

# Hear Ye, Hear Ye

## Florida is on a roll

We are proud that Lynn Rousseau of Gainesville, a member of our Hearing Loss Association of Florida Board of Directors, has been featured in this month's issue of Hearing Loss Magazine. Her life has been one of dance and hearing loss, and among other things she is a wife, mother, grandmother and advocate *extraordinaire*.



The same issue contains an excellent article by Dr. Pat Kricos, a Professional Advisor for HLA-FL's Board, who also lives in Gainesville. She has been an outstanding addition for many years and stands ready to assist in any way. We are proud that, for the last year, Pat has been the President of the American Academy of Audiologists and salute her. Her article – Living Well with Hearing Loss is both fascinating and encouraging to all of us.

Additionally, in the May-June issue, is an article by Judy Martin, Jacksonville. She is the State Chapter Co-

ordinator as well as the President of the Hearing Loss Association of Jacksonville. She wrote about Walt Ivey, a member of HLA-Jax, who is a Doctor of Audiology as well as a talented musician. Though accomplished in voice and other instruments, he currently plays the bagpipes for the Jacksonville Pipes and Drums.

Two outstanding chapters in Florida are part of being on the roll – the South Palm Beach and Sarasota groups. Oscar Segal, an octogenarian, is the leader of the former, a successful 200+ member chapter. His meetings are vibrant and varied while he keeps packing them in. The Sarasota chapter, with Ed Ogiba at the helm, is making waves with looping technology in that city. The number of venues looped and then featured on television and the newspapers, makes Ed the face of the initiative, called “Let’s Loop Florida.”

Finally, HLA-Florida has been notified that it has been chosen as this year’s recipient of the State Organization Award at the HLAA convention in Washington, DC next month. We are thrilled and pleased with this recognition.



**THE FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**  
**2011 Report**

**Who We Are**

The Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, hereafter referred to as the "Coordinating Council" is mandated by F.S. § 413.271 to serve as an advisory and coordinating body which recommends policies that address the needs of Florida's deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened and deaf-blind (hereafter referred to collectively as "hearing loss") community. The Coordinating Council serves as a resource for deaf and hard-of-hearing Floridians who need some assistance with everyday needs including employment, education, and access to services. Whether providing technical assistance to individuals, governmental agencies and other private or public organizations, or providing the resources to allow individuals to help themselves, the Coordinating Council is dedicated to assisting the nearly 3 million Floridians affected by hearing loss. The Coordinating Council's technical assistance allows both public and private entities to better and more efficiently serve persons with hearing loss and their families. This information can also help those entities avoid costly litigation resulting from violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other laws and statutes that provide for protection of civil rights.

**Accomplishments of the Coordinating Council**

- Provision of reports and advice to the Governor, Supreme Court, and Legislature of the State of Florida on the needs of persons with hearing loss (see Governor's Reports of 2005, 2007, 2009).
- Creation of a comprehensive website ([www.fccdh.org](http://www.fccdh.org)) for information, referral and education purposes.
- Creation and distribution of public service announcements regarding the rights of Floridians who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened and deaf-blind.
- Participation in a statewide community roundtable exploring the needs of Floridians with hearing loss and possible solutions.
- Provision of training to consumer groups on overcoming communication barriers and improving accessibility (ongoing).
- Provision of training to emergency management and first responder agencies (ongoing).
- Provision of education and training curricula to law enforcement agencies, associations, and commissions (ongoing).
- Creation and provision of training to the Department of Children and Families Dependency Summit.
- Collaboration with the Florida Hospital Association to develop a training video and guide used to address the provision of medical services to persons with hearing loss.
- Delivery of medical communication trainings and in-services to hospitals, palliative care facilities, and children's medical groups (ongoing).
- Report on licensure of sign language interpreters (2008).
- Provision of content and technical assistance for cross-disability recommendation and implementation reports of the Governor's Commission on Disabilities 2008, 2009, 2010.

**Noteworthy Recognition by State and Federal Agencies**

The Coordinating Council's expertise was most recently cited in 2009 when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights ordered the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) to form an advisory committee to help them become fully compliant with the ADA. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights had found several instances where DCF was not in compliance with the ADA when providing services to Floridians of all ages with hearing loss. This mandated advisory committee is comprised primarily of Coordinating Council members who, along with a consultant and on an ongoing basis, review and revise DCF policies and procedures to more equitably serve persons with hearing loss. In addition, this committee reviews and advises DCF on training issues and materials used by DCF employees who serve this varied and unique population.

**READ THE FCCDHH REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR**

**Please note that *Hear Ye, Hear Ye* will be posted on our website only, except for our printed October issue which announces our Annual Meeting and Elections. If you are on our mailing list, you will receive a message when it is available. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, please use this link:**

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**Hearing Loss Association of Florida**

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**UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS**

Sat., June 4, 2011 - Sun City Center  
 Saturday, October 1, 2011 - TBA

**HLAA BLOGS FOR YOU!**

[Brenda Battat's Blog](#)  
[Nancy Macklin's Convention Blog](#)

[Lise Hamlin's Public Policy and  
 Advocacy Blog](#)  
[Elizabeth LeBarron's Chapter and  
 State Development Blog](#)

**You Can Help**

We publish five e-newsletters (November, January, March, May and July) and one print edition in October for our annual meeting and election of officers. Circulation for the former is about 800 and 2,200 for the latter. All editions are posted on the website and remain there.

