

**Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) – Chapter Meeting
Sherman Oaks Library – Community Room
Sherman Oaks, CA
9/22/18**

MEETING COMMENCES AT 10:06 A.M.

JENNA NELSON: The room is looped so if you have T-coil in your hearing aids or Cochlear implant, please switch over.

Now you can hear?

Everybody plugged?

We have a lot of newcomers.

Okay, we're getting set up here.

So, I'm Jenna and Heather Lehr is our president and she's not here today.

So, I'm stepping in with my lovely assistant here.

Um, do you want to go to the --

TIM BROWNING: She's setting up --

JENNA NELSON: What should I talk about?

TIM BROWNING: Steering Committee.

JENNA NELSON: So, every year we have elections for the Steering Committee and it's that time of year again and we put out an email hoping some people would step up and we've got some lovely volunteers.

Actually, putting these meetings together is time-consuming, we do it because it's a labor of love but we can't do it ourselves.

So, we ask for help.

So, we had two people step up and what we're going to do today is we're going to -- myself, Tim and Diane are going to offer just a quick minute bio of what we do.

And then Sharon stepped up and she's not here, and then Sandy I believe is going to also step up and she'll give us a little bio and we'll just do a hand vote.

It's really sort of not complicated (laughing).

So -- are we ready?

TONI BARRIERENT: Sure.

JENNA NELSON: On this is stuff we're going to get to in the second half.

So, the way it's set up is because I see a lot of newcomers we usually have our speaker first and then the second half is going to go through some other business for the chapter, and what have you.

They're both equally important so please stick around but right now I'm going to hand this over to Toni, she's got a great seminar for you guys about hearing aids and how to purchase them and what to look for.

T-coil, T-coil, and I'm going to let you introduce yourself.

Go for it.

TONI BARRIERENT: I'll do it.

JENNA NELSON: Thank you for coming.

TONI BARRIERENT: I'm trying to get on the Wi-Fi here.

Well I'm lucky -- is this on?

Okay, I'm lucky to be here at all since I had a flat tire.

I stayed the evening with Grace, parked in her driveway and when I rolled back, I had a huge flat tire.

I mean it was totally flat I had to drive on the rim to get to a gas station and fill it with air and once I filled it with air I remember seeing a tire shop close to her place.

And I went there and I said I've got an emergency; can you fix this? And I -- they found a screw, a really fat screw.

And they plugged it and we got here almost on time (laughing) I was hoping to be here a little bit early, but anyway.

Yes, my name is Toni Barrient and there's a lot of faces I don't recognize here.

So, it's been a while since identify I've peon to this meeting.

I live in Orange County.

I am -- it's not really important but I used to work for HLAA in the National Office for nine years.

I came -- I retired and came back home to California.

So, I've been here since 2011.

It seems like forever.

Okay, you should have a handout, the Consumer's checklist?

And I base my presentation off of the HLAA checklist for purchasing hearing aids but I have a few things to add.

That I think are important.

And, so I'm not going to go line for line on the checklist, I just wanted everybody to have the checklist.

It's a good checklist when you're whether you're going for hearing aids or Cochlear implants, there's a lot of similarity in the process of investigating, being evaluated, tested, et cetera, and choosing a device.

So, all right.

Well the first thing you need to do is to find a provider.

So right now, you may have a provider but if you're thinking of changing you need to find a provider -- somebody that will evaluate you and prescribe hearing aids and fit them.

So, the best way to go about that, first of all, being in this meeting is a perfect place to talk to your fellow members and find out who they see, if they like them, what kind of service are they getting -- maybe what they don't like about them.

So, to find somebody that you think is going to be compatible.

I also wanted to point out hearing tracker.

Has anyone heard of hearing tracker? Hearing tracker.com, this is the new Yelp! for the hearing aid industry, hearing tracker.com.

And, so it's been out about a year, maybe a little bit longer it's just building up just like Yelp! was skinny when it started so hearing tracker is now picking up steam.

And what you're going to find there are hearing aids and what the features are, what's available; hearing aids dispensers; audiologists, little bio of them and reviews -- you can go in there and review your provider so you can see -- so other people can see your opinions on them.

What else? Oh, and you have a forum where you can ask questions, questions and kind of like a little blog.

It's a wonderful website, hearing tracker.com, I recommend it.

There's also Yelp! and health grades and you can use those to research reviews.

I'm going to suggest that you find a patient-centered provider.

And I'm going to explain a little bit more what that means.

So, audiologists versus hearing instrument specialist.

Tim, I got some more things to -- I'm sorry.

I should have given you both at the same time.

TIM BROWNING: No problem.

TONI BARRIENT: I brought lots of handouts.

From hearing tracker, I absconded with their -- or plagiarized their article about the difference between an audiologist and a hearing instrument specialist.

Basically, right off the top, you need to know that an audiologist these days graduating has to have completed eight years of education focused on the science of hearing.

They have four-year bachelor degree followed by four years to get a doctoral degree that happened in 2007 where a Master's degree was not enough, you had to have a doctoral degree.

On the other hand, the hearing instrument specialist is licensed to perform basic hearing tests exclusively for the purpose of selling hearing aids to adults and they do hearing aid fitting and sales.

They have to have a high school diploma, and they have to pass a licensing test. Kind of different.

So, this sheet will actually give you a listing of all that is in their training.

So, they do balance and dizziness disorders, we're talking about audiologists -- they evaluate infants, children, as well as adults.

They design, select, fit verification of hearing instruments -- we'll talk a little bit more about that; and they can do auditory processing, rehabilitation, there's a lot of things they're trained to do and they're trained to recognize and diagnose medical issues that can be seen with a phonoscope examination and there's a lot that you can see and at that point they'd refer you to an ENT.

And they can also help you with wax management, something that is a really big problem and a lot of people say I can't hear and then they discover that they can have the wax removed, lucky for them.

So obviously, I am suggesting -- oops.

I am suggesting see an audiologist and not a hearing aid dispenser.

Okay.

Seek a patient-centered provider.

So, this is a provider that is going to sit with you and provide information, give you T-coil counseling (laughing) ... something that I fought for and lost; collaboration -- they work with you, they have to work with you.

It's not a matter of just sit down, raise your finger when you hear a sound, you need hearing aids, here they are and out the door.

We want a lot more happening besides that.

So, somebody that is going to really collaborate with you.

Part of the collaboration is just finding out about your hearing history, your hearing loss history, and also where you have issues hearing.

Female voices, television, telephone, public places, that type of thing -- to find out where your problems are.

Participation, they're fully integratedly involved, again no slam, bam, thank you ma'am -- very involved.

And they provide dignity and respect so they don't bully you into buying hearing aids or anything like that.

Making your appointment. Well when you make your appointment, do ask if you'll be seeing an audiologist or a hearing aid dispenser.

Down in Orange County where I live, there are several clinics that have audiologists but they also have hearing aid dispensers and unless, unless you're familiar with the office or ask for somebody specifically, you need to ask am I seeing an audiologist or hearing aid dispenser?

You also want to find out if there is a charge for the hearing test.

Okay, one of the advantages of going to a hearing aid dispenser is they don't charge for a hearing test.

By law they can't do that.

They can't bill it, they can't -- it's -- they're not allowed to.

It's not in their scope of their practice.

Dispensers can charge and they should for the extensive work that they can do and their testing in their evaluation -- I think it's worth it.

Do they offer a Quick-SIN test and Real Era measurement? And I'm going to talk a little bit more about those things because those are things that I want you to take away from this presentation.

So, your first visit, you want to know do they offer one brand of hearing aids or a variety?

A variety.

There are many places like Beltone, Miracle-Ear and there's even some audiology practices that sell single brand.

