

**Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) – Chapter Meeting
Sherman Oaks Library – Community Room
Sherman Oaks, CA
4/27/19**

MEETING COMMENCES AT 10:04 A.M.

TIM BROWNING: Good morning.

Good morning.

How are you?

Okay, enjoy your donuts.

JENNIFER NELSON: Good morning everyone.

Can you hear me?

No.

Can people hear?

JACQUI GRITSCH: Is it supposed to be nay --

JENNIFER NELSON: Can you hear me now?

Yay, can you hear me? Is there Telecoil on?

Yes.

Can you switch to your Telecoil?

And it's not on?

Sometimes do you have bump up the volume.

Can you hear me now?

Sometimes, when you get your Telecoil put in, they need to bump up the volume.

So, you might need to go back.

That happened to me, yeah.

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Okay, good morning everyone.

Oh, here's our agenda.

We're swapping.

Good morning everyone I'm Jennifer Nelson, Jenna I'm the president of HLAA, Los Angeles, welcome to our group.

Small today but people tend to trickle in.

So, if you don't know and you want to keep in contact with us, we have all of our emails and we send emails periodically, if you're not, everybody should be on that list.

Otherwise you could always check out what's going to our website, Hlaa-la.org.

Our Facebook group, it's kind of a -- once you get there then you just go back easily and it's a closed group so we can talk about anything, and nobody's going to find you, so you can tell secrets.

Yahoo groups we're kind of phasing out so I'm not sure why it's on the PowerPoint.

And if you ever want to email me or anybody so the Steering Committee email us at info@hlaa-la.org.

So, today's agenda we're going to do first-time visitors and then Florence who's one of our wonderful members is going to share an experience with her -- with us about her advocacy journey and that's going to sort of kick off our rap session.

And then at the end we're going to talk about wend is going to talk about the Walk-4 hearing in June.

And then chapter notes.

So new people, who's new?

Yay lots of people.

Okay.

So I need each person to stand up, introduce yourself, name, type of hearing loss, how you heard about us and what you're hoping for in the chapter and the other thing I

was going to say for the new people is if you have hearing aids or a Cochlear implant, you have what's called Telecoil.

You need to get it put in by your audiologist and that way when I speak into the microphone this, room and looped and it goes right into your device and it's a beautiful thing.

So, if you don't know about Telecoil, please come and talk to me about it after, because it's kind of vital for helping you hear, especially in this environment.

So, with that new people.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay so I have to say my name --

JENNIFER NELSON: Yeah.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi everyone I'm Derek nice to meet you guys.

I don't really know how to explain my hearing loss because it's gotten worse, you know, as the years progressed and whatnot.

So, but it started off I want to say at a moderate to severe you know hearing loss and then it just, you know, got worse.

Since then, whatever.

And that was when I was maybe ... like 10 or 11.

So since then it's, you know, declined.

Yeah.

That's it.

JENNIFER NELSON: So how did you find out about us?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Actually, she kind of told me about it, so I decide to do come.

I went to a few deaf expos and whatnot, and so, yeah.

Pretty much you know familiar with what goes on so, yeah.

JENNIFER NELSON: Do any goals for being part of the chapter? I mean are you hear to learn more?

To just meet other people like you, support?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, definitely, all of the poof, all of the above, definitely.

JENNIFER NELSON: Cool, thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm Caroline, I have a moderate sensitive hearing loss in both ears.

I was -- my ears (inaudible) and I had two surgeries on them and then as I got older it got worse.

I heard about you guys from my (inaudible) app I wanted to take that step to start learning more and finding the support.

I was like so that's what I'm hoping for, just the support and just to learn more and --

JENNIFER NELSON: Awesome.

Welcome to you both, we're really happy to have you here.

Is there anybody else who's new?

Awesome, thank you for coming.

Oh --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Taylor.

I'm not deaf or hard-of-hearing but I'm jurist here to support Derek over there.

And just the deaf and hard-of-hearing, overall.

JENNIFER NELSON: Nice thank you. Did you want to say anything?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good morning I'm Alicia, I'm also here to support a friend of mines I'm not deaf or hard-of-hearing and I normally work in sign language, I -- I work in a program for adults with developmental disabilities.

JENNIFER NELSON: Nice.

You know what? Just having people who support you is like half the battle because so many people don't understand hearing loss.

So, the fact that you came to this meeting is really heart-warming so I'm thanking you on behalf of your friends.

Okay.

So, let's see.

So, to kick off our rap session, because we're going to talk, we all just want to sort of talk about our hearing loss and our frustrations what have you but we sort of try to have a theme so we don't go off into Neverland.

So, we're going to start off with Florence's story.

She achieved an incredible accomplishment by dedicating herself to getting assistive listening devices made available at the USC Pacific Asia Museum that's in Pasadena if you're not aware.

So, she's going to share her journey and then let's let her talk and then we'll sort of kick off into our rap session.

FLORENCE BAKER: Good morning everyone.

Is this working okay?

Okay, great I wanted to first share with you how I -- I wanted to share with you first how I came to what I've called my project and how I've pursued some of the challenges I've encountered.

And, on a positive note, some of the help that came along the way.

So, first of all, I have hearing loss in both ears.

First diagnosed when I was -- well when I was 30, though problems before that.

I've been wearing hearing aids for over 35 years.

And one of the things the loss was genetic I have two uncles with hearing loss but ear and interesting thing it's my mother's side of the family, her name is Taub, which in German means deaf person.

So I kind of feel like I'm in a long line of support but unlike my uncles, I've been helped by -- at a good time for technology so as my hearing has declined and right now

it's in a serious stage, or severe, technology has kept up with it, enabling me to function more or less so often more narrowly.

As many of you, when you began to experience hearing loss, it had an impact on many of your disaster especially with me, my professional activities.

I'm a historian, professors and I just retired a few years ago from teaching at El Camino College but I had to do what I had to do over time was adjust.

And so -- so go to small committees -- how to talk to my students and so on.

