

Winter 2010

THE HEARING LOSS CALIFORNIAN

Hearing Loss Association of California



Mary Clark, Nanci Linke-Ellis, Elizabeth LeBarron

Southern California Regional Chapter Meeting

Chapter leaders from all over Southern California convened the first ever Regional Chapter networking meeting on August 21st in Yorba Linda, CA hosted by Mary Clark at the clubhouse of her condominium complex. Mary and Nanci Linke-Ellis, the HLAA Coordinator for Southern California, led the group in a daylong series of discussions about how chapters can leverage their talents, pool ideas and share resources with sister chapters.

Elizabeth LeBarron, the newly appointed National Coordinator for Chapters and State Offices, flew in from Bethesda, MD to be a part of the event. LeBarron started the day off by explaining the HLAA mission and its vision of the future. According to Clark, "The national organization is focused on what we are doing here in southern California, so we are in the unique position to help set the stage for a model that will work well in other locations."

"This meeting was the result of feedback after the February Leadership Training in Long Beach. The energy felt during the President's breakout was tangible, with the result that everyone wanted to spend more time with their counterparts to brainstorm on ways to do successful outreach and expand the membership base," said Linke-Ellis. "If someone doesn't understand social networking or how it works, look to others to help you do it. No one has to reinvent the wheel. YouTube is the #2 search engine behind Google. This is where everyone under the age of 50 goes for information. So it stands to reason that this is where HLAA needs to be in order to educate the public, create a presence to recruit new members and raise awareness of the organization."

"Social networking and developing an effective online presence was a theme that was raised again and again," noted L.A. chapter member Liz Pruyn. Among the possible cross-chapter projects discussed was an online marketing workshop that would be led by a PR professional experienced in social media.

Every attendee was given a CD with presentations in PowerPoint and in pdf to use for outreach events, such as speaking engagements or health fairs, and a digital duplicate of all handouts given out that day. There were a series of breakout sessions where leaders holding similar positions in their respective chapters could talk to one another, brainstorm and share ideas. During lunch break, participants were encouraged to post their chapter needs and concerns on the wall.

The afternoon was devoted to honing in on successes and challenges within the respective chapters. Danny Tubbs, HLA-LA chapter member and recent recipient of the 2010 Rocky Stone Family Support Award, volunteered to create Facebook pages for any interested chapters. He also offered to create an online yahoo group for members to post requests, upcoming meetings, social events, etc. "I set up the HLA-LA Facebook page in September 2009, and we have 102 fans to date. I recently helped the Orange County Chapter set up their new Yahoo Groups and Facebook pages and help moderate and promote as needed. I have also recently been helping the San Diego Chapter with their Yahoo Groups and Facebook page to help them grow membership. If any chapters need help setting up, maintaining or moderating a Yahoo Groups or Facebook page I would be more than happy to help." Danny Tubbs's email is metromann@yahoo.com.

A two-step strategic planning session resulted in the two top priorities for the region: chapter member growth and a way to network with other chapters. "This is where everyone wants to put their time and their funds to work. Without a wider member base, we can't effectively hold conferences or attempt statewide outreach." Mary Clark further stated, "Together we have more power and resources than if we each work independently. It is exactly this objective that prompted the idea to hold this meeting. Leveraging each other's strengths and ensuring that any individual weaknesses are not hindering chapter growth is what it's all about."

The recent successful exhibit booth at Alive & Well in Los Angeles, manned by the LA, and Orange County chapters, clearly underscored the need for a smarter, more visible HLAA presence in the health and disability arenas. Only 1 out of 10 visitors to the booth had ever heard of HLAA or had any tangible knowledge of hearing loss.

The first group project to evolve is the ongoing HLAA brochure distribution effort. Each chapter leader was asked to identify a minimum of five places where they could take brochures for distribution. Audiologists, implant centers, social services, hospitals, schools, libraries, and hearing aid dispensers were some of the suggestions. "It seems like a small

gesture,” said Linke-Ellis, “but when you consider that the 30 attendees would place HLAA brochures in over 150 locations, it is a great start. The idea was for leaders to go back to their chapters and ask members to come up with additional places. It’s an organic way to start the outreach process”.

The day was not without surprises, however. Elizabeth LeBarron announced a \$10,000 gift bequeathed to the Orange County chapter by recently deceased member of the chapter, George Calamaras. We also learned that after his death, Raymond Blue's daughter gave \$3,000 to the Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter in his name. Mary Clark was also surprised when she was presented with a custom made watch with the HLA-CA logo on its face. This was to thank her for her tireless efforts on behalf of the state and the southern California region. Mary recently moved to New Mexico outside of Albuquerque with her husband, Gary. Clark accepted the gift and then commented, “Although I am in New Mexico now, my memories with the Hearing Loss Association will be with me for a long time. I cherish the friendships I have made, and value the things I have learned from everyone, and hope to share that wisdom when the opportunity presents itself in the future. “

Despite the sweltering heat, leaders left on a hopeful, inspired note. Chapter business cards were swapped, intra-chapter events were put into the planning stage and some jumped into the pool to cool off. But everyone went home with new friends and a deeper appreciation for HLAA and what it has done to improve the lives of those with hearing loss.

San Fernando Valley Chapter President, Phil Kaplan said, “Despite the hot conditions at the meeting place, the group was kept cool while participating avidly in the conference. Attendees learned about key issues that affect all chapters. The concept of this type of meeting is excellent and deserving of follow up. It’s critical for all chapters to strive for greater transparency. The more we know about what is happening in our region, the more successful our coordinated efforts will be.”

