



November 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.

Our November meeting will be held November 13th. Our speaker will be: Shariq Mobin, Ph.D, Auditory Neuroscientist and Founder of AudioFocus. Shariq will explain what “machine learning” is and how it can help us build better hearing aids. Human brains can understand people who speak quickly, talk in loud restaurants, and have unusual accents. But hearing loss interferes with these abilities. Machine learning can now enhance sound just like the human brain, before it reaches your ears, helping you hear in more places. Shariq will show videos of his hearing aid prototype and ask for volunteers for his pilot study.

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

MEETING NOTES: *Emergency Planning for People with Hearing Loss*

At our Oct 9th, 2021 meeting, our guest speakers were Ann Thomas and Alan Katsura, who are both leaders of the HLAA-Diablo Valley (DV) Chapter. Ann, President of the DV Chapter, is a dynamic and award-winning hearing loss advocate. In 1997 she discovered that she was losing her hearing. She later became a member of HLAA in 2008 and joined the leadership team of the DV Chapter in 2009. Since that time, she has been directing her efforts to making HLAA a household name for those having a hearing loss (HL). She is an HLAA Hearing Assistive Technology Specialist, HLAA Brand Ambassador, and HLAA Get in the Hearing Loop Committee member. Ann has considerable nonprofit training, and her experience ranges from working with several nonprofits to conducting many leadership workshops.



Ann Thomas

Safety: Are You Prepared?

Ann commenced her presentation by asking the above question. She proceeded to remind us that those who live in California may experience earthquakes, wildfires, seasonal storms, floods, volcanic activity, and

more. Everyone—and particularly people with hearing loss—needs to take special precautions prior to and during an emergency in order to ensure one’s safety. Indeed, it requires planning to be adequately prepared when an emergency does arise.

Ready National Preparedness Month, September (www.ready.gov)

Ann noted that September has been designated as the Ready National Preparedness Month in the public service campaign created by the federal government. This campaign was set up to motivate individuals to become informed of potential emergencies in their area and learn how to proceed with planning and preparing for those possible emergencies. Ann then provided a detailed outline of some of the most important steps in this planning and preparation process.

Making An Emergency Plan

- Keep working fire extinguishers on hand & know how to use them when needed.
- Know the location of gas, electricity and water controls, & know how to shut them off in an emergency.
- Develop several different escape routes as part of your evacuation plan.
- Designate a family meeting location outside of the hazard zone.
- Identify an out-of-area contact person or persons with whom you can coordinate your communication.

Building An Emergency Supply Kit for People with Hearing Loss

- ✓ Record of information on your hearing devices: make, model, & serial number.
- ✓ Extra hearing device batteries (rechargeable batteries, if possible).
- ✓ Portable battery charger for smart devices.
- ✓ Apps for communication.
- ✓ Personal amplifiers, such as a Pocket Talker.
- ✓ Masks & face shields

American Red Cross at redcross.org - Recommendations for Inclusion in An Emergency Supply Kit

- 3-day supply of food & 3 gallons of water per person.
- Medicines & 1st aid kit; record of prescriptions.
- Flashlight & whistle.
- Extra eye glasses or contacts; change of clothing.
- Extra set of car keys.
- Extra cash, credit cards, traveler’s checks.
- Copies of important documents.

Emergency Alerting Devices

- 3 ways to be alerted: sound, light, & vibration.
- Examples of useful alerting devices: NOAA weather radio, strobe light, & bed vibrator.
- Smoke & carbon monoxide detectors (available at hardware stores and online).

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Our speaker Alan Katsura, IT Support Person for the DV Chapter & a trained CERT member, explained that CERT is a program under FEMA that is ready to respond to emergencies and disasters in local communities and neighborhoods. CERT is different from other programs in that all CERT responders go through 24-28 hours of classroom and hands-on training and operates under a unified command structure which is the same for any type of emergency or disaster. Alan cited 5 steps that CERT emphasizes: (1) Call 911, (2) Stay safe, (3) Stop the bleeding, (4) Position the injured, and (5) Provide comfort.

More Emergency Planning & Preparedness Resources

Here are some additional resources shared by our speakers Ann and Alan that you may find helpful as you and your family plan and prepare for a multitude of different types of emergencies or disasters that can happen at any time. Please see the list of Emergency Planning & Preparedness Resources below:

[Cal Fire](#)

[Smart911.com](#) ([smart911.com](#)) Not available everywhere – register your info to be quickly identified in an emergency.

[Text-to-911](#)

[PG & E Safety Action Center](#)

[California Foundation for Independent Living Centers Program](#)

[Disability Disaster Access & Resources](#)

[Disability Preparedness-Public Safety Power Shutoff \(PSPS\)](#)

[Public Safety Power Shutoff Support](#)

[Rossmoor Emergency Preparedness Organization](#)

[Great Shake Out](#)

[Great Shake Out YouTube](#)

[HLAA DV Resources](#)

[Disaster Planning Brochure](#)

[Safety Fire & Carbon Monoxide Brochure](#)

For Information & Questions:

[www.hearinglossdv.org](#); Email to: athomas@hearinglossdv.org; Call: 925-264-1199

~ Kathy Fairbanks

Tech Talk

By (Ms.) Dale Davis
November, 2021



We would like to introduce a new column in our Monthly Newsletter to cover snippets from the world of technical advancements in the hearing assistance industry. If you have topics you would enjoy seeing covered, or suggestions for news articles, please let us know. This column will also try to answer any technological questions you might pose.

Please Note:

These products and innovations are brought to you for informational purposes only and do not reflect any endorsement by the National Hearing Loss Association of America or the East Bay Chapter. You can follow the links in the column for more in-depth information on the topics presented.

The Future of Bluetooth Hearing Aids:

How LE Audio Will Revolutionize the Way You Hear the World

[LE Audio](#) is a completely new audio architecture that will bring immense benefits to people with hearing loss. This new protocol will make audio streaming over Bluetooth Low Energy possible. By significantly reducing power consumption compared to Classic Bluetooth, hearing aid manufacturers will be able to design and produce products that can take advantage of LE Audio. By standardizing specifications, LE Audio will enable true

interoperability between hearing aids and platform devices. LE Audio makes it possible to integrate the same functionality of wireless headphones (that most people enjoy) into hearing aids.

Looking down the road, this will let event venues like theaters and arenas broadcast audio feeds to anyone in the audience with an LE Audio device or LE enabled hearing aids. In addition, audio sources will be able to identify that a hearing aid is connecting with them and adjust the sound specifically for that device. Soon those with hearing loss will be able to choose from an entirely new generation of Bluetooth enabled assistive devices that are versatile, affordable, and may not look like hearing aids at all.

As with all hearing health device decisions, it is always best to consult with a professional Audiologist to find the best solution for your needs.

To contribute to this column, please contact: info@hearinglosseb.org

Tinnitus Jokes:

What pitch is your tinnitus?

Mine is an EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE sharp.

Why does everybody hate tinnitus?

Because there's a bad ring to it.

My dog was just barking in my ear...

Now I have Rin Tin Tinnitus.

East Bay Leadership Team

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

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JOIN THE HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA – THEY ADVOCATE 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 thru the mail, Nancy Asmundson has membership forms to send to you, or contact HLAA at 301-657-2248 or e-mail membership@hearingloss.org. Your membership form & payment go to HLAA, 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;

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

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