I had no institutional support, nobody seemed to understand my need -- even asking for a more friendly classroom, a more friendly for hearing office was denied, and that was I thought at that point a struggle I couldn't undertake.

I'm advocating too much for the school and for my students.

I didn't know much so I really didn't know the technology out there what was available.

I first encountered the group when I became about a year and a half ago, I began going to the HLAA meetings, having discovered them.

And it took me three meetings of people telling me get my T-coil activated, with and when I did it was magic.

To actually be able to listen without reading captions, without -- it was magic.

So, all of a sudden this opened up new possibilities.

Now when I retired, I had for many years anticipated one of my big concerns was to stay active in the community.

And but I had become a docent at the Pacific Asia Museum it's a beautiful museum right off Colorado Street and it's the only Museum in Southern California that specialized in Asian art and culture.

And it has been a warm place in my heart because of my daughter -- I've had a lot of family activities taking my daughter there and helping to educate myself as I've become active starting to travel in Asia.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: You're blocking the wording.

(Room laughing)

FLORENCE BAKER: Okay, thank you for letting me know.

When I retired the museum had been closed for retro fitting, seismic retrofitting and they were doing some cosmetic upgrading.

Now I knew as a docent I had some problems because over the years it is the upstairs auditorium in which they have their meetings, and -- it was becoming less and less accessible.

Partly it's just pad acoustics but also with my hearing loss and I struggled are with this all throughout my career.

Then coming to HLAA meetings I said why do I need to continue to struggle? I know there's other people that have problems.

So, this basically after beginning as a volunteer and I'm still a volunteer at the museum, I applied for docent, through my application for docent I said I want to not struggle anymore let's see if we can get this working it will be two more years before they have another program.

Time to do this.

So, this is how I came to this project.

The second thing how I pursued it and I think many people that have not been pursued -- it's finding out who is responsible.

It took me four months.

The museum was taken over by USC, during the time of the closure, all of the personnel changed.

When I finally got instructions, I met the director, it was the last day on the job she was flying back into a new job so nothing came of that.

There was no director, nobody of accountability I could get at USC, I wrote emails, and no responses.

Finally, finally found there was an interim director so when I found the interim director there was somebody who is at and you can take care of another gallery.

So at that point I wrote another letter, and one of the things I came here knowing nothing, and before I joined HLAA, I did not know one deaf person who knew hearing loss, I knew somebody who knew somebody who had hearing loss I would just ask them all kinds of questions so this has been eye-opening for me.

I had to educate myself, one incredible resource is the HLAA website, the national organization and that's hearing loss.org and righted on the first page we have resources and they have hearing loop.

Everything you need to know about assistive listening technology, the hearing loop, how to advocate -- everything you need to know is right there if you go through all of the links as well as the laws, the legal implications and so on.

Okay, having pursued that and educating myself, I wrote to the director and explained realizing that I have to do some is education here.

What time situation was, what the problem was for me not only for me but the other docents and also what needs to be done when I'm looking -- what I'm looking for.

I advocated for hearing loop but no it's an old building, it was built in 1924.

And it hasn't had problems.

Then being at USC I think they have all the resources to find out what would be the best for this location.

And the director pleasantly responded immediately.

Fortunately, very open, thanked me for bringing this to the attention and assured me they'd pursue it.

So, I filed a request, now here comes the second step -- don't let them forget.

So, I filed and requested that the director keep knee informed at every step and she assured me that she would.

And, so, R, in the course of this they were investigating what type of system, every other four weeks or so, check in, ask anything new? Anything going on more with in? Can I be of help? Any resources can I provide? Can I come back to your office and discuss this more with you and so on? And they -- they offered the services and the HLAA and our local chapter without telling you guys.

So, this is -- it kept them on their toes and finally in January when we finally contacted the facilities person got in touch with me and, congratulations, all of your advocating and persistence has paid off.

We have installed a loop system, ear system over-the-ear as well as a loop system and I read that as hearing loop.

I was like oh, so excited.

So, it took me a while before I could go down and try it out and it was a total disappointment.

First of all, the set-up was haphazard, the electric they hadn't even plugged it in.

By the time they got that all spelled -- no improvement in my ability to hear.

We tried everything.

So, I went back -- so here's the next thing you have to do is once the system is in, you have to then make sure it's -- it works and it's going to be effective.

I met with my staff members, we tried out the system again, read all the directions to make sure, and it still wasn't -- it was an infrared system which is -- I think the cheapest system you can get, less expensive than a radio frequency.

Which does provide a great deal of clarity.

Of course, the best is the hoop.

So, I wasn't going to settle for that I wrote another letter to all those involved, towards the administrators and expressed my disappointment and asked if they have looping -- hear of hearing loop technology because the vendor they got this from also provides that.

And, then asked us so is there any possibility that this can be resolved, like a hearing loop or some other system better than they had.

I got an immediate response in saying we'll look into this and of course I had to follow up four weeks later, six weeks later.

And finally, just a couple of days ago I heard that indeed they did check out for the hearing loop.

And because of the entry of the building they have major problems, it's going to be very expensive they're going to have a fundraiser for that meanwhile the system that they did put in they're looking to upgrade.

So, I hope we get something better with a radio frequency that would help everybody.

Now the next thing that I'm looking for is making sure -- make sure that they have it set up and people know there's access so this is going to be sort of ongoing and they're going to hear from me every couple of months, how the upgrade is going on.

So, it wasn't the although it wasn't the success, I wanted but at least we got something there and that's going to help others and probably they'll improve that.

I wanted to -- basically, part of discussing this is with anybody else who's thinking of indeed, I work -- I get so much more out of -- performances at a place you might go to, any kind of venue a theater, museum, your churches.

I basically got disinterested in going to mass, I have to say because I couldn't understand the lecture of what's going on -- it could be quite perfunctory boring but I know that churches are one venue that has embraced setting up assistive technology.

Your workplace, your classrooms or whatever and think about what really can be done.

Now some of the just quickly some of the challenges is first of all the need to self-education which as I said the hearing loss.org provides a lot of materials, the magazine and the meetings here and the people here at the L.A. chapter.

