



The newsletter of the Hearing Loss Association of America, Albuquerque Chapter

WIRED FOR SOUND

Hearing Loss Around the House

Mary Clark, HLAA Albuquerque

Hearing loss affects every aspect of our lives and none more than our everyday activities and the people who are in our circle. Solutions for hearing loss are as varied as the individuals who experience it. Many solutions can be based on technology but many more are achieved by learning new behaviors that can help with communication and safety at home.

Communication

Communication is a two-way street, so both parties will need to adapt to our hearing loss. Communication tips with another person who has normal hearing can be found on the Hearing Loss Association of America website (<https://www.hearingloss.org/news-media/brochure-downloads/>), but both the hearing person and the person with a hearing loss have “rules” to begin with. The person with a hearing loss is admonished to remember that 1) Communication is a two-way street and 2) People with hearing loss must make as much effort as people who hear well. The rules for people who are hearing emphasize that when audio is poor, emphasize the visual.

Setting the stage for communication includes things like making sure the person with the hearing loss can see the face of the one they are talking to. A bright background or window normally puts that person’s face in shadow, so avoiding sitting in front of a window will improve communication. Noisy backgrounds are the nemesis for a person with a hearing loss, but if the background noise can be modified to improve communication, it is well worth asking for that. (At a party one time I asked the host if they could turn down the music they had



playing, and it helped enormously!) When the noisy background can’t be avoided, then moving to a quieter location is recommended.

Active listening is a technique to use when communication is important. Most commonly we can simply repeat what we think we heard, with something like “yes, I heard you say we’ll meet at the Flying Star on Wednesday at 11 o’clock for lunch. Did I get that right?” When we’ve asked someone to repeat more than once, it’s time to ask them to paraphrase what they are saying by using different words, or maybe writing down the word we are struggling with. Bluffing can get you into trouble in a hurry, but we all do it, so learning to ask for help with communication is our job before we get into trouble!

Don’t forget to thank the other person when they have tried to improve communication with us.

- Thank the person who lowered the shades in the room where a board game is going on, so everyone at the table can understand,
- Let someone who turns to face us when talking even though there is a group conversation going on - know we appreciate their effort to include us
- When someone lets us know the oven is beeping or the water is boiling – share our gratitude.

Safety at home is a big deal. When we can’t hear, there are so many ways we run into trouble

WIRED FOR SOUND

is published by the
HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER
Providing support and advocacy for
people with hearing loss

P. O. Box 36792,
Albuquerque, NM 87176
(505)219-1962

HLAAbq@gmail.com

Home page: hearinglossabq.org

Hearing Loss Association of
 America – Albuquerque
chapter

Mention of goods or services in articles or advertisements or meetings does not mean endorsement by Hearing Loss Association of America, Albuquerque Chapter, nor does exclusion suggest disapproval.

ABQ Chapter Board:

President:
VACANT

Treasurer: Bobbi Rodríguez
TreasurerHLAAbq@gmail.com

Editor: A. E. "Rod" Rodríguez
EditorHLAAbq@gmail.com

Membership & Web Master: Jim Dillow
catchJimmy@comcast.net

VP Programs: Olivia Fadul
OFadul@unm.edu

Publicity Chair:
VACANT

Hospitality Chair:
VACANT

Professional Advisor: Dr. Carol Clifford
CClifford@abqhearing.com

Special Programs: Courtney McBride
Courtney.A.McBride@gmail.com

Past Pres./Advisor: Mary Clark
Mary@mandgclark.com

The Albuquerque HLAA Chapter is
affiliated with the



6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320
Rockville, MD 20852
phone: (301)657-2248

17 Jun Meeting 10:00 AM To Noon—**Hybrid****Hearing Loss and Thriving in the Workforce**

Hearing loss affects more than the individual who experiences it. It can also impact how a person thrives in the workforce. According to the CDC (2023), about 25% of all workers have been exposed to hazardous noise. About 15%, or 37.5 million over 18, report hearing loss.

For our June program, we are delighted to host Dr. Cleese Relihan, board member of HLAA Accessible, Inclusive Employment Taskforce, a Taskforce dedicated to supporting individuals with hearing loss by providing educational opportunities that teach how to effectively self-advocate and expand their career opportunities. Cleese was diagnosed with severe to profound hearing loss at age three. He



wears two digital hearing aids and learned to listen and speak through auditory verbal therapy. From kindergarten to his doctoral program, he has always attended the regular classrooms with his hearing peers. Cleese will present "Lifting Employees with Hearing Loss: Ways in Which Organizations Can be of Support."

