

**Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) – Chapter Meeting
Sherman Oaks Library – Community Room
Sherman Oaks, CA
3/23/19**

MEETING COMMENCES AT 10:04 A.M.

JENNA NELSON: Good morning everyone.

Wow this is like a killer turnout.

All of the veterans -- I don't want to say oldy but goody but you know what I'm talking about.

JON: Veteran is good.

JENNA NELSON: So good morning everyone, I'm Jennifer/Jenna the president of HLAA.

It's great to see this turnout.

Before we go into our seminar and emergency preparedness, just a couple of things, if you haven't visited our website, please do.

Hlaa-la.org we have private Facebook group that is -- we can talk amongst ourselves, nobody can find us because you have to be invited to the group.

That's [facebook.com/group/hlaa.losangeles](https://www.facebook.com/group/hlaa.losangeles).

Take a picture.

The Yahoo groups were kind of phasing out, we're phasing out so if you're on the Yahoo groups we'll continue to use them now but we won't let people join, we're doing eBlasts so many of you might have gotten an email about this meeting and we're going to continue to talk amongst ourselves on Facebook.

And then our amazing website by our amazing web master Tim Browning.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: HLAA-la.org and if you have questions you can email us.

Also, for those of you that don't know, so we loop the room and so if you have Telecoil on your Cochlear implant or your hearing aid, please turn it to that setting.

If you don't know what Telecoil is or looping is, you can talk to us during the break, it's a fabulous piece of technology that allows my voice or anybody speaking with the microphone to go right into your device.

And it's life-changing, it's crystal-clear and it makes it so much better.

So, if you do have Telecoil on your device please switch it out and it will be clear.

All right so before we get to our seminar, are there any first-time people here?

If so, well -- okay so we're going to do first-time, blah, blah, blah, okay, we don't.

So, for the first-timers please stand up and introduce yourself, give us your name, the type of hearing loss, how you heard about us, and what you're hoping for from this chapter.

So new people, anybody?

Anybody?

RON ROSS: Good morning, my name is Ron Ross, I'm -- I've been wearing hearing aids since 2001, started out with CIC, I've had just about every style.

I'm now wearing behind-the-ear hearing aids.

I have asymmetrical hearing loss; my left hearing is terrible.

What else do you want to know about me?

Oh, and I'm here because of my daughter who found this organization on the Internet.

I commented to her it's a -- that it's amazing that how many EM T's, audiologists that I've seen over the years and none of them have mentioned this organization.

Later on, I'd like to get -- I want to bring it on the audiologists.

Oh, by the way I also because of my problem with tinnitus, I was treated or I went to CSUN, their audiology department.

You know and -- you know, looking for help.

The organization was not mention to do me, I don't know.

Have you -- I suggest maybe you make an effort to do whatever and send your information to the audiology department at CSUN.

And oh, this is my wife Bobbi, this is the one that has to put up with me.

And you know, my problem is I -- like I'm sure many of you, that not getting the sound hearing, I mean -- you know I can raise the sound, no problem.

But my hearing is not, I don't know, typical or whatever but my -- I hear women at the higher frequency better than men.

My problem is actually hearing men more so than women.

Maybe that's trading for my wife, she wants to make sure that I hear.

But anyhow, I'm willing to answer questions, if you have questions for me.

I have an engineering background so I'm involved with and around all kinds of things.

So, I'm a little bit knowledgeable about it.

Okay?

All right.

JENNA NELSON: Thank you very much.

If -- there is an audiologist, we have a few that we do refer people to and they are HLAA proponents and they have their -- our literature in their lobbies.

And one of our audiologists actually does help with tinnitus and we're hoping to get her to speak here about tinnitus in the Fall.

So, we -- but, it's an ongoing battle to try to get the ENT's and the audiologists to recommend us.

But thank you and welcome, welcome to your family for being here.

Is there anybody else who's new?

No.

Okay.

All right, so we're going to go right in -- we have a packed schedule today so we're going to go right into emergency preparedness.

It's time for real talk about what to do in case of emergency, wondering how you'll be notified wondering what to expect in shelters, need some ideas how to prepare for incidents like earthquakes and wild fires.

Rick Pope will be talking about accessibility for people who are hard-of-hearing in emergency situations. So please help me welcome Rick Pope.

(Applause)

RICK POPE: Okay, everybody adjust your hearing aids?

All right.

My name's Rick, and I'm an A.D.A. coordinator with the City of Los Angeles, Department on Disability.

I'm the product of a deaf man, and an interpreter mother.

So, my life was spent in the deaf/signing world.

The interesting thing is my father lost his hearing at the age of 24, from cerebral spinal meningitis, he's a World War II or was, a World War British army veteran and he got through the entire war just to come back home and lose his hearing.

So, this is in post-War Britain so you can imagine there weren't a lot of opportunities and then he came over here in the states, went to Gallaudet and went into seminary, which means I'm a preacher's kid which means I'm about the worst of the worst.

After a stint I ended up joining the army as an infantry medic and after about six years, I figured that becoming a sign language interpreter would mean people would shoot at me a lot less.

Jury's still out on that.

I'm an emergency management specialist from the State of California.

So, I've worked with the city and -- the police department, the fire department, the Emergency Management Department.

I'm the guy that goes 90, stands next to the mayor and interprets, and I also coordinate stuff like we're going to talk about today.

Okay.

So, get right into it, we've all heard about the Americans with Disability Act, right?

Okay? There's another state law that just came out, assembly bill 2311 and it's going to frame our discussion --

GEORGIA: Can that be made bigger?

RICK POPE: Yeah, Jen how that was going to come out on this.

Really, if you're interested in the law, I can send it to you but it's a lot of blah, blah, blah.

But we'll get into it.

The bottom line on this, okay, is this section talks about emergency communications.

And it says the integration of interpreters, translators and -- I love this one -- assistive technology and I believe that's probably what we're talking about.

This is talking a lot of evacuation, and this is shelter.

This came out of the San Bernardino shooting.

You might remember there was an active shooter at the Waterman regional center and this came about because the communications piece, big surprise, went sideways.

Folks who were deaf and hard-of-hearing, basically were out of the loop.

So, we'll talk about it.

And I'm sorry about the font.

So, there are things like, you know, you probably know about the Weather Radio, okay, and then to sign up for notifications you can go to two places -- one's L.A. County.gov and the one that I talk about, because I have to, is the City of Los Angeles notifyLA.org.

Man that -- nothing worked out with this one did it?

Okay.

So, the wild fires that we had up north, recently, and -- in Paradise and you may have heard some of the stories.

But there are people that I know that were literally pulled out of their bed with the fire on their lawn.

And, this is after their parents were doing like 120 down the highway to try to get to them because, big surprise, no communication.

Okay.