Ellen Mathis from the Long Beach\Lakewood chapter added, “I really appreciated the copies of the Chapter Manual from HLAA that were available to the chapters. Although I had downloaded it, it was far too many pages to print. Thank you Elizabeth for that and the other things you brought.”

Gov. Schwarzenegger Appointment Nanci Linke-Ellis

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today announced the following appointment: Nanci Linke-Ellis, 60, of Santa Monica, has been appointed to the State Rehabilitation Council. She has served as president for Captions West since 2008. Linke-Ellis worked as the executive director for InSight Cinema from 2002 to 2008, executive director for Tripod Captioned Films from 1996 to 2002, development executive for Rosemont Productions from 1992 to 1996 and freelance story analyst from 1986 to 1992. The position does not require Senate confirmation and there is no salary. Linke-Ellis is a Democrat.

President’s Message

My name is Sister Ann Rooney. I am a Catholic Sister of Mercy, hard of hearing since early childhood. I work as a licensed Marriage, Family Therapist in Northern California. Mary Clark, former President of HLA-CA, who moved to New Mexico, will no longer grace us here in California. As her Vice President, I will serve as President until February, when the Board of Trustees hosts their annual election of officers.

November is the month of Thanksgiving, and is the month that we honor Rocky Stone for starting this organization. Without HLAA where would we be? How many of us would still be isolated, hardly knowing anyone else with a hearing loss, perhaps dealing with depression. Thanks to our National Office and its small staff, HLAA continues to support and grow chapters nationwide. Our chapters open the world of communication to people with hearing loss on a local basis. Our access needs are becoming known: captioning, looping and assistive devices.

Each year we have an election of HLA-CA trustees. Terms of office are three years and are staggered so that the board has no more than three vacancies each year. Four names are on your ballot for these positions. In addition to the expired terms, two terms were not completed, those of Diane Gross and Mary Clark. Jeff Chess is completing the term of Diane Gross and Barbara Tucker is completing the term of Mary Clark. Please be sure to vote. The Ballot is in this newsletter.

Many people ask what the HLA-CA state association does for the chapters in California. In this past year, we hosted two Chapter Leadership Trainings, one in the North and one in the South. Later, chapter leaders met in both areas for networking to create new pathways of communication between regional chapter leaders.

This past summer we exhibited at our largest function ever for HLA-CA, the huge Alive and Well Expo in southern California--a tremendous success.

In October, Dana Mulvany represented HLAA at the California Academy of Audiology (CAA) Convention in San Francisco, presenting on Looping and advocating for t-coils in hearing aids. The previous speaker, Patricia Kricos PhD, National President of the American Academy of Audiology, spoke on the importance of working with HLAA members and the importance of t-coils. Chapter technology experts created our exhibit booth featuring assistive listening devices, and they also put HLAA and chapter information into all CAA registration packets.

In a Department of Rehabilitation project, packets of HLAA brochures with California chapter information are going out to all 81 DOR regional offices.

HLA-CA tracks issues on hearing loss at the Department of Rehabilitation, the California Public Utilities Commission, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and the Department of Social Services. We educate legislators about hearing loss. AND this newsletter is a fantastic advocate at work, as is our web site at www.hearinglossca.org.

We are very proud to serve all hard of hearing people in California, to support our chapters and to work hard for HLAA. We are thankful.

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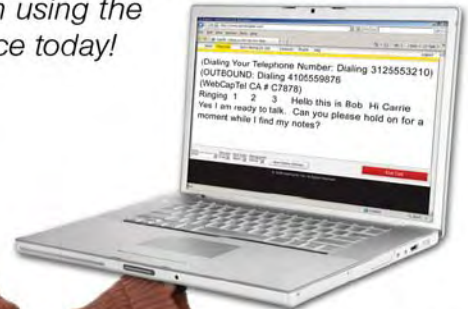
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California young adults. Rachel and Rhianon with Jennifer Eng in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Summer 2010. Rachel and Jennifer attended on young adult scholarships; Rhianon was a Rocky Stone scholarship recipient in Nashville last year and the 2010 Outstanding Young Adult.

Community Building Why We Need Young Adults

By Rhianon Elan Gutierrez and Rachel McCallum

What defines a community? We have pondered this ever since we first met two years ago as undergraduates at Chapman University. We've talked, listened, blogged, and mingled with new friends at deaf and hard of hearing related events and made it our mission to advocate for greater empowerment, stronger support networks, and more inclusive means of participation in our larger society. In the process, we've developed our own vision of what defines a community and asked ourselves what a young adult community would look like.

A hard of hearing community is often interpreted as a gray area composed of many people with varying degrees of hearing loss who may or may not feel entirely comfortable in either the mainstream hearing or Deaf worlds. It presents a challenging and interesting arena for communicating in many different ways. Statistics show that there are significantly more people who are hard of hearing than culturally Deaf, yet we don't know who these people are because hearing loss isn't easily spotted on the streets or in grocery stores. We may have to speak, miss more than a few words, show the tech devices that help us to hear and comprehend sound, or communicate with our hands in order to be identified as someone with a hearing loss.

Why is it important to be a part of a hard of hearing community? Sometimes we choose our community; other times, we find it. Maybe we need it to understand ourselves or to feel empowered. Or we simply need to know that our presence in this world matters--that there are others who share our goals and understand our experiences without us having to explain too much. A community is developed and sustained through support from the individuals within it and outside of it.

