



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

WIRED FOR SOUND

An Auracast™ Update

Stephen O. Frazier

Anyone, hard-of-hearing or not, is doing himself or herself a disservice when buying any of these devices, including hearing aids, if the device is not, at the very least, Auracast ready.

With the February installation of Auracast™ transmitters in some locations in the Frankfurt, Germany airport, this new Bluetooth technology is now well on the way to becoming the world's standard assistive listening technology. It's installed at gates A16 and A17, so hard of hearing travelers with Auracast™ compatible hearing aids will be able to clearly hear and understand boarding announcements, gate changes, and flight delay notices that were just garbled noise previously. Travelers with so-called "normal hearing" can also find announcements on the LPA system to be challenging, and they also can benefit from the system if they have Auracast™ enabled earbuds or a compatible smartphone during this two-month test of the technology. This is the first announced installation of an Auracast™ system in an airport. The Frankfurt installation, however, was not the first transportation hub to try the technology. That distinction is believed to belong to the Temple Meads railroad station in Bristol, England. That installation took place back in July of 2025.

Other Installations and Tests

Following the March, 2025 adoption of Auracast™ in multiple performance spaces in Australia's world-renowned Sydney Opera complex, theaters and performance spaces around the world have been supplementing existing assistive listening systems with the easily installed Auracast™



version. Notable among them are landmark theaters that include La Criée National Theatre of Marseille, France, the Nissay Theatre in Tokyo, and the Regent Theatre in Dunedin, New Zealand. Back to Japan, the ROHM Theater in Kyoto, one of the country's premier performing arts venues, successfully tested the technology using a single transmitter to serve its four-balcony auditorium. It's similar to the one transmitter in Lincoln Center's Alcie Tully Hall here in the US, where a single ReSound TV streamer fastened to the ceiling of the 1,200 seat hall provided the Auracast™ signal that was deemed a huge success by test participants.

A half dozen theaters in the UK have installed or tested the technology, and there are three in the Chicago area that have done so. Sheridan, WY, a community of only 18,000, is proud to have installed Auracast™ in their WYO Performing Arts Center. Installations in the Regent Theatre in Dunedin, New Zealand and a half dozen theaters in the UK further demonstrate the international application of this landmark technology. Installers and venues are generally not inclined to issue news releases about installations, but the list of those known to have done so is expansive. Ranging from a small rural church in Kansas to St. Paul's Cathedral in London, UK, worshippers have been given the opportunity to participate in the service via Auracast. Many of these are "do it yourself" installations performed by the church's sound technician

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WIRED FOR SOUND

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Providing support and advocacy for
people with hearing loss

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[Hearing Loss Association of America
– Albuquerque chapter](http://Hearing Loss Association of America – Albuquerque chapter)



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21 Mar Meeting 10:00 AM - Noon. **Map on Back Page****Technology of Hearing Assistance***The tried & true and the new*

Join us for a lively discussion about assistive technology for hearing loss. Sean Sinderholm from the NM Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing will join us to share the viability of assistive technology and new & emerging technologies that can give those of us with hearing loss a boost in multiple situations. Sean is also interested in sharing a live demo of Auracast and how it works—similar to a loop, but without the wires!



Auracast equipment and Auracast-enabled Hearing Aids: Think of the emerging Auracast system as a “wireless hearing loop”—no need to install a wire around the perimeter. Once set up, each hearing aids wearer switches to Auracast mode by pressing a button, and it instantly connects to the transmission. Any Auracast-enabled receiver (cochlear implants and other assistive technology devices) can connect to an installed system. Auracast will be greatly beneficial for people with hearing loss.

Since Sean hopes to demonstrate how Auracast works, it would be a good idea to find out ahead of time if your hearing devices (hearing aids, CI's, *etc.*) are Auracast enabled.

This will be an excellent opportunity to check out our live meetings now. We are excited to be able to return to having the opportunity to meet in person again.

In January 2026 we had our first in-person meeting at the Deaf Culture Center (DCC). Their charter includes serving both the deaf and the hard of hearing populations in this area. Their event room is on the ground floor of the PAH! Highland Plaza apartment building at 5000 Central Ave SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108. There is a map on back page. Parking is on Jackson Street or at an abandoned Auto Zone across the street.

We could use help in setup, handling the meeting and tear-down. We also want some new blood. You can ease your way into volunteering and learn how this works. Just email one of the board members (listed on the left). You may also use the chapter email: HLAAbq@gmail.com.

or a local electrician and may be powered by one small and inexpensive transmitter connected to the church's existing sound system.