They have to be prepared when you start to advocate, even on personal advocacy and I've gotten increasingly bold and demanding thing when I go to a restaurant, what's your best table? And we're at a very expensive and attend trendy restaurant, we'd been voted the best restaurant to open in the nation this year so it's really up there and when we checked in for our reservation, I just told them, have you got the best table in the house? So, advocate for -- you have -- that was because the person who was the host has experience included hearing loss and once you start advocating, you'll notice people will start saying, oh yes, I know about that.

But also, when you advocated for change in institutions, the -- putting in hearing assistive technology, change the environment and so on you have to be prepared to educate others.

And the again the resources available are there.

The sec thing was communication.

And, I was able to do all this basically through email.

Again, sometimes the fondants work for me, of course this is much more protecting, the people who aren't in Pasadena at the museum, they were at USC and -- I had to go and meet people face-to-face.

It basically -- don't be afraid to reach out through email.

If that's what you're most comfortable with, a telephone call doesn't hurt but I was thinking what's more effective.

Also, to your surprise you will find -- you'll be very welcomed, people are very welcoming to the public when you share your kernels ever concerns.

They often have interest in following that through.

And as I said just stay in touch, is very important.

So, we said more people lack understanding so we need to educate ourselves.

Personally, the feelings we go through, first of all my big fear was actually contact because of my problems with the phone and other places.

So, it was good that I could use email.

The second thing was intimidation.

We all get intimidated when organizations, people that have titles that we don't and so on, and this is with HLAA help this is where HLAA helped me too.

My very first meeting, at the -- I put L.A. chapter so now I had the headquarters and this chapter for me -- HLAA give gave them information email and the website so that they know this is a real organization that has some power behind it and that empowered me.

The last thing of being alone because I've been advocating -- it's a lonely business if you don't have people behind you and you have to reach out and -- I captured Tim, and Tim got all my emails and updates and was very encouraging and that meant a lot because if you have no one at home and no one else to be able to communicate with, it's help to have share that.

I want a final note here and I think what this all adds up to is the need to advocate for yourselves -- but others flu institutions and so on you need to get over this intimidation, lack of knowledge, communication, and this again is with HLAA here -- what HLAA supervised what we provide each other.

And so, anybody who's considering any form of advocacy or just wants to talk about it and so on, I'm here for you.

So, feel free to send me an email or to talk to me at the meetings and I'll make sure others will too.

So, thank you, good luck.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you Florence that was an amazing report and amazing effort.

Tell me where I can stand.

Can everybody see everything?

So anyway, Florence.

Kudos.

Kudos, kudos I'm sure that that -- I'm sure that others are going to be rewarded and so many people not just the people in this room will be you know -- it will have a positive effect.

And good for you for standing up for yourself and figuring it out.

Figuring it out and realizing that you don't have to be intimidated, you don't have to be shy.

You don't have to feel bad.

You don't have to take any of that.

Whatever those messages are that we've collected, in our psyche.

Eh, you know, it will come up and we go oh right, thank you for sharing.

So, thank you so much.

And I know that people will have more questions for you.

Okay let's give Florence another round of applause.

So, we're going to -- we're going to segue now into an open rap session and I would like to take suggestions for topics from the group.

As a matter of fact, we have one suggestion already that came from our wonderful Steering Committee, probably Tim and Sharon and Jim and I put our heads together.

And so, just to start us off, the question do you find you have to advocate within your own circle of friends and family?

What are the situations and outcomes?

Does anybody have anything that they want to share?

I'm going back to Georgia.

Recently.

GEORGIA: Recently, in fact it was last Thursday I went to the UCLA Women's Health Conference in Westlake Village.

And, I went with a group of friends from this group and this -- I think this was our fifth year.

And when we first started five years ago, we had to tell the organizers that we were deaf and that we would like to have captioning by a captioning.

And -- and so every year for the past five years, they've always had set up and Ali was there, last Thursday as one of the captioners.

And, and it was just wonderful, we have our own people and they have somebody standing by helping us with anything that we needed.

It was just fabulous.

But the point that I wanted to make was this year when they sent out the announcement because we've been going on so we're on the mailing list so they send us notices every year.

At the very bottom of the notice they said "live captioning will be provided for those with hearing loss" and I was, like, so amazed because every year we had to request it.

And, they said fine, no problem.

But this year, it was like a given.

We didn't have to request it even though I did request it because I didn't read the fine print at the very bottom of the original announcement.

But anyway, I saw that later.

Another good benefit was that I noticed that there were other people in the audience touching their -- stretching their necks out, trying to read the captions.

They were not with our little group; I think there were five or six of us.

And I thought, wow.

There were other people, too, that struggle to hear the speaker in a very large auditorium.

So I would have to say that, you know, it was just a real blessing that we were there and possibly, you know, provided awareness to other people that there is a way that they can enjoy any kind of meeting or conference and not have to struggle to hear.

So, this is -- we've been advocating for ourselves for a long time, we've been a member of this group for many, many years, so we have a lot of experience advocating for deaf people, and it works.

SANDY BLAKE: Nice success story, thank you.

Yes.

Ann.

ANNA: Hi my name is Anna and I recently joined the HLAA group so I'm one of the new bees on so I'm a part of different mom's groups on Facebook and there was a mom who happened to be complaining that one of the synagogues they're trying to take away the front row for where the moments and the kids are sitting to be able to accommodate people like Georgia and myself who whether you have a hearing loss or you need closed captioning you need to sit up front and see and hear the people that are speaking, the -- I go to a shawl which is -- everything's a little bit more intimate so in that kind of a setting I don't always need to be upfront hearing but when you're in a synagogue, you're in a large, large room, and what struck me and why I wrote in and putting advocate as well the thing that is it's important for people who have a disability, with a hearing loss you're accommodated because we're often not as heard as many as people with eye vision problems.

If you ask someone do you know anything about -- but when you talk about eyeglasses, oh tons.