As members of the emerging younger generation, we've witnessed that the accomplished and respected members of HLAA are getting older. We've heard the stories that speak highly of the organization's founder, Rocky Stone, who truly started it as a

grassroots movement in 1979 with the name Self Help for Hard of Hearing People. We are grateful that he and many other members have achieved so much for those with hearing loss. Yet, we are cognizant of today's realities in which technology is an important tool in communication. It shouldn't replace the face to face companionship that this organization values, but it should not hinder our ability to reach out to those who are miles away and still seeking comfort from someone who understands them. Recently, we have had conversations with many older members throughout the state who have expressed their desire to bring in younger members and their difficulty in doing so. They've asked us to give them solutions, but we both have found that these solutions aren't easy. Goals need to be set and people need to take the initiative to see them through. We know that we can't accomplish these goals on our own. We need more young people to be involved.

Many people with hearing loss go through a process of denial before they are open to meeting others who also have a hearing loss. For adolescents, the process of self-acceptance is often chaotic. They usually have their core group of friends from school, religious or spiritual organizations, sports, and their neighborhoods, which may or may not include people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The same is also true for college students, but the community options are expanded a bit more to include social groups that focus on a cause or activity. During adolescence and young adulthood, the process of acceptance of one's hearing loss should not be rushed. It is necessary to have a mentor or person to support and challenge a young adult to do his or her best no matter what.

For working professionals and seniors, communities often center on the home, religious or spiritual organizations, work, neighborhoods, and, in the case of seniors, retirement homes and senior centers. Working professionals may experience isolation if they know no one with a hearing loss. The workforce, as diverse as it is, does not have many hard of hearing people identifying themselves as such. We have met many adults within HLAA who were in this situation. HLAA serves an important role for those members who long for a community that "gets them."

The older generation does not lack the initiative to bring in younger members. They just need more support to do so. The tools are there but they are often scattered and confusing. There are also issues with having an insufficient number of members to do specific tasks, the availability of members, or the lack of skills among chapter members either due to age, interest, geographical location, and/or money, among others.

The big question is: how does one bring in new members in this increasingly technological world? Internet and computer skills are necessary to gain attention to one's cause and to provide resources. We strongly urge members to work towards gaining more technological skills because it will help chapters gain more visibility. Consistency is also important to ensure chapters keep themselves visible.

We believe in the importance of grassroots coalition building. Our organization was founded on it. This is exactly the kind of engagement that we need to see from local chapters. Getting more young adults actively involved will increase the appeal of the organization to other young adults. We know what appeals to other young adults and can teach the older generation how to more successfully utilize technological

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Technically, providing captioned movies is easy – the dialogue and other pertinent aural information like “gunshot,” or “door closing” is put in writing and displayed in visible form so that we can “hear” with our eyes. Captions may be open – visible to everyone in the audience – or closed – visible only to patrons who have requested the necessary viewing equipment. The captions, prepared for most although not all of today’s movie releases, are contained on a computer disc furnished to the theaters at no charge. All they must do to display captioned movies is to purchase, install, maintain and then actually use the necessary equipment.

According to the DOJ, some 88% of first-run movies today are available with captions. Yet captions are actually deployed for fewer than 1% of the movie showings. As DOJ notes, studios have made tremendous strides towards making movies accessible, but the theaters themselves have not done their part.

DOJ stepped into the fray in July of this year, when it published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which is available online at www.ada.gov. In that notice, DOJ is proposing that all movies shown on at least one-half of the movie screens at any theater be closed-captioned. DOJ proposes to phase in that requirement over a five-year period beginning one year after the effective date of the regulations, with 10% of the screens being equipped for captioning per year until the 50% mark is achieved at the end of the fifth year.

DOJ will hold a day-long hearing on that proposal in San Francisco on Monday, January 10, 2011, at the Marriott Marquis, 55 Fourth Street. That will be one of three hearings nationally. The others will be in Chicago in November and Washington, D.C. in December. The site that gives the dates and times for the hearings and tells people how to register to testify is http://www.ada.gov/anprm2010/anprm_nov-jan_2010.htm.

While I was pleased to see that DOJ was actively involving itself in the movie-captioning issue, I was perplexed by the proposal’s implicit conclusion that 50% access will be “good enough.” Yet nothing in the proposed rule explains why 50% is an appropriate number, leaving one to wonder whether it is anything more than splitting the difference between what we want, which is total access, and what the theaters want to provide, which seems to be nothing.

That said, the problem DOJ is apparently trying to address with a 50% rule is very real. Under the language of ADA, the obligation to provide auxiliary aids and services persists “unless the entity in question can demonstrate that taking such steps would fundamentally alter the nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage or accommodation being offered, or would result in an undue burden.” By placing the burden squarely on the entity – singular – it seems abundantly clear that ADA calls for specific, case-by-case determinations of whether each specific company would find that providing the requisite aids and services is unduly burdensome.

The rub, obviously, is that while the structure of the statute is

clear, the words “undue burden” provide very little guidance. Congress might as well have told the theaters, “do this unless it would cost too much.” Congress directed DOJ to adopt regulations fleshing out those vague standards. But DOJ didn’t bite the bullet either. It stated that “undue burden” means “significant difficulty or expense,” which is just another way of saying, “do this unless it costs too much.”

Not surprisingly, opinions about how much expense is “too much” vary considerably, depending on whether one would be burdened by the expense or benefited by the resulting accommodation. Consequently, facilities asked to provide aids and services can and do say with perfect sincerity that the cost would impose an “undue burden,” with an emphasis on the “burden” part, while parties requesting the accommodation can and do say with equal sincerity that while the aids and services are not free, the burden of providing them is not “undue.”

This extremely non-specific “standard” produces battles over ADA accommodations that resemble playground fights. We ask for captions. The theaters say providing captions would be an “undue burden.” We say, “would not.” They say, “would so.” And on it goes.

