainsaw
- * Crickets Chirping

Main Causes of Tinnitus: There may exist several underlying causes for tinnitus. The old theory was that there was something wrong in the individual's ears and cutting the auditory nerve may fix the problem, but that drastic step has not generally remedied the person's tinnitus problem and may even made it worst. Since there is such wide variance in possible underlying causes for an individual's tinnitus symptoms, it is important, of course, to be initially evaluated by a medical or health care professional before pursuing any treatment plan. These are some of the major causes of tinnitus:

- **Loud Noise:** Exposure to loud noises (oftentimes preventable), especially if extremely loud and continuous, such as explosions, firearm shots, and music playing at high volume, may trigger some tinnitus sounds.
- **Hearing Loss:** Another theory is that hearing loss and tinnitus go together since most or nearly all persons with tinnitus typically have some level of hearing loss, although not all persons who have a hearing loss have tinnitus.
- **Ototoxic Drugs:** It is possible that certain drugs, medications, chemicals or herbals used by individuals may have an ototoxic effect resulting in tinnitus symptoms for some persons.
- **Negative Emotions:** Certain negative emotions, such as depression, extreme stress or anxiety, are often associated with tinnitus, and thereby possibly increasing and exacerbating its symptoms.

The Emotional Component of Tinnitus: According to Dr. Neil, suffering from tinnitus may often have an emotional component resulting in a brain phenomenon which affects individuals in different ways. For example, some people hear tinnitus only in a quiet room whereas other people barely notice it. This is good news since this means that at least some of your tinnitus symptoms may be under your personal emotional control!

You & Your Limbic System: Dr. Neil explained that we each have a limbic system which governs our emotions and corresponding behavior. This limbic system in our sub-conscious mind 'listens' to every sound that we hear and 'flags' any emotional response we attach to that sound. Here are 2 illustrations of the limbic system at work:

- **Scenario 1:** Furtive footfalls in the night – Strong emotional response; you move to 'fight or flight' mode.
- **Scenario 2:** Fridge humming noise – No emotional response; the sound is 'no big deal' & does not bother you.

Gaining Control over Your Tinnitus: Dr. Neil proceeded with passing along his 'secret' for gaining control over your tinnitus symptoms by treating tinnitus sounds in exactly the same way that you respond to the on-going fridge humming sound, rather than the way you treat the furtive footfalls in the night. That is, you simply learn how to ignore the tinnitus and keep it at a sub-conscious level, since it is 'no big deal' unless it becomes a real threat to your personal well-being.

Steps for Taking Control of Your Tinnitus: Here are some practical steps for taking control of your tinnitus:

- ✓ Accept your tinnitus condition while building hope that you can take control over disruptive tinnitus symptoms.
- ✓ Educate yourself about your tinnitus to lessen any fear and discover strategies for controlling your tinnitus.
- ✓ Seek counseling or assistance to help you realize that tinnitus is probably not a threat to your well-being.
- ✓ Ignore any annoying tinnitus sounds by focusing on the 'loves of your life.'

- ✓ Practice relaxation techniques to help you bring down the tinnitus to a sub-conscious, less-distracting level.
- ✓ Celebrate your success in developing ability to be unaware of your tinnitus & treat it as 'no big deal.'

For More Information: Please see below for resources & contact information shared by Dr. Neil Bauman:

- ❖ [Take Control of Your Tinnitus – Here’s How](#) (7th Ed.) by Dr. Neil Bauman.
- ❖ [Ototoxic Drugs Exposed](#) (3rd Ed.) by Dr. Neil Bauman.
- ❖ [Center for Hearing Loss Help](#), 1013 Ridgeway Dr., Lynden, WA 98264; Phone: 360-778-1266.
- ❖ Website: <https://hearinglosshelp.com>; Email: neil@hearinglosshelp.com

~ Kathy Fairbanks

Good News at the National level: HLAA Appointed to the FCC’s Disability Advisory Committee

HLAA has once again been appointed to sit on the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC’s) Disability Advisory Committee (DAC). On January 13, 2021, the FCC released a Public Notice announcing the appointments of the co-chairs and members for the fourth term of the DAC. HLAA has been part of the DAC since its inaugural meeting and served as co-chair in the DAC’s second term.

The FCC also announced that the first meeting of the new DAC will be held on Thursday, February 18, 2021, from 10:30 a.m. to approximately 1 p.m. Pacific Time. While the DAC meeting will be held remotely, it will be webcast with open captioning at fcc.gov/live. The agenda for this meeting will be posted on the DAC’s webpage at fcc.gov/dac.