Is to towrope it up, the mom was complaining that she did not have any knowledge of what it really takes for that person to -- my husband and I had this conversation the other night, and -- they both agreed when there's an adult service, kids should be in the back roaming around, not bothering the front.

The front should really be for those that have whatever type of disabilities they have.

So I'm glad I was able to be that a little advocate, we need to be more aware of what the person's situation is and get to know them, before you started judging and saying well we need -- I'm I parent of a child and I always sit in the back, even if I have hearing loss because of my little guy my two month old -- you shouldn't be in the front to begin with, especially if it's an adult service and -- so thank you for.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you.

What I'm getting is that those of us with hearing loss sometimes feel unheard.

Wow.

Isn't that irony? Isn't that irony?

Mindy.

MINDY: I just wanted to mention I've been to a number of synagogues what they start to do at a lot of the synagogues I think they're the FM systems which don't work for me but they work for other people.

We put the device on, you can hear the rabbi whoever upfront but then you may also get the background noise with other people nearby.

But I like the idea but I can see where temples would say but this is Shabbat, we can't have closed captioning.

I know the temple I used to go to would be doing that.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you, it's a process.

When I was at a little church in Wisconsin last August for a family funeral and it was a microscopic church they're just disappearing because what's happening with the church.

And they had a Telecoil, they had a Telecoil.

It was a remarkable.

I was like, huh, gosh, even my, you know -- anyway.

So, Wendi – Wendi did you want to share?

WENDI WASHINGTON: I do.

So, there have been some -- so there have been some talk about the Telecoil or T-coil and I just want to be sure that everybody -- we kind of take for granted that everybody knows what that is.

Is there anybody who knows or doesn't know about T-coil?

Derek you know about T-coil?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Do you wear hearing aids? Okay, because -- you know, we just take that for granted, so many of the hearing aids have more than one program.

You have your regular listening program and then the Telecoil is a separate program that allows you to hear through a loop system or to hear on a land line phone - - things like that.

So, it allows for you to hear directly into your hearing aids.

And the Telecoil, unfortunately, though -- so I'm in the process of -- well not really in the process but I'm going to get in the process of getting new hearing aids this year.

And, the one that my audiologist raved about or -- actually the one that I have now, the next model of does not have a T-coil.

And I cannot tell you how disappointed and frustrating that is.

So, when we talk about advocating, for those of you -- and I'm not sure how this works with cochlear but -- because we have a mixed group but for those people who are using T-coil, we have to be sure that we are speaking up and asking for it.

Even if you don't know what it is and haven't been able to use it yet -- be sure to ask for it because what's happening is manufacturers are taking it away.

The new resound, the latest model doesn't have it.

And so, some people also a friend of mine just got a new cochlear and they didn't even bother to activate the T-coil part of.

So, T-coil, as valuable as it is, like Florence referred to it as magic, and it is in many instances, but it's also moving to the side and kind of going away.

So, we want to be sure that we ask for it and advocate for that as well.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm Jacqui of a I quick question about the coil.

Come a person is hearing through that since my hearing aids are new aids but they don't have it, does it just make everything sound louder or does it clarify somehow? What do you hear?

WENDI WASHINGTON: So, with the loop system that we have here, at the meeting, when I turn on my T-coil setting, and someone speaks into this microphone, I hear that sound directly in my hear as opposed to someone speaking from a microphone over there and the sound traveling.

I hearing hear it directly in my ear.

JACQUI GRITSCH: But it doesn't do anything to clarify the sound.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Oh, it does, absolutely it clarifies it, it makes a tremendous difference.

It's like listening -- it's like listening from where Sandy is standing and the sound traveling as opposed to the sound being in my ear because it's -- it comes into my hearing aids.

It's very different.

And it's very beneficial.

JENNIFER NELSON: Something that I tell people is when -- for those of you who may be had better hearing at some point, it's like listening to the radio, right, in a room versus putting in your ear buds.

And the sound will go right into your ear and it's like oh, okay, this is like -- it's -- it is, it's louder, it's clearer.

So that when people ask me what it is like, that's what I tell people -- I say it's like putting in ear buds so everything is going right in.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good morning I'm Hector and I just wanted to say that the new audicon open has Telecoil, the -- Phonak just came up with one that has Telecoil.

Thank you.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you that's very helpful I guess we have to shop around.

Just to clarify one more question that you had Jacqui, it isn't just magnifying like a hearing aid.

There are settings with the Telecoil for noise reduction, speech clarity.

I mean it's remarkable.

So, it's definitely worth investigating.

And it's definitely worth pushing your audiologist and maybe even funding a -- finding a new audiologist.

I can't believe that Resound --

WENDI WASHINGTON: This one does but the older one doesn't.

Who knows --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: It won't do anything to have T-coil it wouldn't do you any good to have T-coils in this room if the room was not looped.

And so, I don't think you've emphasized, a room needs to be looped.

There are neck loops and other things, but basically T-coils would not be any good unless it's looped.

SANDY BLAKE: Correct, they go hand-in-hand.

So, there are theaters in the Los Angeles area that have loops, the Pantages, the Wallace, the Pasadena Playhouse.

But we have one member who's not here today, is Sharon, she's traveling.

She had gone to the Wallace and the T-coil did not function.

She went to the Pasadena Playhouse, the T-coil did not function.

So, this is kind of a warning to me, like if I'm going to go and put down some nice money for a piece of theater, I'm going to perhaps go to the box office, the manager the stage manager and say is the Telecoil is the loop turned on? Because sometimes it's human error they just haven't turned it on.

Georgia.

GEORGIA: I just wanted to say that many, many years ago hearing aids came with T-coil.

Back in the day, before looping, they were called the telephone switch.

T-coil -- so whenever I would talk on the telephone, would I turn it to the T-switch and that way I was able to talk on the telephone with my hearing aid.

Now I don't know today if the new hearing aids that have the T-coil enables you to talk to talk on the telephone and hear better.

I don't know, if somebody could speak up about that.

Also, back in the day, the T-coil was a given in the hearing aids.