Firefighters pulling people out of their beds, parents of people pulling people out of their beds with the house on fire, the lawn fully involved, smoke all over the place and literally I heard one person say, you know, I'm dead asleep, I have no idea what's going on, and then all of a sudden I'm shaken awake and you hear three large alien looking goods with gas masks and the whole bit and they're grabbing me and pulling me out.

I'm like well how did you feel about that?

Well if you didn't think I pooped my pants, you've got another thing coming.

And so, the point being is that because -- our disability, in my world, okay, it's not the fact that there's an issue hearing.

It's the communication barriers that are put in place because somebody can't hear so well.

Okay?

Or people who do hear don't know how to handle folks who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, more to the point.

Okay?

So, what this is -- and I'm spending a lot of time on this because we're talking about notification -- you go to that website, and I hope you can see that.

The website address, is that large enough?

JENNA NELSON: We can send the information.

RICK POPE: Okay, please send it.

Mobile number, home number, this is key -- voice messages are defaulted to adopt send voice messages.

Okay? We've done that because people would put in their phone numbers, right, and it would go through relay.

But it's a robocall.

Now I've worked in video relay and by the time that call drops into my station, I get it, I get the call to come back out, I've lost 30 to maybe 45 seconds worth that of recording.

Which means I'm probably not going to be able to retain all that while I'm hitting buttons and waiting for the person to come up on the screen.

That's important information.

The fact that it's a robocall means I'm going to miss about ten seconds of information between when it kicks into my station and all the technology, I'm missing information.

So, this is defaulted to do not send voice messages.

Instead, you might want an email or a text message.

Okay.

So, we've done a lot of work with this website to make sure that folks who are deaf and hard-of-hearing are able to get the information that's needed.

So please take advantage of it.

Let's not wait until the three alien-looking guys are busting down your door to haul you out of bed.

And this is where it says individuals -- excuse me, let me try that again, individuals relying on relay are encouraged to sign up and receive text messages using a smartphone, mobile device, by providing a mobile number.

For me and at least in the world I'm That's key.

You also might want to get shake alert L.A. this is going to send you a notification when any earthquake happens in the can County that's 5.0 or above.

JENNA NELSON: What is it?

RICK POPE: I'm sorry it's an app.

I'm sorry, it's an app that came out of the city, shake alert L.A., you download it and there's also like Red Cross has got one, there's some other ones and there burn up your phone telling you about the 1.2, # .3 earthquakes, right? So, this one, rather than have you consistently looking at the phone, oh gosh, you know the shaker -- it's going to be 5.0 or above because that's going to be -- really what we're worried about.

CSUN was a 6.0 or other, Northridge, I mean, correct?

JENNA NELSON: Yes.

RICK POPE: So, the mayor has really put a lot of work into making sure that we're a lot more resilient because we know it's not a question of if, but when.

And, we're really trying to make sure that people get the information.

So, you might want to download this app.

It's new, and I've only just now started talking about it.

And it, it will help you as well with resilience and stuff we'll talk about in a minute.

And, once we get through the legal stuff, Kevin Mullin has put a Bill AB1168 to make sure every single jurisdiction in California can use Text-to-911.

It's already rolled out in L.A. County, Sacramento County, San Mateo County and I work with a guy who's done a lot of work on this, Richard Ray, he works on SCC

boards, he works on notifications, so for us this is really a big thing, we've really had a hard time pushing this out but it's finally getting out there.

So, they say call if you can, text if you can't.

So, I'm also a run flight instructor for L.A.P.D., what to do in the case of an active shooter.

And this is one of the things that you're going to want to do is put your phone on silent and text if you can.

WENDI WASHINGTON: So, just a normal -- you just go to 911 and how do you do -- to text 911, how do you do that exactly?

RICK POPE: So, all you really want to do is go on your phone, do 911 and send a text -- it's that simple.

So, there's no ten-digit number that you have to worry about, it's 911 and you can text your situation.

Okay?

I'm in an evacuation zone and I need help to get out before the fire gets me.

It doesn't matter what it is, quite frankly, okay?

But it's specifically designed for folks who are hard-of-hearing to make sure that they don't have to go through relay, to make sure that folks don't have to struggle on the phone, to make sure that you don't have to worry about the dispatcher consistently saying what? What? So, this way you can communicate as clearly as possible.

JACQUI: So, the android I just put in a thing, it shows a little text box.

If you go on the android phone and you type in 911 on the ski pad down on the bottom there's a little text message thing.

So, I don't know if that shows up on iPhones too.

RICK POPE: I haven't had the courtesy to test it.

All right, so let's get practical.

One of the things that I've noticed, especially in my community, is it's kind of like if we don't look at it, it doesn't exist.

Unfortunately, it does.

And the folks in Northern California and Paradise will tell you that.

So, what does it mean? To be "prepared"? Well let's understand one thing, no plan survives first contact, okay?

But planning is to have a plan ... is nothing.

The planning, itself, is what's going to make the difference.

Okay?

You need at least -- we're increasing the numbers here because reality dictates you need at least seven days of your food, your watered, medication, so forth and so on.

And you're thinking about personal hygiene, blankets, clothing, if you have service animals, you're going to have to provide for the service animal.

Extra batteries for your hearing aids, I'm sure nobody here has gone through that where the battery dies in the least convenient moment possible, right?

Chargers for your phones, for whatever else needs to be charged, any sort of medical equipment.

Cash -- let's talk about cash.

Nobody likes to talk about cash.

Small bills, what I'm doing in my family is 100 bucks per person in \$1 bills.

Why do you think it would be \$1 bills?

We already see who the head of the class is.

JACQUI: Because you can always make it more, you know you know what I'm saying if you need 20 bucks.

RICK POPE: So, if something happens, you get a shaker and electricity goes down, goes out, you're still going to need that gallon of milk, right?

However, if you walk into that store with a \$20 bill and you want a gallon of milk, and the electricity's out, guess how much that gallon of milk is going to cost you?

It's going to cost you 20 bucks because the person behind the till isn't going to be able to give you change, okay?

Small bills.

And important documents.

So, what I mean by important documents, I mean ... deeds to the house, marriage certificates -- huh, in my case divorce certificates.

Passports, birth certificates, insurance papers, all these things that you're going to need, should something happen.

And, you want -- I would say consider storing them somewhere remote like on the Cloud, on a flash drive, maybe with your -- because I'm sure everybody's got an out of state contact, right? Who's prepared to receive and coordinate communication, right? Everyone's got that, right?

So, I've got a buddy of mine out in New Jersey, I've known him since I was leisurely knee-high to a grass hopper.

And he's got all my information.

If I send him -- all I have to do is send him one word, because I've encoded it because sometimes texts don't go through all the time.

One word will tell him what shape myself and my family are in.

Another word to tell him, we're not doing so good.

All I need to do is send him one word and he knows exactly what to do.

He's out in Jersey and the reason for that is he won't be affected by the big shaker or the fire that's happening here in L.A.

JACQUI: So, what does he do? Does he have copies of all your important papers? Or --

RICK POPE: He does.