Hear now USA has a contractual relationship with Kaiser and they're owned by Siemens which is now known by another name that I can't remember right off the -- I'm getting older.

So that's the first thing they're going to want to fit you with is Siemens, just so you know.

You want to find out what brands, you want to make sure there's a variety.

Are the hearing aids proprietary? What is proprietary? Proprietary is they're called locked hearing aids, locked hearing aids.

Probably the biggest provider of locked hearing aids is Costco.

Some of the brands are Audibel, Miracle-Ear, Beltone, NuEar, some Costco hearing aids they are trying to back away from that a little bit.

And in the Phonak Brio 3 model is locked and there may be other brands because they're coming out all the time.

The disadvantage to purchasing a locked hearing aid is you're dissatisfied with the dispenser or you've gone past your trial period and now you're stuck with these and they're not working, you can't take them somewhere else.

The exception to that is if you buy them from Beltone you can find another Beltone dealer and travel to that place.

So, it's not really convenient.

And, again, you're going to wind up getting another hearing aid dispenser which may or may not be a really great skilled hearing aid fitter.

And I -- actually I don't have a whole lot of them I'd like to give everybody but I do have an article that I copied from the professional magazine about the pitfalls of locked hearing aids and also when they're in Southern California, I like to attend the speech pathology audiology and hearing aid dispenser board meetings.

That's a long title.

So, they meet at the airport and they meet by San Diego so half their meetings are in Southern California and half in Northern.

Two meetings ago, they spoke amongst themselves and expressed great concern about locked hearing aids.

Because they thought this was not consumer-friendly.

So, they are -- I've seen they're their consideration and they're thinking about regulations to, yeah -- but that's up for them to.

If you have issues with locked hearing aids you should write to them and support their investigating it and -- so that's the DCA, consumer affairs.

Did you have a question?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was going to say usually what a start with is insurance and so I usually find out -- I would usually recommend finding out what your insurance covers so mine covers Serendipity.

They were bought out by -- I also had Siemens those are the top brands I know and I don't usually go to Costco for hearing aids because I know there's issues.

My husband says go to Costco, and I say no there's no reason because they're having this ...

TONI BARRIER: I'm not saying you can't go to Costco and get a locked hearing aid and do really well.

I'm just -- I just want all of you to be aware so that you can make the right decision for you.

Yes Georgia.

GEORGIA: I got a comment even though I have a -- sorry.

I just have a comment even though I don't have two -- I don't have two Cochlear implants it was my understanding that was if one goes to Costco you just have like a mild hearing loss.

Not like a severe hearing loss, that requires a really strong hearing aid.

So, you know that's just my suggestion to you, I have a friend who bought hearing aids from Costco, and she swears by them, she loves them.

She put them in and it was like, wow, but she has a mild hearing loss.

So that's something to consider.

TONI BARRIER: There's -- there is one company that advertises heavily with HLAA and they support the Walk and you'll see their logo on our website and on the magazine -- hi HealthInnovations.

Has anybody had any experience with hi HealthInnovations? Does anybody know who they are, what they do?

Okay they were the first to come out with -- let's call it mail-order hearing aids.

So, you had to have an audiogram so that means you have to go and get an audiogram and you fax it to them, mail it to them and they ship you hearing aids based on your prescription.

In my neck of the woods, hi HealthInnovations actually has a hearing aid dispenser that comes to the community, once a week or once a month, I'm not sure.

And actually, sees people in a rent it for the day office.

So, they don't have a permanent facility but they rent an executive suite for the day and take care of people that have hi HealthInnovations hearing aids.

So, they may be changing their way they sell hearing aids but for right now that's what I know about it.

If you're on Medicare and you -- and you have a Medicare advantage plan that's like the HMO plans for Medicare, hi HealthInnovations will sell you hearing aids for a co-pay of like \$700 each.

Not bad.

They have the little ones in the ear, they have the -- in the ear and then they have the behind the ear -- they have two models behind the ear.

Those are good -- those are proprietary hearing aids, those are locked hearing aids but for somebody who's just starting out as mild, they might very well get by on those.

So -- and I understand that they now offer accessories like Mini Mic and so -- that's fabulous, that's fabulous.

Okay.

Your tests and results.

You want to have an otoscopic inspection for ear wax and other possible blockages.

Never should you buy hearing aids without verifying that your canal is clear of wax.

So, (laughing) because you're not going to test properly and you may not get the right hearing aid because you didn't test properly.

So, and I'm not so sure that hearing aid dispensers do otoscopic examinations, you could have that done by your medical doctor, primary care.

Did you get a complete auditory assessment parenthesis? So that is a lifestyle history, and you need to provide those areas that you find the most troubling in hearing.

Did you get a "speech in noise test" that's the Quick-SIN that I referred to.

This takes a little extra time, maybe ten minutes.

The equipment is rather expensive.

And so not all audiologists do Quick-SIN.

How many people know Juliet Sterkens? Juliet is the hearing loop advocate that works with HLAA National.

And having a speech in noise test will reveal significantly problem areas and will help the audiologist select the correct device for you.

If you hear well in noise, you can get by with probably just about anything any hearing aid.

If you -- if the results show difficulty hearing in noise, you need some bells and whistles, you need some extra help.

And even that may not be enough.

What you may need is counseling, family counseling, and assistive technology because in some cases, if you're not hearing well in noise, testing, and it can't be corrected by a hearing aid, you probably need a lot of assistive technology.

Yeah.

STEVEN: Is that the test where you have the background noise?

TONI BARRIER: Yes.

STEVEN: Okay.

TONI BARRIER: Did you get a needs assessment? That's really -- that's that sort of duplicates this auditory assessment here.

Were your test results explained to you?

And like did you get your comprehension score? Did you -- and by the way, I suggest you request a copy of your audiogram.

You know, over time at a it will be very interesting you can compare one year to another.

This is the time to ask, you know, how much benefit can you expect with hearing aids?

And have them explain that to you.

It's an expensive purchase.

So, you know you want to know -- get as much information as you can.

Okay, so you've had your hearing test, it's been explained to you that you are a candidate for hearing aids.

Oops ... I'm going backwards.

So, what are your options? Well first of all you have a variety of hearing aid options, we've already talked to you about locked hearing aids and -- I'm not going to mention anything brand-specific and that is up to them.

The audiologist, to select the right one.

And accessories, more and more people are getting excited about streamers and T.V. listening hookups and -- so definitely, you want to find out about that.

I think telling you about telephone options, I mean are they referring you to California telephone access or CaptionCall or CapTel are they giving you any options

about T.V. listening options? A lot of the accessories now help with T.V. listening so that would be good information to get.

So, are they taking the time to explain that?

And public accommodations.

This is this is really what I -- if I was to start all over my legislative attempts, a lady friend through HLAA in San Diego is and I, actually with the help of two assemblymen, there was a bill written and we went to Capitol, the State Capitol and were trying it get this bill passed for T-coil counseling.

So, this is, basically, we just want all of the consumers to be informed so they can make a choice whether they want it or not.

80 percent of hearing aids come with Telecoil anyway, but I have run into audiologists and hearing aid dispensers that order hearing aids, leaving it out.

And they leave it out for a couple of reasons -- one of them is if they give it to the patient, and the patient accidentally turns it on and off and doesn't understand what they're doing, they're going to be very upset and probably put the hearing aid in the drawer.

So, but I don't think that's a good excuse.

You can deactivate it, it could be in the hearing aid without being an active program, so at least they should have that.

Where I live, I live in Laguna West Village we're putting the hearing loops in all of the clubhouses and all of the meeting rooms so when I first came out and I asked well how many people have a Telecoil? And I have I had a room of 40 people and nobody raised their hands.

Pretty much all of them raise their hands now and the ones that went back to their audiologist and found out they didn't have one were really mad.

