



May 2022 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 the back page to sign up and support National HLAA.

Our May meeting will be on May 14, 2022, featuring CEID: Holistic Approach Meeting Deaf/HOH Community and Preschool Needs. Cindy Dickeson served for eight years as Program Director at the Center for Early Intervention on Deafness (CEID) before being appointed as the organization’s Executive Director in 2014. She has first-hand experience parenting a deaf stepchild and understanding the challenges families face accessing support services and determining appropriate academic placements. In addition to leading the agency, she has presented at state and national levels on family support, navigating special education systems, and early intervention for children who are deaf and hard of hearing. CEID is a Bay Area-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has been working with young D/HOH children, adults, and families since 1980. CEID’s professional staff meets community and individual needs through the dedicated application of their own expertise and through engagement with other professionals in the medical and education fields. CEID also serves people of all ages through its two Bay Area audiology clinics. Cindy will outline CEID’s unique communication approach used with young students along with the holistic program services designed to support the entire family of D/HOH children. To learn more in advance of Cindy’s presentation, please visit www.ceid.org.

Register for this free event [HERE](https://www.hearinglosseb.org/monthly-meetings-1). Or use this link if you are getting a hard copy of the newsletter: <https://www.hearinglosseb.org/monthly-meetings-1>. 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 posts our newsletters to the California State Association webpage and a link on our website. VOLUNTEER! Contact us to let us know you are available! Check out our website at: <http://www.hearinglosseb.org/> Contact us at: info@hearinglosseb.org

Walk4Hearing Bay Area is coming June 4th, 2022, to be held in Alameda, CA at Robert Crown State Beach. Sign up at [2022 Bay Area Walk4Hearing - Hearing Loss Association of America](https://www.hearinglosseb.org/2022-bay-area-walk4hearing-hearing-loss-association-of-america) Walk4Hearing is the national Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) walk fundraiser. Of the funds raised, 60% goes to national to support their activities, and 40% supports our chapter. Last year our team raised over \$4000. Let’s do better this year! Our team name is East Bay Hear-oh’s. Please support our team by making a donation and joining our team for the walk on Saturday June 4 at Alameda’s Crown Beach. Teams from Diablo Valley (Walnut Creek), North Bay (Santa Rosa), Peninsula (San Mateo) and others will descend on Alameda’s Beach for this walk. This walk is in our backyard so we look forward to a large and boisterous contingent to represent our team! If you have questions, please contact Connie Gee at cbgee2014@outlook.com. See you there!



Bay Area Walk4Hearing

Saturday, June 4, 2022

Location

Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach
8th Ave, Otis Drive
Alameda, CA

Walk Day Schedule

Registration, 9:00 a.m.
Stage Presentation, 10:00 a.m.
Walk Starts, 10:15 a.m.

Register at walk4hearing.org

Step up for hearing health!

Join an impactful event where people can learn about resources and technologies, connect with others in the community and bring attention to the importance of hearing health.

MEETING NOTES: *An Attorney's Experience with a Hearing Dog from Canine Companions*

At the April 9, 2022 HLAA-EB Chapter meeting, our guest speaker was Shira Mowlem, who has a profound hearing loss and is an attorney with a law practice in the S.F. Bay Area where she represents students with disabilities. After a brief video about assistance dogs, Shira shared her personal story about her own hearing loss and her experience once she was matched with a hearing dog named Sparkle from Canine Companions (CC).



*Shira Mowlem and her dog,
Sparkle*

Shira commenced her story by explaining how her mother became concerned when she noticed that her infant daughter was not responding appropriately to loud noises. After testing and a diagnosis of a serious hearing loss at an early age, Shira has learned how to live with her hearing loss. Although Shira is deaf in one ear and relies on a hearing aid in the other ear, Shira was able to successfully navigate her college and law school education with the help of real time captioning and other assistive technology and then became a practicing attorney. In addition, Shira is married and has two young children at home.

According to Shira, living life fully with a profound hearing loss got even better a few years ago when she was introduced to a beautiful black Labrador Retriever at Canine Companions. Shira shared her heart-warming story of her journey in acquiring her wonderful hearing dog Sparkle through CC. Shira shared that the application process typically includes the following: Submittal of an application, medical forms from her hearing doctor; phone interview, followed by an interview and opportunity to work with a dog, after which an applicant may be accepted and placed on a waiting list.

Shira was very excited when she was invited to an upcoming two-week Team Training session. Prior to the Team Training session, Shira reviewed the handler's training manual given to her. At the beginning of the Team Training session, there were several different hearing dogs which were being considered as a possible match to Shira. It was the special moment when Sparkle jumped up and kissed Shira on her face that Shira fell in love with Sparkle and knew that Sparkle was a perfect match.

Thereafter, Shira and Sparkle were matched and trained together as a team. She explained how the training included lots of demonstrations and practice exercises that were customized so that Sparkle could help Shira meet her personal needs. For example, Sparkle was trained to alert Shira to specific sounds: Police siren; danger nearby; door knock; doorbell ring; phone ring; microwave; dropping her keys; seatbelt alert; fire & smoke home alert; someone calling her name. Shira noted that she is particularly thankful for Sparkle's alerts at nighttime when Shira takes out her hearing aid because without Sparkle's alert, she will not hear the smoke alarm. She then demonstrated how Sparkle alerts her if someone calls Shira's name, and Sparkle is rewarded with a food treat.