The result of this standard-less rule is that the competing interests – those of us wanting access and those wanting not to undertake the expense of providing it – have no alternative but to “tell it to the judge” in court. But with no standards, what is the poor judge to do? Practically speaking, the judges asked to deal with movie captioning claims have come up with one of two answers. They either determine that no captioning is required – a really bad outcome – or they determine that some captioning is required – a really good outcome – but then direct the parties to work out how much.

Even in those good-outcome cases, the “transaction” costs in the form of legal expenses have been extraordinarily high relative to the cost of the benefit ultimately provided. In the most successful movie-litigation case to date, the theaters agreed to spend some \$200,000 to equip 16 theaters to show captioned films. At the same time, though, the theaters agreed to pay \$260,000 to the plaintiffs’ attorneys, on top of what they had to pay their own attorneys, thus spending considerably more on legal fees than they ultimately spent on access.

Because of those high “transaction” costs, I can understand and applaud DOJ’s desire to substitute a transparent and readily applied performance test for the vague “undue burden” standard. But while an across-the-board performance standard may be simple, I don’t think the proposal is appropriate or legal. It is not appropriate because 50% access may be more than some small, independent theaters can manage, but is considerably less than what some of the large, well-financed corporate theater chains can do. Nor do I think the proposal is legal, because the case-by-case “undue burden” requirement is found in the language of the ADA itself, and while DOJ can illuminate and interpret the language of the law, it can’t ignore it.

So where does this leave us – and what should we tell DOJ at the January 10 hearing? Even though attorneys like me may benefit financially from those case-by-case

So where does this leave us – and what should we tell DOJ at the January 10 hearing? Even though attorneys like me may benefit financially from those case-by-case determinations, I think the theaters should spend their money on providing access rather than paying attorneys. So my personal preference would be for ADA to adopt a rule on movie captioning, but a rule that relates to the financial ability of the individual theater companies.

Specifically, I would like to see the theaters be required to spend a certain proportion of their gross annual income on providing access for people with hearing and vision losses. Basing a requirement on resources is consistent with the notion that “undue burden” relates to financial ability, and basing a requirement on gross rather than net income furthers the fundamental principle that providing access is a cost of doing business, and not something that is to be added after only after other expenses have been paid.

If the same requirement based on gross income is applied to all businesses, then none of them are put at a competitive disadvantage. It would be as though electricity prices rose – the businesses would either absorb the increase, or, more likely, raise prices slightly to offset the expense, so that all patrons share the cost. Furthermore, a percentage-of-revenue requirement would result in complete accessibility over time – the larger theaters would get there sooner than the smaller, but all would get there eventually.

In its proposal, DOJ also raised the possibility of allowing theaters to opt for open captioning as a way to satisfy their accessibility obligations. I think theaters should not only be permitted, but perhaps even encouraged to do so. While not required either by prior court decisions or DOJ’s past regulatory interpretations, open captioning is undeniably effective as a means of communicating aural information to people with hearing loss, and is therefore a permissible alternative should the theaters so choose.

From the theaters’ point of view, the potential advantage of open captioning is that it is significantly less expensive than closed captioning – indeed, for theaters that have converted to digital projection, the cost of open captioning is absolutely nothing – they merely select the captioning package from the menu of digital options for that particular show, and the captions appear without the need for any special display equipment. From the perspective of people with hearing loss, open captions can be attractive because there is no need to self-identify, no equipment to check out and no need to focus back and forth from the caption-display device to the screen,

As a practical matter, a mix of closed-captioning and open-captioning offerings may prove both effective and practical. Most multiplex theaters are a mix of large and small auditoriums, the large ones where more popular movies play upon release, and the smaller ones where those movies migrate after they stop selling out in the larger auditoriums.

If open captions scare away hearing audiences, as the theaters assert, then theater owners would likely employ closed captioning in their larger auditoriums during the initial release of the movie. But by the time the films run their course in the large

auditoriums, they are no longer filling even those smaller auditoriums. A theater owner might decide that it makes more sense to provide open captions in those auditoriums than to undertake the additional expense of equipping them to show closed-captioned movies. By conspicuously publicizing which showings will be open-captioned, both people who dislike and people who like open captioned movies will have a choice that suits them.

The DOJ website (<http://www.ada.gov>) that contains the entire proposed rule on movie captioning also gives instructions on how to file comments, and on how to give testimony at the January 10 hearing. I would encourage readers to file their comments and, if possible, to appear at the hearing. Despite our concerns about the specifics of DOJ’s proposal, I do believe that the present DOJ is far more committed to disability-access issues than any prior DOJ since the passage of ADA.

Here is what I think DOJ ought to be told, both in writing and in person at the January hearing:

- 1) Tell them they are on the right track in addressing the captioning issue, because movies without captions are not accessible to those of us with significant hearing losses;
- 2) Tell them that settling for half access over five years is not sufficient when many of the large corporate theater owners like Regal, AMC and Cinemark are perfectly capable of providing full access in less time than is being proposed;
- 3) Tell them that open captioning ought to be permitted as an optional means of providing access under all circumstances, and should be required in those situations where open captioning is possible but closed captioning is not, such as for 3-D movies.

As promising as the proposed rule may be, rulemaking takes a long time. And unfortunately, DOJ’s can change their positions as federal administrations change. So while we hope for a good rule that will truly provide access to movies, we’re not putting all of our eggs in that basket.

