



President's Message

From Lynne Kinsey

My Sudden Onset Hearing Loss

I was totally unprepared for my Sudden Onset Hearing Loss. I was home alone when I suddenly realized I was only hearing with one ear. I immediately had a plethora of unanswered questions.

Is this permanent or will it go away? Is it a serious condition or is it just a minor ailment? Should I see my primary care doctor or a specialist? Is it related to my usual allergy congestion and conditions? Is it something to be worried about?

I didn't know anyone with hearing loss nor did I have a family history of hearing loss.

When I was in elementary school, there was a boy in my class year after year who had a hearing aid that obviously sat in his front shirt pocket with a twisted wire going up to his ear. He would take it out to adjust and fiddle with it. He took it off when he went outside to play but then he could not hear any of us. He was always the last one picked to be on a team.

In class he always sat in the front row and always asked questions about things that were just explained. He was frequently pulled out of class to meet with the speech teacher. His mother always came at the end of the day to get extra material to review with him.

No one ever spoke to our class about his hearing loss or hearing aid. I didn't learn more about it or him until years later.

I do not know that having learned more about him would have helped me when I developed my hearing loss in my 40's. But it would have helped me understand him better and to better understand future instances when I came in touch with hearing loss situations.

There was a significant period of my growing up years when adults did not talk to children about serious issues—illnesses, deaths, wars, or dangerous situations. I guess if we did not know about them, it was as if they did not exist.

Today's children are more street aware of the world and about people. They talk about things I never even knew about.

I have made up for all the hearing loss information I never learned from HLAA literature, meeting and talking to people at meetings and conventions, and becoming active in HLAA.

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

From Amy Mizuguchi

For the period February 5 through April 4, 2021:

Total Revenue:	\$ 1,061
Total Expenses:	\$ 121
Checking Account Balance:	\$ 499
Savings Account Balance:	\$ 23,058
Scholarship Fund Balance:	\$ 2,645*

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

MAY IS BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH

May is recognized each year as Better Hearing and Speech Month. We'd like to think that every month we should strive for better hearing and speech. This May, we can use the opportunity to learn more about our individual hearing loss, what things make it easier for us to hear and what things make it harder to hear, strive to accentuate those things that help our hearing and that of others, and make more people aware of the large number of people with hearing loss.

HEARING TESTS

Most HLAA members have had their hearing tested, have copies of their audiograms and have received services or devices to deal with their hearing loss. But do you know someone that you suspect has a hearing loss but has not undergone any testing or diagnosis?

Did you know that most audiologists will provide an initial examination and testing for free and then make treatment suggestions based on the testing results? If this is what an individual wants to do for a first appointment, they need to verify that they will receive the testing results and recommendations free of charge and then agree to listen to what the professional suggests and how much it will cost. If a hearing aid is suggested, they may let the person

try a sample hearing aid to determine if it is useful to them.

We have had professionals that have presented a program at one of our meetings and then invited our members to come to their office for a free testing. Also, if you are an AARP member, they offer a free online hearing test. It is not as detailed or as comprehensive as an in-office hearing test, but it may be a good initial test for identifying problem areas. This is also available for non-AARP members for \$8. To find out how to take the online test, go to nationalhearingtest.org. Encourage your family and friends to have their hearing tested to identify any hearing issues earlier, rather than later.

THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT HEARING LOSS

(From HLAA-Fox Valley, WI News, March 2021)

Scientists have discovered that the left and right ears process sound differently. The right ear responds more to speech and logic while the left ear is more tuned in to music, emotion and intuition. Scientists believe it's because speech is processed primarily in the left hemisphere of the brain, while music (and other creative functions) are processed in the right hemisphere. This may explain why those with greater hearing loss in the left ear may have trouble understanding friends

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 2nd 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 or call 408-265-4038. Website: <http://www.hearinglossca.org/chapters/northern-chapters/silicon-valley-chapter>

and family's emotional issues while those who have greater hearing loss in the right ear seem to lose some of their ability to sort things out.

If you find you're tiring more easily than you used to, it may not be your age—it might be hearing loss. People with hearing loss have to concentrate harder to understand what they're hearing. A study by the Better Hearing Institute estimates that untreated hearing loss costs the United States \$56 billion each year in lost productivity at work, much of which can be blamed on hearing loss fatigue.

A survey by the Danish Institute for Social Research found that as many as one in five people with hearing loss stop working altogether. Of those who do work, 15 percent are too tired at the end of the day to pursue leisure activities. Fortunately, properly fitted hearing aids and technology that goes beyond hearing aids can significantly help reduce hearing loss fatigue. (Condensed from *Healthy Hearing* 12/10/2019)

RECYCLING HEARING AID AND OTHER BATTERIES

Hopefully, you have continued to properly recycle your used batteries. Please do not toss them into garbage cans or wastebaskets. Most audiology offices, some Costco, and Ace Hardware stores will accept batteries for recycling. If you know of a business that will recycle your used batteries, please let us know so we can share the information.

PRE-EMERGENCY ADVICE

We have said this before, but please be sure your immediate family and people living with you know how to change your hearing device batteries and how to put your hearing devices on you so you can hear. Too often people with hearing loss are in hospitals or care facilities and are unable to follow instructions, hear or communicate with doctors, nurses or others. Often they just need fresh batteries or for their hearing device to be reinserted properly. Please show those that usually care for you how to care for your hearing devices.

RECYCLING DURING COVID-19—BE CAREFUL AND SAFE!

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT NON-HEARING LOSS SUBJECT.