Accessing Auracasts™

The November, 2025 announcement of the Auracast™ enabled Bernafon Encanta line of hearing aids added yet another brand to the growing list of such devices. There are now hearing aids able to receive an Auracast from Beltone, Bernafon, Jabra, Oticon, ReSound, Signia and Starkey. Devices labeled “Auracast Ready” (meaning they simply need an over-the-air (OTA) update to become enabled) have been included in models from Cochlear, Danalogic, Miracle Ear, Phillips, Phonak, Rexton and Zep.

All major electronics manufacturers now offer Auracast enabled earbuds, earphones, loudspeakers, transmitters and other devices. This includes TV sets with their own built-in Auracast™ transmitters. Anyone, hard-of-hearing or not, is doing himself or herself a disservice when buying any of these devices, including hearing aids, if the device is not at the very least Auracast ready. Ready means they have the ability to receive an Auracast as soon as they receive from the manufacturers an

over-the-air (OTA) software update.

Conclusion

A detailed magazine article on renovation of the Austin, TX airport did not mention the installation of hearing loops that were part of the project. A more recent article detailing the “improvements” being offered in the newest Amtrak trains did not include mention that the passenger cars have hearing loops installed. The same sort of omission would not be surprising as Auracast™ finds its way into more and more venues of every type. This makes researching the installation of Auracast problematic as so many installations will go unreported.

That being said, the plethora of Auracast™ capable or enabled products now available positions the technology as the default assistive listening standard of the next decade. Auracast™ is not just a technological upgrade for theaters, concert halls and places of worship—it is a universal solution for inclusive listening across transport hubs, sports facilities and educational institutions. Real-world deployments prove that this technology is already reshaping accessibility, making it easier, more dignified and more future-ready for everyone.

Hearing Loss Support Social

HLAA Santa Fe Chapter

Strategies on Coping With Your Hearing Loss

Saturday, March 21st, 10 am to 11:00 am
 Travel Bug Santa Fe: Bring a friend —



opportunity to talk about your hearing loss or ask questions

839 Paseo De Peralta

For information, contact John Hooper

johnhooper.ref@gmail.com

505-603-2994

One of our Own Honored

HLAA Announced 2026 Awards

One of the categories was Advocacy Impact, honoring “an HLAA member or Chapter demonstrating exceptional advocacy by engaging with policymakers and key stakeholders on legislation and critical issues impacting individuals with hear-

Editor ing loss.”

Two individuals were honored for Advocacy Impact in 2026. One of them is from Bloomfield, CO. The other was John Hooper of the Santa Fe Chapter.

Please congratulate John when you get a chance.

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

February Meeting Summary

“Rod” Rodriguez, Editor

On February 18, we had our second hybrid meeting—still on Zoom, but with the option to attend in person at the Deaf Culture Center meeting room on the first floor of the PAH! Highland Plaza apartment building. We again had some technical glitches, but they caused only a slight delay in starting the meeting. We had five in-person attendees (not counting the presenter and other active participants), but that’s more than double the two in January.

We thank Katie Gordon from Disability Rights New Mexico for a very good presentation about ADA rights and accommodations for people with hearing loss. The presentation covered the five ti-

ties of the Americans with Disabilities Act, including employment rights, government services, public accommodations, telecommunications and miscellaneous protections. Katie discussed common accommodations such as captioning, assistive listening devices, and real-time transcription services, as well as strategies for self-advocacy and how to request accommodations effectively. She also provided information on filing enforcement complaints with various agencies, including the New Mexico Human Rights Bureau, which she recommended as a primary resource for ADA complaints in the state.

She later sent us the contact information for the new manager of the City of Albuquerque Office of Civil Rights: Gabriela Marques

Manager, Office of Civil Rights and Consumer Protection, City of Albuquerque

Office: 505.768.3138

Cell: 505.376.7823

Email: gmarques@cabq.gov

Web page: <https://www.cabq.gov/office-of-equity-inclusion>

We hope the in-person attendance increases even more in March. The topic and speaker are described on page 2. Please help us spread the word. The address is 5000 Central Ave SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108, and there is a map on the back page of this newsletter. At left, we repeat the close-up map showing where to park and how to walk to the outside doors of the meeting room.



Loop People, Loop Places

Ginevra Ralph

You’ve Been Summoned!! – #1

Courtrooms are required by the ADA to provide both an assistive listening system (ALS) for everyone to use and personal accommodations if the system alone isn’t enough to guarantee “effective communica-



tion” for an individual. Most often the ALS will be either an infrared (line-of-sight) system or a hearing loop, because these can contain the sound transmission within the courtroom. Sometimes, though, the jury instruction or deliberation rooms are forgotten. What then?

I’ve been collecting stories of peoples’ experiences in court – as jurors, witnesses, plaintiffs/defendants, CASAs, attorneys,

judges, etc. – to illustrate how crucial your self-advocacy may need to be if you are called to court. It is your fundamental right to participate in our peer-based judicial system. You must be able to participate in your own defense. You must hear instruc-

tions and questions accurately. You should not be “disinvited” to serve on a jury, for example, when you say you will need assistive listening support. Please add to my collection if you have a story to share!

