

# Hear Ye, Hear Ye

## HLA of Florida Welcomes You to the 2006 Convention

Every year our National organization holds a convention in one of the 50 states. This year's National Hearing Loss Association of America convention is in our very own Orlando, June 29 to July 2. The location is at Disney World's Coronado Springs Resort. Events of the convention are geared to improve our lives through fellowship and education. Diverse workshops include coping strategies for hearing loss, communication barriers, hearing aid forums, and healthy eating.

Browse the 90+ state-of-the-art exhibitor hall to learn about the latest products and services that may improve your life. Try the latest hearing aids. Learn about the new cochlear implants. Test the latest hearing aid compatible cell phones. To complete the conven-

tion, discover tomorrow's medical and technological breakthroughs at Sunday's Research Symposium. But, mostly, I dare you to shake hands with Thursday's motivational speaker, *The Hulk*, Lou Ferrigno. Visit the website [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org) to find out more about price and schedule. Or e-mail Jim Diaz, [jdiaz@flashhh.org](mailto:jdiaz@flashhh.org) for specific questions. Or phone, (407)366-3024.

If price of the convention looks too steep, please consider these options:

- Volunteer for a convention duty to help defray costs.
- Consider visiting the exhibit hall with a free sign up pass.
- The FCCDHH is sponsoring scholarships for children who would like to attend.

Please keep spreading the word to your friends and to your audiologists about the convention.

Jim Diaz, President  
HLA of Florida

## A Message from our President

Like watching the flowers bloom in the spring, I, too, am seeing the fruit of the Florida Coordinating Council of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (FCCDHH) mature in front of my eyes. This last month, I spent a good deal of time in the local hospital as my mom journeyed from the Emergency Room to the Critical Care to Progressive Care to Intensive Care and finally, to a quick end from lung cancer.

At each of the hospital wings were numerous highly-visible 8.5 x 11 black and white notices on a display stand boldly stating:

### *Notice to Deaf and Hearing Impaired Patients*

*You have the right to a sign language interpreter if one is required for you to effectively communicate with hospital staff. If you are deaf or hard of hearing and require a sign language interpreter to communicate, please let us know.*

*Continued on page 3*

## Exhibit Hall Free to the Public

The exhibit hall at this year's convention is now open to the public at no charge! Don't miss this rare opportunity to learn about new technology that will improve your life. Exhibit Hall passes will be available on site at the registration desk.

## Discount to Volunteers

Convention volunteer positions are still open. A convention discount is offered to volunteers. A minimum number of hours will be required to receive a discount. The extent of discount will be increased as the number of hours increase, to the maximum for five hours donated. For more information on convention volunteer opportunities and requirements, visit National's website at [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org) or contact Barb Bavido: [bbavido@tmail.net](mailto:bbavido@tmail.net)

## Children's Scholarship

We still have one more scholarship of \$500 left for a qualified person who would like to attend the convention. The major requirement is that they have a deaf or HOH child. The parent does not have to have a hearing loss, but the child does. The child may attend with the parent, but it is not required. A high school or college student with a hearing impairment can also take advantage of the scholarship and does not have to be with a parent as long as they do not require chaperoning. Contact Joan Haber at [joan1@comcast.net](mailto:joan1@comcast.net) for more information.

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President: **James Diaz**, Oviedo

[jdiaz@flashhh.org](mailto:jdiaz@flashhh.org)  
407-366-3024

State Coordinator:

**Lynn Rousseau**, Gainesville  
[west6273@bellsouth.net](mailto:west6273@bellsouth.net)  
352-331-9808

**Barbara Bavido**, Orlando  
[bbavido@tmail.com](mailto:bbavido@tmail.com)  
407-227-7052

**Francis Beecher**, Sarasota  
[fbeecher@comcast.net](mailto:fbeecher@comcast.net)  
941-952-9011

**Kathy Borzell**, Tampa  
[kborzell@verizon.net](mailto:kborzell@verizon.net)  
813-832-6810

**Alan Brown**, Maitland  
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[jforstall@ftri.org](mailto:jforstall@ftri.org)  
888-292-1950 X230