Last August, attorneys from the Disability Rights Advocates public-interest law firm in Berkeley and I held two “town hall” meetings in the East Bay area of Northern California with community members interested in movie captioning. Our objective was to assess the possibility of filing a lawsuit that could establish a statewide precedent to the effect that not only ADA but California’s state laws require movie theaters to offer meaningful access through captioning. What would happen, we expect, would be that rather quickly, negotiations would begin.

As of this writing, those plans are still in the formative stages. The theaters would no doubt want to wait until DOJ announces its proposal, and if DOJ does indeed move rapidly enough, that might make some sense. But should DOJ falter, or propose an unacceptable rule, the lawsuit would provide another vehicle by which access could be achieved.

As someone who used to really like movies but hasn’t really been able to enjoy them for years as my hearing has gotten worse, I’m really hopeful that 2011 could be our year. I hope to see many of the readers of this article in San Francisco in January.



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Bill Busch, Ann Thomas, Barbara Asay, Debbie Sharp, Rick Gerner.

OUTREACH 2010 CAA Conference in SF

By Bill Busch, VP Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

HLA-CA was invited to support the 11th annual California Academy of Audiology Conference held in San Francisco from September 30th to October 2, 2010. It was a great opportunity to show the audiologists that HLA-CA can be effective partners with them in serving the needs of people with hearing loss. Ann Thomas and Debbie Sharp of the Diablo Valley Chapter assembled a comprehensive packet of information to be included in the registration materials. It included HLAA and HLA-CA brochures, information about hearing loss and a list of chapters in CA complete with meeting and contact information.

On Friday Dana Mulvaney, representing HLA-CA, provided a thorough update on the progress of looping California, entitled "Get in the Loop". She also took the opportunity to remind audiologists of the importance of programming the telecoils of hearing aids as well as possible for their clients and objectively evaluating them to verify they are working effectively. She further recommended that audiologists (and hearing aid dispensers) provide their telecoil-equipped consumers the opportunity to try out audio loop systems, neckloops, and silhouette inductors in their own offices. Dana also recommended that neckloops and silhouette inductors should have three-conductor (aka stereo) plugs so that they will work with most portable music players and eliminate the risk of damaging the players.

CAA also requested that HLA-CA set up an exhibit of assistive listening devices to allow the attendees (nearly 275) to drop by on breaks and see the wide variety of hearing assistive technology now available. The Peninsula and Diablo Valley Chapters provided the devices, brochures and HLA banner from their respective Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) exhibits. The exhibit for CAA consisted of a table of brochures and three tables with over 30 different devices including personal amplifiers, personal FM systems, TV listening system, telecoil adapters, microphones, clocks, telephones, alerting devices, loops, etc.

Five members from three different chapters worked as an effective team to explain to the visiting audiologists the features of the assembled devices. They were Barbara Asay and Rick Gerner of the Peninsula Chapter, Ann Thomas and Debbie Sharp from the Diablo Valley Chapter and Bill Busch from the Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter.

Chapter News

Woodland Chapter. Outreach to Hispanics. Woodland is said to be 50% Hispanic, but no Hispanics have attended our meetings since we began in 2005. We determined to make September our month to reach out to the Hispanic population.

A Spanish speaking board member offered to place an advertisement of our meetings in a free Spanish language magazine, with promise of a translator at our meetings when requested.

We offered to speak (through a translator) at any of the many Hispanic groups that meet at the local Catholic church.

Our Woodland Chapter of HLAA set up an information table at two health fairs in September, one intended for Spanish speaking residents and the other advertised among lower income people. At both fairs, we had handouts and, through a translator, spoke to numerous Hispanics. We were fortunate in our translator, who was enthusiastic and effectively explained that hearing loss is a health issue, as well as explaining the HLAA purpose of helping the hearing impaired to live better.

Both fairs had very loud Spanish music, which made it difficult for us to have a conversation with participants, so we took the opportunity, after the fair, to comment to the organizers that the loud music, especially within the confines of a building, was unhealthy.

Incidentally, Woodland also has a mosque. They have received a copy of our monthly newsletter with an invitation to attend our meetings.

Clare Childers, leader, hearherewoodland@gmail.com.

Los Angeles Chapter. For the last six years, the LA Chapter has been meeting free of charge at the HEAR Center. The Chapter was glad to sponsor the second annual HEAR Center Pasadena Marathon with a donation of \$500. Since 1954 the HEAR Center has been dedicated to helping people at all stages of life be a part of the hearing and speaking world. HEAR Center's mission is to serve speech, language and hearing impaired infants, children and adults, enriching their lives by providing them with auditory and oral communication skills.

HLA-LA donated \$500 to the No Limits annual fundraiser. No Limits is a non-profit organization aimed at helping children with hearing loss gain confidence through theatrical arts, individual therapy and family support. No Limit's annual fundraiser this year is the 6th Annual Walkathon "Splash-A-Thon at the Aquarium of the Pacific" in Long Beach. Kathy Buckley, the hard of hearing comedienne, hosted the event. All proceeds will benefit economically disadvantaged children with hearing loss.

Each year, the month of October is celebrated as "National Disability Employment Awareness Month" to remind both job seekers and employers alike of the employment needs and contributions of those with disabilities. Northrop-Grumman of Woodland Hills held an employee fair at which HLA-LA members, Diane Gross and Alicia Fernandez, (wo)manned a table.



ESTHER SNIVELY, 1927 – 2010

By Lynne Kinsey

Esther Snively was the epitome of a real leader, friend and colleague. She served the Hearing Loss Association of Silicon Valley (HLA-SV) in numerous official and unofficial capacities. At the time of her death she was our President; Newsletter Editor, for which she won a national award, and our Website Manager. She was always cheerful and smiling, welcomed new people and befriended the long-standing members. We rarely saw her without her camera around her neck, and her wonderful photos were often published in our newsletter and on our website.

