



Monthly Chapter Meeting

1st Monday of the month at 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Except June, July & August; on holidays, meets 2nd
Monday

**ALL MEETINGS WILL BE ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER
NOTICE DUE TO COVID-19.**

Register to attend meetings. If you don't get an email a week before, contact membership@hearinglosspen.org. A registration link will be sent to you where you'll provide your name and address, and then a link to the meeting will be sent to you.

Presentations

Monday, January 9

**“Successful Coping Strategies for People with
Hearing Loss”**

**Dr. Bauman, a hearing loss coping skills specialist
will demonstrate how we can choose successful
strategies and bypass the intuitive but
unsuccessful ones**

Monday, February 6

**“Earlens, a Unique Technology That Can
Significantly Improve Hearing”**

**Ken Peters will share and answer questions about
his experience**

Monday, March 6

“Our Identity as a Person with Hearing Loss”

**Dr. Michael Harvey provides navigation tools in
the life journey to strengthen our identity in a
hearing world**

Special Meetings

Saturday Connections

2nd Saturday of the month,
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
except June, July, August, December
(Meeting online until further notice)

Meniere's

2nd Friday of the month
12 noon-1:00 p.m.
(Meeting online until further notice)

Please contact us if you are interested in
attending Saturday Connections or
Meniere's.

info@hearinglosspen.org

Request which meeting you're interested in
and ask that you be put on the roster for the
next meeting. You'll then receive an
invitation and link to attend.



3555 Alameda de las Pulgas,
Suite 100
Menlo Park, CA 94025
650-854-1980

496 First Street, Suite 120
Los Altos, CA 94022
650-941-0664

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Sally Edwards



Dear Friends,

Yesterday was a special day for me. I have been feeling quite sad as my beloved husband of 35 years is declining in his health. I woke up not sure I could attend our chapter's annual holiday party, despite anticipating it so much. The sad feelings were overwhelming. BUT I wanted to be with my friends and celebrate the holiday season. So I went, heart in hand, knowing I could be there just as I was. And the thirteen of us who attended had a sweet time together.

A special surprise was the attendance by our very first scholarship recipient and his parents. Nathan received that scholarship five years ago and is now a college graduate. One of his jobs is working at Foothill College's physical therapy program. It was wonderful seeing him and his proud parents and hearing them express their gratitude to our chapter for that support we gave him.

We've been giving scholarships yearly ever since to hearing impaired high school seniors who are going on to further education endeavors. What a joy it is to be able to encourage them, recognize them and give them some financial support. I think the recognition is equally important as the financial award.

We are still meeting on zoom for our regular monthly chapter meetings, Saturday Connections and the Meniere's Support Group. We are so anticipating the time when we can again have in-person meetings, or hybrid ones which combine zoom and in-person. At Vets Memorial, where we have met for so many years, the first of two new buildings is expected to be completed in 2023, with the latest in sound equipment installed. We will have a meeting room there.

Thanks to Eliot, Bob and Steve for their great articles in this newsletter, and of course to Jaynie, who puts it all together. It is one of our life-lines to staying connected and informed. Please consider sending Jaynie articles (or short statements) you would like to see included in the newsletters. We can stay connected even more with your personal contributions to our newsletters.

Have a blessed holiday season,
Sally

CHAPTER NEWS – Tidbits from our members who want to share.

ZVOX AccuVoice AV157 TV Speaker by Eliot Terborg



Ever since my hearing started to decline, I have relied on some sort of assisted listening device (ALD) when watching TV. I first used a product called “TV Ears”, a device that is still on the market today. But as my hearing got worse, I could no longer use ALDs with ear buds, particularly after receiving my two cochlear implants (Cis) nearly ten years ago.

My next solution was a Sennheiser device connected to the audio output of my TV. The Sennheiser was a bit more complicated to hook up but allowed me to use the telecoil feature in my Cis, an approach I used for years until discovering the ZVOX device a few months ago.

The ZVOX AccuVoice is basically a soundbar connected to the audio output of a TV. There are three different ways to connect the device that are furnished with the product: a conventional 3.5 mm headphone jack; a pair of standard RCA audio cables; and an optical cable to connect to the optical digital output of most late model TVs.