Because I can trust him.

Okay?

So, he does have copies of my important papers and if he tries to clean up my bank account, he ain't going to get much.

He's going to have to put some money in first.

(Room laughing)

RICK POPE: Okay.

But, if there's not that individual, then you want to keep your stuff, again on the Cloud, if you don't trust the Cloud, understandable, keep it in a fire-proof safe.

Everything that's going to prove that you own that property, and that it's insured and that you live there, your driver's licenses, because what's going to happen after the incident when you start filing paperwork, they're going to want to make sure that it's you.

And the reason for that is after disasters is when the cockroaches come out.

Okay?

These are the guys that will come up, hey, listen I've got some extra building material and we'll fix your roof, just -- you know, and they want to on get the deposit right then and there and then they're going to run with your money.

And that's just not on the contracting end of things, that's on everything.

Trust me, post-disaster people are going to try dough to come and take advantage of you.

Sow want to make sure that you have all the documentation possible.

Make your emergency plan -- have a plan.

Have a plan.

Figure out how you're going to get out of your neighborhood.

Figure out how you're going to get out of your house.

Figure out where you're going to meet your loved ones.

Have the plan.

I know people in this town have been kind of beat about the head and shoulders with this stuff but I've got to tell you, it's amazing how many people, again, put their head in the sand and figure, if he I don't look at it, it won't happen.

Again, when those three guys come pounding at your door to get you out of there, it's happening, too late.

Which means visit your local first responders today.

Okay?

If there's a fire station nearby and you know that's your fire station, go to it.

Go tell them that you're there, same as your police station.

I've got a brand-new emergency preparedness guide put out by the fire department.

And it's got a list of every single police station and fire station in the city.

So, there would be no reason for you not to go knock on the door, and say, hey, look I just want to let you know that, you know, I'm down here and it's my -- in my case it would be myself and my son.

So, I don't hear so well.

So, I want to make sure that we are communicating on the local level.

Okay.

While it's great to go to the city and make sure you get signed up for their messages there, there's no replacement for that face-to-face eye to eye contact, right, we know that in our world, and the handshake and looking at somebody in the face.

PUAY NG: So, in that case what would they do then?

Would they be able to have you on some local list or alert on that fire station or police station?

RICK POPE: Yes.

Bottom line is yes.

When you go there and you say hey look, I have a disability or what they're calling an access and functional need, it's the latest buzz word in emergency management -- what can I tell you? Then they're going to have on their radar, and especially because of the fact that we deal with wild fires we've got so many of these horrible lessons learned.

And let's face it, I don't know if you know this but the city and county just wrapped up a lawsuit on this stuff where the city was found in a summary judgment to be guilty of violating the A.D.A. by not having plans in place for people who have disabilities.

So, trust me, it's very high on people's radar -- that's literally how I got my job (laughing).

Okay.

And I can tell you, from personal experience, the mayor, himself, is very serious about this.

And he's very serious about communication access.

I was supposed to be at a press conference during the Creek-Skirball fires and he decided he was going to pull up the presser by half an hour but nobody told me.

So, I got there like a good little interpreter 15 minutes early, no, I'm 15 minutes late.

So, I get there and he's already at the podium talking and cameras are on him and I'm like behind the cameras looking at him -- I'm not kidding you.

I was so impressed.

He literally stopped, told me to come here, I walk towards him like I don't know what's going to go on.

He comes out of the pack and like grabs me, I'm not even kidding, literally grabbed me, put me up right by the podium, knocked a councilmember out of the way literally elbowed him out of the way because you know politicians want to be in front of the camera.

So, he literally elbows him out of the way and makes sure I'm right next to the mics, on camera.

Okay.

I've never seen a politician do that.

I've never seen a politician care enough to do that.

Okay?

I'm up there during, I think the La Tuna fire and I've got a -- a million miles a minute and on live T.V. I've got to say excuse me, could you slow down a bit? Maybe spell the name because I literally just got out of the car and went, oh, press conference.

Okay?

So, all of that to say that while the information is, we're trying to get it out there, nothing is going to replace your plan.

Okay?

Let's see.

All right, so sheltering, here's the bottom line.

Shelters are going to be big rec and park facilities with cots -- ain't going to be pretty, probably won't be comfortable.

But the point is is that you'll get your three hots and a cot, literally -- it is a survival situation.

However, what happens in these places, it is chaos.

Okay? It is chaos, people are still trying to get to work, kids are still trying to get to school.

The Red Cross is trying to get their arms around the problems, rec and parks folks have figured out half their staff has been affected and they can't come in -- it's

chaos, it really is and meanwhile you've got people who are shouted announcements -- it doesn't work folks.

Can't hear.

So, they've got to do things like make sure whatever the announcements are, are put on light boards.

They're captioned.

Okay.

They have to make sure that you get the information.

Which means, when you walk in there, do your part and say, look, you can't go out here and yell stuff and think I'm going to get it -- it's not going to work.

Oh, but you've got hearing aids.

Oh, c'mon now, it's not going to help.

I'm in the middle of this gym, I've got 19,000 other people in here and you think that, like, my hearing aid is going to all of a sudden magically pick out your voice from that? Probably not.

Okay.

You're going to have to do, unfortunately, some of the typical education that you have to do every day.

But, as soon as you tell them, they're going to -- and they better, and if they don't let me know -- jump on it like white on rice.

They're going to have that white board, they're going to have Ali in here doing his thing.

They're going to have it there.

You know why I know? Because I'm the guy that's responsible for coordinating it.

So, if I find out that somebody who's hard-of-hearing or deaf came into the shelter, had an issue, and the communication wasn't there, oh, trust me, we'll be having some intense conversations.

JENNA NELSON: I just wanted to let you know because I'm part of the telecommunication access for the deaf and disabled so I work with a lot of deaf people.

The Thousand Oaks fire, whatever shelter was out there, the guy that I work with he's 100 percent deaf.

So is his wife.

He had no -- he was one of these people that got yanked out of his bed but he said the shelter was fully unprepared for him and they ended up leaving because nobody could help them, there was no white board there was no interpreter, there was no captions there was nothing for him.

So, just FYI.

RICK POPE: The one thing I can say and I hate to say this, I really do, but -- it wasn't necessarily a shelter.

There are other jurisdictions that were opening up those shelters but quite frankly, I don't care.

I would love to get that guy's information and start talking about it.

Because, you know, in our world, our world doesn't recognize faults human-made jurisdictional boundaries and quite frankly neither does my work.

So, if I can talk to that gentleman, I'd appreciate it.

Saw another hand?

MINDY: As many of you know, I work at the high school level and when we had the fires, Taft where I work was a shelter and the principal told all of us on staff, even if you're not in the field, of sign language or not, but if you see someone, let them know that we have a shelter.

At the school, we had staff from the school go at times to the shelter, signing or helping and ready who needed it.