They didn't have need for it then but they do now.

So, it's a good idea to make sure you have it.

Also, when it comes to public accommodations, different -- Georgia you're a wonderful advocate for public accommodations.

But more and more places that have FMs will provide a neck loop or if you have your own neck loop you can bring your own neck loop.

And you can use that with your Telecoil and you don't have to wear a headset -- that's preferred.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: When's what is a Telecoil this is the first time I'm hearing about it.

TONI BARRIER: Oh boy well I have a whole presentation but I don't have enough time to give it to you today (laughing) Telecoil is a copper wire that is inside the hearing aid.

And it -- when you have a loop, there's an electromagnetic connection to the loop.

And that loop is connected to the microphone.

So, the audio equipment to so when I'm speaking into the microphone, I know sound goes down, and then it seamlessly wirelessly presents the sound in your ear.

Through your prescription, through your prescribed hearing aids.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I see, okay.

TONI BARRIER: Okay?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's like what they used to have back in the day you wear -- now I get it because I'm used to the old style.

GEORGIA: I have to go back to the Dark Ages because I got my first Cochlear implant in 1994 but before that I wore hearing aids for 30 years.

And I love the T-coil, the switch the T-switch that's what it was called back then and I use it for the telephone.

It was amazing.

I couldn't talk on the phone without the T-switch, the phone would ring and I would just wrap it to the T-switch and get off the phone and put it back on.

But I don't know, is it harder to do it these days?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I guess you have to ask your office.

You have to ask your audiologist when get the new hearing aid to put the T-coil switch.

TONI BARRIER: Well hearing aids now are not likely to have a rocker switch. It's a button that will -- every time you press it, it moves to another program.

You might also -- a lot of hearing aids now you use a smartphone to turn it on and off, you have programs turn on, or remote control from my Cochlear implant I have a remote control that turns on the Telecoil -- so it's not on all the time.

See, Diane's got that.

Hi.

WENDI: So, yeah, the T-coil it's the same T-coil it's always been it's just -- you can still use it for the phone and just there are more options for the T-coil but initially it was used for the phone.

And now, it's the same one that you use for loop systems, it's the same one that you use for your Bluetooth, so it's the same thing.

It may not be a "switch" so some hearing aids it may be just the button but it's that same one.

ANNA: I want to know now more information -- I have the bells and whistles one.

WENDI: Very few hearing aids report going to come with the T-coil or T-switch and whether it's a button or switch it's the same one because it's the same technology for the most part now it's Bluetooth but it does allow you to hear on a regular let's say land line phone, if anybody still has one.

But it's very accessible and it's the same one they've always had.

And it's very -- like Georgia, you would love it and you may be using it some kind of way and you don't even realize.

Do you have a programmable hearing aid?

ANNA: Mine does like the different noise level like louder, but if I pick up the phone whether it's working at schools or (inaudible) --

JENNA NELSON: Okay you guys we're a little bit pressed for time so can we let Toni just finish her seminar and we'll do Q & A after and she'll stay at the break where we can talk about it.

ANNA: So sorry.

JENNA NELSON: No, it's okay.

TONI BARRIENT: Okay.

So, hearing aid considerations, so you need to pick a style that's best for you.

And your hearing loss.

So, I say that because many people you know want to get itty-bitty and disappear in the ear and nobody can see it.

And they work, if you have a hearing loss that will accommodate that size.

A little bit bigger or behind the ear is more powerful and you -- and you may need a powerful prescription as opposed to something like that.

So, it's really best that you -- that you pick that with your audiologist, they'll pick it.

Volume control, volume and volume control.

Boy this is almost controversial.

Because audiologists would like to put on automatic pilot for volume control.

And, for some people, that would be beneficial.

Somebody that doesn't have a lot of dexterity, somebody that can't remember how to do it, but -- I like to control my own volume.

There are situations where I like to bring the volume down or bring it up.

There really needs to be a conversation, for you to think about -- or you can have that conversation with yourself and decide if that's important to you and express that to the audiologist.

So, T-coil feature, insist on a T-coil I'm a big T-coil user.

What about the ease of operation and replacing batteries?

Some people don't have good dexterity, so you wouldn't want to have batteries that are really tiny and -- you might want to get rechargeable batteries.

So many of the good name brands have a rechargeable system where you just take it off and you put it in the charger overnight and then they're good.

So, there are a lot of people over 80, might benefit from something like that.

Okay, accessories you also want to find out about all the different accessories, I sort of touched on earlier.

Streamers -- and streamers connect to the Telecoil as well.

So, if you have a com pilot or mote con streamer or something like that.

And of course, you have to consider your budget.

And that's kind of a sticky wicket conversation, it could be.

If you're uncomfortable with that -- it's uncomfortable to talk about.

Purchasing the hearing aid.

You need to know you have a 45-day trial period, minimum by law.

But that doesn't mean that many places will give you 60 days -- I've heard trial periods of six months.

Whatever you do, get it in writing and put it on your calendar and make sure, before that date is up, you're satisfied with what you have.

You can return hearing aids for a refund, before the trial period ends.

So, I would suggest if you decide it's not what you want, be in that office before your trial period ends.

Whoops.

Ask for an in-office demonstration.

My favorite audiologist in Orange County has enough hearing aids there that she actually puts it on in the office -- and then they can walk around and the T.V.'s going and she has the T.V. on Telecoil, on a hearing loop.

And so, it's a marvelous experience.

A lot of people in my community are getting Oticon open which seems to be a fabulous, fabulous hearing aid.

You have one? Yeah.

Get a purchase agreement, in writing and -- this is the one time I'm going to suggest to you that you actually read it before you sign it.

I know we also -- you know, when I logged on here to the Internet, you know you're supposed to read this whole page.

This is the one time, don't just sign it, actually read it and make sure that it's compatible with your thinking -- or your expectations.

Okay.

So, here's the hearing aid fitting.

Verify with Real Ear Measurement test.

So, this person here actually has a little microphone -- there we go, it's in their ear.

And then they put the hearing aid on top of that and then -- this is the equipment that's connected to a box.

And, this will actually verify that the hearing aid is as prescribed.

And it's not too loud.

And, it verifies all the features, including directional microphones and Telecoil.

And, Brad Ingrao, I think he's been here and spoken.

He's since moved to Florida, back to Florida.

So, I he told me a story about a Real Ear Measurement that one time way, way back he worked for Miracle-Ear -- he sold real ear information and he sold real ear to Miracle-Ear which is really a surprise.

The equipment is not cheap, and it does take a little time to do the evaluation.

So, many people, including audiologists, don't perform this procedure.

This test.

It is best practices to have a Quick-SIN in Real Ear, you just have to ask for it and if they don't provide it, you may want to consider finding an audiologist that does.

Are you getting instruction and information? So, do you understand all the hearing aid features and programs?

Have you practiced with the audiologist have you practiced putting your hearing aid on, and taking it off?

When I first got hearing aids I was just pulling them out and then I wound up breaking the little plastic tube.

You got to learn the right way to do it.

Yeah.

And, all your features -- and that's not something that you're necessarily going to learn the first day that you pick them up but over time you need to make sure that your provider is providing you with all that information.

Care and cleaning.

Now, a lot maybe ... if you take care of your hearing aids and Cochlear implants, properly, put them in a dryer every night whether it's a jar of dis -- dry-in store electric box or whatever, if you take care of them you will extend the of your hearing aid.

So hopefully, hopefully the audiologist or hearing aid dispenser will give you instruction on that.

Comfort and feedback.

So, I'm doing good with my feedback today.

Oh, I just had a little feedback.

So, I always get feedback when my wax builds up in my ear, where the little wax gets stuck in the hole in my ear mold so you do have to check for that.