Advertising rates for the e-newsletter are \$150 for a full page and \$50 for a quarter page. In the print edition, the rate is \$150 for a quarter page. Larger ads are not available in print.

Chapter leaders, please forward the link to this newsletter to your members or you may send us their e-mail

**Register for HLAA Webinars****Register Today**

May 26, 2011, 7:00 p.m. EDT  
 Guest Speaker: Ken Hollands

**Topic: Hearing Loops:  
 Technical Basics**

Ken Hollands is a graduate engineer with over 25 years experience in the communications industry. Currently the Commercial Director of a manufacturer of induction loop systems, he is responsible for the management of all technical and commercial training programs. He is a regular speaker at international events and has trained many hearing loop advocates how to evaluate the performance of loop systems in accordance with the international standard.

He is passionate about audio induction loop technology, knowing that where it is correctly specified and installed, it will make a real and positive difference to the lives of the hearing aid user.

**Topic Summary**

In this webinar session, Ken Hollands will explain how hearing loop systems work and demonstrate some basic but challenging issues for the performance of loop systems. He will explain the international performance standard for loops and describe the six fundamental loop configurations used in hearing loop system design.

In June, Mr. Hollands will present a second webinar — *An Introduction to Assistive Listening*. In this session he will discuss why it is necessary to provide additional hearing assistance for hard of hearing people; what types of assistive listening technologies are available; and where they should be used. Details will be posted soon.

addresses.

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**We are on Facebook!**  
**We are on Twitter!**  
**We are on Yahoo!**  
**If you are a member of Facebook, check us out. You can add news and photos of your chapter, send announcements of events or share hearing loss news of general interest. You can follow us on Twitter or join our Yahoo group.**

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[health.groups.yahoo.com/group/HLA-FL/](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/HLA-FL/)

## Dear Savvy Senior,

What can you tell me the about the constant ear ringing syndrome known as tinnitus? At age 56, I have had it for several years but it has gotten more and more noticeable lately. Is there anything I can do?

**Ringling Rhonda**

**Dear Rhonda,**

Tinnitus is a common disorder that affects nearly one in six Americans. Here's what you should know along with some tips and treatments that may help.

### Ringling ears

Tinnitus is the sensation of hearing a ringing, buzzing, roaring, hissing or whistling sound in one or both ears when no external sound is present. The sounds, which can vary in pitch and loudness, are usually worse when background noise is low, so you may be most aware of it at night when you're trying to fall asleep in a quiet room. For most people tinnitus is merely annoying, but for many others it can be extremely disturbing.

### What causes tinnitus?

It's important to know that tinnitus is not a disease, but a symptom that can be caused by a variety of underlying conditions.

The best way to find out what's causing your tinnitus is to see an audiologist, or ear, nose and throat doctor (otolaryngologist). The various things that can cause tinnitus are:

**Exposure to loud noise:** This is the most common cause.

**Hearing loss:** For many people, hearing loss can cause tinnitus.

**Earwax:** A build-up of wax deep in the ear canal can cause temporary tinnitus and hearing loss.

**Medications:** Over 200 different drugs can cause ringing ears including aspirin, especially when taken in high doses. For a list of drugs that can cause tinnitus call the American Tinnitus Association at 800-634-8978.

**Health conditions:** Various medical conditions can also trigger tinnitus such as high blood pressure, vascular disease, diabetes, allergies, thyroid problems, ear or sinus infections, Meniere's disease, otosclerosis, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) syndrome, a tumor, an injury to the head or neck and more.

### Treating the causes

While there's currently no cure for tinnitus there are some ways to treat it depending on the cause. For example, if your tinnitus is caused by a medical condition (high blood pressure, thyroid problems,

## Don't miss Convention 2011

June 16-19  
Hyatt Regency Crystal City



This convention will be 4 days of fascinating workshops plus the opportunity to greet old friends

and to make new ones. It includes an out-of-this-world assortment of products and services for the hard of hearing in the giant exhibit hall, banquets, and the opportunity for side trips to the nation's capital.

Four nationally recognized experts will discuss *The Impact of Noise on Hearing* in the research symposium and Christopher J. Artinian, Chief Executive Officer and President of Morton's Restaurant Group, Inc., will be the keynote speaker. The Artinian family is the subject of the Oscar-nominated film *Sound and Fury*, which tells the story of brothers - one hearing, one deaf.



### A Wicked Evening

Experience a captioned performance of the Grammy and Tony award-winning musical, *Wicked*, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Friday, June 17 (7:30 p.m.). *Entertainment Weekly* calls *Wicked* "the best musical of the decade." The tickets are for seats in the Orchestra Section of the Opera House, the second largest theater in the Kennedy Center. Tickets are limited so make sure you purchase them when you register ! !

### Special notice for techies.....

Overlapping the HLAA convention will be the

## 2nd International Looping Conference June 18-20

Attendees will learn basic, complex and creative installation techniques, hearing loop technology from a user's perspective, integration of loop technology with FM and infrared systems, and the status of hearing loop installations in the United States and in other countries.

