



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

WIRED FOR SOUND



Can Bluetooth® Now Serve the Masses?

Bluetooth, has finally developed a technology that can broadcast a Bluetooth signal to multiple users.

Stephen O. Frazier, Hearing Loss Support Specialist

The answer to the headline is no, not yet—but it's coming. Unlike telecoils, Bluetooth has been heavily promoted by both manufacturers and distributors of hearing aids since its introduction by Starkey nearly twenty years ago. It has dramatically increased the functionality of hearing aids, allowing users to wirelessly connect to their TV, computer and other devices. It makes hands-free phone use possible without the need for an additional device like a neckloop. The major problem with it is that those connections are all one-to-one. It cannot serve multiple members of the audience in a theater, a place of worship, a city council's chambers or even your own looped TV room at home. Settings are often very problematic for people with hearing loss with or without hearing aids.

That is about to change, but it will take some

time before a church choir will be singing the praises for Bluetooth. Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG), the organization that created and controls Bluetooth, has finally developed a technology that can broadcast a Bluetooth signal to multiple users. It uses a new technology using Bluetooth Low Energy (LE) to broadcast audio, and they call it Auracast®. Its capability is already being quietly installed in a variety of products.

As was the case with the original Bluetooth, it is major consumer devices like loudspeakers, earbuds, televisions and smartphones that will be featuring the technology first. Hearing aid manufacturers will follow their lead. When [Jeff Solum](#)¹, Wireless System Architect at Starkey Labs, was asked how soon Starkey hearing aids with this new multi-user technology would be available, he predicted hearing aids will be “hardware ready by 2023.” He also said most smartphones and computers will have adopted and marketed the technology by 2024, and then it will begin being marketed as an assistive listening technology.

Bluetooth LE is [already being used](#)² to program hearing aids to the user's needs in most brands. As

continued on page 3

¹ <https://www.bluetooth.com/blog/hearing-aid-manufacturer-explains-why-bluetooth-audio-sharing-will-be-a-game-changer-for-those-with-hearing-loss/>

² <https://betterhearing.org/newsroom/blogs/the-next-version-of-bluetooth-with-audio-sharing-will-bring-a-new-world-of-sound-to-users-with-bluetooth-enabled-devices/>

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

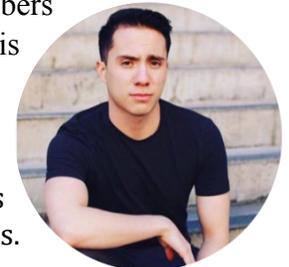
19 Nov Meeting 10:00 AM - Noon On **Zoom****Hearing Loss Journey in Families Panel**

Hearing loss affects not only the individual who suffers the loss, but also those in their immediate circle. Family members often suffer as well, as their significant other/parent/sibling/etc. deals with their own loss, while relearning relationship dynamics affects everyone else. Whatever our journey, each family has found ways to adjust, cope and re-build bonds with hearing loss in the mix.



For our November program we are delighted to host family members of individuals with hearing loss. Panel members can share their perspectives as they have navigated having a family member with a lifelong hearing loss, dealt with the frustrations of siblings who don't hear them well, and of course the inevitable "you play the TV too loud!". We hope you invite your family members and/or significant others to join us for this month's program.

Our facilitator for this gathering will be Michael Lovato, a trained group facilitator. Michael is a native New Mexican, and has taught the Intro to Veteran Counseling class. Michael's resume can be found at:



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-lovato-b0b9441a2/>

Check our Web Page (HearingLossAbq.org) for updates and the link to join the Zoom meeting.

Always check our Home Page for the latest information on upcoming programs.

The HLAA ABQ Chapter is always looking for volunteers. You can man a special project. You can help us out for a few months, or consider a longer-term commitment. "Try us out" for a month or two. We will provide orientation for working on a nonprofit board, share our chapter's mission and goals, and discuss topics we can use your help with. If interested, contact any board member (contact info at left), or use the chapter email hlaabq@gmail.com.

a sign that this technology is here, users of some Starkey hearing aids using Bluetooth LE recently became capable of receiving sound in digital form streamed from the new [Amazon Fire³ Cube](#), the first commercial streaming device to send sound directly to hearing aids in digital form. Also new is the VOCE transceiver that supports the input/output interface of analog and digital audio signals that allows users to quickly create a broadcast audio area that supports Auracast™. All that remains is to bring Auracast supported earbuds, earphones loudspeakers and other devices to market which could begin as soon as the upcoming Holidays.

Soon additional transmitters and receivers for Auracast ALSs will become available, and in places that already have a hearing loop or other ALS, Auracast will probably be installed as a supplement to that existing system. That being said, people contemplating buying either new or first-time hearing aids might want to decide if they can put that off until Bluetooth LE and Auracast capable hearing aids are available. Bluetooth LE tech-

nology is already being used for the remote programming of most of today's hearing aids, and as Auracast is implemented in the actual operation of new models, they will be able to benefit from connectivity to phones, TVs and other devices even before they can do so with an ALS.

Experts say it will take ten years or more to transition from hearing loops the Bluetooth's Auracast®, so for the time being, people should still *Get in the Hearing Loop*.

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

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. **Correction:**

1-800-444-8081, opt. 3 to sign up or re-enroll.

The HLAABq NPO number for Smith's is **NC419**.