But are they comfortable? I have had people with in-ear hearing aids that have a lot of issues with comfort.

So, pay attention to that.

Pay attention to your trial period, if they're not comfortable and can't be made comfortable, you need to return them for a different model.

Accessory training, are you getting training for the accessories that you're purchasing? And of course, warranty information it's critical you get that information.

And sometimes they offer you an extended warranty.

I'm sorry Pete, did I -- I've got my back to you.

All right.

Counseling and follow-up.

So, wearing -- was a wearing schedule recommended?

Now, if all of you here have had hearing aids for a while, this probably is meaningless to you.

But somebody who's brand new, has been in denial, and they probably should have a wearing program where they get used to the sounds.

Things that I've heard from people wearing hearing aids are I didn't know the world was so noisy.

I didn't know the refrigerator made that much noise.

I know when I got my Cochlear implant, I heard the signal on my car for the first time in many, many years.

I didn't hear -- and you know I always leave my lights on.

And in Maryland when I lived in Maryland that was the worst time because we used to have flash rains and storms, and you have to turn your lights on and then I would forget to turn it off and ding-ding-ding, I didn't hear it.

Dead battery, all of that.

Okay.

Adjusting amplification, expect adjustments.

I have had people get hearing aids and complain about it but they've gone back to their hearing aid provider.

They didn't want to bother them.

Oh, they're so busy.

This is not a good excuse.

You want a patient-centered provider who will step up and help you with tweaks.

And they should be checking on you, especially after you get hearing aids, even if you're an experienced hearing aid user, you really need to follow up with new hearing aids and make sure you're getting the most out of them.

Environmental issues, background noise.

So, have you gotten a program that helps -- if you've got two microphones, one front and one back, one way to address background noise is to turn off one of the microphones.

And that's a feature or a program that's, you know, it's one of the programs you can tap into.

So, have that explained to you if that's an issue.

Did you get counseling about listening and communication strategies?

One of the best pieces of information HLAA provides is the tip card.

Do you have tip cards here?

No tip cards?

Okay, on -- it's sort of like a bookmark shape and on one side it's communication tips for people with hearing loss.

On the other side, it's communication tips for hearing people.

It's really excellent.

From the HLAA website you can download the tip cards.

And print them up yourself and, you know, make them available at meetings.

Hearing assistive technology.

You know, get information about FM systems, infrared, hearing loops.

This is the place you should be getting it.

And I know -- just generally speaking audiologists are not spending time -- it's not on their list to tell you this.

But, you should ask.

And ask what kind of support can you expect?

There's two ways to get hearing aids now, there's bundled and unbundled.

So, bundled is the cost of the hearing aid covers support for a year, including boundaries.

Unbundled, it's individual charges so you -- there's one charge for the hearing aid and then when you return for tweaks and follow-up, there will be a charge for that.

So, all that should be explained to you on how you're going to get serviced, what's included.

So, this is -- I'm at the end of my presentation and this is what I want you to take home today.

This is my takeaway for the best outcomes.

What you want is you want really good outcomes, you want hearing aids that work for you, and, specifically -- so I say choose an audiologist for your hearing aid -- hearing health care.

Ask for speech and noise test.

Ask for a Telecoil and ask for a real ear test.

If you were to do those things, you'll have -- in the hands of a really good provider, you will have an excellent, excellent outcome.

All right.

That's it.

Thank you.

(Applause)

LESLIE: Can you have -- is this on? Can you have HLAA email us a copy of that locked hearing aid article that you talked about? And also, can we have the name of the audiologist in Orange County that you recommended?

TONI BARRIER: Well I know them all.

A little bit more of my background is that when I retired from HLAA and I came home, I worked part-time for Caption Call and so I got to know all the audiologist and hearing aid dispensers.

Here's the article on that.

HLAA doesn't have this article.

This came from the hearing review magazine which is ... I have a few of these Tim if you want -- anybody who wants one.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I want one.

TONI BARRIER: This was written by an audiologist to audiologists.

DIANE GROSS: We can get that article --

TONI BARRIER: On the back side of this is the known hearing aids that come locked.

DIANE GROSS: Toni.

TONI BARRIER: We have an audiologist in our area, who sells Audigy and also the Lyric, the one that you put in for six months.

It's very expensive, too.

Anyway, so I don't -- I stopped recommending her because I -- I don't want to send people down that road.

Hi Diane, haven't seen you for a while. Good to see you.

DIANE GROSS: I used to, in effect worked for Toni when I was chapter court reporter for a couple of years when you were back east.

Anyway, I just wanted to say we can get that article about locked hearing aids and scan it and put it up on our website so everybody can see it.

TONI BARRIER: Great.

Tim has it.

Any other questions?

I know you guys have boating and things to do.

JENNA NELSON: It's okay.

It's all you for an hour.

You said it but I just wanted to reiterate for all the new people here.

Two things that was never told to me and that is set your expectations.

Because, hearing aids do not cure hearing loss.

You don't get a pair of hearing aids and now you hear normally again unless you have an extremely mild loss.

Then hearing aids will very likely get you back up to sort of pretty close to normal.

But, so you need to set your expectations because the majority of people who get hearing aids they go I'm not hearing great, and they take them out.

And that's it and they just spent 7 grand for something.

And to add to that is you have to advocate for yourself.

And, again, you said that but Jeff Grama is my audiologist and I recommend him he's here in Hollywood and I would go back sometimes weekly.

The refrigerator's too loud, my keys are making me grays crazy just jingling am high car.

You have to go back and just keep getting adjustments and some people 10 times, 20 times, keep going back.

That's your right and you paid \$7,000 for these instruments and so I just think that's really important because people don't do it.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I would like to have more information on providers who will do room looping for Telecoil.

TONI BARRIENT: Okay.

Okay.

There's not a long list in California these days.

That's the only card I have but you're welcome to have it.

Yeah, so one of the reasons why you may need tweaks is that when you first get hearing aids and you have not been a hearing aid wearer before, it may be so loud that they start off soft and then you adapt to that.

And then you need to tweak it up and bring you up to full steam.

That say true for Cochlear implants too, you know sometimes you get a better response but you've got to start low.

And this is the best place to be so you just got a recommendation here, so their provider, Jeff Grama, I never met him before.

So, she says he's excellent.

So, the next question is why do you like him?

I mean I'm not asking you to answer that but I'm just saying when you're inquiring and you want to make a change, you want to find somebody, why do you like him? Why is he so good?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I also use Jeff Grama and I highly recommend him but I also think that if you are into technology and you want your hearing aids to have that level, then you need to make sure that you get an audiologist who's not only proficient in what they do in terms of the hearing aids but that they have expertise in all the accessories and how to connect your hearing aid to the technology that's available.

Because not all of them are as proficient.

TONI BARRIER: Not only that, they may have all the expertise and knowledge but they shortcut you the time.

And that is a real bummer.

So, you need to find somebody that is willing to spend the time with you, somebody that's totally engaged and has integrated service.

Yes.

Tim.

And I also have one more thing for everybody but I'm going to make it the last thing.

TIM BROWNING: Just quick question, what are your thoughts about the over-the-counter bill that passed and do you have any thoughts about the future because hearing aids are supposed to get much cheaper but they're concerned about quality and so forth.

TONI BARRIER: The "official" over-the-counter regulated hearing aids aren't out yet they probably won't be out until 2019, 2020.

So, you can get an over-the-counter hearing aid at CVS for \$9.95 were.

The problem with most over-the-counter hearing aids is they're going to amplify but they're going to amplify everything.

So, if you're in that -- so if you're beginning, if you're very mild, that might be okay for a while.

But, eventually you need to have something that's programmable.

Some of the over-the-counter hearing aids have Telecoil, which is wonderful.