Research Participants Needed

Seeking older adults with long-term hearing difficulties from various backgrounds.

We want to learn from you about your everyday activity challenges.

Participants must:

- Be ages 60+
- Be able to complete an interview in English via phone or Zoom (video call)
- Have difficulty hearing (even with hearing aids)
- Have had hearing difficulty for at least 10 years
- Have hearing difficulties that affect performance of daily activities

From National HLAA:

Upcoming Spring Webinars

April 22, 2026 | 2–3 pm ET

Workplace Hearing Loss: Diversity, Identity and Disclosure

Register here:

https://hearingloss.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_vLRAyqUMS2KC2y3-DLidDg

May 14, 2026 | 2–3 pm ET

Breaking the Silence: Hearing Loss, Mental Health and Substance Use

Register here:

https://hearingloss.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HeDhko_TOe-KF8-GOvuUQ

Past Webinar:

Did you miss the most recent Chapter Leader Training webinar about the HLAA website? It is now online. Watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9A6-p1oBMM>

The study consists of:

1. questionnaires (can be completed on paper, online or by phone)
2. an interview (via phone call, video call or in person, if local)

Participation: is 2-3 hours total

Participants will be compensated \$50 in Amazon E-coded (or check)

Interested in participating?

Contact: Mya Dye

SHS-Admin@unm.edu

Phone: (217)265-0150 (voice)

Email: access-study@illinois.edu

Convention Reminder — Don't Miss Early Bird!

Early bird registration ends March 16 — be sure to register now to receive your chapter leader discount! Convention is an incredible opportunity to:

- Connect with other chapter leaders
- Share ideas and best practices
- Learn from experts
- Reconnect with old friends and make new ones

Register Here: <https://web.cvent.com/event/6d358469-d65e-4f69-b94b-c85ce6225a8c/summary>

We can't wait to see many of you there!

World Hearing Day, March 3

Five million children and teens aged 6 to 19 in the U.S. (1 in 10) have hearing loss, and many more are at risk due to unsafe noise exposure,



according to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

HLAA is joining the World Hearing Forum in highlighting the critical need for hearing health care that supports the 95 million+ children aged 5 to 19 with hearing loss around the globe.

Our HLAA Hearing Loss 101 Toolkit includes key facts and stats about hearing health and prevalence from kids to seniors, and will soon be updated with more resources for parents: hearingloss.org/hearing-loss-101
#WorldHearingDay #WHD26 #HearingLoss

Cochlear Implant Day

International Cochlear Implant Day was February 25. HLAA continues the celebration with a new blog series sharing three unique stories of people with cochlear implants (CIs). Read about Doni's CI journey with his family



at <https://ow.ly/nnxM50Ylf0U>.

Meet Qais Khan, a passionate public speaker and disability rights advocate for young adults from the UK. Qais's story continues our look at people who are flourishing with cochlear implants (CIs) at work, school and all aspects of their lives.



<https://ow.ly/IT1J50Ym5sA>
#InternationalCochlearImplantDay #CIDay2026
#CochlearImplants #HearingHealth

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

A Special Announcement:

No matter your age, education and support are the keys to your hearing health journey. That's why we are so excited to embark on a partnership with **Hasbro!**

Inspired by the announcement from the world of **Peppa Pig** that George, Peppa's younger brother, has moderate hearing loss, HLAA will be creating new resources designed for children with hearing loss and their families. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore the many ways people talk about and experience hearing loss from the perspective of a child—while celebrating curiosity and acceptance along the way.



Read more about our plans:
<https://ow.ly/B6c950Ykx8o>

Thanks to those listed below for their generous donations.

Platinum \$400+ Adelaide Zabriskie	Gold \$200-399 Linnea Hendrickson	Bronze \$50-99 Yukie Ebara Rita García Kim Granzow Rod & Bobbi Rodríguez Mary Tyler Marge Weitzel	Andrew “Bo” Gamboa Patricia Gonzáles Barbara Kerr Barbara Pierce Mary L. Raje Richard Tuschhoff
Donation of Portable Loop: Ginevra Ralph	Silver \$100-199 Barbara Armstrong Elisabeth Endean	Friends - up to \$49 Gail Anastasio Carol Emerson	Special: Smith’s Community Rewards
In memory of Rosalin Cohen: Cohen Family	Gloria Inlow Michael Lieberman		

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 automatic with any donation (separate from any Chapter dues). A \$45 or more donation to National HLAA provides a subscription to the bimonthly publication Hearing Life.**



Albuquerque Chapter Membership

- New
- Renew

Name: Date:

Address: Please mail Newsletter rather than email.

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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