Not anymore.

The hearing aid comes without a T-coil.

We have to request it.

You have to say to your audiologist, does the hearing aid have a T-coil? And they'll say no, then maybe you have to pay extra, I don't know, do you have to pay extra?

To be able to give you a hearing aid with a T-coil? I would like to have that information.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm Rae I think we're getting off-topic.

MFI hearing aids like Resound, interface with loops and your phones and all of those things, very easily.

You can operate it with your Apple watch, you can operate it with your phone and all of those things and all you have to do when you're getting them set up with your

audiologist, they put the T-coil in and all of those things and you -- it's adjustable with -- it's called MFI made for iPhone and they put the settings in, you work it out with your audiologist and it's just a loop setting and it remembers on your phone and your Apple watch when you walk into the same place, I have the settings whenever I walk into the Sherman Oaks Library, it remembers that I need a loop and it adjusts my hearing aids.

So, yeah, it's the same.

It's called MFI hearing aids.

It's just new, it's new technology.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you Rae.

So perhaps it's time to move on, we have spent quite a bit of time on this, on this topic.

FLORENCE BAKER: Real quick I just wanted to mention, two things, first of all, the T-coil works not only for a loop, but when it is using another assistive hearing system like the radio frequency and the infrared which are the two common ones that are used so if you're in a theater and so on that has not a loop but one of those other systems, the difference is we have to ask for a receiver that will go around your neck, but you don't need the ear phones.

So, the T-coil works for other than just the loop system.

The other problem with going to a theater that says loop and you can't hear -- when you turn on your T-coil, this I'm finding out is that the same thing I had at the museum.

The systems that have loops that go around your neck, and I had to tell them, a hearing loop loops the room -- not your neck.

And they don't understand this.

So they have the other systems when U air headphone that goes around -- they call that loops or hearing loops and I just am -- and this is something that I'm investigating because about a I just got burned at a -- I was New York, I went -- I went it

a Broadway show and made \$165 for a ticket not only does it not loop and they're supposed to have handheld caption devices and they weren't ready yet.

So be careful when they --

SANDY BLAKE: We're definitely -- \$165 for a ticket.

Hi Grace, thank you driver.

Thank you.

Um, I want to I would like to address someone approached me before the meeting, and this is a struggle that she has experienced in this hearing world in the hearing world and she's experiencing it right now.

Insurance.

When your insurance changes and you need new hearing aids, the question is does anybody have any kind of advice for people who are at UCLA insurance and I guess the quo Diana asked me about this, Diana wants to know who is a good audiologist.

Does anybody have experience with UCLA insurance?

Jacqui?

Rae?

No?

Okay.

All right.

Yes, Ron.

And if I didn't articulate that perfectly please feel free to jump on it.

>>> I'm sorry my mother --

RON: My --

>>> I'm sorry, is someone here from Pasadena my mother says there's someone from Pasadena here, otherwise I'll have to get her a ride home.

Oh, Grace, I'm sorry.

Ron.

SANDY BLAKE: The question is does anyone live in Pasadena that might be able to give Grace a right home after the meeting.

I don't see any hands.

>>> Okay, what time is the meeting over?

SANDY BLAKE: Meeting is over at 12:00.

RAE: I can take her in a Lyft.

>>> Please otherwise I can wait and give her a ride but if you can --

RAE: It's up to you I just take a Lyft.

>>> Thank you and I can reimburse you.

SANDY BLAKE: She's not going to take the bus that's for sure.

And.

RON: I started without hearing aids a long time ago and at the time Bobbi was teaching and I was on her insurance and the insurance was -- (inaudible) the insurance company.

And, they go to whoever the audiologist is, and it would be like 6, \$7,000 but the insurance paid 80 percent.

So, you know, it was quite a good deal.

Bobbi retired and no longer insurance and so what happened was before I got the last set of hearing aids through her insurance I checked with Costco.

And at the time, their price was half that of the outfit that I was getting it from.

But with the -- I got my last set through that outfit and I went over and got the next set through Costco.

They had a special.

Got this set of hearing aids, this is what I'm wearing on the left side, for \$1,800.

And, their service is great.

SANDY BLAKE: One hearing aid?

RON: No, a pair but there's a catch.

That pair was a special and -- they don't provide a T-coil.

And then I got this one for other reasons and that's Resound.

And it does have a T-coil.

But check with Costco and the audiologist there is great.

So, this is the Northridge one I can vouch for.

I can't vouch for all the Costcos but I'll vouch for the audiologist there, he's really good, he's as good as any audiologist that I've dealt with since 19-over -- might be 40 years, 30, 40 years.

SANDY BLAKE: Okay, thank you, I know some people at Costco -- are crazy about their Costco hearing aid.

Did you have something to contribute?

Okay, so we're talking about insurance, we're talking about audiologist and if anybody has any ideas for Diane, UCLA audiologist, you might be able to work with her, please contact her.

FLORENCE BAKER: There is a directory of audiologists that are recommended by the HLAA.

And, I had that not too long ago, and I will have to try to locate it, I think it's either working through the HLAA or HLAA ca California website but there is one there.

So, I'll try to find it and let people know.

WENDI WASHINGTON: This is a change of topic a little bit.

Because, I recently went to the movies.

And, so you know the movies is another story.

They used to have at least in some places, open caption movies.

Now it's more difficult to find that.

I loved them.

So, you know we have our options of either the glasses or the ... Plexiglas which that's probably the most popular one.

I do believe they're redesigning those glasses because they would be so heavy after a couple of hours.

But I just wanted to remind me people that you can go to the movies, I don't know if anybody is looking for and asking for the assistive devices that they offer at the movies.

But, again, sometimes they don't work.

I was in the movie last week but I took it in and it was working fine and then it just wept completely out right at the beginning of the movie so it was very frustrating I had to get up, I had to take it out and find someone and they da-da-da, they take you back to their seat while they work on it and then they come back.

Often times, though, we're not doing simple things like keeping the batteries charged or changed.

And so, they will go out.