And I'm not a nutrient signer either but I know a little bit of sign so I spent -- not only was I working but also doing additional stuff at that time with all of the fires.

And we had more of our staff not working because the fire -- several of them lost their homes.

RICK POPE: Right.

So, I'm going to now start giving business cards because I'm going to start hearing stories that I need to hear and so do the politicians.

So, take one if you'd like.

I'm also going to ask that you take a look at the emergency preparedness guide and some of the materials in there.

DIANE: I live on Canyon and I would like to know what the city is doing about having a fire -- there's no way we're going to be able to get out of Beverly Glen Canyon out of rush-hour traffic anyone who takes that can onion knows that and most of the people that live around me said that (inaudible) told them at all about what is going to be done and in order to get people -- stop people getting into the Canyon when we have an emergency.

I don't know how many of you ever traveled Beverly Glen Canyon but the traffic is lined up in the evening when I go West all the way down, I think to way beyond Brentwood so I can get going East.

So, I don't think the city is doing anything to look at that because the traffic's so out of control in the city that it's ridiculous.

That's one thing I think every city should be concentrating on, building all these buildings and getting more traffic.

I just find that it's ridiculous that the whole situation with the traffic in this area is so out of control, that there's no way that emergency's going to be done well.

RICK POPE: Well, this is kind of what we're trying to do.

And I will talk about the community participation piece.

I'll talk about the community participation piece in a minute.

Before I get onto the evacuation --

SANDY BLAKE: Gary has a question.

RICK POPE: Let me answer the first one.

We'll get into evacuation, but this is part of what we're trying to do because when I went up into those very same canyons, from the past three fires, we had a real problem with tourists, basically.

People who wanted to go look at the fire.

And I went up there because I have this large accessible van from an independent living center and I wanted it get up into those roads and see how realistic it's going to be -- I've got cars on both sides of this narrow canyon road and people sitting there and taking pictures.

I've got the fire just on the other side of this ridge, and the sun's going down.

Now, I'm not from L.A., but I'm a woods kind of guy.

And I know with beyond a shadow of a doubt when the sun goes down in a desert environment, it's going to start blowing.

Now meanwhile, we've got PD and fire trying to do their best they can but they've got a whole bunch of rookie-loos and they want to take pictures.

So, it's very difficult to say for people to say yes you can be here, no you can't.

Mandatory evacuations, let me tell you what happens.

You say I'm not going to leave, then okay, they're not going to arrest you but they will give you a tag that you can give your name and Social Security number attached to your clothes.

You understand where I'm going with this? So, it's very difficult for people to say this is not an evacuation zone.

But you can't be here.

We really need community participation and cooperation to solve that very problem.

It is absolutely a problem.

GARY: I just had a question -- are you part of a coalition of the, let's say, A.D.A. people that are visually hearing as well as mobility deficits?

RICK POPE: So out of the lawsuit they created a coalition, they call it "The Coalition" there's a big long name we call it "the coalition."

The purpose of this is to get community members and organizations that are of, by and with people with disabilities to be involved to be able to give us this kind of feedback.

Look at plans, be involved with exercises, okay, and drills and stuff like that.

Here's what I'll tell you -- I did one for the Dodgers a couple weeks ago, we did two drills of the same thing.

Both times they let the county commission on disability president, Carlos Benavides roll state through security, nobody checked him.

I had two tactical L.A.P.D. squads, guys all rigged up and assault rifles and everything, went right by him, nobody checked him.

So, it's that type of stuff too that we're like, yeah, we need involvement in whatever -- whatever you want to call it, investment, time, energy, in order for us to make sure we've got the plans squared away for people who have disabilities, but we also need people with disabilities to show us where our security gaps are.

It's a two-way street.

So, this coalition is supposed -- and they're trying to kick it off again -- is supposed to be able to get that kind of community involvement, kind of grassroots involvement.

However, it's been my experience that when government comes to folks with disabilities, especially in the deaf and hard-of-hearing world, all of a sudden stuff sort of like gets lost.

That's why I'm doing what I do, to make sure that that doesn't because I've got a higher authority -- my childhood.

Okay?

I've got to get moving here.

So, the accommodations don't stop there, no matter what happens, whether it's a disaster recovery center or town hall or forum, okay, interpreters, CART writers, whatever it is that you need should be made available and if it doesn't and it's got to do with the city, I want to hear about it.

So back your organization do?

I want the leaders of this organization to take this seriously -- IS456 and IS547 go to training.FEMA.gov take those courses.

And the reason is it's talking about continuity of operations.

What happens when the documents and everything that's important to this organization goes up in smoke?

Chartering documents, et cetera et cetera.

How are you going to continue to maneuver? Because I'm going to be on the phone, I'm going to be calling saying what do you have, what kind of information do you have for me? What kind of information do you need from me? I'm going to start opening up those communications.

But if you're busy trying to figure out how to reconstitute the organization because every document you had has gone up in smoke, we've got a problem, right?

You're going to be worried about this and now you've got an emergency operation where I'm going to be harassing you -- okay?

Because let's face it, I've got white hair.

But when I was a kid, my elders, who had white hair and taught me things about life -- couldn't hear.

So, I've got a debt that I have to repay and that's why I do what I do.

So, you want chartering, financial and other documents there, your plans and procedures, delegation of authority.

If the leadership is in communicado because of whatever reason, someone's going to have to take the reins and lead.

Addresses, amazing lists, probably something you don't want to lose.

You want to facilitate the relationship between the community and the first responders.

There's -- it's very easy for me to say go speak to your local first responders.

It is not always so easy to be able to do that.

So, maybe we can find a way to facilitate that communication to make sure that folks don't get lost in the shuffle.

Loaner equipment because you know hearing aids could burn, could melt.

Other types of equipment might burn and melt -- folks might need that equipment.

You guys might be in a situation or position to figure out how to facilitate that.

That would absolutely help the community.

On an individual level, get involved in CERT, community emergency response teams and I actually came here from the Northridge earthquakes and Mexico City because what they found out was 80 percent, at least 80 percent of your rescues are done by civilians.

All right.

They're the folks who are getting into the vulnerable pulling people out.

Why?

Because we can't get there.

The bridges are down.

That's why we're telling you, have seven days' worth of food and water and so forth.

You will go through everything from disaster preparedness, to medical operations, light search and rescue, and what disaster psychology, meaning stress, traumatic stress.

Pointed of this is that when things fall down and catch on fire, it's going to be you who's going to be there -- not the badges.

So, until the badges can get there, something's got to get done.

And, you know as well as I do, that many hands -- this is what we're hoping is that the average person can contribute whatever they can to get people out of the rubble, to start stabilizing the neighborhood when the badges are not there.

And, this is [emergencycity.org/RYLAN](https://www.emergencycity.org/RYLAN), ready your L.A. neighborhood.

