



### **President's Message**

From Lynne Kinsey

#### **How I Am Spending My Pandemic Days**

If you are like me, you are getting tired of being at home and missing going places and being with people. I wonder what children will remember of this year in the future. I wonder how long this will last and what life will be like when it does end, how many people will be physically affected by this virus, how many more people will we lose, and how many people that I know will be affected.

In our previous life, we went out to eat once or twice a month and drove 100-200 miles to visit people we knew or to see some favorite place or someplace we had not yet been. We talked to people on these outings and I could understand people because they were not wearing face masks. We went to meetings of several organizations and engaged in activities that were important to us and helpful to so many. We enjoyed movies, live theater, and concerts to stimulate our senses and enrich our lives. We took pictures with our digital devices so we could look at them later and re-live and remember what we saw. I can't get excited about continually taking pictures of the different rooms in our house. In late spring, I did take pictures of various flowers, leaves, and tree bark in the back yard. They are fun to look at and some make me smile.

Halloween went by as if it didn't exist. Children missed out on picking a special costume, going house to house with or without their parents, depending on their age, and then sorting their goodies received from known and unknown neighbors. The Thanksgiving ZOOM was a

wonderful time to see and talk to family we have not been able to see. But we could not partake in the traditional meal we enjoy preparing and then sharing with others. We didn't make the biggest turkey we could find or all the side dishes. Our family members did not bring their favorite additions to the menu. I suppose we will do the same for Chanukah, but it just won't be the same. Neighbors near us have started putting up their holiday decorations and lights, but we have always taken drives around the larger immediate area to see the elaborate displays in other neighborhoods.

Is it just me or are you getting more robocalls than you did before? The offending callers have more time to make calls and are taking advantage of that time. I do not answer anonymous calls or those from numbers I do not recognize, but it wastes my time to go see who is calling. My computer and I would be on first name basis, if she had a name, because I spend much more time reading her offerings. Her news is more current than the newspaper, I can visit places that I physically cannot get to and look up information about almost anything I want to know. I often waste time completing word or number puzzles or reading books on my computer's version of my Kindle. The computer is available 24/7 if I wake up early or stay up late.

We can order food and other products and have them delivered or drive by and pick them up without interacting with a person. BUT we miss out on viewing the selections, selecting the ones we want, trying on clothing, asking questions of the sales people, and smiling or talking to people we know or don't know.

We are enjoying our activities and interactions in new and different ways. I miss and look forward

to the old familiar and satisfying ways. I hope you have developed satisfying and enjoyable ways to spend your days confined to your home. We are learning more about ourselves and our immediate families, whether it be one, more, or no other people. PLEASE wear masks and social distance when you leave your home. Be safe and follow the ever-changing rules. Use this opportunity to try recipes you have wanted to try--just cut large recipes in half so you do not end up eating the same food for a week. Learn how to do something you have been meaning to try.

This is going to take up much more newsletter space than I intended, but I just keep thinking of things to write. Hopefully, it is more satisfying to read this than to hear me ramble--you can pause or stop when you want. Continue to find rewarding and meaningful aspects to life in this pandemic and realize that it will end and we will have to establish new normals. Use TV captions, lip-reading and asking people to repeat what you did not hear, so you can better understand the people and things around you. Try listening to holiday and other music to see what you can hear and what you can do to improve it. Sometimes favorite and familiar music are easier to hear.

I wish everyone a happier and more active 2021 and I look forward to HLAA-SV being able to meet again and to seeing all of you!

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION--NO CHAPTER DUES FOR 2021**

The Executive Board discussed via email the financial status of our chapter. Because we have not been able to meet for most of 2020, it was decided that we will not charge dues in 2021. Therefore, if you have paid your dues for 2020, you do not have to pay again until 2022.

This is just for our Silicon Valley chapter. You will still need to pay dues to HLAA if you wish to be a member of the national organization, to receive *Hearing Life* and other HLAA benefits. We look forward to meeting again sometime in 2021. If the label on your newsletter inadvertently says you owe 2021 dues, please ignore it. If your dues are not current for 2020, you still owe that.

Reduced expenses and additional revenue from the Bay Area Walk4Hearing should offset the revenue loss for membership fees in 2021. We hope to be able to use part of the Walk money for future chapter activities.