Movie About Going Deaf: “The Sound of Metal”



Creating an audioscape for a movie about a musician losing his hearing is more complicated than it may seem. The filmmakers behind the new drama [“The Sound of Metal”](#) wanted to take audiences into the experience of its lead character, Ruben (Riz Ahmed), pictured left, a punk-metal drummer who is forced to look at his life differently as he goes deaf. Judging by the [overwhelmingly positive reviews](#), the filmmakers pulled off that difficult feat. In [The New York Times](#), Jeannette Catsoulis raved about “an extraordinarily intricate sound design that allows us to borrow Ruben’s ears.” The film ([streaming on Amazon](#)) often places us in Ruben’s aural perspective as he navigates his new reality. “I had many conversations with people who have lost their hearing and not two people’s experience is the same,” said Darius Marder, the film’s co-writer and director. “But one thing that’s pretty much true for all people who are deaf is that they don’t lose sound entirely. It isn’t silence.”

Instead, Marder and his sound designer, Nicolas Becker, wanted to capture those low-frequency vibrations and other tones. The approach was adjusted for different moments in Ruben’s experience. In separate Zoom interviews, Marder and Becker focused on three scenes as they spoke about some of the techniques and ideas they used to tap into Ruben’s aural experience, including putting microphones inside skulls and mouths.

In a sequence, Ruben gets up in the morning to realize his hearing loss has become more pronounced. The sound here comes off as low and rumbly, somewhat cavernous and very internal. That internal feeling is a specialty for Becker, who has created immersive, personalized sound experiences on many projects, [from the astronaut drama “Gravity,”](#) for which he put on a spacesuit to understand the sound inside it, to the deep-sea [disaster film “The Command,”](#) for which he spent two weeks recording underwater in a submarine. “If I can put people in a real ambient sonic environment, I can create something very specific,” he explained. “It’s about how you relate sound to your body memory.”

Becker said that a year before filming [“The Sound of Metal,”](#) he invited Marder to Paris to visit an anechoic chamber. The room is designed to get rid of sound and reverberations. “After 10 minutes, you can hear your tendons, the pressure of your blood,” Becker said. “You reach the physiological limit of your hearing system.” Going deeper into this body-sound connection and conjuring up Ruben’s aural experience involved what Marder

called a “real experimentation of muffledness.” Becker mic’d the insides of preserved skulls and helmets to get at that feeling of being enveloped. He also used stethoscope-style microphones, along with mics that go inside a performer’s mouth to create a mix of audio illustrating.

Later in the film, Ruben gets cochlear implants. In this scene, he meets with an audiologist, who helps tune the devices. She adjusts them in different ways, with each result more pronounced but still accompanied by a hissy distortion, like a radio dial that doesn’t quite reach the right frequency. The audiologist explains to Ruben that it isn’t sound the way he remembers it; rather, the implants are tricking his brain into thinking he’s hearing.

This movie should be very interesting. Check it out!

HLAA – EBC is looking for volunteers! Specifically, we need a Publicity Chair, but other volunteers are needed as well. Please contact Dale Davis, our EB Chapter leader, to discuss the possibilities! Contact: daledavis94605@gmail.com. Leave your number so she can call you.

HEARING AID BATTERIES! Only 17 cents apiece at Costco.

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! Bag them up and when we meet in person again, 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.

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

Treasurer: Len Bridges, lenbridges3993-hlaa@outlook.com

Programs: George and Susan Fitzgerald, revcgf@gmail.com

Technology and AfterWords Small Group: George Chin, Sr., 352-1569, georgechinsr@gmail.com

Membership: Connie Gee, cbgee2014@yahoo.com; Marlene Muir, muircmc@comcast.net; Derek Daniels, d.c.daniels262@gmail.com

Newsletter Editors: Nancy Asmundson, nasmundson@comcast.net; Kathy Fairbanks, mkathyfairbanks@att.net

Publicity: George Chin, Sr., georgechinsr@gmail.com

Refreshments: Marie Rhein, Coordinator

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

JOIN THE NATIONAL HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION – THEY ARE ADVOCATING FOR YOU!

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

OR, if you prefer to pay by check or card through the mail, Nancy Asmundson has membership forms to send to you or you can contact HLAA at 301-657-2248 or e-mail membership@hearingloss.org.

Your membership form will go along with your payment to 6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20852. Call 301-657-2248 or e-mail membership@hearingloss.org.

COSTS:

Regular Membership/year (will receive *Hearing Life* magazine in print and digital format): Individual - \$45; Couple/Family - \$55; Professional - \$80; Nonprofit - \$80;

Online Membership (receives *Hearing Life* magazine in digital format only): Individual - \$35; Student - \$25.

Veteran Membership: Complimentary one-year Regular Membership & Lifetime Online Membership.