Hopefully, we are all wearing face masks when we leave our homes to prevent the spread of germs that passes from one person to another. Many of us are not using disposable paper masks properly. Do you dispose of them daily? I just read that an environmental specialist said not to put them in paper recycling, even though they seem like they are made of paper. After they have been worn, they should be put in the trash can. We are wearing them to trap dangerous germs and if we recycle the masks, we may be spreading trapped germs to others.

Additionally, by covering our mouths for many more hours of the day we are preventing normal mouth activity that occurs to clean and protect our teeth, gums, and tongue. Our mouths dry out more easily when covered, causing less saliva to be in our mouths that help to move bacteria and particles around to prevent damage.

Several professionals use the term "Mask Breath". You may have noticed this on you or others. Because your breath stays in your mouth longer than when you are without a mask, the bacteria and germs that are normally in your mouth are there longer and may develop mild unpleasant odors that may be noticeable to others.

It is for all of these reasons that you should be keeping your normal schedule of mouth cleanings and dental checks. Most offices have added stricter cleaning procedures, fewer people in waiting rooms, and few or no magazines to be touched and shared between patients. They may have you use a strong mouthwash both before and after your cleaning procedure.

When you go for an appointment, notice these changes in procedures, ask questions you might have, and realize that in many practices they have not changed their prices. Remember to thank them for helping you stay safe.

GIRL'S LETTER TO LAWMAKER LEADS TO PROPOSED LEGISLATION FOR PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS

(From HLAA-Fox Valley, WI News, March 2021)



Eleven-year-old Ally Tumblin wrote a letter to her Congressman two years ago. Now, proposed legislation has been drafted in her name. This legislation would require insurance providers to cover the cost of hearing devices. When Ally wrote her letter to her local representative, Rep. Joe Neguse, D-Colo., she asked him to mandate insurance coverage for devices like hers. Neguse re-introduced the legislation last month in the U.S. House of Representatives. Senators Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., and Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass. also introduced Ally's Act last month in the Senate. "I think it's pretty cool," Ally said of seeing the legislation that her letter inspired. "I'm excited and I hope Ally's Act passes. I think kids deserve to hear." For more on this special story go to: <https://abcn.ws/3aTexYH>

WHY DOES HAIR TURN GRAY AS YOU AGE?

This is a non-hearing loss topic brought to mind by the pandemic. Because of the pandemic and the need to be home for so long, we see many people we know with much more gray hair than ever before. I am amazed at the various shades of gray, white and silver appearing on heads around town. I am also amazed at the various reactions to individuals turning gray. To just let it go or to return to coloring is a universal personal question being pondered.

Some people turn gray at an early age due to a genetic gene--most likely, one or both of their parents turned gray at a younger age. A deficiency of Vitamin B-12, stress and some diseases may cause early graying. But most of the people we see graying during the pandemic is because of age. Some people dislike graying hair on their own head and others ignore it. Which kind of person are you? Try not to stress over it. It will happen naturally and you will have to decide what to do about it.

TRY A COUPLE OF STRESS BUSTERS

(From HLAA-Fox Valley, WI News, March 2021)

- If you catch yourself in a negative thought pattern or feeling particularly stressed, turn your focus to the rising and falling of your breath. Even a few seconds of conscious breathing will help you reduce stress and increase calm and focus.
- When washing your hands, think of three things you're grateful for. Taking the 20 seconds to practice gratitude lowers your risk of infection and boosts positivity.

Practice Gratitude

HLAA INTRODUCES NEW MENTOR, MAXINE

*Here's a tip as you get older:
Never wear a hearing aid,
because if you do,
people expect you
to listen to them.*



Executive Board

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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.

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

Membership & Renewal

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ALL membership information is kept confidential.

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Month and Day Month and Day

DUES:

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\$15 Individual/Couple/Family

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP HLAA

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\$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

Michael & Margie Davis (National only) and Ivan Fawley (National only)



May 9



June 20

DONATIONS

Chapter Donation: Michael & Margie Davis

Scholarship Fund: Michael & Margie Davis, Ivan Fawley, Allan & Nancy Hikoyeda, Sandra Hocker, Geri Osborn, Kittye Ryczkowski, and Evelyn Taravella

- Your donation is greatly appreciated

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Happy Birthday

May

- 17 Sandra Hocker
- 17 Henry Ryczkowski
- 19 Zina Jawadi
- 20 Laurel Euler
- 22 Richard Stone
- 27 Elsa Dinis-McVeigh
- 31 Judie Cordy

June

- 5 Denise Hildenberger
- 18 Marcia Fariss
- 26 Connie Turner
- 27 Pat Oswald

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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 1st 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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Barry Drogy

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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!***

25 YEARS OF DIGITAL TECH IN HEARING AIDS

(From HLAA-Fox Valley, WI News, March 2021)

November marked the 25th anniversary of a hearing aid that heralded a fundamental change in how hearing care professionals, consumers and the media perceived hearing aids. The first ear-level fully digital hearing aid was developed and introduced by Oticon. This development moved hearing aid discussion out of the image of “your grandfather’s hearing aids” into the new world of digital innovation. Other major manufacturers soon followed Oticon.

In 1995, the Los Angeles Times predicted: “What digital technology has done for music and video is about to happen in another industry--the manufacture of hearing devices.” Further, the devices were referred to as “tiny computers for your ear”.

Before they were built on a digital platform, hearing aids could do little more than amplify sound. An important element of moving into the era of digital was that it allowed developers to begin to imagine solutions that simply could not be developed using analog technology. And, it keeps getting better!

HLAA has been very much involved in advocacy and education that has bent the ears of manufacturers. We WANT to hear better!

NOTE: Except where noted, all articles were written by Lynne Kinsey.