Why? So, we can make sure we don't have the lookie loos there, make sure we don't have the traffic jams up there in the canyons where we're trying to fight fires.

I think it was Station -- I forgot which one it is up there in the hills but it's great, it's called the Taj Mahal, it was beautiful, but from a firefighting emergency management point of view it's a nightmare.

So, your point is well-taken ma'am and we do have to do something about it and this is what we're hoping to do.

So, I think I'm on time.

One thing I will say about evacuation, if you don't have the wheels, stay tuned because we will get you.

Okay? You are not on your own.

This is why I want to make sure that we have the kind of communication between the first responders and your organization and me.

So that having been said, questions?

JENNA NELSON: Yeah these are great things.

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail, that's Benjamin Franklin and I think that's a key.

But the thing that I really want to do in response to what you're saying because it sounds like a lot of what we need is to take things upon ourselves and then work with you.

And so, I would put this out there to all of you -- let's try to put together a plan for our communities.

And, then once we put together a plan, go to Rick and say this is what we want to do.

This is what's going to help us in a fire, in an earthquake because -- while it would be lovely for the city to do that and I'm glad you are working on it, you know, we are the people who are being affected.

And that's something that I've come up a lot with, people who are trying to put these procedures in place, they're not necessarily deaf or hard-of-hearing or incapacitated or whatever so I think we need to be in charge of ourselves and now we have a great contact who we can bring this plan and try and get it put into place.

The only other thing I was going to say, so there's a lot of people, seniors more so who don't have cell phones, okay.

So, they can't download the app, they can't get these alerts.

RICK POPE: Right.

JENNA NELSON: So that's I think another thing it put in place is if you don't have a cell phone -- get one -- no I'm just kidding.

But I would say then make sure your neighbor knows, right.

I'm hard-of-hearing, and I don't have a cell phone, if there's an earthquake, if there's a fire, I need you to be my ears.

You need to get a plan put in place because all these bells and whistles right now is through technology.

And if you're the not going to have that technology, you're going to need a physical person to help you.

RICK POPE: So, absolutely key point, have your support network around you, your neighbors and whatnot.

And I know it's not the most easiest and comfortable thing -- I get it.

Okay.

I went and did a similar thing, similar presentation at another organization and a person says well, I really don't feel comfortable telling people this.

I get that.

How uncomfortable are you going to be when you're trapped in a void with stuff on fire around you and you can't get out and nobody knows you're there? That's going to be fairly uncomfortable, don't you think?

And the person looked at me and kind of blinked.

Ma'am to be honest with you, it's your life -- it's not mine.

So, I don't know what to tell you, if you're not willing to go knock on a couple of doors and say help me out come bang on the door or something, what do you want me to say? We can't do it for you.

Okay?

And, we can't -- because, how many times has government come into our communities and told us what's up? And they have no idea what they're talking about?

Happens all the time.

So, get your personal support network -- it's key.

And, you don't have to do the plan on your own.

Okay? Our job is to do it with you.

To make sure that your plans mesh with ours so we can give you the most support possible, prior to the incident.

Because that's what's going to make you resilient.

If we can sit down with you and you hold our feet to the fire, okay, you hold mine to the fire and say hey Pope you came out in front of 30 people and you told me this is what you're going to do.

I expect you to do it, that's the kind of communication, the kind of relationship that I want.

I'm not going to be that guy that goes on, great, I've got some overtime and now I put that in the circular file.

Sorry that's just not the way I'm going to live.

I think I'm over time.

I don't know.

JENNA NELSON: You can take questions.

TERI: About the Text-to-911, let's say I have a stroke, okay? Then I haven't got anything on the text and of course I can't hear, I don't have a hearing aid on.

So, is there a way where I just hit "enter" 911 I hit enter on my text with nothing on -- so will the because I wasn't able to text anything so will the emergency response get my message and send someone?

RICK POPE: Um, I got to tell you, I'm not the -- I'm not the tech guy.

I don't really know that program as well as Richard Ray does.

Richard Ray is the gentleman in my office who's been working on this on a national level.

But that is a question that I -- should need to answer.

So, I'll get is that back to you.

And one of the things that I also should say before I forget for the third time is keep your land line.

Keep your land line.

Okay?

Here's why -- because all you need to do is dial 911 and if you tell folks your situation, that I'm hard-of-hearing, I'm deaf without my hearing aids, whatever it is, that information can pop up on the screen.

We had a real problem with in the signing-deaf community because now everything's migrating to video.

That information that's on the e911 system doesn't pop up on the dispatcher's screen.

In addition, there's no guarantee that your phone is always going to be triangulated correctly, meaning there's no guarantee that people are going to know where you are if you call 911 from a cell phone.

Okay?

So, keep your land lines.

Keep your land lines.

I can't say it enough.

Because 911 -- and you don't have to say a word, not a syllable, and that stuff will pop up on the screen as long as you've told us.

When it comes to being able to just hit a button because I've got another disability, like I said it's the first time I've talked about it so it's the first time I'm going to answer that question.

But we will get that answer to you.

I know your email address.

I'm going to just -- you guys are doing it I'm not going to be the first one.

MITZY: I live in an unincorporated -- the other thing I want to say you're part of the Caltech community you don't is to make a choice of how you want to be notified.

Every time they're running a test even, I get an email, a phone call, land line, just every possible way you don't have to choose it they just let you.

RICK POPE: I believe the people who have been working with that have looked at that.

I'm not quite sure why they haven't just blitzed, like you say.

But, the one thing I can say is that it's like the amber alerts now, right, with your phone goes off, and you can actually shut those off now.

So, what we've downed in the found in the past is when we blitz people like that it starts to tick them off.

I was just talking this morning about how my son's school was calling me two, three times a day.

Robo calls, no that's not why you have my phone number, chuckle-head.

I'm sorry beings, it's because if he gets in a fight or breaks a leg or something like that, that's why.

Coffee with the principal? How many times are you going to shove that down my throat before I turn around and shut you off?

And that's exactly what happened.

So, people started shutting off emergency alerts and notifications.

So that's one of the reasons why they didn't blitz them, and I'm like what's your method of choice? Now layered on top of that people's communication issues, whether

you're deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech-impaired you name it. Now we're trying to find out what really works without turning people off.

Part of the problem is, believe it or not, it happened in Northern California, was they had that type of stuff and it got to what they call alert fatigue and had the big one did come, it was like people were crying wolf -- they didn't really pay attention to it until it's right there in front of them.

So, that's one of the reasons.

MITZY: But my other question is do you have counterparts?

RICK POPE: Oh yes, I do have a counterpart in time, it's Sinan Kahn.

And you've got my card and I have problem getting in touch with him, let me know.

Because I work with him all the time.

Good dude, very good dude.

And, is very dedicated to the work.

As you might imagine with my background, I've got a decent eye it for who really means and T and who doesn't.

Oh, that's right it's been like 15 minutes, 20 minutes, I'm sorry.