To register for the convention, the looping conference (or both) or, for more details, go to:

<http://www.hearingloss.org/convention/>

or call (301) 657-2248

ear infection, etc.) treating the condition may reduce or eliminate the noise.

If you have wax build-up in your ears, removing it can help. Or, if you think a medication you're taking may be causing the problem, switching to a different drug, or lowering the dosage may provide some relief.

*Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.*

## Clear surgical masks that let you speech read your doctor and other health care professionals now available!

by Neil Bauman, Ph.D.

For decades I've wished that doctors, dentists and other health care professionals would wear clear surgical masks so that I could speechread them. I know many of you with more severe hearing losses feel the same.

In the past, I've read about clear masks that had been invented, but I never have heard of anyone actually wearing one. Apparently a serious flaw was that these clear masks quickly fogged up from the wearer's breath, so they were useless for speechreading.

Fortunately for us, that has changed now. I'm actually wearing one of the brand new Nex-Gen Clear Surgical Masks as I type this. I'm experimenting to see whether it fogs up or not.

Now the good news. So far, I can't make it fog up! It stays crystal clear in spite of my hot breath.

And yes, you really can speechread through this surgical mask. For best results, you want to look at the person from a slight angle, not head on, or the filter might get in your line of sight. (In contrast, the respirator model has the filters to both sides, so for a person wearing this respirator model, you look at the person head on.)

The Nex-Gen masks have a metal nose-bridge piece that you bend to fit the shape of your nose so you get a tight seal. (I found that if I didn't make a seal tight across the bridge of my nose, my escaping breath fogged up my glasses!)

When wearing these masks, the person's voice is

somewhat reduced in volume and is slightly distorted like you would expect, since the sound of their voice has to come through a filter.

These masks are held in place by two adjustable elastic straps—one above your ears and the other below them. They meet FDA 510K and ISO 10993 standards.

These masks are designed to last for up to a year of use—not bad for a \$3.50 investment! You can get these masks in large, small and child's sizes.

Not only do these clear surgical masks help hard of hearing patients understand their masked health care professionals, but also, they help hard of hearing professionals communicate with their co-workers.

For example, a hard of hearing nurse working in the operating room is at a distinct disadvantage when masked doctors tell her to do something. If all the operating room staff wear these clear surgical masks, then any hard of hearing staff will be able to speechread them.

Spread the word and help these masks to catch on. Send this article to all your doctors, dentists, nurses, paramedics and health care professionals—anyone that typically wears a surgical mask. Let them know just how much these clear masks will help them effectively communicate with you. Ask them to get some of these clear plastic masks and wear them when around you (and other hard of hearing people) when you next visit them.

## Beating Too Hard on Your Drum – Your Ear Drum!

-by Benjamin S. Brasch, UF '13 [ben.brasch@gmail.com](mailto:ben.brasch@gmail.com)

Blisters. Broken wrists. Hearing loss. That may not sound like the ideal image of a rock star, but it is the reality in some cases. With improper form, many musicians can severely injure themselves.

A musician must have good technique to play music at a high level and when that form is broken, then catastrophic injuries, tiny everyday injuries or the advancement of chronic illnesses can occur.

The University of Florida Speech and Hearing Clinic and the Gainesville chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of Florida will be re-offering their four-part series focused on hearing loss. The University of Florida Graduate Audiology students emphasize in



the class discussions how listening to music with ear buds and I-pods at loud levels or wearing them too many hours in a day can harm one's hearing in the long run. Participants in the program are told how important it is to protect their hearing from loud sounds.

The classes are held on Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the United Way of North Central Florida Office, 6031 NW 1st Place.

"If you do the basics right, chances are you won't hurt your mouth or anything," said Max Freidrich, a seven-year saxophone player. Freidrich said that he cut his mouth and developed canker sores from playing saxophone.

During high school, Freidrich knew a clarinet

player who made her chronic tendinitis worse by playing clarinet. Playing an instrument that affects a part of your body already affected by chronic illness can make it worse or aggravate it, Friedrich said.

Over time with incorrect mouth position musicians can lose their teeth, and that is why music teachers spend so much time focusing on basic form, Friedrich said.

Music veteran Tobin Wagstaff has had splinters in his hands from broken drumsticks, stabbed himself with broken pieces of drumsticks, and has experienced some hearing loss.

He has been drumming for 20 years and owns a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) drum shop in Gainesville called Studio Percussion Inc. The Wagstaff family was selected to receive a new house through the television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" because of their involvement in the Gainesville community.

When Wagstaff dislocated his wrist, he had to lay off it for many weeks putting him behind on his practice schedule. Similarly, the only way to let blisters heal is with time away from drumming.

"Your skin gets thicker, so you're not as prone to those types of injuries," Wagstaff said.

While in his high school marching band, Wagstaff pulled ligaments in his forearm area, suffered from severe exhaustion, and experienced chest pains.

"Hearing loss is really common amongst musicians," Wagstaff said. Jazz and concert bands' loud horns and rock and roll's amplified music are awful for musicians' hearing, Wagstaff said.

When musicians do not perform carefully they can hurt themselves in the short-term and the long-term, and more often than not musicians suffer hearing loss because they did not prepare or did not know the consequences.