Please remember to consider us when you need to make donations for various situations like births, deaths, special occasions, and thank you's. Donations are appreciated any time to the chapter or to our scholarship fund.

## **Monthly Chapter Meetings**

***Please note that due to Covid-19 restrictions and for the health and safety of our members, we are currently not holding any meetings.***

Meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month, September to June. All meetings are audio looped and captioned. Meetings are held in the San Jose Masonic Center, 2500 Masonic Drive, San Jose, CA 95125. Look for us in the Red Dining Room, off of the main lobby.

Presentations start at 1:00 pm. Refreshments and Social start at 12:30 pm when there is no potluck. Potlucks are held in March, June, September, and December and start at 12:15 pm. Our Secondhand Treasures Sales are held at non-potluck meetings in January, February, April, May, October, and November.

For more information, contact President-Lynne Kinsey at [kinsey@hearinglossca.org](mailto:kinsey@hearinglossca.org) or call 408-265-4038. Website: <http://www.hearinglossca.org/chapters/northern-chapters/silicon-valley-chapter>

## A TREE IN THE FOREST

There is the old axiom about a tree that falls in the forest. If no one heard it fall, did it really make a sound? I sometimes wonder about similar sounds. Since I often don't hear them, I wonder whether they actually made a sound.

Katherine Bouton, an HLAA board member, wrote "A Question About Sound" in a recent entry in her blog, *Smart Hearing*. Her essay made me think about sounds that we hear and those that we do not hear. I rarely hear thunder and rain at night, but does that mean those things did not occur? Other people heard them and it was most likely wet outside when I got up. How do I know if it really made noise that others heard or if it just happened without making noise? My best check is to ask my husband if he heard it. He usually did, but if he didn't, I still do not know.

### A Question About Sound

by Katherine Bouton

If a tree falls and I'm not wearing my hearing aids, does it make a sound?

One morning last week, I was sitting at the kitchen table drinking coffee when I noticed something odd out the window. We have a large, old, beautiful and very decrepit barn. From where I was sitting, a tree trunk seemed to be leaning on it. It's a woody overgrown area so at first, I thought I just hadn't noticed it before.

Later I went out to look more closely and saw that the tree trunk had pierced the barn roof, leaving a hole about six by eight feet, now filled with tree trunk. Not only that, as the tree man told me later, the trunk had snapped off, hit the sloping ground, and then flipped back up, like an Olympic pole vaulter. I'm sorry I missed it!

But I'm more concerned that I didn't hear it. It must have made a loud noise as the trunk cracked and fell and an even louder noise as it sank into the roof. It was a windless night, and quiet.

I have a dog who barks at people coming to the door and at stray raccoons and other creatures who venture too close to the house. But the

cracking tree doesn't seem to have phased him. Maybe because it was one (or two) short sharp sounds. That may be why I didn't hear it either. I have some residual hearing, though, and it dismays me that I could miss something so dramatic.

But back to the question. It's a play on the old philosophy trope, "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?" An amusing essay in **Medium** by John Hydrisko attributes it (or the idea of it) to George Berkeley, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Irish philosopher whose belief was summed up in the phrase: *esse est percipi (aut percipere)*; *to be is to be perceived (or to perceive)*. For Berkeley, Hydrisko writes, if the tree is not perceived it doesn't exist. "If you asked George Berkeley, 'If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it' — he would probably cut you off, 'What tree?'" No one there to perceive it. Thus it doesn't exist.

The Oxford English dictionary defines "sound" as "Vibrations that travel through the air or another medium and can be heard when they reach a person's or animal's ear." But if they reach the ear and are not heard, are they still sound?

*Scientific American*, back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (thank you again John Hydrisko), summed it up: "Sound is vibration, transmitted to our senses through the mechanism of the ear, and recognized as sound only at our nerve centers. The falling of the tree or any other disturbance will produce vibration of the air. If there be no ears to hear, there will be no sound."

Of course, there *were* ears to hear: all the little critters in the forest have some form of hearing, and in many cases it's far more acute than ours. So, if a tree falls and I'm not wearing my hearing aids, does it make a sound? Ask the deer and the raccoons and mice. The answer is yes.

We have all experienced that awkward moment when you have already said "What?" three times and still have no idea what the person said, so you just agree.