Her organizing and caring skills stemmed from her former life as an elementary school teacher. Her husband, Ed, often accompanied her to HLA activities and more recently he, too,

needed a hearing aid. It was not a stigma for him; he now just matched his wife.

A life-long learner, Esther was constantly searching for ways to learn new things and apply them to her and others' benefit. As a longtime member of a Sign Language class she opened her home for regular practice sessions to the whole class. She frequented the local Apple Store to learn the intricacies of her Apple computer, how to publish a newsletter, membership directory, design brochures, informational cards, print business cards and membership address labels. These skills were all new to her. She graciously shared this knowledge with others. When she saw a new need, she learned how to fill it.

When I first met Esther she was active in the Almaden Cycle Touring Club and participated in and enjoyed long bike rides. Her photographs are of professional quality; capable of being published. She eagerly volunteered when there was a need—being on a new committee, baking cookies, searching for needed equipment, facilities, or volunteers. She had a knack for making people feel comfortable and was always interested in other people's stories and needs. Esther Snively leaves a hole that will be hard to fill.

Esther leaves her husband Edward, three children by her first husband, Steve and Scott Pierce and Patty Emberley, many grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and very good friends. She is also the mother of Chris Pierce who passed away in 1988. Esther touched many lives with her gentle spirit and positive outlook on life.

A memorial service was held in October at The Chapel of Roses, Oak Hill Cemetery. The Chapel of Roses was looped for Esther's service.

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Farewell to Mary and Gary Clark

Goodby HLA-CA. Hello HLA-NM. Mary Clark, HLA-CA President, and her husband were both laid off. They had long planned to retire to New Mexico, so instead of looking for jobs in California, they decided to sell their condo and move to New Mexico right away.

They have a 5.92 acre lot in NM and plan to build their dream house. Their lot is on a ridge, and at 5600 feet is a little more than a mile high. It borders on Open Space, Bureau of Land Management land, and also is adjacent to Indian Reservation land, so it's unlikely there will be any development near them. Great view. Clear skies.

Best of luck on your new life in New Mexico.

May there always be work for your hands to do;
 May your purse always hold a coin or two;
 May the sun always shine on your windowpane;
 May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain;
 May the hand of a friend always be near you;
 May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.



WELCOME TO HOLLAND

*by Emily Perl Kingsley, ©1987 by Emily Perl Kingsley.
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I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this...

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy." But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met. It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills... and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned." And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss. But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.

BALLOT - Deadline December 31, 2010

The Hearing Loss Assn-California Nominations Committee is proud to submit the following well-qualified candidates for the Hearing Loss Association-CA Board of Trustees. The term of office is three years. Successful candidates will begin their term at the February 2011 Board of Trustees meeting. **Please vote for no more than three candidates by entering an "X" in the space next to the candidate's name.** Voting for more than three will invalidate your vote.

Note: Only members in good standing of the Hearing Loss Association of America National organization may vote. Qualification will be based on the list obtained from HLAA National office showing current members as of December 1, 2010. The return address is the only identifier used, so it is important that your return address matches the records of HLAA membership.

Family memberships are identified as Mr. and Mrs. or as two names on the membership records from HLAA National. In this case, each member is entitled to vote. If copies of the ballot need to be made, it is the responsibility of the members to make a second copy or print a copy from the online version of the newsletter available at www.hearinglossca.org.

Return envelopes containing ballots must show the voter's name and address in the return address area of the envelope, but not on the ballot. Envelopes not bearing a return address and/or postmarked after **December 31, 2010** will be considered invalid and will not be counted.

Please send your completed ballot to: **Carol Waechter, 6807 Gray Court, Foresthill, CA 95631.**

_____ **Maxine B. Barton**, Attorney at Law--Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

I am a retired Attorney. Currently, I volunteer as a Judge Pro Tem in the Superior Court of California. I serve on the Speakers' Bureau of the State Bar of California and am presenting seminars on Financial Elder Abuse and its prevention. I am a member of the Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America.

I would like to serve on the Board of Trustees of HLA-California in order to promote fair treatment under the ADA for those persons who are hard of hearing. I also have a special interest in seeing that children with hearing loss are identified at an early age and given the tools to develop into contributing members of society.

I am a willing worker and feel that I can contribute in a meaningful way if elected as a Trustee.

_____ **Debbie Clark**, Au.D, FAAA—Peninsula Chapter

I have over 25 years of experience as an audiologist and am particularly interested in the process of adapting to hearing aids and teaching communication strategies. I believe there is much more to managing hearing loss than purchasing hearing aids. Excellent hearing aid technology is important but it is equally important to address all of the challenges that face people with hearing difficulty. Hearing Loss Association meetings, community lip reading classes, and professional counseling services to address issues of denial or depression are just a few important resources for people struggling with hearing loss.

_____ **Ellen Mastman**, MA, CCC/A, FAAA—Peninsula Chapter

I have devoted my career to helping people and their families to adapt to hearing loss and its impact on daily life. I have taught "Lip Reading and Managing your Hearing Loss" in Los Altos Hills for over 20 years. I have worked as Consulting Audiologist helping deaf and hard of hearing infants and toddlers develop listening skills. Before coming to California, I worked as a hearing therapist for the Instituto Oir Speech and Hearing Clinic in Guadalajara, Mexico, and held audiology positions at the Niagara County Speech and Hearing Clinic and at the University of New York at Buffalo.