Don't be polite with me, people.

Remember the community I'm from.

RAE: I would say thank you for -- I watched you during the fire, and you were putting in hours signing, I did you do all the interpreting.

So, thank you -- you did amazing work.

RICK POPE: Thank you.

RAE: You were -- um, I'm confused on the alert things, I signed up for Nixle are all these things you recommended today different from Nixle? Is that different what you're talking about different from Nixle?

RICK POPE: So Nixle -- is actually the software platform that a lot of other jurisdictions will use.

And they'll re-brand it ready L.A., notify L.A.

But it's Nixle is just the underlying software for a lot of this stuff.

And it depends on again what jurisdiction you sign up in.

Because, if you sign up in Palmdale, it's not going to work here.

You're not in Palmdale, right? And this is why we've got to be really careful with how we do this because for millions of people, our overnight population in the city is more than double -- excuse me, is our day-time population is more than double of our nighttime.

The City of Los Angeles has about 4 million people overnight, it's got at least 8 to 9 million during the day so our entire population doubles.

Okay? And then we've got to worry about the tourists or people who are just going through but need to know.

Because if you're coming down from Harbor or San Pedro and you're driving up and thinking we're all good driving up the 5 when stuff is on fire, we've got to worry about that as well.

So Nixle you can sign up for, you can sign up for a million of these things, it doesn't necessarily help you if it's not your jurisdiction.

So that's one of the reasons why I would say go to the fire station, knock to the door make eye contact do it face-to-face like we do in this world all the time, and say -- so who do I sign up with? For you to know I'm over here.

Okay?

A lot of it's going to be that sort of old-school I'm going to sit down I'm going to look you in the face and shake your hand because when stuff goes sideways, I'm coming looking for you.

They know that's the message.

Trust me.

And if you drop my name, they'll say who? And you say disability guy.

The signing guy.

He'll come talk to you.

He doesn't care about rank.

They'll know who.

JENNA NELSON: One last question.

RON ROSS: Getting back to a question of land line keeping your land line, we're -- we use our -- our land line is part of now a package that comes through Spectrum with our T.V., with the Internet and it goes through a modem.

I don't -- I have a question if that's really a land line, do you know?

RICK POPE: So, what you're talking about is actually called voice-over-internet protocol, VoIP.

So, it's going to be dependent on the same what do they call it, IP addresses and all that other stuff, okay?

It's not what the e911 system was designed for.

The e911 system was specifically designed for copper wire land line, the old-fashioned -- no we're not talking about the lady on the switch board and listening to people -- oh God I just dated myself.

But, it's still kind of that technology that we're dealing with.

Now we're also going to what they call next generation 911 that's going to take all of that into account and that's why I don't get into computer science -- shhhh, over my head.

So, what I'm going to say is for now let's keep it old-school because we know it works.

Okay.

We know it works.

WENDI WASHINGTON: So, I was still not clear.

So how do we know if our land line is a true land line or not. I'm not sure.

RICK POPE: Well, if you pay your phone bill to Spectrum, it's not a land line.

If you bundled your phone in with your Internet, it's not the kind of land line I'm talking about.

I am literally talking about the one where if you yank it out of the wall, you will see copper wires.

It's the one you grew up with.

GARY: AT&T.

RICK POPE: The old Ma Bell system.

WENDI WASHINGTON: So, if it's still in the wall --

RICK POPE: If it's still in the wall (laughing).

Yeah, it's the Ma Bell system, that's the one that I'm talking about.

And, I'll also say that if, you know, no I don't really have the money -- you can also talk to the phone company about getting that system in there only for emergency services.

Okay?

JENNA NELSON: Isn't our caption phones part of --

RICK POPE: CapTel phones yeah.

I mean because they'll operate on the copper, on the copper wire so again that's just 911.

So, if you have any other questions, you've got my business card, you've got emergency preparedness guides up there.

There's also kind of a little brochure about what my department does and I'm getting hooked.

So, thank you very much for having me and I appreciate your time.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: I think that's I'm actually meeting with Richard Ray this week to talk about accessibility, for the hard-of-hearing in Los Angeles and now I think I'm going to bring up the emergency aspect of it because -- so now we have real contacts and I know Rick, he's the real deal, he really is so dedicated to helping us.

And so now that we have some real contacts, you think we're going to get somewhere and I'm excited to move forward with the city and try it make L.A. more accessible in all realms but definitely with the hard-of-hearing community.

So, we are going to take a brief break so our captionist and rest his fingers a little bit.

And we'll reconvene before we do so.

Thank you very much this is just a little Starbuck's card for you but please give him another round of applause.

(Applause)

RICK POPE: Thank you.

MEETING BREAKS AT 11:07 A.M.; MEETING RESUMES AT 11:28 A.M.

TIM BROWNING: Hello!

JENNA NELSON: Okay can everyone hear snow?

Okay.

Okay, the kitty.

We're not passing it around because we now have two and it's up there where the food is.

So, if you feel like these meetings -- is worth something to you and you can afford to give a \$2 donation, we greatly appreciate it.

Of course, if you want to give more, we will never say no.

But the money -- so these meetings are free.

But -- so your money goes to our captionist, Ali.

Coffee, and juice, and all that fun stuff.

Meeting supplies, marketing supplies, and what have you and then of course our college scholarship fund which was started last year.

Your money goes towards them as well.

So, like I said, if you -- before you leave, if you --

DALE: Are the T-coils on? I can't hear you.

DANNY: His hearing aids are ringing loudly.

JENNA NELSON: Is it too loud?

RICK POPE: I adjusted it when he was talking to me.

JENNA NELSON: For those who have Telecoil, can you hear me?

Okay -- we'll talk to you about Telecoil after.

So please think about donating to the chapter.

We -- bye Rick, thank you.

RICK POPE: I was trying to get the back door (laughing) see you.

JENNA NELSON: Okay you, thank you for your generosity.

So, we'll quickly, we're going to have the lovely walk consistent, Wendi Washington to talk to us about what's happening with the walk.

(Applause)

WENDI WASHINGTON: Hi.

So, I know we only have a few minutes so the first thing I want to remind you of is the date -- it's June 8th.

This time it's on a Saturday, so sometimes it's on Sundays, sometimes it's on Saturday, so this time June 8th is a Saturday so we are encourage encouraging all of our members, our friends and friends of friends and everyone to come out, be a part of the Walk, we need the visibility and we need the participation.

But this is also a fundraiser for National as well as our chapter and this is probably the biggest fundraiser, we have this year so the money we raise 40 percent of it goes to our chapter and we use the money to support the things we do, captioning, parties, scholarships, et cetera.

So, I posted something on Facebook, so there's a link that allows you to just kind of click on and then you can join the L.A. Stars that's the name of our team.

And so far, we have a few participants.

We need many more.

We have Tim, we have Jenna we have Laurence, we have Felicia and we need many, many more.