**Joan Haber**, Sarasota  
[joan1@comcast.net](mailto:joan1@comcast.net)  
941-921-9197

**Flo Innes**, Sarasota  
[advocatesforbetterhearing@msn.com](mailto:advocatesforbetterhearing@msn.com)  
941-349-3057

**Judy Martin**, Jacksonville  
[judy40@bellsouth.net](mailto:judy40@bellsouth.net)  
904-778-2265

**Jane Motrinec**, Naples  
[Janemot@aol.com](mailto:Janemot@aol.com)  
239-455-1870 TTD/V

**Kerry Payne**, Jacksonville  
[CKerry@aol.com](mailto:CKerry@aol.com)  
904-998-9888

**Andrea Wilson**, Davie  
[awilson4@mindspring.com](mailto:awilson4@mindspring.com)  
954-475-3125

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**THIS ISSUE IS  
DEDICATED TO THE  
LOVING MEMORY OF  
ROSE R. DIAZ  
OCT. 12, 1923 - MAY 25, 2006**

## TASA Advisory Committee

I serve as the representative of Hearing Loss Association of Florida on the TASA Advisory Committee. Here's a little background on TASA and the TASA Advisory Committee.



The Telecommunications Access Systems Act of 1991 (TASA) became effective May 24, 1991. TASA provides funding for the distribution of specialized telecommunications devices and provision of the Florida Relay Service through the imposition of a surcharge of up to \$.25 per access line per month. The surcharge is currently \$.15 per line. Under TASA, the Public Service Commission has the responsibility to review the amount of the surcharge at least annually and adjust the amount as necessary to assure available funds to achieve TASA's goals. Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI), a non-profit corporation formed by the local telephone companies, serves as the TASA administrator.

The TASA Advisory Committee consists of up to ten members recommended by the various organizations representing deaf and hard of hearing individuals in Florida (e.g. Deaf Service Center Association, Hearing Loss Association of Florida, the Florida Association of the Deaf, Florida Telecommunications Industry Association, Coalition for Persons with Dual Sensory Disabilities). The committee's role is *"to provide the expertise, experience, and perspective of persons who are hearing impaired or speech impaired to the (Public Service) Commission and to FTRI."* The TASA Advisory Committee meets twice a year. If you have any questions or concerns about telecommunications equipment or distribution, the Florida Relay Service or CapTel, please feel free to email me ([kborzell@verizon.net](mailto:kborzell@verizon.net)) or call me at 813-832-6810.

- Kathy Borzell

## Movie Captioning – a Hot Topic

The Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (FCCDHH) held its quarterly meeting on May 4 and 5 at the Radisson Kendall Hotel in Miami. Even though there is no active HLA chapter in the Miami area, many hard of hearing residents testified at the FCCDHH public hearing about the lack of captioned movies in Miami and South Miami.

Joan Haber, Vice-Chair of the FCCDHH Council, and a long time board member of HLA-FL is actively advocating for more movie captioning in all of Florida's theaters. The Council is writing a letter and a survey which will be sent to every movie theater in Florida requesting information about what they currently offer to hard of hearing and deaf patrons.

Joan is also writing a report on how to effectively advocate for more movie captioning, which will be published in a future edition of this newsletter.

## Thank You, Eric

The Florida Local Host Committee (LHC) would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Eric Bolves, Esq., of Bolves and Associates, P.A. for graciously opening their office space, donating not only their rooms, mailbox and phones, but also for personally donating, time, staff time, food and hospitality. We would encourage anyone in Florida needing advice or representation in his area of specialty (see full page ad in this newsletter), to pay back his gift and hospitality by contacting the office. If he cannot help you, he or his staff will find someone who can.

The Florida LHC is still in full swing, managing the last-minute details of the 21st Annual Hearing Loss Association of America Convention. Our LHC meetings will continue on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. weekly until the convention date. Volunteers are still needed, and our meetings are open to all interested. If you have any questions you can contact [HLAFL\\_volunteer@yahoo.com](mailto:HLAFL_volunteer@yahoo.com), or [Eric@TheLegalCenter.com](mailto:Eric@TheLegalCenter.com).

--Barbara Bavido

*Continued from page 1*

On all the TVs in the hospital rooms, a black and white sticker said:

*TV equipped with Closed Captioning (CC) capability. Push both volume buttons simultaneously. Push + to desired setting. Scroll down to exit.*

My first thoughts were excitement that the hospitals are responding to the FCCDHH's call to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.