_____ **Susan Shaffer**, MSN, PHN--Orange County Chapter

I live in north Orange County, and have been late deafened for over 30 years. I am a bilateral CI user. Currently, I am a Public Health Nursing Supervisor for the County of Los Angeles where I advocate for my staff, my underserved patients, and change. For ten years, I have been in leadership roles and am comfortable promoting for those that need assistance. I teach my staff, my superiors, my peers, as well as my young grandchildren how to communicate with me and the hard of hearing population in general. My experience in these activities can easily be transferred to service on the Board of Trustees for the Hearing Loss Association of California.

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Programs of the California Public Utilities Commission
Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program



RESOURCES FOR HEARING LOSS QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

Hearing Loss Resource Specialists

Jennifer Stuessy, Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness (GLAD), Los Angeles 323-478-8000, jstuessy@gladinc.org

Pauline Strickland, Center on Deafness Inland Empire (CODIE), Riverside 951-275-5000, pstrickland@codie.org

Colette Noble, Sacramento 916-359-1893, cnoble@gmail.com

Sr. Ann Rooney, Burlingame arooney@hearinglossca.org

Bruce Harris, Berkeley bjharris@ieee.org

For Parents

Independently Merging Parents Association of California (IMPACT)

Parent group focused on securing the best for children regardless of methodology, www.impactfamilies.org

Hands and Voices

Similar approach as IMPACT but nationwide <http://www.handsandvoices.org>

Education

Helen Walter hwalter1@dc.rr.com
951-849-6713

For Youth

HLAA Young Adults Group

Interactive social website <http://hearinglossnation.com>

Training and Advocacy Group (TAG), Los Angeles

A self-advocacy group for deaf/hard of hearing children and teens. <http://www.tagkids.us>

Cochlear Implants

Cindy Jagger (Northern CA) 707-422-3753, cjagger@hearinglossca.org

Darlene Fragale (Southern CA) 909-907-1188, dmfragale@gmail.com

Clinics

The HEAR Center

Hearing/speech therapy, Community outreach, hearing aid dispensing. All ages, <http://www.hearcenter.org>, 626-796-2016

House Ear Institute

213-483-4431, <http://www.hei.org>
Research on hearing loss and vestibular disorders. Cochlear implant services.

Stanford University

Cochlear implant services cochlearimplant@stanford.edu, 650-736-4351
<http://www.med.stanford.edu/ohns>

Hearing and Speech Center, San Francisco 415-921-7658, info@hearingsspeech.org
<http://www.hearingsspeech.org>

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, Stanford

Pediatric hearing loss
Jody Winzelberg AuD, FAAA 650-498-2738, jwinzelberg@lpch.org

John Tracy Clinic

Pediatric hearing loss, free services worldwide <http://www.johntracyclinic.org>, 213-748-5481

Oberkötter Foundation

Pediatric hearing loss, free materials, oral schools <http://www.oraldeafed.org>

Financial Aid

Audient Alliance

<http://audientalliance.org>, 206-838-7194

Let them Hear Foundation, Palo Alto

650-462-3143, <http://www.letthemhear.org>

Career Counseling/Employment Services

HLAA Employment Toolkit

Interview strategies; hearing loss and ADA; communication tips; insurance coverage for hearing aids. www.hearingloss.org/advocacy/Employment.asp#jobtoolkit

GLAD/EDD

GLAD/Employment Development Department <http://www.gladinc.org>
213-478-8000, info@gladinc.org

Vocational Rehabilitation provides service

for clients who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance with hearing aids and devices may be provided to clients who need such devices to secure or retain employment. <http://www.dor.ca.gov>

Deaf/Disabled Telecomm Access (DDTP)

Administrative Committee (TADDAC)

Colette Noble (Hard of Hearing) 916-359-1893, cnoble@gmail.com
Nancy Hammons, (Late Deafened) hammonsn@aol.com

Chriz Dally, (Deaf)

Patrick Boudreault, (Deaf)

Equipment Program (EPAC)

Brian Winic (Hard of Hearing), lovetwohear@aol.com

Richard Ray (Deaf), rrayada@aol.com

Ken Rothschild (Deaf)

Vacant (deaf/blind)

Free Telephones (CTAP)

www.ddtp.org/ctap

Lawyers

Real Time Captioning at school
David Grey, david@greyslaw.com
Captioning of movies/theatre
John Waldo, john@wash-cap.com

Online Videos

HLAA

www.hearingloss.org/learn/hearingloss_vids.asp

Listen and Speak, children

www.oraldeafed.org/movies/index.html

Captions

Captioned movies search engine

Captionfish.com

Captioned videos of world's leading thinkers.

TED.com

How to get Real Time Captioning

Captioning for workshops, lectures, courts

Arlene Patton,

arlepatt@aol.com, 626-337-8331

Captioning at College

Colette Noble

916-359-1893, cnoble@gmail.com

Assistance Dogs for hard of hearing/deaf

Canine Companions for Independence

<http://www.cci.org> 800-572-2275

Sam Simon Foundation

Rescues and trains assistance dogs for the deaf and hard of hearing <http://www.samsimonfoundation.com>, 310-457-5898

Other Resources

Lip reading classes

hearinglossca.org/html/lipreading.htm

Aural Rehab Group for CIs, San Diego

Mellisa Essenburg, M.S., CCC-SLP

mellisasl@yahoo.com, 858-232-5842

www.SanDiegoSpeechPathology.com

www.auditoryverbaltherapy.blogspot.com

Hearing Aids 101

Info about all brands of hearing aids <http://www.hearingaids101.com>

Better Hearing Institute

Educates the public and medical profession on hearing loss, its treatment and prevention, 202-449-1100, <http://www.betterhearing.org>

Living and Coping with Hearing Loss by

Sam Trychin

samtrychin@adelphia.net
<http://www.trychin.com>

Hearing Loss Network & Web

<http://www.hearinglossnetwork.org>
<http://www.hearinglossweb.com>
larry@hearinglossnetwork.org

Hearing Loss Help E-zine

www.hearinglosshelp.com
neil@hearinglosshelp.com

Deafness in Disguise

A fascinating look at the history of hearing devices. <http://beckerehibits.wustl.edu/did>

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS

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805-968-2777
Claudia Herczog, czog16@cox.net

South Coast Chapter - Irvine
Lorraine Fanizza, hear@hearpros.com
714-669-0401 V/TTY/FAX

Where/when do chapters meet?