So please go on Facebook, sign up even if you're not going to be able to attend the Walk, you can still be a part of our team.

We need names, we need numbers, we just need, you know, that enthusiasm.

You can make a donation.

You can solicit donations.

Whatever works for you, you can bring a gang of friends down to Long Beach with you.

Because we need high visibility, and we need lots of fundraising.

So, I'll talk more about this next month.

And I have some papers that I can pass out so if you don't have -- I see Kate has some postcards, I have some, I have some sheets.

So -- and then next month we'll talk more about it but in the meantime if you would sign up, you could either go on Facebook or you can go directly to the Walk 4 Hearing Long Beach and sign up via that website.

Okay?

We really, really need you -- thank you.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: Thank you Wendi.

Yes, please, please, the Walk is a lot of fun it's along the waterfront, it's a beautiful walk, it's an opportunity to hang out.

They have food, there's vendors there so please click on the link and sign up to be part of that.

Heather is not here actually, but I know some of you saw, she posted on Facebook she is going to try to have another party tomorrow.

Which I know is sort of last minute.

I'll tell her to post something ASAP.

So, the 598AB Bill has to do with -- and we really need this bill passed.

It is a huge issue, it's for parents who have children under 18 who need hearing aids, and this would allow them to get hearing aids for free.

We know hearing aids are incredibly expensive if you have two or three children, and they break and they get lost and they, you know, and the gentleman I mentioned before, his children are all deaf and hard-of-hearing, he said he spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on hearing aids for his three deaf, hard-of-hearing children when they were growing up.

This would allow free hearing aids.

So please, we can give you more information.

If you can't make it to Heather's to sign up the postcards to send it, I believe Kamala Harris is the person we're sending them to, we'll let you know where to send them and what to do.

It's incredibly important, we ask for everybody's participation.

RAE: 8,000 kids, there are 8,000 kids in California this is affecting just to give you the numbers.

So, we're going to help, we're going to be helping 8,000 kids have access to hearing aids.

And that's a big number.

JENNA NELSON: Yeah, exactly, exactly, so this is really a major bill so please, please -- and like I said if you need more information, we'll give it to you.

Memorial Day party so, every day we have a Memorial Day party instead of having an actual meeting.

So, we won't meet here in May, we're going to have a party, we're the party chapter.

But we need a place to have our party, whether we want to do it at a park, or a lake or if somebody wants to donate their home.

Heather posted last year, it was a fabulous party so, please if you have any ideas or you're interested in hosting, please come see us because we are planning that.

It's a day-time event.

There's food and beverages, adult beverages, and it's a really fun time to just be able to talk to our friends and hang out without it being, you know, an actual meeting.

So please let us know if you have any ideas because it's fast approaching.

WENDI WASHINGTON: I'm sorry I just wanted to say one thing about these pamphlets and postcards and papers -- I know many of you already know so I'm kind of giving them out for people who don't know.

But also, if you could take a few and just drop them wherever you think somebody else might pick them up.

Just getting the word, out, if you have an audiologist that doesn't have any in his office, if you could leave some, if you go to the office, at work, if you just leave them around you never know who might be able to get this information.

So that's why I'm passing it out.

I know you kind of know about it already.

Thanks.

JENNA NELSON: Yeah, great point, great point.

Okay.

Yeah, sorry.

So, for those of you who are here in February, and those who weren't, we had a panel which was fabulous and we talked about the frustrations of being a part of or a partner being hard-of-hearing or vice-versa, Teri talked about dating in the hard-of-hearing world, and Wendi had her sons talk about having a parent who has a hearing loss.

So, one of the things that we find is really important to us is just support, right?

So, we have rap sessions every so often to just hang out and talk about frustrations, we do sort of like to have a topic to sort of keep us in line.

But, next meeting, April 27th, which is the fourth Saturday, right here, we will be having a rap session.

We'll post the topic.

But we hope you'll come because it's a great opportunity, just come and hang out and just vent.

And I think that's part of just feeling better about our hearing loss, is just being able to talk about it and say, oh yeah you have frustrations in restaurants? I have so many -- you know I have so many problems in restaurants, what do you do to get through that? And we give each other advice and what have you.

So, it's a really fun time.

I would color implore you to be here, rap sessions are a lot of fun.

So that's the fourth Saturday, April 27th.

And topic for June to be determined.

That's where when the convention is, I don't know how many people -- who's going to the convention this year?

In Rochester?

Dale.

Anybody else?

It's far away this year so I know a lot of people aren't going so maybe in July you'll come back and give us an update as to what happened.

But June tends to be a smaller meeting because a lot of people do go to the convention but because it's in Rochester this year, I think a lot of people are not going.

So, we will let you know what's coming up for June.

Okay, guess what?

So, for those of you who don't know and for those who do, we have a chapter member, the amazing Grace Tiessen who April 4th is going to be 100 years old.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: So, we're actually -- this is going to be like a whole little thing we're doing for you Grace but just to let you know, Grace has been part of HLAA -- when it was called shhhh, which is self-help hard-of-hearing.

Since 1984, and -- so that's --

SANDY BLAKE: Thirty-five years.

JENNA NELSON: And by the way for those of you who say well I don't know if I can make a meeting, I don't know if I can make the convention, Grace is here every month.

She has gone to every convention.

So, you are a testament to what we should be doing for ourselves.

So, with that being said, we are going to hand the mic over to Sandy who is going to give a brief bio, I think for those of you -- I think everybody almost everybody knows who Grace is.

So, for those of you who don't, so when we go on and with the rest of the festivities, people know who she is.

SANDY BLAKE: All right, well, there's just so much information about Grace on the National Hearing Loss Association.

That I had to really edit it down.

But I just wanted to give you the highlights because, of course, Grace knows everything that she did in her life and many of you who have been with her know.

But many of us have no idea that Grace was born April 4th, 1919 in Sacramento, California.

Just one year before the women were able to vote.

Grace's mom was pretty forward thinking.

She sent her two girls to UC Berkeley and Grace graduated in 1940 with a wash bachelor's degree in English.

There or thereabouts she met this fellow named Leonard Edmonson he was an artist and an art professor and I guess, you know, there were some sparks.

And they got married.

And they had three children.

They had Leonard, they had Margaret, and they had Stan.

So, life happens, life happens, life happens.

The marriage did not work out.

Grace took her mother's name, Tiessen, Grace Tiessen and decided she was a single mom now in 1974 -- actually she wanted to go back to school in 1970.

That's when she got her hearing aids.

She would sit in the front of the class, she would sit in the center.

She earned a bachelor of psychology, first of all, from Cal State University Long Beach.

And then she kind of thought about it and she said, nah, you know, I want to -- I don't want to work with difficult people, maybe I'll just get another degree.

So, she then got a third bachelor's in math and computer science.

She first was a Kelly girl she worked for JPL Labs a lot of time and they said why don't you get a degree in math and computer science?