But they did give me a free movie pass to compensate me for my misery.

But I just wanted to remind you that, you know, that's happening.

Also, I was down at the Dorothy Chandler and they have as well as the Pantages they have captioned performances, you just have to kind of find out when they are.

Some of the devices they offer, they help some people, and some people they don't because hearing loss has such a wide range.

So, if you have a mild hearing loss, some of those devices actually work very well.

But for most of us, we're past that.

So, you know that assistive hearing devices so there's just lots of things, again, we have to kind of educate ourselves and share information but I've been able to get back to going to the movies.

You know, at least some of the time, so I just -- so that's a bit of a success that I'm -- that I'm going back to the movies and using the captions.

JENNIFER NELSON: That's awesome because I think that's one of the biggest problems for any of us, is that we withdraw from society, right?

Restaurants are too loud, I can't hear at the movies, I can't hear going to the theater and so what happens you end up just staying home.

And that's really common and I think the one thread that we all face is that we have to advocate because nobody -- you have to rely on yourself, unfortunately, at this point.

And, the one thing that I will say that's helped me -- so many of you know here that my hearing loss got worse and worse and worse to the point where I pretty much was deaf.

And, Lisa Yuan who's our former president -- she's not here but, yay, Lisa, Lisa has a Cochlear implant, and she really talked me off a cliff because I kept saying I don't want to get a Cochlear implant, I don't want to get a Cochlear implant, you know.

And it's been life-changing.

So, getting a Cochlear implant for me was like night and day but the one thing I will say even though I do hear so much better now is that people don't understand hearing loss.

They don't know what that word means.

So, when I have to deal with a doctor or a dentist or somebody who's in the service industry, I just say I'm deaf but I read lips.

They get that.

And it is -- it's been -- it's worked like a charm for me so people slow down, they speak, you know, right to me and what have you.

So even though I don't use ASL and I'm not capital D deaf, I'm lower-case d deaf and I just say to them I'm deaf but I read lips.

It's a life-changing tip, and I would definitely -- because when you try to tell people I have hearing loss, you know, people just -- that's like saying I have a (inaudible)

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and you don't know what that disease is and you don't have time to educated somebody, necessarily, right? So anyway, that's my tip because for years I was just frustrated, and withdrawing from society.

So, I think that that's a good tip.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you.

I see a couple more hands.

And, I do know that we want to take a break.

Which -- can we come back to you after the break? And -- we'll take a 15-minute break and then we'll be back on track, okay?

We'll come back at 12:18.

Watch out for Grace she's pretty glib over this.

MEETING BREAKS AT 11:03 A.M.; MEETING RESUMES AT 11:18 A.M.

JENNIFER NELSON: Hey everyone.

Can you hear me?

Hey folks.

Woohoo.

Can I clicker the lights here.

Hey --

All right.

Real quickly we're going to finish up our rap session.

But something I just want to bring up real quickly.

Hey guys -- Anna.

Can you just -- that's all right.

So, just to let you know, especially for the new people.

So, this chapter free and we this chapter is free and we never charge anything.

If you want to join National, there's a lot of advantages to that and you can look at the website and look at all the things you get joining national but this chapter is free and it always will be free.

However, we do take donations.

If aphyllly feel like this was worth a couple of bucks, that you got something out of it, that you found support, that you found education, we have a kitty over there and there's one for scholarships because we have a scholarship for a hard-of-hearing student.

Or you can just give to the general fund.

And the general fund pays for Ali, our amazing captionist.

Coffee, marketing, so, there's a lot of things that go into putting this meeting together.

So, if you feel like you're in the mood to offer a couple of dollars for donation, it helps us to keep going each month.

So, we definitely appreciate that and we're going to go back to the rap session right now.

The kitties are over there they're well-marked so definitely stop by if you can.

SANDY BLAKE: Yay.

We've got ten minutes for a few more questions but before we do, I just wanted to let everybody know it's Jacqui's birthday today she doesn't want fanfare she doesn't wanted a song but if you want to say happy birthday to Jacqui this, lovely lady.

(Applause)

SANDY BLAKE: Okay.

So, does anybody remember what they wanted to say before the break?

Was it about the movies?

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>> KATE JACOBSON: I was going to say that if you sign up for a movie captioning, open captioning you need to sign up at greater Los Angeles for the deaf called -- they'll send out the waiting list of where you can go out and see open caption movies.

I went to see Mary Poppins, open captions so that was fun, but it was in Burbank. You see? It cost me \$14 per person.

Wow.

So, how bad it depends on how bad do you want to see an open caption movie.

But that's a normal rate I think for anybody, closed caption or open.

You said open caption or closed caption.

Oh, it's open on Mondays and in Granada Hills once a month? Which month?

Granada Hills movie theater has an open caption once a month but I don't know -- we'll find out more details.

Okay.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you.

Yes.

Rae.

RAE: This actually isn't about movies but I was hoping you guys can help me since it's a rap session.

I'm doing a -- an advising to a local hospital about if you go into a local hospital and you're hearing impaired or deaf and they have a kit for you, of supplies, like things that you would need, I mean assuming that if you know you're going in for a hospital stay you would bring your own things.

But if you go in and it's an emergency, they should have things for you -- like a sign that says this patient has hearing loss and things like that.

And, I don't have -- I was hoping anybody here -- I was hoping that maybe anybody here who is a CI could weigh in.

We have these great badges but you can't wear them in you're in a hospital and you have to go down for a scanner so you need a fabric thing or a wristband -- I've had a couple of -- because of and not having what I need so, I'm -- I've complained so many times they -- I need people with CIs and experiences to help me.

So --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Rae.

SANDY BLAKE: Did you say because of dummies?

RAE: Yes.

SANDY BLAKE: I feel your pain.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, I recently had a -- a ... I had a colonoscopy.

So, the first thing -- they're not going to understand you so please, you know, remember that.

So, what they did was with my hearing aid, they taped it to my ears so it wouldn't fall out when the guy was giving me a colonoscopy.