~Unknown

## ADVICE FROM LYNNE

While you are sheltering at home, don't think you do not need your hearing aids. This is a time to keep them in. If you are with other people, you will hear them better. You can hear the phone, maybe the doorbell, the radio and TV, the timer on the oven or microwave, the water running, possibly noises from outside, the furnace going on and off, or sounds to alert you that you left something on. One day after I had left the bedroom, I returned to the room and found that the hair dryer had been left on. When I was using it, my hair had been wet and my CI processors were not on. I hadn't realized I left the hair dryer on. When I am using my computer, it sometimes talks to me to read alerts to me; or I can instruct it to read an email or article to me. I know some of us do not hear most of these things, but some of us do. I need to practice these things so my brain won't forget how to do it. I also feel a little better when I have some slight background noise even if I don't know what it is. If your hearing aids help you, wear them and let them help you and make you feel more grounded.

Don't try to hide that you have a hearing loss. Let people know that you are not understanding them and that the wearing of face masks makes it even harder for you to both hear and understand them. Some people may lower their mask so you can see their face and read their lips. But don't think others are rude or ignoring you when they do not. If they have unknowingly been exposed to the COVID virus, they would be putting you at risk. Explain that they can help you try to understand by facing you, speaking a little slower, and repeating some of the words. Carry paper and pen with you so you can ask them to write down key words, names, and prices. Don't expect them to write down whole conversations. There are many apps for smart phones and tablets that will caption what they hear. Try different ones to see what works best for you. I use the Otter app which prints what the other person says. It also saves it to read again later. I use it at doctor appointments, important conversations, Zoom sessions, and even some TV or radio programs. The captions are not perfect and the format is just one big paragraph without periods at the end of sentences. But it records the details of

what was said and I will sometimes read it later to see what the doctor's instructions were or the details of some event I intend to watch or participate in. Most people are more than willing to do their part in making it easier for you to understand what is being said.

If you use a cochlear implant, always open the battery door at night so it can dry out from any accumulated moisture inside. Also, remove the battery (or batteries) at night. Put re-chargeable batteries on their charger so everything will be ready to use in the morning. Put your processor(s) in the dry box so it too will be ready to use in the morning. Your devices need to rest and be ready to serve you in the morning.

### Can Bananas Help Your Hearing?

New research suggests that bananas could be effective in protecting against age and environmental hearing loss. Additionally, the fruit's lesser-known component – zinc – is thought to help protect against tinnitus, and magnesium is thought to prevent noise-related hearing loss.

*(Source: We're All Ears by Connect Hearing—September 2018)*

### QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

From Amy Mizuguchi

For the period October 9 through December 7, 2020:

Total Revenue:	\$ 1,962
Total Expenses:	\$ 221
Checking Account Balance:	\$ 573
Savings Account Balance:	\$ 21,932
Scholarship Fund Balance:	\$ 1,840*

\*Note: \$1,000 of total reserve for 2020 Scholarship Recipient who has not enrolled due to the pandemic.

## Executive Board

President- Lynne Kinsey  
408-265-4038 [kinsey@hearinglossca.org](mailto:kinsey@hearinglossca.org)

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Program- Maggie Iller  
408-890-8879 [marjorie.iller@gmail.com](mailto:marjorie.iller@gmail.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President/  
Membership- Earl Mizuguchi  
408-997-6377 [earlmiz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:earlmiz@sbcglobal.net)

Secretary- Evelyn Taravella  
408-629-2428 [etarv@att.net](mailto:etarv@att.net)

Treasurer- Amy Mizuguchi  
408-997-6377 [amizs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:amizs@sbcglobal.net)

### Committee Chairs:

Cheer and Courtesy & Social &  
Welcome Table- Barbara Hinman  
408-753-9776 [ca\\_sunsets@comcast.net](mailto:ca_sunsets@comcast.net)

Hospitality & Sound System-Amy Mizuguchi  
408-997-6377 [amizs@sbcglobal.net](mailto:amizs@sbcglobal.net)

Library- Stephen and Lynne Kinsey  
408-265-4038 [kinsey@hearinglossca.org](mailto:kinsey@hearinglossca.org)

Newsletter Editor- Gwen Odell  
408-667-3125 [gwen\\_odell@hotmail.com](mailto:gwen_odell@hotmail.com)