Over the past months, a special task force committee of the Council has been meeting to specifically address communication accessibility needs in hospitals. Indeed, the signs are an excellent response to the council's initiative. My second thought was, why does the sign not mention assistive listening devices and

perhaps amplified phones available on request? This, my fellow hearing impaired friends, is simply because hearing impaired people in Florida need to vocalize their needs to the FCCDHH. The council meets four times a year at various locations in Florida. During the afternoon session of the first meeting day, the council opens the floor for people to share their wishes either verbally or in written form on a public comment card. The council then uses the information to determine what actions they should take. Simply put, many needs in Florida must be addressed. Some of these needs, like captioning, are common to both deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Some needs are more specific to the type of hearing loss. Qualified interpreter services, for instance, are more suited for deaf needs, whereas, an amplified phone would be a need for a person who has a less profound hearing loss. Typically, the forum at the council meeting draws many deaf folks who are very eager to point out problems revolving around inadequate accessibility to qualified interpreters. Unfortunately, hard of hearing folks, though a far greater population, show up in small numbers, maybe five or six. For changes to be made in favor of hard of hearing needs, we need your input at the FCCDHH forums. The next council meeting will be August 17 and 18 in Gainesville, Florida. The public forum will be on August 17 from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. If you can not attend, please send a public comment card to be read on your behalf at the forum. To obtain a public comment card, visit the council's website: [www.fccdhh.org](http://www.fccdhh.org). The council is currently focusing on movie captioning, CapTel phone service, licensure of sign language interpreters and medical accessibility. I, for one, will be writing a

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comment card mentioning the weak volume control on the telephones in the hospital. Also, I'll mention that the hospital desktop signs should include mention of amplified phones available on request. God forbid I have to visit a hospital in the near future, but if I do, and I see new signs posted, I will be happy to say the fruit of the Council is in full bloom. Please share your wishes and your experiences resulting from a need that has yet to be met, be it lack of hearing aid insurance, education, movie accessibility, or lack of captioned hurricane weather reports. Until the Council sees the requests in writing by numerous people, they can not justify the effort to address the problems at hand. Help the Council help you. Voice your needs. NOW!

The FCCDHH has made a generous donation to our organization to financially assist people; mainly children of low income families, to attend the upcoming Hearing Loss Association Convention at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort from June 29 to July 2. For details and inquires, contact Joan Haber at [joan1@comcast.net](mailto:joan1@comcast.net)

Jim Diaz, President

## From the desk of Lynn Rousseau, Florida State Chapter Coordinator

This has been a whirlwind of a month. I have been traveling to meet the various chapters on the east coast this time. Last month, the Florida Board members met in Boca Raton as guests of the Boca chapter and its president, Geraldine Young. The board members who traveled to Boca Raton were from all areas of Florida. They included Judy Martin and her husband Tom, from Jacksonville, James Forstall from Tallahassee, Alan Brown and Barbara Bavido from Orlando and Jim Diaz from Oviedo. Thank you to the chapter members from South Florida who were on hand to greet us!



A nice presentation on assistive communication devices was given by James Forstall of FTRI, with a question-and-answer session afterwards. Highlights of the 2006 HLA Convention, June 27 to July 2, was shared by Lynn Rousseau. After a lunch break, the group was invited to listen to the proceedings of the HLA-FL Board of Trustees.

Traveling to Orlando to meet John Miller of the Coronado Disney Resort has taken up most of my time these days as well as coordinating events for the pleasure of all attendees! A trip to Ft. Lauderdale to meet the Polynesian dancers and band was fun! A trip to St. Augustine allowed Judy Martin and me to experience a private musical concert by the famed Roger Geronimo, tenor. Meetings at night in the middle of the state at Wildwood with Jim Diaz, Alan

## Sinatra Meets Caruso

Here's the show you won't want to miss at our banquet Saturday evening, July 1. Dr. Roger J. Geronimo (Doctor of the High C's), has been a college dean, professor, entrepreneur, and corporate financial executive. Roger, a tenor who resides in St. Augustine, began singing, strictly for fun, at the age of 40! His professional performances include Peter Pan at Candlewood Playhouse, the Shubert Opera Company under the baton of Anton Coppola, Stage II Opera Company, and countless solo concerts and charity events. Roger has also acted in professional commercials for Time-Warner and AT&T, as well as in full-length motion pictures. Teaming up with Roger is baritone crooner Ralph Grieco (originally from the Bronx), who sings the songs of America's greatest entertainer, Francis Albert Sinatra. Ralph is not an impersonator! But when you close your eyes and listen, he will take you on a journey back in time. Ralph has been performing in clubs and major venues for over 45 years and is delighted to join Roger



Brown and Barbara Bavido have also been an experience.