Regardless of which method you choose, the installation is quite simple. The AccuVoice soundbar measures only 17” W X 3 3/8” D X 2 7/8” H and fits easily on a shelf next to your TV. In my case, I have mounted the device on top of my cable box. Once installed, you have the option of listening to your TV audio in one of three ways: through the soundbar exclusively; through your regular TV speakers, or through a combination of the two sources.

The AccuVoice soundbar uses patented speech processing technology to boost spoken dialogue, resulting in much greater clarity. The device comes with a remote control for volume and mute, plus the ability to choose among twelve levels of dialog boost.

With the AccuVoice, I am able to hear as well or better than with my previous Sennheiser solution. And my wife, who has mild to moderate hearing loss and wears hearing aids, also agrees that the TV audio is easier to understand.

As we know, each person’s hearing loss is different, so the AccuVoice may not be for everyone. One other chapter member tried the device and decided that it did not help her. Fortunately, you can try the device for 60 days and return for full credit if it doesn’t help you.

The ZVOX Accuvoice AV157 is available from Amazon or directly from the manufacturer (<https://zvox.com/collections/accuvoice/products/accuvoice-av157-tv-speaker-with-twelve-levels-of-voice-boost>).

CHAPTER NEWS – Tidbits from our members who want to share.

The New Phonak Roger On Mic and the Roger Neckloop Receiver by Steve Sells

We are sometimes in situations where we cannot hear well with even the best hearing aids. Two common reasons are that the microphones in our hearing aids are just too far away from what we want to hear — a voice, for instance — and they are picking up too much background noise. Remote microphones to the rescue! An excellent example is the new Phonak Roger On mic. You put it close to what you want to hear, close enough to the source that it will be louder than the background noise. The mic transmits the sound it picks up by radio to where you are. A receiver you wear picks up the radio signal and sends the audio to your hearing aids. If the person you want to hear is wearing a Roger On mic on a lanyard around their neck, it will sound like they are speaking to you just inches from your ear.



The Roger On mic is small, just under 4 inches long. It can be worn on a lanyard around the speaker's neck (Speaker mode), or held in your hand and pointed at the speaker (Pointing mode), or placed on a table to hear all around (Table mode). In Table mode, a Roger On can listen in six different directions, while in the other two modes it listens only in the direction it is pointed. It adjusts its directionality and sensitivity according to which mode is being used.

The Roger On is the first mic that can be used with the new myRogerMic smartphone app. The app links to the mic by Bluetooth and acts as a remote control. You can lay the Roger On in the middle of a table and put the smartphone on the table right next to you. Using the app as shown at left, you can control which direction(s) the mic listens by tapping on any of the six segments. Each tap turns the corresponding listening direction on or off. In the picture, the green segments are on and the others are off.

The Roger On supersedes the popular Roger Pen, which Phonak has discontinued. (Pre-owned Roger Pens are still readily available on eBay.) The Roger On can do almost everything the Roger Pen can do and more.

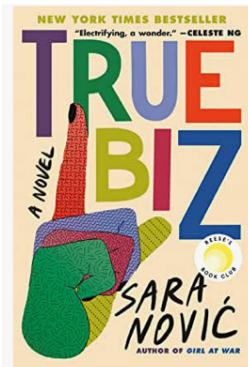
Any Roger mic (or any network of Roger mics) requires a receiver. The most versatile Roger receiver is the Roger Neckloop Receiver. Its neckloop, worn around your neck, can send the audio to the T-coils in your hearing aids. Almost all hearing aid brands offer models that have T-coils. This receiver also has an earphone jack. There is a USB-C output for sending audio to compatible smartphones, tablets, and computers for recording, captioning, transcription, etc. There are several other types of Roger receivers available. Recent generations of Phonak hearing aids even offer Roger receivers built in.



Using the mic and receiver described above, I am frequently able to hear well in situations where using hearing aids alone would be just a discouraging failure.

CHAPTER NEWS – Tidbits from our members who want to share.