Some of the them have volume control, I would definitely -- if you're going to try an over-the-counter, make sure it has volume control.

And it would be nice if they had some kind of background control noise to control microphones.

But I haven't really looked at any and I certainly have not tried any.

My awed audiogram, I'm off the charts.

So over-the-counter would be useless for me to even try that to evaluate for you.

But it's going to be a while before they're out.

Okay, I brought something very special for everybody.

I hope I have enough for everybody.

This is the consumer's guide to purchasing hearing aids.

You can buy these -- this one is a 2017 edition.

You can buy these I think for 10 or \$15 on the HLAA website, I'm giving it to you at no charge.

I began a relationship with a publisher when I worked for HLAA way, way back.

So, I've maintained that relationship and every once in a while, when I ask he'll give me some magazines and that's what he did.

I just paid for the postage but they do charge -- here it says \$7.50, you know to purchase.

So, if you'd like to have one, I have a box and first come, first serve, I don't know if I have enough for everybody.

Whoops.

There is a lot of information about hearing aids, specific models, and I wouldn't even bother trying to digest that.

Just use the hearing aids as -- be aware of the different features that are -- might be available for you.

All right, that's my special treat for everybody.

That's it, I'm done, thank you.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: Thank you so much.

I thought that was incredibly informative, even for an old-timer like me.

So, thank you for -- I'm sorry it took you -- we wanted to give you a nice little gift.

TONI BARRIER: Oh, thank you.

JENNA NELSON: For coming all the way out here and going through getting a flat tire.

We really appreciate it.

Thank you, Toni.

And are you going to stick around for the break?

TONI BARRIER: Yeah.

JENNA NELSON: So, if you have questions and you want to talk to her, she's available, a lot of us know these things too.

So, is there -- there's a couple things before the break?

TIM BROWNING: I've got to switch the presentation.

JENNA NELSON: Um -- so before we take a break, I just wanted to let you guys know that it's Diane's birthday today.

And, Diane is our social media chair but she's actually just does a lot of everything for this chapter.

We -- I don't know how we survived the first year without you, so we have a cake for Diane.

But, do we want to sing Happy Birthday?

DIANE GROSS: No, we don't!

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes!

[Chapter singing Happy Birthday]

(Applause)

DIANE GROSS: Very nice.

JENNA NELSON: So, we're going to have cake, we're going to let our captionist take a nice break, 10 or 15 minutes just to get some cake, people brought food, there's coffee, water, juice, so -- and then we'll be back, thank you.

MEETING ON BREAK 11:03 A.M.; MEETING RESUMES AT 11:21 A.M.

JENNA NELSON: Hello everyone.

Yoo-hoo.

People.

Guys, can you take your seats, please.

Everyone!

Hello, hello!

Ladies.

Lovely ladies.

GARY JACOBSON: Hi, is everybody ready?

Did you all eat your cake?

But you can't have everything.

Okay, first of all, my report for the financial statement is -- I'm having a hard time reading it.

We have \$13,097 in our account.

But, we have not received the money from Chase yet for the Walk.

So, I don't know how much we're supposed to get.

You haven't heard anything, right?

GEORGIA: He sent out an email today.

GARY JACOBSON: Okay.

This is for the cake.

Also, if you write a check, you will be able to write it off on your taxes.

So, we're people to donate to the HLAA -- also for the scholarship fund because we need to raise money for the scholarship to give to a high school people or college kid, for them to go to college.

I'm going to pass this around.

If you already gave, you can always give more.

(Room laughing)

GARY JACOBSON: I'm going it start off with her.

And if you could pass it around.

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Okay.

It's all yours.

WENDI: I have a question.

So, do we also have money -- are we also raising money for the convention scholarship as well?

GARY JACOBSON: For the scholarship --

WENDI: That's for college and convention we call it scholarship or --

GARY JACOBSON: Well the scholarship we started a scholarship fund for the -
- so -- so if you're a kid you go to college maybe high school, we don't know but we also give scholarship for -- pay this poor kid.

I'm sorry but I think somebody like --

JENNA NELSON: So basically, what I try to tell people is the L.A. -- the Sherman Oaks Library generously donates this room to us.

But we still do have other expenses we have our captioner.

We need copies, supplies, marketing, all kinds of things that go into putting these chapter meetings on every month, when we have our holiday party we will be supplying the food and beverage for that so those are the types of things that the money goes to.

And what I try to tell people is if you feel like you got a benefit from this and it's worth two bucks, right.

That's really helpful to us.

Of course, if you want to give more we're very, very happy -- Gary's back there saying \$10.

But we don't want anyone to feel pressured but if you feel like this seminar was worth your time and effort to get here, we appreciate anything that you have to give.

So, onto the next thing.

Oh, newcomers.

We love newcomers.

If you would do us a favor and just stand up.

Brevity is key but tell us a little bit about yourself, who you are, how did you -- your hearing loss.

ANNA: Hi, can you guys hear me? First of all?

My name is Anna I'm 34 years old I'm a married wife, I have a baby boy who -- I am from Russia, I came here when I was five and a half.

Picture this, there were no tests -- my son was born, first thing -- totally clear nothing, no -- I work with Sonus hearing company that's where I got my audiologist needs from.

I found out about this, for many, many years my mom -- for those of us who wear glasses you get your glasses you go about your life.

That's how I was raised there was no support in school, nobody to talk to about my hearing problem, even my husband sometimes doesn't understand that my hearing aid can break when I go to bed and I have to hear one just to hear my baby boy in the other room.

So, to -- that's how I found about it, I was looking online and it had things for audiologists for hearing dispenser people but what about us folks who have a story like mine to tell and say I -- I'm in this I made it in this world not just through the help of educators and family, I told my husband I need meetings like this to feel safer that I'm okay to be someone who has hearing aids and -- today I learned about T-coil had no idea that I could ask my audiologist should these hearing aids be compatible with your snog so sharing my story will hopefully inspire other people and say that you guys can do it too.

My grandfather always complained, grandpa, I'm 34 and I've been wearing mine for 29 years.

So, I'm going to pass this around.

(Applause)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello everybody my name is Reid, thank you for being so welcoming today.

What are the questions you would like me to answer again?

JENNA NELSON: How you found --

REID: Well I moved here three months ago from Eugene, Oregon I was there for eight years I've lived in many places.

And I moved here to join the editing community to edit films and T.V. shows so networking has been very difficult.

My hearing history, I got spinal meningitis when I was a baby and started wearing hearing aids when I was three years old so kind of similar to you I think Anna, it's been very normalized for me.

But I haven't gotten a lot of education.

So, assistive devices I'm interested in learning more about those.

And just learning from you all, so yeah, thank you for having me.

WENDI: How did you find us?

REID: Oh yes through a Google search.

JENNA NELSON: Okay, thank you.

(Applause)

DENISE: My name is Denise Godoy and I lost my hearing about four years ago, I'm left side so I'm deaf in my left ear.

And so, it was sudden.

So, I think what had happened is I picked up either some kind of -- I picked up some kind of infection so it was sudden.

And at that time, I kept hoping my hearing would come back but after four years I think I finally realized okay this is it.

And, I had finally made up my mind to start checking into the Cochlear implant and lo' and behold I met Diane over in Calabasas and ran into her and I noticed she had the cochlear.

So, I stopped her and asked her how she liked it and she was kind of my guardian angel there.

And has been the one who really encouraged me to come over here and find out more information.

And I'm so thankful that she did.

So, I'm working with Dr. Burke right now, and trying to see if insurance will cover it so I am hoping, hoping to get some additional help and just to try to find out as much information as I can.

So --

(Applause)

DENISE: My husband --

PEDRO: My name is Pedro and I'm here with my wife Denise just for support and to learn more.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: Partners.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: She's been here before.