We actually froze in the ice cream shop of Steak and Shake! Brrrrrrrr! Imagine, in Florida! There will be an ice cream social to cool off with at the convention too, but not as cold!

Anyone who would like to volunteer at the convention can access the volunteer matrix by writing to HLAFL\_volunteer@yahoo.com.

Don't forget to have your picture taken with *The Hulk* before his opening keynote speech, and then the Polynesian entertainment at the Get Acquainted Party will be sure to bring smiles and laughs as we try to do the hula!

Last but not least, a big thanks to all chapters who have donated a gift basket or item for the Silent Auction, to be held at the reception before the banquet. This is something new to the list of events. Come to the reception, and bid on an item you would like to have. You do not need to attend the banquet to view and bid on the items.

On the chapters updates. We have potential chapters forming in Hallandale and near the Villages. Anyone who lives nearby please contact me if you are interested in helping or joining these people.

If I haven't visited your chapter yet, let me know when is a good time. Be sure to share news of your chapters or yourselves with our editor, Judy Martin. This newsletter is for you! Send in pictures of your groups! I heard somewhere there is a picnic in the works?????!!

See you soon.

*A special note of condolence goes to James Diaz, our Florida. Board President, on the death of his beloved mother,*

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Geronimo, who brings audiences on a tour of Italy via the greats Neopolitan love songs and the famous tenor's opera arias. What a show! It has something for everyone. The incredible songs of Sinatra and the songs and arias of the legendary Enrico Caruso. Theirs is a show you will never forget.

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**Thank you to the following donors for supporting  
Hear Ye, Hear Ye, the HLA-FI newsletter**

*Kathy and Tom Borzell, Tampa*

*Terry and Alan Brown, Maitland*

*Carol Christopherson & Zoey, Jacksonville*

*James Diaz, Oviedo*

*Joan and Steven Haber, Sarasota*

*Flo Innes, Sarasota*

*Judy and Tom Martin, Jacksonville*

*Lynn and Joel Rousseau, Gainesville*

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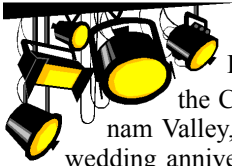
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## Spotlight on Frank Corica, Volunteer Extraordinaire



Frank Corica was married in 1955 at the Church of the N. America Martyr, Putnam Valley, NY and recently celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary. Frank's children include seven daughters of whom six are married with children. There are sixteen grandchildren and one great grandchild.



Frank lived and was employed in Pearl River, NY by the Board of Education as a teacher, elementary school principal, and various dept. head (such as music, art and school libraries) and finally as assistant to the superintendent. His educational background includes BA, St. Michael's College, Vermont; MS degree St. University, NY; additional school administration, courses, Teacher's Col-

lege, Columbia University. He authored a sixth grade Social Studies work/text book and a published poem, "In Search of a Distant Tomorrow."

Frank has been hard of hearing since the age ten as result of auto/bicycle accident. Now deaf in one ear—his hearing situation worsened from US Army service in Korea during that conflict in the early nineteen-fifties—and has used various hearing aids since 1965.

In his volunteer activities, he is a former JayCee President in Pearl River; a 40-year member of Knights of Columbus, served as "Lecturer" (program chairman) and received Knight of the Year award 1988.

His history with SHHH, now HLAA, is extensive. Frank was SHHH chapter president in the New York area and newsletter editor; SHHH chapter president Port Charlotte, FL and newsletter editor; several articles published in local newspapers relative to SHHH; instrumental in getting Venice Community Center equipped for HOH people; ongoing discussions with local libraries concerning issues for HOH patrons; provided information to FLASHHH in newsletter article about LIONS CLUB provider for low income assistance HOH people to acquire hearing aids.

Frank has been on the FLASHHH Board for more than five years; assisted in searching out information of grant-writing procedures for FLASHHH and presented to board; was FLASHHH Secretary and Vice-President; participated in joint AARP/SHHH National training workshop relative to helping HOH people prepare for job interviews; advertised such sessions in Rockland County, NY several years ago; attended Central Florida U. / Federal Government two-day work shop on Virtual Learning for HOH and Deaf children and adults; requested to attend to represent SHHH National

Whew! Frank retired to Florida 1995 and has been volunteering as Meals on Wheels driver for six years. He will be 76 on June 28 and is ready to retire again!