A Review of Sara Novic's, *True Biz: A Novel* by Bob Hall



This is a novel primarily about three deaf people. February Waters, deaf and the Headmistress of the fictitious River Valley School for the Deaf (RVSD), and two students: Charlie Serrano a teenage female who has been implanted, but has come to River Valley to improve her communication and Austin Workman-Bayard a high school student at RVSD who has inherited deafness back at least three generations.

Novic uses these three central characters and their interactions with the hearing and deaf to educate the reader about difficulties of being deaf in a hearing society. In addition to the lives February, Charlie and Austin lead, she stops to teach the reader about sign language using the illustrations of a deaf graphic designer, Brittany Castle.

There are asides, where Novic writes about **hearing educators** of the deaf organizing to stop the teaching of sign and to require deaf children to learn to speech read and talk. Seventy years passed between the late nineteenth century and the twentieth century before the teaching of ASL was resumed.

She describes, despite warnings of a scientist, a Cochlear Implant manufacturer who produced implants that were prone to short circuits that led to shocks, and what appeared to be seizures, in those implanted. This was especially problematic for children and those who could not communicate their experience. Despite complaints to the company, the problem was ignored for many years.* Novic uses the character Charlie, whose hearing mother wanted her implanted so she would appear more normal. We follow Charlie's efforts to learn to communicate.

Novic also takes the reader aside to talk about deafness and the protest movements in the 1960s and 1970s. The deaf have been a minority dominated by the hearing and have fought successfully to gain agency for themselves. The Americans for Disability Act (ADA) was influenced by the deaf insisting deaf persons have agency in their education and lives.

Sara Novic is deaf and has a Masters in Fine Arts (MFA) from Columbia University in creative writing and translation. She recognizes the value of cochlear implants, and also recognizes this surgery is not for all deaf people. She believes deaf education choice, sign language versus cochlear implants, is a disservice to deaf persons. There are some deaf persons who would do better with both.

* Problems with this manufacturer's product were eventually resolved. This writer knows persons who have used this manufacturer's product without difficulty.

CHAPTER NEWS – Tidbits from our members who want to share.

Filtering Out Background Noise – A Letter from Bob Hall

Managing background noise is the most difficult thing to do for anyone who wears hearing aids or CIs. Difficulty hearing in noise usually starts in one's 50's and gets worse. It is one of the reasons you don't see older people going to or having cocktail parties. Mathew Fitzgerald, Ph.D., Chief Audiologist at Stanford University School of Medicine, says having difficulty hearing in noise is usually the first sign of hearing loss. He is urging audiologists to do basic testing with noise, not the quiet beeps in a soundproof room.

First, you need to check out every situation you go to where you need to hear others. You need to sit or stand closest to the person you want to talk to or who is running the meeting. You should ask others if they would please talk one-at-a-time. Another option is taking the person away to a quieter space. Getting the cooperation of others may be difficult. You may need to decide whether it is worth attending if you cannot comprehend what others are saying and they are unwilling to accommodate you. Another alternative is to organize people to meet you in a quiet room with the proviso they agree to speak one at a time.

Second, there are some things hearing aids, cochlear implants and assistive hearing devices can assist with noisy environments. These are partial solutions.

a) To hear someone in a noisy environment you could have an assistive listening device such as a remote microphone clipped on the person you want to talk to. That microphone has to generate a sound 10 times louder than the background noise in order for you to hear them. The microphone should be no farther than six inches from their mouth. There are some of these devices, like the Roger Pen and its more recent products, that allow one to network the microphones together so that everyone hears the speaker. Anyone who tries to talk when another speaker has started are excluded until that person has finished. But these networked devices are very expensive and providing one to each person in the group can be prohibitive.

b). Portable phones can be very difficult to use in a noisy environment. Many of the new phones are electronically attached to your hearing aid or cochlear implant. So the sound of the person calling you goes straight into your hearing aid. That is a great help. But it still cannot be enough, as I found trying to answer a call when I was walking near a freeway. You want to have a hearing aid or cochlear implant that allows you to turn off your external microphones. There are streamers that accompany some hearing aids that offer that option, plus connection the phone to the hearing aid.

c). If you have a smart phone there are many ASR products (automated speech recognition) that allow you to point your smart phone toward a person and you will be able to read the text of what they are saying. Some of these programs include translation of other languages into English. This can be a handy accompaniment to you in a meeting. Again, if people speak one at a time you may be able to read what everyone has said. Microphones are better at getting all the consonants that those of us with hearing loss cannot comprehend.