Cleese holds a bachelor's degree in political science from San Francisco State University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of San Francisco, and he just graduated this past December with a Doctor in Education from the University of San Francisco. Cleese has worked in city government for seven years, two years in business development and five years in economic development.

Dr. Relihan will provide a brief background of disability history, legal rights, the disability rights movement, and helpful strategies and accessibility we can use in paid or volunteer work.

With hybrid meetings started, the HLAA ABQ Chapter could use some help (for example, with hospitality), as well as some new blood. You already know our dedication to providing the best information, advocacy, education and support for people with hearing loss. You can ease your way into volunteering and learn how this works. Just email or see one of the board members (listed on the left) at our next meeting. You may also use the chapter email: HLAAbq@gmail.com.

 **Amazon Smile's** donation program was discontinued in February.

that hearing people just don't understand.

- You may not hear a doorbell unless you have a special one installed. I have one with a very low pitch buzz instead of the usual high pitched "ding-dong".
- Running water in the sink and forgetting about it, and not hearing it might be okay if the drain is open, but if the drain is plugged, this can lead to some big messes.
- The same goes with boiling water in a teakettle. I've burned up at least three teakettles after they boiled dry, because I don't hear the whistle and have forgotten about them. Now I have an electric teakettle with an auto shutoff, so I no longer have to worry about ruining a kettle.
- Hearing an emergency alert, whether it is an Amber Alert on your phone (it's hard to imagine not being able to hear that shrieking noise for hearing people, but with our hearing aids or CI off, we won't hear that) or a weather alert to warn us of flood danger or storms. A weather alert radio is available that flashes when alerts are sent out so if it is in visual range, we would get those alerts.
- Keeping our doors locked if we live in a residential area would be wise. In an apartment or condo the same rule would apply to the front door.
- Having a pet—usually a dog who can alert us when someone is at the door—can be a game-changer. Many dogs will learn to come and let us know there is something going on when we don't respond to a noise.
- Young parents who have a hearing loss worry about hearing a baby or toddler at nighttime. There are several special types of baby monitors that will connect with a vibrating alert or light flasher that can wake us up if the baby is crying. Years ago when my oldest daughter was a baby, she was unusually mobile at a very young age,

Smith's Community Rewards Shop at Smith's with their Rewards card, and Smith's will make a donation to HLAA Albuquerque chapter. You get your usual rewards points.

1-800-444-8081, opt. 3 to sign up or re-enroll.
The HLAAAbq NPO number for Smith's is **NC419**.

and I worked part time at night, so when she would nap, I would sleep. I found that I didn't sleep very well when we were in different rooms, so I ended up sleeping on the floor outside her door, so if she got out of her crib she couldn't get past the door if I was sleeping there, so I had much more peace of mind, and slept much better.

- Smoke alarms (and Carbon monoxide detectors) make a high pitched sound, but they can be gotten that make a much lower booming sound that we might even FEEL before we would hear it.

Watching TV can be the nemesis for a person with a hearing loss. The volume we would like is usually WAY too loud for the others in our home. If you live alone, count your blessings on this topic! You won't be fighting over the remote with anyone! Solutions include ensuring that captions are enabled. Sure, many of them are not that great, but for most network shows or news programs they are good enough. If you have a Bluetooth TV device that lets you listen to the TV using Bluetooth you can enable that. If you have a T-coil in your hearing aids or CI, you can connect a loop to the TV either with a single chair loop, or in my case, a loop through the room to listen to the TV. Then the volume is something we can control independently from the actual TV volume. There are TV ears, and ear pods as well that claim to help with listening to the TV with a hearing loss.

Living alone with a hearing loss:

- Locking doors is a good practice.

Yearly dues are \$15 per household. They are due in January.

- Notifying the local law enforcement and fire/rescue agency in your area of your hearing loss is wise. I've heard many times the naïve suggestions that we should put a sign on our door that a person with a hearing loss lives here, or even claiming to be deaf. I'm not a fan of advertising this so publicly, for fear of unscrupulous individuals realizing they could break into our home without us hearing them.
- There is a program called Code Red Mobile that can be downloaded to your smart phone, but it is a subscription service, so a signup is required and you can be notified about major fire events, or evacuation orders if needed. This beats not being able to hear a police car driving down the road with a bullhorn telling you to evacuate.
- Practicing responsible habits when in the kitchen, such as not leaving a boiling pan unattended, or running water in a plugged sink can prevent a lot of aggravation. For those who are completely deaf without their CI or hearing aid, you may even forget that the garbage disposal is running. An electrician can add a light to that circuit to let you know if it is on and running.
- Make sure you have a peep hole in your door to see who is at the door. Most delivery services like UPS or FedEx wear uniforms, but GrubHub or Door Dash or Uber eats – not so much.
- Although a car isn't exactly "home" style tips, more than once, I've left my car running unknowingly since I can't hear it. Learn what lights are on and which are off when the car is running and learn to check when leaving the car. With the newer hybrid engines, they make almost no noise, so using the indicators on the dashboard becomes even more imperative!