<http://www.hearinglossca.org/html/chapters.htm>

Please join us. Meet others who are facing the challenge of everyday life with a hearing loss. Meetings are free and informal. Bring a friend or family member. Everyone is welcome. Hearing loss is a daily challenge you can overcome. **You do not have to face hearing loss alone.**

No chapter near you?

Our Chapter Coordinators will help you to set up a local group.

- **Acting No. CA Chapter Coordinator**
Elizabeth LeBarron,
National States and Chapters Coordinator
elebarron@hearingloss.org
- **Southern CA Chapter Coordinator**
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text pager

FOUNDER Howard E. "Rocky" Stone, 1925-2004. In 1979, Rocky Stone founded the organization as Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH). Renamed Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) in 2006.

JOIN US! Membership includes national and state memberships, *Hearing Loss Magazine* and *The Hearing Loss Californian* newsletter. Rates are \$20 Student, \$35 Individual, \$45 Couple, \$60 Professional. For international and corporate rates, please visit www.hearingloss.org.

Please make check out to HLAA and send it to Hearing Loss Association of America, 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814 (include name/ mailing address/zip code/ email/phone) OR you can join on line at www.hearingloss.org/membership/renew.asp

Remember, in order to **VOTE** in state elections, you must be a National member.

SUPPORT BRENDA BATTAT & HLAA. Join the Premier Club.

Please join the **Premier Club** by giving an ongoing monthly pledge of \$20 or more. Premier Club donations help HLAA predict their financial resources more reliably and manage their expenditures more wisely.

This is automatically deducted from your credit card and applied directly to the work of HLAA, to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy, and support.

I have joined the Premier Club. Have you? www.hearingloss.org/donations/index.asp.

ITINERANT TEACHERS OF HOH/D support your graduating seniors in their transition from high school by giving them a **FREE** trial subscription to *The Hearing Loss Californian*. Please send student name/ mailing address/zipcode/email to gtiessen@hearinglossca.org.

YOUNG PEOPLE ages 28 to 35, Socialize.

HearingLossNation is a non-profit online social network community designed specifically for HoH individuals between the ages of 18 and 35. HLAA member **Patrick Holkins**, a Harvard University senior, moderates the discussions for young adults. Go direct to <http://hearinglossnation.ning.com> OR access it thru <http://hearingloss.org>.

FREE trial subscription to *The Hearing Loss Californian*. Please send your name/ mailing address/zipcode/email to Grace Tiessen, 714 Prospect Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91103, gtiessen@hearinglossca.org.

FREE. *Hearing Health* magazine, a quarterly publication of Deafness Research Foundation. Sign up on line at <http://www.drf.org>.

HLA-California publishes *The Hearing Loss Californian* quarterly in mid February, May, August and November. The newsletter is available through mail, and on line at <http://www.hearinglossca.org/html/newsletter.htm>.

Demographics. Our database consists of 5300 records--1250 California HLAA members; 1345 California audiologists; 1350 California Hearing Aid Dispensers; Dept of Rehabilitation HoH/D counselors; Itinerant Teachers of the HoH/D; Office of Deaf Access outreach centers; members of the Assn of Late Deafened Adults; Kaiser Permanente audiologists; members of AG Bell Assn for the D/HoH; Costco Hearing Aid Centers; HEARx Hearing Aid Centers; Sonus Hearing Aid Centers and others interested in hearing loss issues.

Editor: Grace Tiessen, gtiessen@hearinglossca.org

Layout: Lisa Rettino, leftylisa63@yahoo.com

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Submissions for the Spring 2011 issue are due no later than January 15, 2011, and should be sent to gtiessen@hearinglossca.org. Inclusion and/or editing will be at the full discretion of the Editor.



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HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA *A Hearing Loss Association of America* *state association supporting chapters throughout California*

Hearing Loss is a Leading Public Health Issue

Who We Are

Hearing Loss Association of California (HLA-CA) is a state association affiliated with Hearing Loss Association of America. Residents of California who join our national organization automatically become members of HLA-CA.

Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is an international, non-sectarian, educational, consumer organization of hard of hearing people, their relatives and friends. It is devoted to the welfare and interests of those who cannot hear well but are committed to participating in the hearing world.

Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 657-2248 Voice
(301) 657-2249 TTY
(301) 913-9413 Fax
info@hearingloss.org

Hearing Loss Association of America

The Nation's voice for people with hearing loss.

Hearing Loss Association of America opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and advocacy.

The national support network includes the Washington, D.C. area office, 14 state organizations, and 200 local chapters.

Our clear, straightforward message has changed the lives of thousands of people.

Hearing loss is a daily challenge you can overcome.

You do not have to hide your hearing loss.

You do not have to face hearing loss alone.

HLAA: www.hearingloss.org

HLA-CA: www.hearinglossca.org

Find a chapter near you: www.hearinglossca.org/html/chapters.htm