So, to understand him, but still, you know, it would help if they sign or use some basic signs but they don't.

That's one thing.

Sec second thing at the airport when you go to an airport, you go right over and talk directly to the people at the, you know, at the front desk.

At the terminal.

Go directly to them and say I'm deaf.

And this -- so I don't know when you're going to want me to go in.

So, when the time comes, all you do, as soon as you see people going online, you go on-line, you tell them you're deaf and you get in first.

There's no waiting, there's no one -- it's great.

Just do that, perfect.

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SANDY BLAKE: Actually, when you book a ticket, when you book a ticket, look for the disability ... portion on the website.

And, go, scroll down to disabilities, you can click "deaf" and that will be on your card.

And then like Michael said, when you go to the airport, just walk right up and say I need some little more time, I'm deaf, they give you a special boarding pass.

And then when you go to the gate, you say I'm deaf, can I have early boarding?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, and I'll try to be quick about this.

Oh, my glasses.

I take Access service here because I live in West L.A.

And -- am I talking too loud?

SANDY BLAKE: No put it closer to your mouth.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I live in West L.A. so I take Access, they will pick me up for doctors' appointments, meetings, shopping, theater or whatever.

And, I pay \$2.75 each way, I think it's -- \$2.75 each way, and so if anyone is interested, call access customer service, (800) 827-0829 for an application.

Thank you.

SANDY BLAKE: Thank you so much.

It's Tina, right? Your name?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh Tina Elliott.

SANDY BLAKE: Okay, I think Georgia has an urgent share and then we're going to go onto our chapter business.

Is it urgent?

Can it wait?

Okay I'm going to turn the meeting over to our president, Jennifer.

JENNIFER NELSON: I just want to say thank you everyone for sharing your stories and we need to do more of this just because we all get frustrated.

I was going to say the chapter offers these buttons it says please face me I'm hard-of-hearing.

They're free we provide them so they're in a box upfront, I know some people hate them, and some people love them.

So, take some.

So, we offer that.

Anyway, we all share your pain.

I think that's the bottom line, right, we all have our frustrations with hearing loss but I'm so grateful for this group because -- we're also a wealth of knowledge.

There are things that I've learned here that I had no idea about, including getting on the plane which I did yesterday because I had a C boarding pass for Southwest, I was like I don't want it get on last, so I went right up front and said I'm deaf, they let me on first.

There's very few advantages for hearing loss but that's one of them.

Now we're going to talk about our biggest fundraiser of the year, wend Washington she's going to give us all the details to participate.

Why are you hiding? (laughing).

WENDI WASHINGTON: I'm going to come over here.

Okay.

Can everybody see?

Okay.

Great.

All right.

So, and Jen has mentioned this is our No. 1 fundraiser, at least for your chapter but this is a national event as well.

And, we've been doing this for, oh gosh, over ten years.

So, Saturday June 8th is the big walk.

This walk is in Long Beach, a beautiful Marina Green Park, it's beautiful down there, you can see the Queen Mary, you can see the aquarium, it's absolutely beautiful so I want you to think about that as you prepare to join our walk and, and just have a most glorious Saturday morning.

It really is wonderful.

We already have a number of people on our team, about 14 strong woohoo.

I see my team members here, I see Jen, I see Georgia, I see John, Mindy Tim, Ryan, Sandy I see a bunch of folks so thank you for being on the team, we're looking for more team members as we try to raise money.

JENNIFER NELSON: The down.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Okay.

Here we go.

Okay, so this information is for anyone who is not already on the team.

And would like to know how to get information about the walk and, specifically, how to find out about the L.A. stars -- that is our team name for the L.A. chapter, we are the L.A. Stars.

Woohoo!

And so, if you go to our homepage at HLAA-LA.org you'll find this you can click on the right side, you'll see this ad and then will take you to the page that you can sign up.

You can also go directly to the walk page, again this is a national event, what they do is they have walks in various parts of the country, and various cities at times so the Long Beach Walk really includes Los Angeles, Simi Valley, everybody in Southern California shows up, the Lakewood chapter, a lot of chapters, it's not just us.

So, a lot of people, so for example if we have 14 team members, we're probably going to bring our family and friends, we're going to tell other people so they show up and all the other teams so it's kind of like a friendly competition as well.

The L.A. Stars like to be on top though.

So, we're trying to raise a little money so that we look good compared to Lakewood, Long Beach and other chapters.

So, once you get signed up, that's it.

You know you just kind of -- you're a member, it's very easy.

Part of the task is donations or securing them.

So, what I suggest is that you ask as many people as possible, that's it.

Almost like a sales job, you ask 1,000 people and you get 100 yes, well that's a lot of money if you get a lot of yesses.

The numbers do add up over a while.

Once you sign up you will have the opportunity to create your own page.

So, on your page it's a good idea to kind of personalize it.

And that's where you kind of say a few things about why you're walking, what this chapter or what the organization means to you.

And, don't forget to say how others can support you -- by coming out and/or making a donation.

Some people put a lot of inches and statistics are good.

On my page I find that I usually try to make it a little more personalized because people respond to that -- but it's up to you.

What I then do is email a link to the walk page and so they can see everything that I put and ... from your personal email account.

And you can do something from the walk page but I just find that it's a little bit easier to just email family and friends from my own email account.

But, again, these are just suggestions, if the link is complicated, you can just send out an email with that message and then direct them because the donations are done online.

So, one of the things that -- let's go back for a second.

If you -- once you set up your page and you tell people what you want and what's happening, then the suggestion is that you talk it up in other places.

So, you can also put that same message on Facebook or other social media.

One of the things I also do is that I print out this spreadsheet and that's for my cash and check donations.

Most of the donations are done online but they don't have to be.

If you want to ache a pledge sheet to work just like the people selling girl scout cookies, they still take that sheet with them and signing up and giving them five or \$10.

The same thing can happen so you can print out a pledge sheet which is also on the site.

Once you send out your emails, I would suggest that you resend that message every two weeks -- it can get lost, people forget.

And then as it gets closer, I would send it out witness a week.