And she went, okay, I'll do that.

So, she worked as a software engineer from age 62 to 73.

Let's see ... HLAA business my goodness as Jen said, she's been part of the whole deal, the original organization for 35 years.

She was president from 1985 to 1990 in the San Gabriel Valley chapter.

But that wasn't enough, nope, she also went to the state Board of Trustees from 1997 to 2011 where she also served as corresponding secretary for a year.

Vice president for a year, and president for a year.

Tore decades Grace has been deeply involved with HLAA doing outreach, participating in Walk 4 Hearing, performing advocacy, attending meetings, hosting Christmas parties and anything to further the aims of HLAA.

Grace has recruited and mentored young adults for HLAA.

She is a role model to many.

But we're not finished.

Grace was a member of the California Department of Education Advisory task force for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

A member of the Board of Directors of the Hear Center, a non-profit speech and audiology Center in Pasadena from 1996 to 2007.

And a member of the city of Pasadena Commission on Accessibility and Disability from 1990 to 1995.

Finally, Grace is the winner of HLAA's highest national honor -- the key stone award in 2003.

I think we all want to say a big happy birthday and a big thank you and acknowledge.

Birthday, and acknowledge Grace who is truly a force of nature in our hard-of-hearing world.

Let's all give her a big round of applause.

(Applause)

SANDY BLAKE: And now we have put together -- we're not ready for sharing yet.

SHARON: Well I was going to say is something about Grace.

SANDY BLAKE: You'll have a chance. But first our Sharon put together a slide show, something we'd like to run.

[Slide show of Grace]

SANDY BLAKE: Is there music?

JENNA NELSON: There's supposed to be music.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Look at Kat!

There's Bernie.

SANDY BLAKE: You can see this is really the party chapter.

And Grace was at every party.

Of course, sharing and spreading the joy and wisdom.

So now, we would like to invite people who have something that they would like to say about Grace -- we have -- shall we start with -- shall we start with Nanci?

NANCI LINKE-ELLIS: I have actually something from National for you that they put together.

First was your birthday card from Barbara Kelly and Nancy Macklin and Joan Clyderock.

They send their best wishes today.

And then they imposed a little diddy for you, that -- it says Grace Tiessen a woman of distinction Grace dear are you able to hear the HLAA cheers?

As we celebrate your birthday of 100 years, along your California admirers and followers, we send congratulations from all HLAA members.

It was 1984 when you joined our young organization, destined to become a strong voice in our mission.

Rocky Stone our founder was at the helm back then we all indulged in self-help our philosophy now and then.

You helped California chapters and members foster rapport, through education, information, advocacy and support.

Grace you traveled to most all HLAA conventions, grasping technology and establishing connections.

When editor of the award-winning California newsletter, your readers with hearing loss related to this treasure.

Your term as president of the Cal State association was another opportunity for advocacy information.

When plans began for the annual walk 4 Hearing Grace mailed out personal letters as time was nearing, asking each to kindly support our national funds, the money you raised was deserving of applause.

Determined and tenacious, you get things done.

But also, you cut out time for exercise and fun.

When the holiday parties held in your home or the slots in Las Vegas went in that time-zone.

Grace is a woman of distinction for 35 years a steadfast, loyal star.

We're sending 100 kudos your way with love thanks and praise your special day.

(Applause)

NANCI LINKE-ELLIS: And I just want to make one personal comment I know other people do is Grace has been my mentor since 1993 and the one thing that always trailed me, when I was walking off to do something, she'd stop me and go, you know what? And that always meant she was about to ensnare me into some job, duty or responsibility.

So, beware.

So -- Alicia?

Oh.

ALICIA: I'm sorry to interrupt I just wanted to bring it in a little bit.

Grace was a member of ADLA -- LADLA, with Catherine and Pat and Nanci and I and Danny, I'm so sorry.

Anyway, and she kept saying you start an SHHH chapter which was HLAA back in the day so seven of us finally took her lead and we started this chapter about 15 years ago or so.

And we had no clue and basically, she was our mentor, she found us the place to meet and kind of led us into finding out how to even do this thing.

And I can't say enough how much she helped us.

And, I wanted her -- her personality is just amazing and her character, she's an inspiration but you know there's that saying -- well-behaved women seldom change history.

Grace is proof positive that that is exactly the case.

You can't say she takes crud from anybody, she says what's her mind and she's how she changed our world, anyway, so thank you to her for this entire -- from this entire chapter.

(Applause)

SANDY BLAKE: One thing I left out of her bio was in 2005 Grace got a Cochlear implant, and she got Cochlear implant so I think that's a big part of her story.

Would anyone else like to share anything.

Wendi.

WENDI WASHINGTON: In addition to just wishing you a very happy 100th birthday which is in and of itself amazing and all the work you've done and the

accomplishments, it's still staggering to most of us but I just wanted to say, too, and maybe it was mentioned and I didn't see/hear but not only was she the editor of the state newsletter but she was the editor up until just a few years ago.

So, I mean we're talking about somebody who's in their 90s who's editing a newsletter in addition to everything else she was doing.

So again, just absolutely amazing.

Absolutely amazing.

SANDY BLAKE: Okay.

Oh, Mitzy has something to say.

MITZY: Well Grace usually gets me to drive her to these meetings and driving Miss Gracey is an experience.

Because we're carpool, we take the carpool lane and as we're passing the traffic, she rings out the window, "suckers!"

(Room laughing)

SANDY BLAKE: Now I'd like to, unless anybody else wants to share I would like to ask Grace if you would like to say a few words?

GRACE TIESSEN: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

SANDY BLAKE: And now the announcement that we have in Grace's honor, we have decided to name the scholarship after Grace Tiessen.

(Applause)

SANDY BLAKE: Have the -- Grace, honey, you're going to live forever through the scholarship program.

JENNA NELSON: For those of you who don't know, so we give \$1,000 a year to a hard-of-hearing student who wants to go to college.

We don't have anybody yet so if you know of anybody, please let them know because the deadline is coming up but it's called the HLAA scholarship and we have changed that to honor Grace's legacy so from now on it's going to be called the Grace Tiessen scholarship and we hope to honor your legacy from this point forward.

So, thank you Grace, you're an inspiration.

One hundred, we'll see you here next year for sure.

Please give her another round of applause.

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: And I -- and I think -- Tim wanted to make sure that I don't forget, now we got a wonderful cake for Grace.

So, we are going to break.

We're done with the meeting.

And we're going to have some cake and chit-chat and honor the amazing Grace.

Why don't we sing -- oh you want to sing happy birthday right now?

Okay.

Lead the way.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Okay, so the cake is coming but we might as well sing our happy birthday now and I am definitely going to move this microphone away because that's not my strong suit but I can at least start with the.

(Singing *Happy Birthday* to Grace)

(Applause)

JENNA NELSON: Thank you everyone.

CLASS ADJOURNS AT 11:59 A.M.