## HLA-FL seeks applicants for Board

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 7, 2006.

**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 composed 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 urged 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 geographical 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 chatroom and thus, Board members are required to have e-mail access. Reimbursements of previously approved expenses on behalf of LA-FL are available to trustees upon request.

**How to apply for the HLA-FL Board.** Application forms are available by contacting Joan Haber, Chair, Nominating Committee, 1768 Pine Harrier Circle, Sarasota, FL 34231 or by e-mail: joan1@comcast.net

Applications must be returned no later than **August 15, 2006.**

**Please support this  
newsletter. Ask your  
audiologist, ENTs, hearing aid  
center or local businesses to  
advertise.**



## Spotlight on Joan Haber, Woman on the Move

Joan's hearing loss developed in her early 30s and is attributed to a genetic predisposition and exposure to ototoxic drugs as a child. In 1990, about a year before the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Joan lost her job. This was due to her hearing loss and her difficulty in using the telephone. Today, because of the advocacy efforts of organizations like Hearing Loss Association of America, this would not happen and Joan could have retained her employment with better hearing aids and assistive technology.



Joan decided to go to college and earned her bachelor's and master's degrees, all the while learning how to advocate for herself to hear in the classroom. After moving to Sarasota in 1997, she found her first SHHH chapter and attended her first SHHH convention in Boston in 1998. She then joined the state organization of HLA-FL (called FLASHHH in those days) and in 2002 became a board member of the national HLA organization. She currently serves as the Vice-Chair of The Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard and Hearing and secretary of her local chapter. She recently received a cochlear implant and is thrilled with her progress thus far. She credits the Hearing Loss Association of America for providing her with the tools necessary to advocate for herself and the support to know she was not alone in dealing with her hearing loss.

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### HLA of Naples

Jim and Lois Smith are co-leaders and ask that you check their website.  
[www.naples.net/presents/naplesears](http://www.naples.net/presents/naplesears)

### How do you stay safe during thunderstorms or hurricanes?

The CEPIN (Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network) Project team has developed fact sheets for you. They focus on how deaf or hard of hearing people can be prepared for a variety of emergencies or disasters, and they also include other emergency-related resources: To download the fact sheets, go to: [www.cepintdi.org](http://www.cepintdi.org) (click on National Resources).

--courtesy of HOH Bob, Deerfield Beach

## Hearing Loss Association of Jacksonville

The Hearing Loss Association of Jacksonville meets monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at the Jacksonville Public Library, West Regional, Room 105B, 1425 Chaffee Rd S Jacksonville, FL 32221. Directions: I-10 Exit 351. For support, education, and advocacy. For more information contact the HLAJax chapter leader, Judy Martin, at [judy40@bellsouth.net](mailto:judy40@bellsouth.net) or 904-778-2265 or visit our website [www.freewebs.com/hearinglossassociationofjacksonville](http://www.freewebs.com/hearinglossassociationofjacksonville). CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) is used to caption text the meeting proceedings projected on a screen. There is no fee to attend the meetings.

We had the honor of having Janet Shelfer, Au.D. speak at our May meeting; who has been in private practice for 20 years and with Mayo Hearing Aid Clinic for 5 years. She gave a presentation on the background of hearing loss and the history of hearing aids. As well as a show and tell on the current and future technology of hearing aids. Following the show and tell she opened the floor to answer questions.

In June, our guest speaker will be Jack Gillrup, Chief, Disabled Services Division/ADA Coordinator, City of Jacksonville. Representatives of Fire & Rescue and 9-1-1 will also be in attendance. He will show us what's available to us, as citizens with a hearing loss.

In July, there will be a barbeque at Judy Martin's house. This will give us a chance to do some anxiety free socializing and eat good food! We won't have to worry about having anyone to talk to or if we'll be put in embarrassing or awkward group situations. This is a great opportunity for our group to get to know each other better, and to celebrate HLA coming to Jacksonville!

In August, we will go watch an open captioned movie at one of the two Regal movie theatres that host them in our area. This will be another chance to get together outside of the meetings, and to also experience and support the wonderful technology of open caption. If you have never experienced an open captioned movie you are missing out on one of the best things to happen to people with hearing loss. Sometimes going to the movies can be a disappointing and upsetting experience because we don't understand the storyline, or we missed the punch line of a joke or two because people were laughing. Now imagine going to the theatre with your family and friends and eating popcorn while watching a movie on the big screen, but this time you are relaxed and having a good time because the words are on the screen and you don't miss a thing! It is a life changing experience.