Amazon Smile You can donate to the Albuquerque Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America every time you make a purchase of most of the products from Amazon.

Go to <http://www.hlaabq.com/amazonsmile.html> for more information and detailed instructions on how to designate HLAA-ABQ Chapter as your charity of choice when you make [amazon.com](#) purchases.

Once you have set it up, always log into [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) to purchase from amazon. 0.5% of the purchase price is automatically donated to HLAA Albuquerque Chapter—at no cost to you.

Hybrid Meetings Update

"Rod" Rodriguez, Editor, WFS

October's meeting was another trial run of a hybrid meeting. Our speaker and our moderator were both at our venue in person, but general members were still all on Zoom. We know some of you have expressed a strong desire to meet in person again, now that pandemic restrictions have been lifted in most public places. We want to make in-

person attendance an option again, but we want to make sure we are ready. In October, we still had some technical problems.

First, we had the wrong link on our Web page, and did not catch the error and email the correct

³ <https://www.cnet.com/tech/services-and-software/amazon-fire-tv-cube-now-connects-with-starkey-hearing-aids-on-bluetooth-le/>

link until minutes before the meeting started. We deeply apologize to any of you who missed the meeting because of that. You can view the [Zoom recording of the meeting](#) (Passcode: U5fku5?).

It took us some time to get the presenter's slides shared on Zoom. Then we had some awkward moments trying to send audio to both the meeting room and the Zoom audience without getting feedback.

The problem is that the laptop used by the presenter could "hear" the in-room loudspeakers. The Zoom audio was sent to the room, but I had to manually mute that in the room every time the in-room presenter was talking. Later, when a Zoom participant wanted to ask a question, I brought that up in the room, but the presenter had to mute the laptop. Otherwise, the sound from the loudspeakers would be picked up by that laptop and sound like an echo chamber.

In consultation with an audio expert who's been a friend of the Chapter for many years, we think we have a solution. We can use Zoom's built-in capability to avoid such feedback loops.

Imagine if you were on a Zoom meeting, and every time you wanted to talk, you had to turn off your built-in speakers to keep that sound from be-

ing picked up by the built-in microphone. It would be crazy! Zoom solves that in software that does it for you automatically. Our challenge is to do the same with a sound system serving a whole group of people in our meeting room.

We got sound from the laptop to the room loudspeakers through our audio mixing board ("mixer"). That replaced the laptop built-in speakers. The problem is that we did not have an obvious way to get sound from the audio board to the main laptop, because typical laptops do not have a clear microphone input—only a headphone output. So we had to use the laptop built-in microphone.

We think the solution is to get an audio adapter that accepts audio from the mixer to the laptop through a USB port. Then, our mixer will send audio from our nice, professional microphones to the laptop, and everyone on Zoom will hear everything our live audience hears.

That will replace the laptop built-in microphone, and Zoom won't know the difference. Then Zoom's software will do its usual "magic".

We want everyone on Zoom and in person to have a good experience, so we will again have a test-run in November before we invite members to come in person.

Loop People, Loop Places

Ginevra Ralph

Looping Other People

This monthly article regularly focuses on the self-empowerment that can come from "looping yourself" in daily life. We've then seen it result in powerful advocacy by telecoil users to encourage the places they frequent to add this essential tool that dramatically enhances quality of life and community engagement. It builds the army of strong self-advocates.

Now, with Over The Counter (OTC) hearing devices newly on the market, you will most certainly be asked by your friends what you think of

them, whether they are a good idea, what features they should demand if they buy them, and so on.

Be sure to bring up telecoils as one of the elements that your friends should consider, along with rechargeable batteries, Bluetooth connectivity, and other features. It appears that many of these OTC devices aren't automatically including telecoils. Folks with milder hearing loss may decide that they don't need it for now. But this should be an informed, conscious decision, and your friends will greatly benefit from your knowledge, experience and insight.

This month you get to loop OTHER people!

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

Wired For Sound

Thanks to those listed below for their generous donations.

Platinum \$400+

Albuquerque Hearing
and Balance
Rosaline Cohen
Donald Thurn
Adelaide Zabriskie

Gloria Inlow
Mike & Barbara
Langner
John Simmons
Tim Taylor

Bronze \$50 - \$99

Barbara Armstrong
Carol Emerson
Barbara Fix
Kim Granzow
Bette Jean Ingui
James & Sharen
Koch

Gold \$200 - \$399

Stephen O. Frazier
Michael Lieberman
Erin H. Luhan
Ginevra Ralph

Fran Neil
Ira J. Rimson
Rod & Bobbi
Rodríguez

Silver \$100 - \$199

Ben Curret
Yukie Ebara

Marge Weitzel

Friends - up to \$49

Gail S. Anastasio
Margie Collins
Don Degasperri
Carol Emerson
Elisabeth Endean
Shirley Furen
Andrew "Bo"
Gamboa
Rita D. García
Patricia Gonzáles
Linnea Hendrickson
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
Harriet S. Smith
Tan Va
Richard Tuschhoff

Special

Smith's
Community
Rewards
Amazon Smiles
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



Meeting
HLAA Albuquerque Chapter Meetings are held at Los Altos Christian Church,
11900 Haines Ave NE, on the 3rd Saturday of the month, Sep-Jun.

on Zoom