(continued on page 7)

CHAPTER NEWS – Filtering Out Background Noise (continued from page 6)

I last noticed that my Cochlear Implant company was crowing about how well their processor helped in noisy environments. Then I saw that their client example was a teenager. Young people typically do not have hearing loss in noise.

Sorry this message is so long. This a constant problem for all of us with hearing loss and there is no current solution other than what I have mentioned.

Bob Hall, Co-President, Peninsula Chapter, HLAA
Hearing Loss Support Specialist



Did you miss some of our chapter meetings? Alan from Diablo Valley volunteered to edit them and put them on the HLAA-CA YouTube page. Thank you Alan! They are all captioned. Here are a few links:

Hearing Challenges with Family: Julia Stepp of Hearing Loss Live (November 7, 2022)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EouBJO0vC8c>

My Cochlear Implant Journey: Dr. Michelle Hu (October 3, 2022)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnotmeUrpE>

Neosensory Buzz – Expanding Perception (March 7, 2022)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAe9OkrBgEM>

HeardThat (February 7, 2022)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmNFcaBe20w&t=19s>

America's Getting in the Hearing Loop (January 3, 2022)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyHemVi8jCY&t=37s>

(P.S. There are recordings from other California chapters as well. Or you can go to our National website for HLAA Webinar and Virtual Meeting Recordings:
<https://www.hearingloss.org/programs-events/webinars/schedule-recordings/>)

NATIONAL NEWS – Resources for Over the Counter (OTC) Hearing Aids

Tip Sheet:

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/technology/otc-hearing-devices/otc-hearing-aids/>

Shopping List:

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/technology/otc-hearing-devices/otc-shopping-checklist/>

Hearing aids

Professionally fitted

vs

Over the counter (OTC)

Who fits them?

Licensed audiologist or hearing instrument specialist



Self-fit, ordered online or purchased at store



Price

Varies widely, but generally \$2k to \$7k



Varies widely, as low as \$200 but higher-quality models can be up to \$2k



Diagnosis & testing

Conducted by provider using advanced testing and diagnostic tools



Approximated by self, depending on product purchased



Design

Full range, including discreet custom-fit options



Limited; one-size-fits-most



Degree of hearing loss

Mild, moderate, severe, and profound levels of hearing loss



Self-perceived mild to moderate only



Intended user

Any age, any medical status



18+, best for people without complex ear conditions



Source: FDA

(Permission granted by Healthy Hearing, <https://www.healthyhearing.com/report/53233-Otc-hearing-aids-over-the-counter-devices>)

THANK YOU!

We want to thank the following donors who gave to our chapter or national organization since the last newsletter, above and beyond membership dues. Your donations have helped pay for our captioning, student scholarships, refreshments, convention scholarships, brochures, assistive listening demo devices.

Scholarship Donations in honor of Raegene and Jack's 80th birthdays and 60th wedding anniversary for a total of \$4105! Congratulations to the Castles and thank you all!

Frank Bartaldo, Danford Foundation, Sally Edwards, Gasparini-Beals Foundation, Donald Hack, Bob Hall, Irene and Bob Haas, Mary Lou Hollywood, Ann Hurley, Connie Latch, Carolyn Mignacco, Christian and Debbie Miller, Sandra Newman, Bonnie Neylan, Pennie Provo, Marilyn Territo, Paula Uccelli.

If we have missed someone, please let us know as we want to acknowledge each of you.



Whether you would like to donate to our chapter directly or have your family or friends donate instead of giving you a present, please make checks payable to HLAA-Peninsula Chapter and mail it to:

If it's an occasion, please tell Eliot, our chapter treasurer, if it's a Birthday, In Memory Of, Congratulations, etc. and to whom to send the acknowledgement.