--Melissa Trauthwein, HLA-Jax

## A Call for Hearing Aid Improvement

By Francis Beecher

I have been a hearing aid user for more than forty years. My first hearing aid was incorporated within the temples of my eyeglasses. At the time, I was a proprietor of a campus area phonograph record store in Madison, Wisconsin. Prior to that time, I operated a small electrical contracting business specializing in sound system installations.



Francis Beecher

I experienced an overnight total loss of hearing in one ear caused by mumps. Recovery left me, reeling at times, with vertigo. Because of my severe loss of balance problems, I sold my ladder-climbing contracting business. My new venture was in a retail business selling the aforementioned phonograph records. Standing behind a cash register was less dangerous than climbing a ladder installing a sound system loudspeaker. About five years after becoming deaf in one ear, continuing loss of hearing in my aidable ear caused me to seek the help of an audiologist.

After my twenty-five-year career as a contractor and record shop owner, I asked my audiologist, almost in jest, if he had any job openings. He did, I accepted, and soon became a licensed hearing instrument specialist - a position that I filled for another fifteen years before my full retirement in 1984. During my years as a hearing loss professional, I became an active member of the Madison Chapter of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH). This was shortly after the founding of the national organization by the late Rocky Stone in 1979.

SHHH recently changed its name to a more meaningful, Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). I have held various positions in the HLA chapters in Madison and in Sarasota where I now live. Recently, I was nominated as a trustee of the national organization. My nomination was predicated on a call for hearing aid improvement. Concurrent with my professional and HLA activities, I have frequently contributed papers to professional journals and several articles in Hearing Loss - the magazine of Hearing Loss Association of America. Because of my recent HLAA board nomination calling for hearing aid improvement, Hearing Loss Editor Barbara Kelley invited me to write an article with a suggested title, "Affordable Hearing Aids."

Not long afterwards, I became acquainted with a newly-formed plan to make quality hearing aids more affordable for hearing loss persons with limited income. The plan was initiated by the Northwest Lions Foundation for Sight & Hearing, the Lions Club of Seattle. The Lions have a long history of helping persons with sight and hearing loss.

## Scholarship Funds

The Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (FCCDHH) is providing scholarship funds in the amount of \$2,500 to be used for families with children to attend the Hearing Loss Association's annual convention in June in Orlando. The FCCDHH Council believes in encouraging children to become involved in the HLAA's convention and to become advocates for themselves at an early age. A maximum of \$500 can be used per family with minor children to offset costs of registration and convention expenses. To find out how to apply for this scholarship, contact the Vice Chair of the FCCDHH Council, Joan Haber, at [joan1@comcast.net](mailto:joan1@comcast.net) or phone 941-921-9197.

## Hearing Loss Assoc. of Sarasota

The Hearing Loss Association of Sarasota (HLAS) meets in the Selby Public Library, 1331 First Street, Sarasota, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. in the auditorium on the Third Wednesday of each month (except there will be no meeting in July).

The summer meetings are usually informal gatherings. June 21st, we will have a brown bag lunch at 12:30 p.m. and immediately following the lunch we will have a rap session.

In June, HLAS will sponsor a series of captioned computer classes for our members. This is a pilot program and depending on how many people attend, we may offer more classes in the future.

LaVonne Stocco,  
President

## Emergency preparedness for the deaf and hard of hearing in Florida

It is important for community members to get involved. If you are a member of a local association of the deaf, Association of Late-Deafened Adults, Hearing Loss Association of America, Deaf Senior Club or any other professional or community group it is important that you or a representative from your group becomes involved in your community emergency preparedness, response and recovery plans. With your help, lives may be saved.



## Device testing at HLAA Convention

If you are coming to the convention, you may wish to participate in a special program.

Over the next few months, the Walt Disney World Resort will be testing the next generation of their wireless handheld technology for Guests with hearing loss. As you may know, Assistive Listening receivers have been available at Guest Relations for many years. In the late 1990's, Walt Disney World added Video Captioning activators that turn on captioning displays on selected video monitors. Then in 2001, Disney introduced its Handheld Captioning device, which displays text for specific theme park attractions where fixed captioning systems were previously unattainable or impractical.