"Remember, louder is not always better," said Lynn Rousseau, co-founder of the Hearing Loss Association of Gainesville and past president of the Hearing Loss Association of Florida. Rousseau comes from a

proud family of musicians and is the only member of her family that is hearing impaired. While difficult to hear the piano, bass instruments and bongo drums pose no problem for her to hear and feel.

No device can restore hearing to normal once hearing loss has taken place, which is very different from eyeglasses that can improve your vision to almost normal, Rousseau said.

"If a person desires to learn to play an instrument, find an instrument you can hear well and can distinguish the tones and pitch and enjoy," Rousseau said.

When one loses their hearing, the first thing to go is usually high-pitch sounds, then your low-pitch frequency recognition. For the hard of hearing individual learning to set themselves up for success in music, they should learn to play a low-pitch frequency instrument or one they can feel the beat, Rousseau said.

If hearing loss has already taken place, musicians have many options to try to get as close to normal as they can again. The use of hearing aids, cochlear implants and assistive devices can help one to enjoy the sounds of music again. Taking care of your ears from loud sounds or a constant noisy environment can help save your hearing. There are ear plugs one can wear at rock concerts for protection.

"Feeling the music is always a natural, we can feel the beat without beating up on our ear drum, thus still participate in dance and also play certain musical instruments," Rousseau said. Rousseau concludes with the fact that if one is exposed to music that is so loud that they feel it beating in their hearts, it is most likely beating too hard on their ear drum too!

*(I wrote the article for an assignment in my MMC 2100 Writing for Mass Communications class at the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL. The assignment was to write on a topic having to do with the environment, health, science or technology. The topic of musicians who are hard of hearing and musicians injury means a lot to me as I am a musician myself with a passion for everything musical.)*

**With tongue in cheek, Helen Piekín of Hodahearn, NE, who is hard of hearing, writes,**

**I prefer to think of myself as *easy of misunderstanding* rather than *hard of hearing*. Sometimes I envy the deaf; they at least have their own subculture or society, while I live in a twilight zone, neither *hear* nor there. I believe it would be appropriate to say I feel *excommunicated* from the world in general.**

**And it pleases me to boast that mine is a *multilingual* hearing disability, since I don't hear Spanish just as well as I don't hear Italian or French, but I don't hear Russian best of all!**

***(From: Do You Hear Me? by Maxwell Schneider)***

## The High Price of Leaving Hearing Loss Unaddressed

By Laura Walter

**People with untreated hearing loss lose as much as \$30,000 in income annually, depending on their degree of hearing loss, according to the latest national study by the Better Hearing Institute (BHI). The cost to society is estimated to be as high as \$26 billion in unrealized federal taxes.**

Use of hearing aids was shown to reduce the risk of income loss by 90 to 100 percent for those with milder hearing loss and from 65 to 77 percent for those with severe to moderate hearing loss, the study of more than 40,000 households showed.

“More than 34 million Americans suffer from hearing loss,” says Sergei Kochkin, Ph.D., executive director of BHI. “Roughly 60 percent of them are in the work force. Our study showed that when hearing loss is left unaddressed, it can pose significant barriers to productivity, performance, career success and also to lifelong earnings.”

The loss in income for people with untreated hearing loss due to underemployment is estimated at \$176 billion, according to the BHI study. And there is a strong relationship between the degree of hearing loss and unemployment for those who do not use hearing aids. Those with severe hearing loss had unemployment rates (15.6 percent) double that of the normal-hearing population (7.8 percent) and nearly double that of their peers (8.3 percent) who use hearing aids.

About 11 percent of the U.S. population has some degree of hearing loss. Yet hearing loss remains one of the most commonly unaddressed health conditions in America today, BHI said. In fact, only 40 percent of Americans with moderate to severe hearing loss and 9 percent of those with mild hearing loss wear hearing aids. What's more, fewer than 15 percent of those who received a physical exam in the last year said they received a hearing screening by their physician or nurse during that exam – despite the fact that the vast majority of those with hearing loss could benefit from hearing aids.

Kochkin urges employers to encourage the use of hearing aids in the workforce by taking one or more of the following steps:

- (1) Create a corporate climate where hearing loss is acceptable. This may positively affect workers who feel stigmatized and hide their hearing loss on the job.
- (2) Cover hearing aids in corporate insurance plans.
- (3) Recommend that employees use the company's medical flex-spend program to buy hearing aids.
- (4) Provide easy accommodations, such as moving an employee's desk away from noisy hallways or installing a phone that amplifies high frequencies.
- (5) Design cubicles with noise-absorbent mate-

rials or equip meeting rooms with inductive loops.

Perhaps most important, Kochkin urges human resource executives to increase awareness and education among employees of the importance of addressing hearing loss. This is especially relevant because 50 percent of people with untreated hearing loss have never had their hearing professionally checked.

“The real tragedy in delaying hearing loss treatment is that when left unaddressed, hearing loss negatively affects individuals and their families for the rest of their lives in the form of lost wages, lost promotions, lost opportunities, lost retirement income and unrealized dreams,” said Kochkin. “But when people with even mild hearing loss use hearing aids, they improve their job performance, increase their earning potential, enhance their communication skills, improve their professional and interpersonal relationships, stave off depression and better their quality of life.”