JENNA NELSON: Okay, great.

Thank you.

Welcome.

Please, continue to you know we speak about Cochlear implants, we had somebody last month talking about Cochlear implants but the other thing that you get is that even if the seminar is not focused on -- like last month it was Cochlear implants, people were like well I have hearing aids.

But there's enough people here that you can get help from any of us at any time.

You know, we all wear hearing aids we all wear Cochlear implants so somebody can help you.

Okay.

Do we need to go through this? Since we've already --

TIM BROWNING: No, I don't think so.

JENNA NELSON: Since we already have nominees?

TIM BROWNING: I don't yea I don't think we have to.

DIANE GROSS: Are there anymore?

TIM BROWNING: I don't know, want to go through this real quick?

JENNA NELSON: Sure, okay.

So, we already had people step up and -- want to be part of the Steering Committee.

The prerequisites were must be a paid member of HLAA National.

I recommend you all do that.

It's 35 bucks for a year, or 45 bucks it's really nothing and you get a lot of benefits from it.

And I would recommend doing that.

The Steering Committee is -- I don't know why we're going through this?
Anyway, you have to -- why are we going through this?

We already have our -- we already have our nominees.

DIANE GROSS: Well it helps for people to know what we do.

JENNA NELSON: Well we were each going to go around and talk about what we do.

So, I think that's what we should do.

The Steering Committee is who puts these meetings together, gets these seminars and to give you a sense of who we are and what we do, Tim, don't --

TIM BROWNING: Oh.

I set up the projector.

So -- lag up.

(Room laughing)

TIM BROWNING: Actually, I've been with the Steering Committee probably the longest of everyone so far.

I joined around 2015.

So, I am working, I have a very busy job so I wasn't sure how much I could contribute.

But I'm pretty happy with what I've been able to help bring back to the chapter in HLAA.

So, I think what's most rewarding is the fact that it's a very vibrant hearing loss community out there, and going through the conventions and so forth meeting all the great people couldn't have happened without the chapters.

So, I wanted to give back and the way I could give back, I thought was more from a technology perspective.

So, the website, social media, I'm trying to set up just help the chapter run because I don't have a lot of free time.

So, I think for me it's been a very rewarding experience from that regard because to have this set up and to have the platform and -- build relationships with others means a lot to me.

So, my way to give back for an association and chapter is giving that's given so much to me.

So, I find it very rewarding, I think the future's -- I think from these presentations there's a lot out there, a lot of advocacy going on and so, so I want to be part of.

And so, I think anyone who wants to participate in the Steering Committee in the future there's an enormous opportunity, whatever area they feel they fit in and feel comfortable doing.

So hopefully you can join us so that's me.

So, Diane would you like to speak next?

The birthday girl.

DIANE GROSS: Thank you all for the birthday wishes and the cake.

Tim has been on the Steering Committee the longest but I have been around longer than anybody.

As far as being part of this organization, I discovered it right after the San Fernando Valley chapter and actually National started in 1980 so I've been in and out for most of my adult life.

And I'm sort of the historian for the Steering Committee.

Like we just haven't been talking about fundraising and events and I just the other day fell into some perspective about things we've done in the past.

So that's one role I play.

The other role is Jenna said before I do a lot of the social media things, I do a Facebook, website, email updates.

I sit here and I take notes, right now, Tim is technically the secretary but he's doing other things.

So, I take notes so I have things to write and be able to summarize the meeting for all of you.

That's the kind of thing that I enjoy doing, I like working behind the scenes and keeping things in order.

And, that's what I would like to continue doing.

The other thing I'd like to say about the Steering Committee is that we -- even though we all may have a designated role, we fill in as needed, we cover for each other.

So, if somebody can't do something or maybe if I'm working on something and Terri has some ideas about how to work with Facebook, we will work together.

So, it's very much a collaborative effort to keep this chapter going and making it good for all of you.

So, I hope I'm -- I'm happy to be able to continue doing that.

(Applause)

TIM BROWNING: Thank you Diane.

JENNA NELSON: Everyone knows me (laughing).

TIM BROWNING: So, these are the nominees.

JENNA NELSON: For best picture (laughing).

TIM BROWNING: Yeah so that's me by the way.

That's Jennifer and Diane and we have Sumerian Sandy who would also like to be nominated.

And I think Jennifer was going to provide a statement on behalf of Sharon.

JENNA NELSON: Right.

And Sandy will also give us a quick low down.

So, I don't know if you all know who Sharon is.

But she's been here -- she's been coming for I think exactly a year.

And she's been very interested in helping out and what of what have you.

Her son is a freshman at Indiana University and it's parents weekend this weekend and so she's there.

So, I'm reading this for her and on top that of -- she'll be here next month and she'll speak to you.

Heather is more than likely stepping down as our president.

It's all good, she's still going to be involved with us, she's still going to be in charge of the scholarship fund.

She just has some personal things going on and doesn't feel like she can give 100 percent, but she's still going to be here she's still going to be involved.

But -- so she's on vacation this week so that's why she isn't here.

So, for Sharon I am interested in helping out in a variety of areas from meeting topics to event planning to advocacy, looping is a of particular interest to me and it has

been a game changer in my hearing experience and I know for many of my fellows as well.

In addition to a monthly meeting I would be happy to host in my home an informal gathering every month or so to discuss various issues such as apps, assistive devices, loop theaters rehab.

The information out there is huge and I think sharing best practices can be very helpful for us as a group and a good way to bond.

My academic and professional background in finance investment management and I'm interested in learning new databases, systems to organize ourselves as a group.

So, I think Sharon would be really valuable and as Diane said, you know we all have titles because we have to.

But we're a committee.

And we really, we're all on equal footing and we all just do different things.

So, I think Sharon's going to be a great addition and it would be Tim, myself, Diane and then Sandy has also stepped up to the plate.

So, I'll let her --

SANDY: So, my name is Sandy Blake and I -- here.

Better.

Sorry.

Anyway, I lost my hearing late in life.

I lost my hearing in 2009, this ear went, most of it.

And then last year in May, this ear totally went bye-bye.

There was a way big adjustment, depression and so on and so forth.

And then I got a ReSound hearing aid in my left ear and a Cochlear implant in January.

I was activated in February, by May I had 92 percent word recognition.

So that's where I come from.

Before that, you know, I'm an actress, singer, musician, so working on the music, the music is not great with Cochlear implants.

But, I'm involved in a study down at USC because there are these brainiacs who are trying to improve it, and I just love them.

And I go whenever they call me.

So anyway, I want to help.

I don't know, I like connecting, and I love to -- I discovered this meeting, I don't even remember how I found it but I just thought as we all did, as soon as you walk into a room where people have similar challenges, you go, they get it.

They get me.

I don't have to explain anything.

And so, I've just gotten more and more good feeling and I, too, want to give back.

So that's my spiel and I'm sticking to it.

(Applause)

TIM BROWNING: Don't forget to mention about --

JENNA NELSON: Oh right, Terri you all know Terri she's our social butterfly and she does a ton she's also stepping down from the Steering Committee but she's still going to be involved with marketing and social media and that's what I mean.

We're all still sort of involved in it.

There's a million committees throughout and if anyone wants to step up, you know I've been trying to get involved Starbucks involved with getting captions in there so I've been trying to do all that kind of stuff.

So, if anybody has interest in things, even though you're not on the Steering Committee, please step up and be a part of that committee or speak to us about it, it's something that we could further explore.

So --

LESLIE: So, I guess this is a politics question for HLAA.

You said that you're trying to get captioning in Starbucks.

Are you doing that as a member of the Steering Committee? Or as an individual? I mean --

JENNA NELSON: Well as a part of HLAA.