Alarm clocks

- Many versions of alarm clocks exist to help wake us up with vibration, lights, or extremely loud noise. Some people can simply use the vibration of a smart watch to wake them up, but many of us sleep too soundly for that to be enough to wake us up. If you travel very often, and especially if you travel alone, having a portable vibrating alarm clock makes a lot of sense. My personal favorite is called a Sonic Alert (formerly known as a Shake Awake) which has a loop with a clip on it and you can clip the clock inside your pillow under the pillowcase. It vibrates enough to wake me up, and also has an audible alarm if you want to turn it on. I've only ever used the vibrating version.
- There are bed shakers and Sonic Boom alarms and ones that connect with a nightstand lamp to wake you up with either increasing light or flashing light. I've included a link to one catalog at the end of this article where some of these products can be found, but I encourage you to browse for other choices that look like they would suit you best.
- Of course if you live with a spouse or significant other, there is always the "elbow" alarm when you ask to be woken up at a certain time and they can hear an alarm that you can't. I'm such a sound sleeper, that sometimes my elbow alarm evolves into a physical shaking alarm!

Considerations

- If we are expecting someone to come to the house – this might not be the best time to run the vacuum cleaner, when we will be unlikely to hear anything else.
- Coaching anyone else we live with, or even those who we see often on techniques for communication with those of us with the hearing loss will go a long way to avoid strained relationships.
- Being comfortable being your own advocate is not always easy. Practice asking for what you need when you are by yourself, even in front of a mirror. You'd be surprised that what feels awkward at first starts to feel more natural.

Links and resources:

Catalog: diglo (formerly Harris Communications) offers many of the devices I mentioned. (diglo.com)

Local support:

New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing has a Telecommunications

Equipment Distribution program <https://www.cdhh.nm.gov/tedp/>

New Mexico Technology Assistance Program <https://www.tap.gcd.state.nm.us/>

Hearing Loss Association of America www.hearingloss.org (also mentioned above with the communication tips)

Two fascinating articles published by national HLAA:



Experiencing the Zero-G space test flight

Mission Possible: The Sky's the Limit for Disability Inclusion

By Larry Guterman

Fourteen disability ambassadors boarded a zero-gravity test flight with the goal of making space travel accessible. See what they learned.

Read the article at <https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/hl-2023-2-guterman.pdf>

Important Tips for Flying with Hearing Loss

Last month's topic was Traveling With Hearing Loss. Read more at <https://www.hearingloss.org/flying-with-hearing-loss-can-be-challenging/>

Are you among the millions of Americans planning to travel for Memorial Day or during the summer season? This holiday weekend is projected by AAA to be the third busiest since 2000, with 42.3 million people traveling more than 50 miles from home, including 3.7 million flyers.

Don't miss our latest blog about air travel with hearing loss, and what anyone flying with a disability should know before they go.

Popejoy Neckloops Now Work

Stephen O. Frazier, Hearing Loss Specialist

At one time the powers that be at Popejoy Hall were encouraged to loop the auditorium but it was found that there was too much electromagnetic interference in the room to do so. Later, to improve communication access for those of us with hearing loss, a new, state-of-the-art FM systems was installed, and under the terms of the Americans with



Please support the
GET IN THE HEARING LOOP
campaign of the
Hearing Loss Association of America

Disabilities Act (ADA), neckloops had to be offered as an option in place of earphones with the receives. Hearing aid wearers found that the neckloops were problematic—you had to turn the volume way up on your hearing aids and the FM receiver (and sometimes even loop the neckloop over your ears) for you telecoils to connect to the sound.

Complaints seemed to fall on deaf ears, and those with telecoil-equipped hearing aids learned they had to use the earphones, requiring them to remove their hearing aids in most cases. Last year a complaint was filled with the federal government about the fact that the ADA-required neckloops simply did not work. The complaint also included the fact that there was no ADA-required signage either at the box office or the entrances to the auditorium alerting the hard of hearing to the availability of an assistive listening system.

As you would expect with a bureaucracy, it took many months for the University to come into compliance with the law, but on several recent visits to Popejoy, the neckloops now work, and on the most recent visit, there are signs in the box office

and on the information counter alerting the public to the availability of the ALS.