To facilitate a hearing test for all American workers, BHI is offering an **online hearing test** where people can assess if they need a more comprehensive check by a hearing professional.

*From Better Hearing Institute*

### A (partial) list of venues looped for sound in Florida

*These names were supplied by Complete Hearing Solutions and The Hearing Loop Group. If you know of others, please email the information to*

[HearYeHearYe2006@gmail.com](mailto:HearYeHearYe2006@gmail.com)

*We will print a more complete list in the July issue.*

Largo Community Center, Largo



Episcopal Church of the Annunciation,  
Anna Maria Island  
Village Church of God, Winter Haven  
Westminster Presbyterian Church, St.  
Petersburg

Oak Hammock at University of Florida -  
Gainesville

North Sarasota Public Library - Sarasota

Community Development District Boardroom - The Villages,

Ashley Wilkes Room, The Savannah Center - The Villages

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church (Sanctuary and

Fellowship Hall - Sun City Center

First Baptist Church - Dover (underway)

Grace Presbyterian Church - Gainesville

Our Lady of Lourdes - Clearwater

Largo Community Center - Largo

## OUR CHAPTERS SPEAK . . .



The HLA Central Florida Chapter, located in The Villages for the past year, has been busy with some interesting speakers over this time. We remain a small, but active chapter. We don't ask for dues but urge those attending to join the Hearing Loss Association of America so as to be able to get the Hearing Loss Magazine as well as the "Hear ye, Hear Ye" state newsletter.

Board member, Andy Finlayson, recently purchased a looping system, so our meetings are now looped. This came about after having both the Complete Hearing Solutions and The Hearing Loop Group make presentations to our chapter.

Audiologist, LeAnn Boone, an Outreach Specialist for Med-El Corp. recently talked about hearing loss and cochlear implants. We set up a class for lip and speech reading after having Dottie England, class instructor at the University of Florida, Ocala, give a presentation on techniques that training your eyes to hear what your ears can't hear.

For our March meeting, Michael McKinley, CSP, a CPAE Speakers Hall of Fame Awardee, spoke to our chapter in a humorous way, about his life story on overcoming obstacles, including hearing loss, and how he worked through each barrier.

We meet on the first Tuesday, September through May, at the Churchill Recreation Center in The Villages.

Muriel Raine, Board Member

### Do you live in the Ocala, Miami-Dade or Lee County areas?

A few good people are looking for a few more good people to establish chapters or to build up current ones. Are you one of them?

In Ocala/Marion County, Leigh Ann Watts is hoping to get a group going. She can be reached by email [LALRDW@aol.com](mailto:LALRDW@aol.com).

In Miami-Dade, Joe Dashiell is forming a new chapter. If you are interested in joining him, his preferred method of contact is email - [joe.dashiell@gmail.com](mailto:joe.dashiell@gmail.com) - or, if you do not have a computer, his cell is 305-213-4092.

In Lee County, Lois Smith, a former member of the Naples chapter, is hoping to encourage more interest in the Lee County chapter or else begin a new chapter. Lois and her husband, Jim, can be reached at [loisjims@embarqmail.com](mailto:loisjims@embarqmail.com)

If you know of other areas where a few good people live, who might be interested in having an HLA chapter in their neighborhood, please let me know.

Judy Martin,  
Florida State Chapter Coordinator  
[judygmartin@bellsouth.net](mailto:judygmartin@bellsouth.net)

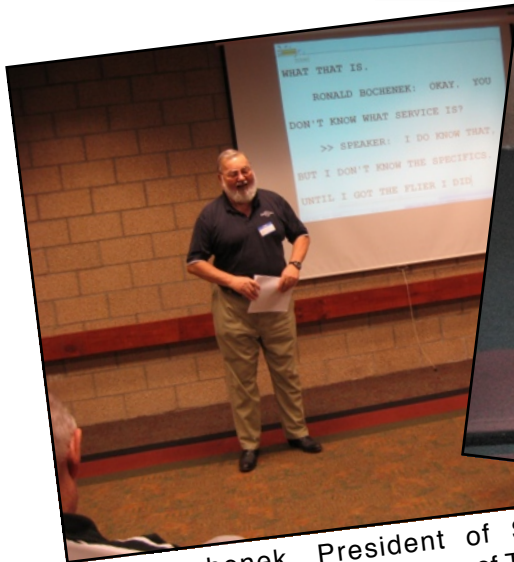


In April, the Treasure Coast chapter met at the Saint Lucie Lanes Bowling Alley in Port St. Lucie. Meeting announcements were followed by lip reading training. It was open to the public and participants were asked to bring a hand mirror for the lesson.

In May, the chapter hosted guest speaker Bill Smith, Hearing Instrument Specialist, of Audibel Hearing Care Centers. The topic was the differences in hearing aids today, including the newest technologies. The meeting was held in the History Room of the Indian River County Library, Vero Beach.

For more information, email [noisegone@treasurecoastflhlaa.com](mailto:noisegone@treasurecoastflhlaa.com) or call Bill or Cheryl at (772) 466-5687.