The updated technology will incorporate the services for Guests with hearing disabilities into one device to include Assistive Listening, Handheld Captioning, and a Video Captioning Activator. This consolidation of services into one device eliminates the need for Guests to have multiple pieces of equipment.

As Disney prepares for the roll-out of this new device, they are looking for feedback from the community. As part of this, they are extending an invitation to 2006 HLAA Convention attendees to participate in a test of the device at selected Epcot locations.

On Wednesday, June 28, the day prior to the official start of the convention, the first 100 HLAA Convention participants who visit the "Device Testing" table hosted by Walt Disney World *Services for Guests with Disabilities* will have an opportunity to take part in this worthwhile opportunity. This table will be located in the Coronado Springs Resort Convention Center Lobby.

Participants in the test will receive a complimentary one-day admission ticket to Epcot along with an evaluation form to take into the park and fill out.

If you interested in participating in the device testing, here are the details: Date: Wednesday, June 28. Distribution is from 8 to 11 a.m. and from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Device Testing table hosted by WDW *Services for Guests with Disabilities* in the lobby of the Coronado Springs Resort Convention Center. Participants are required to be registered 2006 HLAA Convention attendees over 10 years old. For more information, please contact Mark Jones at [Mark.Jones@disney.co](mailto:Mark.Jones@disney.co)

--Toni Barrient  
Director of Member Services

## Information for Guests at Disney World with Hearing Disabilities.

If you are NOT participating in the device testing, here are some of your options.

**Assistive Listening Devices** utilize a lightweight wireless device that receives an infrared signal (an invisible beam of light) from overhead transmitters at certain locations in order to amplify sound. Receivers are available at Guest Relations lobbies in all four Theme Parks. A refundable \$25 deposit is required (must return item on the same day for refund).

**Handheld Captioning** This portable captioning system uses a wireless handheld receiver to display text in locations where fixed captioning systems are impractical, such as moving attractions. Receivers are available through Guest Relations and require a \$100 refundable deposit (must return item on the same day for refund). Handheld Captioning is currently available at the following locations:

**Reflective Captioning** is available at many theater-type attractions at the Walt Disney World® Resort. This technology utilizes an LED display to project desired captions onto an acrylic panel positioned in front of the guest. To utilize this system, guests should contact a host/hostess at the attraction.

**Telephones** Pay phones equipped with amplified handsets are widely available throughout the **Walt Disney World®** Resort. Pay phones equipped with a Text Type-writer are also available. Theme Park locations are listed in the Park Guide maps as well as the Guidebook for Guests with Disabilities.

**Video Captioning** Caption-ready monitors have a "CC" symbol and can only be activated by remote control. These remote control Activators are available at Guest Relations inside all four Theme Parks and require a \$25 refundable deposit (must return item on the same day for refund). Handheld captioning receivers also contain an Activator.

**Written aids** A pad of paper and pens/pencils are readily accessible at each location for Cast Members to utilize, if necessary, to communicate with Guests. Cast Members with abilities in Sign Language can be identified with the appropriate language pin. Guest Assistance Packets containing dialogue, flashlights, and pen and paper are available at or near the performance areas or entrances for most shows and attractions. Guests should contact a host/hostess at the attractions.

**Sign Language** If requested, the **Walt Disney World** Resort provides Sign Language interpretation for our Guests at live Theme Park shows with a minimum of seven days' notice. However, interpreted performances are currently available on a rotating basis as follows: Disney-MGM Studios: Sundays, Wednesdays; Magic Kingdom® Park: Mondays, Thursdays; Epcot®: Tuesdays, Fridays; Disney's Animal Kingdom® Theme Park: Saturdays.

### Calendar

**June 29 - July 2, 2006**

Hearing Loss Association of America  
Annual Convention - Orlando

**June 29, 2006**

HLAA Board of Trustees - Orlando

**July 28, 2006**

FCCDHH - Medical Accessibility Task  
Force

**August 15, 2006**

HLA-FL Board of Trustee  
Applications Due

**August 17 - 18, 2006**

FCCDHH - Gainesville

**October 7, 2006**

HLA-FL Board of Trustees -  
Jacksonville

**November 2 - 3, 2006**

FCCDHH - Tampa

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Member photos in this issue

by Lynn Rousseau

**Don't Miss the 2006  
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**Keynote Speakers:  
Lou Ferrigno, *The Hulk*  
Michael Chorost, Author  
[www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)**



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