For anyone who tried the neckloops in the past and found them to be inadequate, try them again. If they work as they should, you will finally be able to hear performances in the hall. If they don't work, the attorney in Denver who handled this case for the US Department of Education will want to be alerted to that fact. Send an email with the date and name of the performance you attended to loop-nm@gmail.com, and she will be alerted.

Steve Frazier is the former New Mexico HLAA chapter coordinator and was a founding member of the national HLAA Get in the Hearing Loop committee. Trained by HLAA as a hearing loss support specialist, he has in recent years become a freelance writer on hearing loss and noise control issues and has been published in many of the major hearing loss and hearing care periodicals in addition to others such as Sound and Communications and Technologies for Worship. Many of those articles are posted and www.sofnabq.com. Steve can be contacted at: LoopNM@gmail.com

Loop People; Loop Places

Ginevra Ralph

Looping the Great Outdoors!

Sometimes you have to get creative to make an inclusive outdoor sound experience! This summer we have been successfully experimenting with looping three different types of outdoor events where people needed to hear either a speaker or entertainment well. We had been puzzling on different strategies depending on the set-up. Each was a temporary loop installation that ultimately had a big impact.

First, we were asked to loop an out-of-town meeting in a city park gazebo for a disability conference. There wasn't time to do a site visit, but we knew that we didn't want to lay the loop out on the ground. It is challenging to protect it from wheels and to prevent tripping. Eugene looper Alan Anttila

decided to create a traveling outdoor loop kit. He used 6 PA speaker tripods and strung the copper loop wire around the outside of the gazebo. He attached his driver into the event's sound system and everyone both in the gazebo and standing outside could hear the presentation clearly.

Next we used the same system to loop a 20x40' tent for a benefit BBQ and auction. It took an hour to set up. Attendees using telecoils heard all the music and the auctioneer, and raised their paddles generously.

Last night, Alan taped a temporary loop onto the concrete walkways around some seating in an outdoor amphitheater. Bonnie Raitt never sounded better for many attendees! We anticipate that this will lead to a permanent installation.

Looping our lives leads to some creative solutions!

Thanks to those listed below for their generous donations.

Platinum \$400+
 Albuquerque
 Hearing and
 Balance
 Donald Thurn
 Adelaide Zabriskie

Gold \$200 - \$399
 Rosalin Cohen
 Michael Lieberman
 John Simmons
 Ginevra Ralph

Silver \$100 - \$199
 Ben Curret

Mike & Barbara
 Langner
Bronze \$50 - \$99
 Carol Emerson
 Barbara Fix
 Kim Granzow
 Linnea Hendrickson
 Bette Jean Ingui
 James & Sharen
 Koch
 Fran Neil
 Angel & Roberta
 Rodríguez
 Marge Weitzel
Friends - up to \$49
 Gail S. Anastasio
 Geraldine Boden

Margie Collins
 Norm Dawson
 Don Degasperi
 Judy Elder
 Elisabeth Endean
 Shirley Furen
 Andrew “Bo”
 Gamboa
 Rita D. García
 Patricia Gonzáles
 Roy & Helen
 Johnson
 Richard Johnson
 Ralph & Barbara
 Kaplan
 Barbara Kerr
 Richard & Pushpa
 Knottenbelt
 Dirk & Arlene
 Knowles
 Victoria L. Magown

Deanna & Bob
 McMain
 Barbara Pierce
 Mary J. Raje
 Lindasue Romero
 Mara Saubers
 Carol Sliney
 Harriet S. Smith
 Steve Smith
 Tan Va
 Tim Taylor
 Richard Tuschhoff

Special
 Smith’s
 Community
 Rewards
 Frontstream

NM HLAA chapters are 501(c)3 nonprofits and all donations are tax deductible.

Support the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Become a member TODAY!

The Hearing Loss Association of America is a volunteer association of Hard of Hearing people, their relatives and friends. It is a non-profit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to the welfare and interest of those who cannot hear well. Membership in the national organization is by annual dues, which are separate from the annual Chapter fee paid to your local chapter. National membership includes a subscription to the bi-monthly publication Hearing Life.



Albuquerque Chapter Membership

- New
- Renew

Name: Date:

Address: Please mail Newsletter rather than email.

City: State: Zip:

Email: Phone(s):
 voice? text? VP? caption?

Mail to: HLAAAbq Treasurer, P. O. Box36792, Albuquerque, NM 87176

Payment: Membership amount: \$..... Donation: \$..... Total: \$.....

Dues: \$15 per household per calendar year (Includes newsletter subscription)

Online: <https://www.hearinglossabq.org/electronic-pay>

Wired For Sound



P.O.Box 36792, Albuquerque, NM 87176