Everyone knows how frustrating it can be to have a word dangling *on the tip of my tongue*. Much the same thing happens to people with hearing loss when they have asked two or three times for a word that has eluded them to be repeated. Could the term for that predicament be called, *It's on the lobe of my ear*?



Ron Bochenek, President of St. Augustine Sertoma and member of The Beaches Sertoma, tells the members everything they want to know about his organization.



Members of the Jacksonville chapter enjoy some social time together at the River City Brewing Company. Standing, from left, Stephen Smith, Tom and Judy Martin. Seated, Melissa Trauthwein, Waldo and Verona Romero, Walt Ivey.

In March, the Jacksonville chapter was “booted” from its regular meeting space because of early voting. An alternate room was not available, so it was decided to dine on the St. John’s River, an idea of which everyone heartily approved! The group was small but large on joviality.

In April, the chapter was pleased to welcome Ron Bochenek from the Sertoma (**S**ervice **T**O **M**ankind). Sertoma’s primary focus is assisting the more than 50 million people with hearing health issues and educating the public on them. [www.sertoma.org](http://www.sertoma.org)

Ron explained the many program they sponsor –

Hearing Aid Recycling, Camp Endeavor for kids with hearing loss, Sound Investment (looping technology), SAFEears (noise induced hearing loss prevention), Scholarships, Hearing Aid assistance, and Adopt-An-Agency (establishing relationships with non-profit hearing and speech facilities).

There was much more and the chapter members had many questions. It was agreed that Sertoma is a well-kept secret. The chapter hope to collaborate with them to benefit people who are hard of hearing.

Meeting and other chapter information is listed on the [HLA-Jax website](http://www.hla-jax.com)



## May is Better Speech and Hearing Month



The Clearwater chapter held its election in April. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer remain vacant. Tess Crowder, Vice President, handles the financial functions while the newly-elected President, Marjie Anderson, covers the secretarial duties. A secretary *pro tem* records the minutes at each meeting.

Members of the chapter have voted on a new meeting place and are trying to secure their first choice (although they won't know until June if they have it or will have to go to their second choice.) Meetings will change in September to the first Wednesday of the month at noon.

The next meeting is June 7 at 3:30 p.m. Meet us at Cristino's Coal Oven Pizza, 1101 S. Fort Harrison Ave, Clearwater, FL, 33756

For more information, contact Marjie Anderson, President, [marjjeal@gmail.com](mailto:marjjeal@gmail.com) or [visit their website](#).



The chapter meets the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at the St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1239 Del Webb Blvd. W., Sun City Center.

The next meeting is September 7. The program is **New Advances in Research and Treatment for Tinnitus** – Real Hope for the Tinnitus Sufferer. Presenters are Evans, M.S., and Patricia Harrington, Au.D. (Audiology Innovations, Largo).

For more information contact [Richard Herring](#), President, or [visit their website](#).

## HLA-FLORIDA CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Hearing Loss Association of Florida (HLA-FL) is seeking qualified individuals to serve on the HLA-FL Board of Trustees for a three-year term beginning October 1, 2011.

### Who is Eligible?

All members of Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) who are Florida residents are eligible. HLA-FL is committed to assembling a board comprised of individuals with a diversity of skills, backgrounds, hearing loss, and ages. Hearing applicants with sensitivity to the needs of people with hearing loss will be considered. Ability to work with others is essential. Positive thinkers with the desire to improve the quality of life for hard of hearing Florida residents are encouraged to apply. HLA-FL members can nominate themselves for board membership or nominate another Florida HLAA member (with permission).

### What is Required?

The board meets at least three times a year in locations that vary to provide equitable geographic access. Members are encouraged to attend all meetings. Costs of travel are the members' responsibility. Members are asked to take active roles on standing and ad hoc committees. Meetings are presently held on Saturdays to accommodate employed members. Major committee work occurs between board meetings and is most often transacted by e-mail or chat room, and thus, Board members are required to have e-mail access. Reimbursements of previously approved expenses on behalf of HLA-FL are available to trustees upon request.

### How to Apply for the HLA-FL Board:

Application forms are available by contacting Lisa Tanner, Au.D, Chair, Nominating Committee Chair, 522 Oakfield Drive, Brandon, FL 33511 813-315-9850 [lisatanneraud@adhs-brandon.com](mailto:lisatanneraud@adhs-brandon.com)



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## HLA-Sarasota reception helps focus government and business support for hearing loops



On April 12, the Sarasota Chapter held a reception for local leaders to learn about the opportunity that hearing loops offer businesses and community organizations. The event attracted 98 government, business and community leaders, including 20 local ear, nose and throat doctors and audiologists.

City Commissioner Suzanne Atwell pledged the city government's support to help educate and advocate for greater hearing loop access. Eileen Hampshire, the chair of the Downtown Sarasota Alliance, helped businesses understand the customer building potential that hearing loops have demonstrated in other markets.