LESLIE: So, you won't have to get approval from National or anything like that you're allowed to advocate? I mean maybe this is a question for Toni you're able to advocate on behalf of HLAA?

JENNA NELSON: As a matter of fact, I usually tell people I'm with HLAA because it gives me some caché versus just being somebody who's hard-of-hearing, it's like I'm the vice president of the HLAA Chapter and this is what we're looking for.

And if anybody actually takes it seriously then National does have attorneys and what have you.

I'm sorry.

And they can help us.

But, right now, because these are such grassroots efforts, that are mostly proving futile but we still keep going.

That if we make a breakthrough and they say yeah let's have a conversation and I can call up National and say I'm going to have a meeting in L.A., is there somebody who's an attorney somebody who can help me but we just do those things on our own.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to add on advocacy I've been advocate forgo Pacific Asian museum in Pasadena to get its meetings looped and I've been working on this as an individual since last month and I finally started to make some very strong inroads.

And what HLAA -- first of all, the most effective advocacy is for somebody who is part of an organization but also the HLAA National website has really everything you need and step by step.

So, it provides information about how to go about it.

I -- basically, have identified myself as a member of HLAA chapter.

So, I have an organization behind me.

But I don't need to.

They're providing the resources and I could extend that -- USC right now has control of the museum and I could say -- and I did, if you need more information I was able to and I use the HLAA, appeal to them and I can get you the resources and so on that you need.

And I think that they took things much more seriously to useful yourself with a national organization that I could point to.

So, if you're thinking of advocating somewhere, you can -- in other words, you don't need permission.

I met a week and a half ago with the executive director of the National HLAA -- and very supportive of individual advocacy.

And so, they will provide you with the resources.

JENNA NELSON: So -- oh, does anyone --

DIANE GROSS: Just one thing.

They should also mention that Gary is part of the Steering Committee as the treasurer.

But we are just rewriting the bylaws so that the treasurer is more of a specialized position, someone who has accounting, tax-paying knowledge so that we don't keep rotating this out so often.

He'll still be part of the Steering Committee but not so much as a voting member as much as a participant.

JENNA NELSON: Yes, Gary has been part of our Steering Committee and he's talented and he's going to stay on doing that.

So, thank you Gary.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: So how do we do this?

TIM BROWNING: Does anyone else want to --

JENNA NELSON: Oh, so does anybody feel they want to step up right now?

I know it's a large commitment and maybe you ... but, as long as you fill the prerequisites of having been here for six months, blah, blah, blah and you're a national member, you can.

So, does anybody -- last call.

GEORGIA: I have a question.

How many positions are we filling?

Today?

JENNA NELSON: So, basically, because Gary and Heather and Terri are stepping down, technically -- I mean the Steering Committee can have up to nine people I believe.

It gets kind of crazy with nine people.

But, we would accommodate that if people wanted to be on it.

But, basically, because Gary is still going to be on in ... some kind of capacity, it's really Heather's role and Terri's role.

And so, we have Sandy and we have Sharon so we're just sort of filling that in.

But we don't -- when we put out the calling last month and -- on Facebook, those two stepped up.

And so, like I said they're sort of filling those spots.

It doesn't mean we can't have more.

But, that's sort of what where we're at.

DIANE GROSS: I'll try to shout.

The entire Steering Committee is up for election this month.

So, we're, in effect, electing the whole Steering Committee to fill however many spots we want.

And then after the Steering Committee is chosen -- okay, sorry. I was saying that the entire Steering Committee is up for election every September.

So, we are kind of affirming now who's going to be on the Steering Committee.

And then according to the bylaws, once those people are in place, the Steering Committee decides who is going to be the officers.

It could be a rotating president, each month, it could be one president -- we have to decide how we're going to do that.

But I think you should all be aware of that.

ANNA: Hi I have a question.

So, one of the reasons why I looked into this HLAA is I'm not seeing in a lot of schools that I work with whether it's -- there's other you know K through 123 classes there there's not really much information or advocacy out there for locating common middle about where to go about to find things that are for hearing loss.

Like this is my first meeting, so when I came here, I learned some new things today that I didn't know before.

I'd love to maybe start something with HLAA that can maybe like go to schools and share information and advocate because I recently went to a mommy time event where they had a speech pathologist speak there.

She doesn't have a hearing loss, she doesn't understand the world we're in and like she said she found a friend, that's show how she really learned about what community -- like, I meet kids at school they have hearing aids but I'm like can you hear me? No, not really, when I worked in the special ed program, so that's why my question is do you have something like that going? Or can we do something that's part of an addition to -- because I would love to work for that.

TIM BROWNING: You can speak to Jennifer but I think the Steering Committee, we do have committees, we do have outreach, advocacy and so forth.

And, any chapter member can be a part that of.

As a matter of fact, we have we're always looking for people to participate whether it's setting up, outreach, social media, whatever.

Steering Committee members will be the effort but it doesn't mean that you guys aren't part of.

You come to our meetings, you can participate, be part of the committee, share ideas -- everything.

So even if you're not part of these people, you are a very, very viable piece of the puzzle.

ANNA: I would love to just go to schools and advocated, because I know the Steering Committee -- I'm looking for ways to just promote -- hey there's information, you know do your own research and find the best whatever for your child because a lot of schools will say don't talk about all this other stuff.

You know.

WENDI: So, I guess this was last year in Pasadena as a large group, we broke up and people were able to say what it was they wanted to do.

And that is still very much an option.

So, for right now the Steering Committee works primarily on making sure that this chapter runs smoothly and that everything is in place.

However, we may do this again whereby let's say another meeting anybody who wants to do anything on behalf of the people with hearing loss can have that opportunity.

You and I could get together with, say, you know Denise and we can do whatever we want to do.

That -- you don't have to be on the Steering Committee to do that and we have lots of things that the whole chapter can get involved behind either as a smaller group or as a large group.

So, what you're talking about is very viable and I would be willing to work with you on that.

But we don't have to be on the Steering Committee to do it.

ANNA: Because I have meetings with a lot of you guys here and a lot of you guys were saying well you know I was -- I was older in life and I had something that affected my hearing loss and I met Reid and one other person here where we were born with it.

So, there's so much out there -- people who come into the schools and talk about we'll get your dent -- to get your eyes checked -- what about hearing? There isn't much said on it, it's very much a (inaudible) world I think in my opinion.

TIM BROWNING: So, Anna we can really use your ideas, so we need that passion.

But there's more opportunities to talk about this.

But I think we're running a little short on time.

So, can -- hold those thoughts you're not forgotten.

So, I think as far as the voting goes I think just a raise of hands.

So hopefully you like us.

But --

JENNA NELSON: Do we have to do each individual person?

TIM BROWNING: Toni can we get through all five at once?

We're going for Steering Committee.

I don't know if there's any sort of --

TONI BARRIER: I don't understand what's the question?

TIM BROWNING: We'll be voting in the Steering Committee members and we just show a raise of hands for all of them at once?

DIANE GROSS: Yeah, I think so just you affirm these five people to be on the Steering Committee.

TONI BARRIER: The only people that are eligible to vote are members.

JENNA NELSON: If retrim.

TIM BROWNING: If you're a member you can vote.

So please keep that in mind.

So be ready to vote.

JANE: I just joined online.

Like minutes ago.

So, if you want to vote, it will take a couple minutes online, with a credit card.

GARY JACOBSON: Okay, non-repeat I can say something I move that we accept all five as the new Steering Committee.

Anybody second?

DIANE GROSS: Second.

TIM BROWNING: That's why we love Gary so much.

(Applause)

TIM BROWNING: Thank you Gary so -- so I guess we can move on.

JENNA NELSON: Yeah, we have to.

TIM BROWNING: So, guys, real quick I have a handout here that I can put up there.