As an attorney with her own law practice, Shira regularly takes Sparkle to work with her and to many public meetings. If someone questions Shira about Sparkle, Shira takes the opportunity to educate them about service animals and how they help meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. She also reminded us that only two questions may be asked of service dog owners: 1) Is this a service dog? and 2) What tasks does the dog do for you?

Shira noted the tremendous impact that her hearing dog Sparkle has had on her life. She also commented about her positive experience with Canine Companions, whose main features are summarized below, while urging us to visit their website for more details.

CC's Mission -- CC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to “. . . enhance the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships.” Back in 1975, CC was established in California with the help of donated land and money from the character cartoonist Charles Schulz and his wife. Since then, CC has become the largest non-profit provider of assistance dogs free of charge with six centers in the United States. It is now recognized worldwide for the excellent quality of its dogs and longevity of its matches, resulting in more personal independence and loving companionship for individuals with a disability.

Types of Assistance Dogs -- CC places four types of professionally trained assistance dogs:

- Service dogs for adults with all kinds of physical disabilities;
- Skilled companions for children and adults with emotional, developmental or physical disabilities;
- Facility dogs for professionals to promote healing & facilitate therapy (e.g., hospitals & courts);
- Hearing dogs for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

CC's Process for Dog Breeding & Training -- It is apparent that CC's process for breeding and training of canine companions, as well as selection, matching and training of individual recipients of assistance dogs, is quite rigorous. CC breeds only Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and crosses of the two breeds. Volunteer breeder caretakers provide permanent homes to CC breeder dogs where puppies are born and nurtured for about eight weeks, at which time the puppies are placed with puppy raisers for 14-18 months, receiving much love and attention while learning socialization and obedience skills. The next step for the CC dogs is completion of a 6 - 9 months Professional Training program at one of the six training centers (including the National Headquarters & Northwest Training Center in Santa Rosa, CA) where professional instructors teach the dogs to respond to more than 40 specialized commands. Subsequently, the trained canines enter the two-week intensive Team Training stage, where the dogs are matched with their human partners with whom they learn to work as a team.

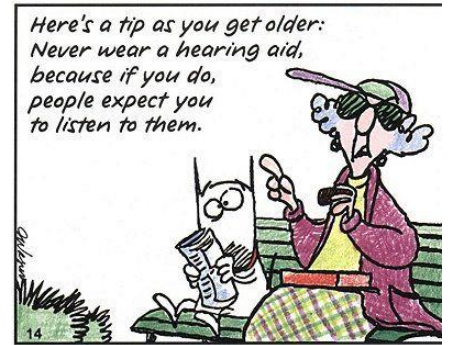
Screening & Matching Applicants -- The guidelines and procedures upon which CC relies to screen and match individual applicants to CC's trained assistive dogs are presented below.:

- ✓ Children five years or older and adults having a physical or auditory disability.
- ✓ Contact the nearest Canine Companions Training Center, or visit *their website* to request an application.
- ✓ Find a friend or family member to be a training assistant.
- ✓ Complete an application; phone/chat/video interview; medical reference forms; personal interview.
- ✓ If accepted, attend a two-week Team Training class at CCI's NW Training Center in Santa Rosa, CA.
- ✓ Participate in an inspirational graduation ceremony, ongoing training and follow-up support services.
- ✓ Typical wait = one to two years; although the entire process may take longer.

For More Information & Questions: Visit: <https://www.canine.org/> Email: shira@mowlemlaw.com

~ **Kathy Fairbanks**

JOKE CORNER



PLANNING A VACATION THIS SUMMER? YOU'RE INVITED TO THE HLA A CONVENTION IN TAMPA, FLORIDA, JUNE 23- 25! The [HLAA Convention](#) in Tampa is your summer vacation destination! Join our community for some fun in the sun AND enjoy a [discounted rate](#) at the brand new JW Marriott Tampa Water Street Hotel. Planning your time at the Convention? Visit the online [Schedule-at-a-Glance](#) to learn more about times for educational workshops, social events, the Exhibit Hall, a research symposium on cochlear implants and more! **REGISTER AT:** [HLAA 2022 Convention Registration - Hearing Loss Association of America](#)

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, National Chapter Coordinator/Liaison: Susan Jeffries Fitzgerald, susanlj29@gmail.com
- Treasurer: Len Bridges, lenbridges3993-hlaa@outlook.com
- Programs: Robin Miller, robin@robinmillerlaw.com
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Go to this URL to join:: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew/> OR, if you prefer to pay by check or card thru the mail, Nancy Asmundson has membership forms to send to you, or contact HLA A at 301-657-2248 or e-mail membership@hearingloss.org. Your membership form & payment go to HLA A, 6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20852. **COSTS:** Regular Membership/year (will receive *Hearing Life* magazine in print and digital format): Individual - \$45; Couple/Family - \$55; Professional - \$80; Nonprofit - \$80; Veteran Membership: Complimentary 1-Year Regular Membership & Lifetime Online Membership.