Chapter president Ed Ogiba demonstrated the room hearing loop system, which was similar to the first one installed in the community last month at the North Sarasota Library, where the chapter holds its monthly meetings. Ed also provided a hands-on tutorial for two portable systems, which included a table-top unit ideal for restaurants, pharmacies and bank tellers, as well as a clipboard model, which has become popular among European audiologists. *See the follow-up stories below for more details on both these portable devices.*

Among the immediate results impacted by the reception were requested meetings by several organizations, who were interested in a proposal for hearing loop system. Among those doing so, were a leading bank, community residence and university lecture hall. Perhaps the most promising development was the invitation from a local foundation to develop grant proposals to underwrite a loop system for theatres in town.



*Three Sarasota audiologists check out the art work, which was among the items raffled at the reception. The event was designed to raise awareness for greater hearing loop system use in the community.*

**Check out the latest and best ways you can advocate for HLA**

**What is 3G and 4G for Mobile Video Phones?**

submitted by Kay Shaffer, Secretary  
Hearing Loss Association of Florida

## Two Sarasota restaurants are the first in the US to offer the table-top loop system



The most immediate effect of the Sarasota chapter's "*Hearing Loss Affects Everyone*" reception was that two local restaurants now offer the new table-top loop system, that was developed in Europe. The wireless unit offers a built-in speaker and internal loop that project voices just over three feet to anyone wearing a hearing aid with a t-coil. It is ideal for a table of up to 4 people in a noisy restaurant. The two restaurants offering the system include Caraguilos, a very popular downtown Italian restaurant and Owen's Fish Camp, a new seafood restaurant in the historic Burns Court district. One person at the reception also bought the unit for home use. For more details on this device, [here's the link to ABC's coverage.](#)

## Clipboard hearing loop promoted as the ideal tool for audiologists to use with patients



In Europe, there is new wireless. clipboard loop system, which provides a helpful communication tool for doctors when treating patients, who wear either a hearing aid or cochlear implant, as the penetration of t-coils is universal in many European countries. The Sarasota reception promoted the device to local audiologists as a way to enhance patient discussions, as well as to promote much needed t-coil awareness and usage. The wireless clipboard has a built-in speaker and internal loop that can project the doctor's voice 3 feet. A Sarasota chapter survey found that over 70% of its members miss 20% or more of what is said in sessions with their doctors or audiologists. One unit was sold at the reception. The chapter also uses the clipboard at community outreach events, like health fairs, where it has proven to be a helpful communication device, as well as an educational tool providing an engaging introduction to the power of t-coils.



*HLAS member Joan Haber uses the clipboard loop to have an effective talk with a visitor seeking information at Chapter's monthly booth at the Farmer's Market.*

**Will We Hear the Light? Surprising Discovery That Infrared Can Activate Heart and Ear Cells**

**submitted by Richard Herring, President  
Hearing Loss Association of Florida**

**HearCare**  
Audiology Center

**William J. Lopez II, Au.D.**  
Doctor of Audiology

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## How to use an Assistive Listening System at the Theater

By Janice Lintz Schacter

The theater is a rich and enjoyable experience, yet it can be a frustrating and stress-producing nightmare if you can't understand what is happening. Who wants to attend an entertaining event if you may not be able to enjoy the show? The solution is understanding your hearing loss needs and proper preparation.

**Can you use an assistive listening system?** If you have some residual hearing, you may be able to use an assistive listening system (ALS). Three systems are currently available: radio frequency (FM), infrared light (IR) and Induction loop. The signal arrives through a receiver, which may be either an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) or a telecoil (also called a T-coil.) in a hearing aid or cochlear implant. ALDs enable theatergoers to receive the sound directly from the sound source to their ear, which

eliminates the negative effects of distance, noise and reverberation on sound clarity. Volume can also be increased.

**Does the theater have an assistive listening system?** In the US, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires that all places of public accommodation with fixed seating that either accommodate at least 50 people or have an audio amplification system (or both) must provide an assistive listening system (ALS). If the theater does not have an ALS, you can ask them to install one. If they refuse, file a complaint through the US

Department of Justice (<http://www.ada.gov/t3compfm.htm>) or the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights <http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcr/index.html>. Change will only occur if complaints are filed.

**What type of ALS does the theater have?** The three types of ALS mentioned above are: FM - works via a radio frequency; Infrared - works via a beam of invisible light; Induction loop - works via an electromagnetic signal.

Different locations have different systems for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to envi-

ronmental concerns, privacy issues, portability, the size of the space, construction materials (for instance, metalwork can absorb or distort magnetic fields), the impact of installing the system in the space, and cost.

**What type of ALD receiver should I use?** The type of receiver used (if any) depends on the type of ALS used, whether your hearing aid or cochlear implant has a T-coil, and the degree of your hearing loss.

### What type of ALS is used?

Look on the theater's Web site for this information, and you may have to call. The following symbol means that one of the three types of ALS is used:



You will know if the theater has an induction loop if they have the following symbol:

Unlike FM and infrared systems, induction loops are hearing aid compatible, meaning people with T-coil equipped hearing aids or cochlear implants can receive the sound signal directly via their T-coil, maximizing the customized

output of their hearing aid or cochlear implant, and no receiver is needed. Consider adding a T-coil if you do not have one. T-coils can be added to your hearing aid for less than \$100, which is substantially less than replacing your hearing aids.

An FM radio or infrared system requires a receiver for use, whether or not you have a T-coil. There are different ways to use a receiver: ear bud headset, a headset that fits over your ears, or (for those with T-coils), neck loops.