Eliot Terborgh
57 Parkwood Drive
Atherton, CA 94027

(We are a nonprofit 501c(3) organization and all donations to our chapter are tax deductible.)

Important Message on Membership from Sally Edwards

Now more than ever, with distancing keeping us apart, we need to be there for one another. And as we will not be physically together for the time being, staying connected by phone, email, Zoom or other virtual platforms including HLAA meetings and webinars, is really important.

With this in mind, I want to urge you to KEEP YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT AND IF YOU HAVEN'T, PLEASE REJOIN. There are so many ways HLAA is reaching out to help us who are hearing impaired to cope with the isolation many are feeling. Webinars, Leaders' meetings, and the local chapter meetings keep us connected and learning and sharing what is helping us in this difficult time.

Memberships support all of this work and are now renewable yearly. See information below on how to do that. National does send out a reminder letter the month before your membership expires. And the date of your expiration is also on the Hearing Life Magazine if you are receiving it in hard copy. HLAA wants to help you as much as possible and also needs your support for this work. The cost is \$45/year for an individual, and \$55/year for couples/family. I look forward to seeing many of you who have drifted away, returning and benefiting from your renewed membership.

Blessings to all and STAY CONNECTED SAFELY, Sally

You can renew online: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-member-renew/>
Or download a form off the website if you do not wish to renew online: https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA_MembershipForm_8.2021.pdf and mail it to: [6116 Executive Blvd, Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20852](mailto:6116_Executive_Bldv_Suite_320_Rockville_MD_20852)



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Or pick your own charitable organization:

Charity name, location, or keyword

Search

Hearing Loss Association Of America Inc [\(About\)](#)
Deaf/Hearing Impaired Centers, Services

Redwood City, CA
Founded 2001

Select

BUYING USING AMAZON SMILE

Since Amazon Smile began in 2017, our chapter has earned \$883 total, with \$148 of that amount coming in 2022. Thank you all!

AmazonSmile. It’s Amazon in every way, except that with every purchase you make, 0.5% of your eligible purchases will go to a charity of your choosing. Our chapter has registered. We hope you’ll designate our chapter as your charity.

Note that there are many HLAA chapters registered. When you select a charity, look for our chapter, either in Emerald Hills or Redwood City. (We are trying to change the address to Redwood City.)

(Your wish lists, account history, free shipping through Amazon Prime, etc. is

all exactly the same.) All you need to do is make sure to go to smile.amazon.com when you shop. Then, once a quarter, our donation will automatically go to our chapter. It’s so easy and a great way to help our chapter!

For those folks who receive a printed copy of this newsletter:

Snail mailing the newsletter is both expensive and labor intensive. Would you like to get it via email? You receive it much sooner and instead of typing a link to a web page, a video, etc., you can just click on it. You can always print it if you prefer to read it that way. Let me know.

Kate Szentkuti, Membership Chair
membership@hearinglosspen.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Contact : Email: info@hearinglosspen.org; Telephone: 650-365-4868

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the nation's foremost membership and advocacy organization for people with hearing loss. The National support network includes the Washington D.C. area office, 14 state organizations, and 200 local chapters. 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.

Resources:

Hearing Loss Association of America-Peninsula Chapter:

<http://www.hearinglossca.org/Chapters/peninsula-chapter>

Hearing Loss Association of America: www.hearingloss.org

Hearing Loss Association of California: <http://www.hearinglossca.org>

Hearing Loss Web has resources for people with hearing loss: <http://www.hearinglossweb.com>

Hearing Aid Reviews, Audiologists, etc. www.hearingtracker.com

CTAP and CRS (telephone access): <http://ddtp.cpuc.ca.gov>

Young Adults Social Network 18-35: https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/communities/students_youngadults/

American Tinnitus Association: www.ata.org

Hearing loops: www.hearingloop.org

To find and add venues that offer ALDs and Loops: www.ALDDLocator.com, www.loopfinder.com

To find and install loops: www.loopamerica.com