Heather brought to my attention that UCLA is doing a research study for people with either Cochlear implants or have a Cochlear implant and a hearing aid.

It's a very important study.

You know we talked about what the chapter does for helping each other.

This is a chance to help and reach out to other people.

I think Sandy we talked about what she's doing at USC, this is an opportunity with UCLA.

So, they would like an opportunity for any of you that might qualify to have a chance to participate in this research study.

So, one thing to keep in mind is they'll schedule the best they can at your convenience.

So, if you're able to participant participate, please do.

I think in 2019, sometime in that time-period they're going to finish the study so there is time for you to volunteer.

But I do have handouts here, plus contact information.

This will be a great opportunity for you to give back and offer some help.

It's auditory training, question, feedback -- it's a way to give back to the hearing community.

So just wanted to pass that on.

Okay and so Yahoo groups I know a lot of you have been using -- a lot of us have had problems with it, especially new members have had problems getting into it.

So, we're looking into phasing out Yahoo groups into some sort of platform probably the website we're going to utilize -- we have a lot of problems with new members trying to join Yahoo groups trying to navigate and use it.

I have problems with it I don't get timely updates and so forth.

So, we're trying to streamline communicate communication of much more effectively so probably somewhere around 2019 we will have a much more improved process for communication.

Probably much more streamlined, modern to what people are expecting nowadays.

So, we're working on it right now, I don't think anything specific has been decided.

But, we're going to discuss it further and have something in place but I think primarily we can focus on the website, right?

JENNA NELSON: Well yes and no.

So, who here -- just a show of hands, who here is on Facebook?

Three quarters of you.

Because just to go -- just to walk back a little bit for the newer people so Yahoo groups is how we communicate with each other.

So, it might be hey I've got tickets to the Hollywood Bowl and I can't use them, right so Georgia would post that and it goes to everybody who's a subscriber and I get to see Georgia's email.

And then when I reply it also goes back to everybody on the group.

The problem with Yahoo is because you're having this back and forth, so you may have 20 messages in your email about Georgia's tickets.

So, we were trying to find a way to communicate where it's not so intrusive or not everybody's getting an email from every update.

So, a lot of us use Facebook, we have a Facebook page, we sort of skipped over that but I would encourage you to join our Facebook page, if nothing else, just to be in the know because we post upcoming meetings, and Alice all sorts of information.

But we were thinking of using Facebook as a possible platform to just be able to communicate with each other without creating something new and going to the website.

It might be something we have to do but, you know, we're trying to make it easiest.

And I know many of you are on Facebook and maybe for those of you who aren't, you would be willing to just join the HLAA Facebook group if you want to be sort of in the know.

TIM BROWNING: That's what we're still figuring out but we'll come back up with solutions --

DIANE GROSS: I have a question.

Okay.

For those of you who currently don't use Facebook, would you be willing to sign up for it to be able to participate in chapter communications? Because I know people a lot of people have aversions to Facebook but would you be willing to consider that? Show of hands for those of you who don't use Facebook?

That was just something to consider.

KATE: From my experience in Facebook, I get a lot of emails.

What you can do is go into Facebook and there is a line where you can say "do not want to go to the emails."

So, you need to look in your Facebook settings to turn off the emails.

TIM BROWNING: Yeah, there's some options so I know we'll probably bring this up more in November as well.

I guess in the interest of time we -- so we do have a November meeting so we'll discuss it more, just for your awareness.

WENDI: You mean next month.

TIM BROWNING: November 3rd is our next meeting.

The library is not available on that Saturday due to Halloween festivities for kids so they're using this room so we're going to have it on November 3rd.

WENDI: Is that going to be the October and November meeting?

TIM BROWNING: I think it's primarily focused on the holidays, so the pot luck.

We're going to have something in October which we'll present to you in a second.

And there it is.

I'll get out of your way here.

So, Georgia has kindly offered her townhouse for a chapter rap session.

Since the library is not available we thought we'd offer more intimate opportunity for people to discuss any areas of concern with them, support, audiologist concerns and question and so forth.

So, she's offered her town home, thank you Georgia so I think Diane will have the sign-in sheet here.

DIANE GROSS: Start here.

TIM BROWNING: She'll pass along the sign-in sheet for you guys to reserve a spot to join her on the 13th.

We've done this before and been very successful.

So please -- and --

DIANE GROSS: Tim won't be there so we may not be able to set up the loop.

But I've been to Georgia's condo, it's cozy it's got good acoustics so we should be able to cope with hearing each other and helping each other out, if we can.

So, don't expect to have the loop there.

Unless someone wants to volunteer to set it were you present.

TIM BROWNING: It is a very intimate setting so even if you're having some trouble, they all get it, they'll help you out.

Is there anything more to cover on this?

Or should I move over?

I'll move onto the next item.

Just real quick, on the website, we just posted Ralph Rewards, you can sign up for Ralph Rewards or renew it if you were part of it.

Instructions are on the website on how to do it so if you go to our homepage you'll see a big Ralph's logo and step by step I just did it and pretty straightforward.

WENDI: That is one of our ways to fundraise but the other one is not up there is the Amazon Smile.

So, if you can do that while you're doing Ralph's, that would be great (laughing).

TIM BROWNING: That's a very good point, if you go to the website we have a search, just type in Amazon Smile or something like that and you'll see the article.

We have an article on how to do it and it's posted right there.

So please, when you buy that big flat screen T.V. use Amazon Smiles.

So, we're -- buy a lot.

So, we're having an open-house.

Do you want to speak on this?

We're still working --

JENNA NELSON: I mean we're sort of pressed for time.

We're thinking about having an open-house in January.

I don't think it's going to happen but what we're trying to do is we're trying to get more members to come.

And so, when you speak to your friends or your hard-of-hearing friends, I guess I should say, you know, please bring this up.

And, the open-house is an opportunity to invite the community in and let them know about us and we would have a speaker and we would have goody bags and it would be sort of a social thing.

But we haven't really -- we haven't really singed everything together so I think we'll give you more information in the next meeting.

TIM BROWNING: Yeah, I think Heather -- will the committee will be -- it's an idea to kind of change up how we do things here.

So more to come.

If you have questions, please see us.

So, this is the upcoming schedule.

So, library is not available in October, so we're having the rap session at Georgia's and November 3rd we're having our later "coping with the holidays" which is a very popular session which works out well because you have Thanksgiving, New Year's and Christmas to -- great tips you can really have -- it's really a fun session and it's going to be pot luck too as well.

So, we'll have more information for you on the website, Yahoo groups and on Facebook.

December 8th, Grace has donated kindly her beautiful home in Pasadena, we've had our holiday party there before it's been a lot of fun.

So, December 8th we're going to crash Grace's house and have a great time.

And hopefully we leave before midnight but anyway we're going to have more details coming up.

But I think we're going to plan on catering this one.

Kind of ease the pressure of bringing food.

We'll have more details on that.

But we're going to try to keep it simple but I think we'll still do white elephant and do all the normal things we do.

It's always been a great, great time.

The 26th as we said we're not sure it's going to be an open-house or chapter meeting.

More information to come we're still working on our 2019 schedule.

So, I think that is it.

So, Ali thank you our captionist, for all your hard work and I don't see any typos or anything, so good job.

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DIANE GROSS: I saw one.

TIM BROWNING: Thank you guys for coming and thank you for the questions.

So, I look forward to either Georgia's rap session or November 3rd.

But, as always --

WENDI: Before you go, is this anybody's hat?

Somebody has a purple hat with a button?

DIANE GROSS: That's just for anybody who wants it.

WENDI: Okay, thank you.

TIM BROWNING: Thanks everyone.

CLASS ADJOURNS AT 12:09 P.M.