**Can you remove your hearing aid and still hear via the receiver?** Then you can use an ear bud that fits directly into the ear

(as well as any type of headset). Many people are uncomfortable inserting something in their ear that has already been inserted in another person's ear even when it has been cleaned.

**Are you unable to remove your hearing aid to use the receiver and lack a T-coil in your hearing aid or cochlear implant?**

You can use Walkman style headsets that plug into the jack on the receiver. However, headsets typically do not work for people who wear behind-the-ear (BTE) hearing aids or for some people who have more than a

mild hearing loss, because the sound output is likely to be insufficient. In addition, the design of some headsets doesn't confine the sound to the listeners' ears, so other people nearby could be disturbed. That is why a neck loop (see below.) should be used if you have a T-coil. It is thoughtless to blast the volume because you need a neck loop and do not have a T-coil. Many theaters will justifiably ask you to remove the headset because you are disturbing others. Consider having a T-coil added to your hearing aid or cochlear implant if you fall into this category.

**Do you have a T-coil in your hearing aid or cochlear implant?** A neck loop (which is a small induction loop) can be plugged into the jack of an FM or infrared receiver to send the signal to your T-coil; you do not need a headset. The receiver must have a jack for plugging in the neck loop; most one-piece headsets do not have such jacks. Neck loops allow the person's own hearing aids or cochlear implant to regulate the volume.

### What do you know about the t-coil setting on your hearing aid?

I experienced an eye-opener with the telecoil settings. Last year, I was testing the loop at one of the (health fair) booths, which was set to international specifications. I could barely hear the tv, and was told that my telecoil was not set at a proper volume. Surprisingly, telecoils are set at a default to a few db's below what a normal program db level is. The audiologist has to manually increase the gain on the telecoil in order for it to be louder.

This surprised me, because I am a sophisticated hearing aid user. But, I never really understood why I was having problems on the telephone, I assumed it was that the volume on the phone needed to be turned up, or that the other equipment I used just needed to be set at a higher volume.

I was able to get my telecoil adjusted with no problem, but my audiologist also works with pediatric patients and is very familiar with setting up FM's for educational settings. Most adults just walk out with their telecoils set the way they are (if they have one, or if the audiologist even turns it on), and the assumption is that it's set where it needs to be. Most hearing aid users will not know to ask for something different. Most audiologists do not have a loop set up in their office, and with the advent of FM boots, Bluetooth streamers, and other devices, they will likely bypass the need for a telecoil, unless the hearing aid user is aware enough to ask for one. Even audiologists who we think should know better, and are well-respected in their field, have told me that the future is in the other wireless devices

**What receivers and auxiliary equipment does the theater have?** It is important to determine whether the theater has the equipment you need. Reserving it ahead of time will also ensure that it works and it is waiting for you. Sound Associates (212-757-5679) provides ALS for many Broadway theaters, but contact your theater in advance so that you will not be disappointed. Bring your own if the theater does not have the ALD you need.

Theaters should have headsets and neck loops on hand. Many theaters only offer ear buds because they cost substantially less; but ear buds may not provide effective communication under the ADA, since they require users to remove their hearing aids.

File a complaint, as mentioned above, if the theater does not offer ALDs and is unwilling to obtain them. The number and types of devices required are detailed in the ADA Accessibility Guidelines ("ADAAG"), can be found at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).



**Walt, I said hand me over the KEYS.**

and that the telecoil is not the way to go. When someone has a bad experience using their telecoil, it's easy to believe that, but none of those personal devices have the ability to accommodate a room full of people like the loop does.

Debbie, Colorado

## ADA Update

Updated information on service animals and their use. Click on link for complete primer.

Often businesses such as stores, restaurants, hotels, or theaters have policies that can exclude people with disabilities. For example, a "no pets" policy may result in staff excluding people with disabilities who use dogs as service animals. A clear policy permitting service animals can help ensure that staff are aware of their obligation to allow access to customers using service animals. Under the ADA's revised regulations, **the definition of "service animal" is limited to a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability.** The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability. For example, many people who are blind or have low vision use dogs to guide and assist them with orientation. Many individuals who are deaf use dogs to alert them to sounds. People with mobility disabilities often use dogs to pull their wheelchairs or retrieve items. People with epilepsy may use a dog to warn them of an imminent seizure, and individuals with psychiatric disabilities may use a dog to remind them to take medication. Service members returning from war with new disabilities are increasingly using service animals to assist them with activities of daily living as they reenter civilian life. **Under the ADA,**



**"comfort," "therapy," or "emotional support animals" do not meet the definition of a service animal.**

Under the ADA, service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents him from using these devices. Individuals who cannot use such devices must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. Businesses may exclude service animals only if 1) the dog is out of control and the handler cannot or does not regain control; or 2) the dog is not housebroken. If a service animal is excluded, the individual must be allowed to enter the business without the service animal.

In situations where it is not apparent that the dog is a service animal, a business may ask only two questions: 1) is the animal required because of a disability; and 2) what work or task has the animal been trained to perform? No other inquiries about an individual's disability or the dog are permitted. Businesses cannot require proof of certification or medical documentation as a condition for entry.

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