Recruiting & Planning- Ted Santos  
408-298-7112 [tedsfishing@att.net](mailto:tedsfishing@att.net)

Scholarship- Earl Mizuguchi  
408-997-6377 [earlmiz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:earlmiz@sbcglobal.net)

Second-Hand Treasures- Evelyn Taravella  
408-629-2428 [etarv@att.net](mailto:etarv@att.net)

**Volunteers are always needed to assist Officers and Chairpersons with their tasks and new tasks as they occur. With YOUR ideas and help, it truly becomes OUR organization. Talk to a Board member to see where you can fit in.**

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***We are a 501(c) (3) Exempt Organization. Your dues and donations may be tax deductible.***

## Membership & Renewal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_  
ALL membership information is kept confidential.

Name: (1)

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Name: (2)

---

Address:

---

---

City, State, Zip:

---

Telephone:

---

Specify Home or Cell

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred mode of contact: Email \_\_\_\_\_ OR Phone \_\_\_\_\_**

Birthday: (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
Month and Day Month and Day

**DUES:**

### **CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP HLA A-SILICON VALLEY**

Includes bi-monthly newsletter  
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### **NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP HLA A**

Includes bi-monthly magazine, *Hearing Life*, in print and digital format; and quarterly state newsletter, *The Hearing Loss Californian*. (For online membership, *Hearing Life* is in digital format only.)

- \$25 Student (Online only—requires copy of student ID)  
 \$45 Individual  \$55 Couple/Family  
 \$35 Individual (Online)  \$80 Professional

Chapter Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarship Fund: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Make checks payable to: **HLAA-SV** and mail to:  
Amy Mizuguchi-Treasurer  
6136 Oak Forest Way  
San Jose, CA 95120

## RENEWALS

Kaz Hamano, Denise Hildenberger, Sandra Hocker (N), Jennie Stonehouse, Valerie Tomasello, Sathappan Venkatachalam, and Ted Witrykus

## DONATIONS

**Chapter Donation:** Denise Hildenberger

**Scholarship Fund:** Sandra Hocker and Jennie Stonehouse

Happy  
Birthday

### January

- 4 Kaz Hamano
- 17 Mary Ann Shiosaka
- 18 Ted Santos
- 22 Katsumi Hikido
- 23 Phyllis Karsten
- 26 Kittye Ryczkowski

### February

- 11 Lourdes Stone
- 12 Michael Davis
- 24 Margie Davis

Happy New Year



The amazing thing about this coming year is that every one of us has one thing in common: we all have 365 days. The difference between us is how we use our days.

~Unknown

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appreciated



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## HLAA-SV BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

**Note: Due to Covid-19 restrictions, Board meetings are cancelled until further notice.**

Board members meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month (September to June) at 10:00 am in the Library at the San Jose Masonic Center. Chapter members are welcome and encouraged to attend.



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Do more than belong: participate.  
Do more than care: help.  
Do more than believe: practice.  
Do more than be fair: be kind.  
Do more than forgive: forget.  
Do more than dream: work.  
~William Arthur Ward~

(From HLAA-Fox Valley, WI Newsletter, October 2018)

Lynne adds:

We look forward to the time when we can participate. help, and work.  
Meanwhile we CAN be kind and forget!

**Opinions expressed  
in articles appearing  
in this newsletter are  
those of the authors.**

**Mention of goods  
and services in  
articles and  
advertisements does  
not mean HLAA-SV  
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***The Date on your mailing label is your  
HLAA-SV Membership Renewal date.  
Please renew using the form on page 5  
or at a Chapter Meeting. Thank You!***

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**HLAA 2021 CONVENTION  
San Diego, CA  
June 24-26, 2021**



The HLAA 2020 Convention was supposed to be in San Diego, CA this past summer. Granted it was not scheduled to be in Northern CA but San Diego is closer than all the east coast cities where it has been recently located. Fortunately, HLAA was able to reschedule it, so in the summer of 2021, health conditions permitting, the convention will be in San Diego, a reasonable driving or flying distance away. Hopefully, the pandemic will be over and we can consider going, possibly extending the trip and adding on a mini-vacation in San Diego. Registration opens January 4, 2021.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND PLAN FOR AN EXCITING TIME.**

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Unless otherwise noted, all articles in this newsletter were written by Lynne Kinsey.