It's kind of automatic.

And one thing I always do is after each donation or contribution, I send a thank you note, I just email a thank you letting them know how much I appreciate their support -- and that goes a long way.

Not ole do you want to solicit donations but you can make donations yourself and so, three ways that we're making donations, again, is through the Walk4Hearing page and if you go you'll see a big sign that says "donate" once you set up your own page there will be an opportunity for you to make your own contribution and it will give you a little badge that says I contributed.

Again, we take checks, they're payable to Walk4Hearing and you would need to vote what they would like you to do is just bring all those things to the walk that day.

So, if you get checks, just put them in an envelope and you can bring them, as long as they're made out to Walk4Hearing.

If they make them out to you personally then you need to cash them and turn that money in.

Okay?

If you get cash, they would like you to convert that to a check.

So, if I have \$100 cash, I need to write out a personal check and give that to the Walk for hearing and then I just keep the cash and give them the check because they don't want it collect cash that day.

Okay?

If you do that, I would suggest that you print out the pledge sheet because you can just list the people, how much money they gave and then add it up.

It's not very complicated, and a lot of it is not ... you know by check and cash but I do -- sometimes I often do I know my aunt is going to send me a \$100 check that's just what she does.

So, I have to have a way for that.

And you want to promote this event as much as possible.

Tell people you know.

You can ask your favorite restaurant if you could put a sign in the window.

Call people.

Send more emails, post online on your Facebook or whatever and you can send snail mail, a la Grace.

For those of you who don't know she raised a lot of money, last time we were here we celebrated her birthday, she hadn't turned 100 but since then she's turned 100 I just have to say that but Grace has raised -- grace has raise aid substantial amount of money during these walks.

And from what she told us she sends things out in the mail using a stamp and got quite a response.

So, I don't discount snail mail.

So, any of these are ways that you can talk it up.

Okay, Georgia.

Talking about volunteering now.

Okay so, in addition to being on the L.A. Stars team, or even if you're not on the team, just coming out, coming out because we would like to have high visibility.

That means lots of people.

As you know, everyone doesn't understand about hearing loss, people don't know what's going on so when they see all these people out there, who are these people, who are they doing? It's about hearing loss so we would like as many people to come out to the beach on June 8th that's possible, we would like our team to be at least 20 strong, tell your family or friends, then they will be friends of our team, it will be L.A. Stars and friends and family.

But in addition, there's a little work involved too.

So, what we need are volunteers.

For the day of the walk.

We need people to work at the registration booth, people to give out the t-shirt because you get a t-shirt if you raise \$100.

We sell things like hats; Michael has one on right now.

So, they sell hats, Georgia has been part that of for a while.

We also have raffles, snacks, informational booths and we have people who go and put out signs, Tim in the house.

He's going to take that big step.

And then also setting up, taking down.

So, if you can offer your help in any way that day it would be much appreciate.

So, you can sign up today, Georgia.

And just tell Tim or Jen or myself what you would like to do and we will sign you up for it and we'll be most appreciative.

But let me just finish this -- did you have a question?

Okay, that means you're signing up?

Okay.

Also, sponsors and raffles, if you know any companies who might sponsor the walk or offer raffle prizes, please let us know because that makes it more fun and when we, you know, have prizes people get more involved and it's just a lot of fun.

Okay, one last note, this event is really fun and rewarding.

Members and their family and friends that come out to this park and we do more than just raise funds.

We walk along the ocean, we talk, we laugh, we become better acquainted.

That's how the chapter has stayed so strong, that is really how it has.

We also get some exercise, it's a 5K, Tim will be doing 10K.

We eat bagels and other goodies, we've had pizza, one year we had photo-booths, we take pictures of various kinds we root for each other and then we show others who we are.

As I said the L.A. Stars we like to be on top, so.

We raise funds, we raise awareness and then after all of that we go out for Margaritas.

Okay?

Down in that area there's a Mexican restaurant, I think it's Tequila Jacks so around noon, 1:00, a lot of people go over there and they have Margaritas and Mexican food because that's who the L.A. Stars are, they are the party chapter and that's how we roll.

So, I'm asking you to please help make this year's walk another fun and fulfilling and successful event and if there's any questions I'd like to answer those and so we can move on with them.

Any questions?

Yes ma'am.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are dogs allowed?

WENDI WASHINGTON: Absolutely, people walk their dogs they walk their children, we see people there are people on skates -- people on everything, everything.

Any other questions about this walk?

Jen up.

JENNIFER NELSON: It's not a question but it's also an event.

So, there's booths there, right, there's caption call and Cochlear will be there and it's like a whole event that's happening along with the walk.

So, it's a lot of fun to go around and just see what people are offering for hard-of-hearing services, there's food, there's balloons, people bring their dogs, like you said.

So, it's really an event -- even if you don't want to walk.

WENDI WASHINGTON: It is absolutely an event.

And there's freebies and there's information and there's just a lot of -- I wish I had thought to put some of the pictures in here.

I put them on Facebook.

But, in any case, just raise your hand if you participated in the Walk before?

Okay.

So, that means we just need to have one, two, three, four, five, six -- seven, 9, 10, 11, 12 so all of right now invited to really participate in this event.

I assure you it will be very fun and rewarding and informational -- there's lots of information.

Tim.

TIM BROWNING: Just a comment.

Thank you wend, there's a lot here to remember.

So, we're going to put this on the website as well so you can follow along.

But the info at HLAA-LA email if you have questions or anything, we're here to help you guys.

It is a fun event though, great event, wonderful area, Marguerites as well.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Just one more thing for those of you who are raising money, National does offer some prize so as right now again if you've raised \$100 you automatically have earned a t-shirt.

If you raised \$500, you automatically have earned a water bottle or something like that.

And then also, there's some other little prizes that go with it.

I wish I could remember the last thing that was being offered.

Did you get Ronnie's email about something that sticks on something? I can't remember what it was.

Anyway --

GEORGIA: Last year I raised over \$500 so I got this backpack.

It's amazing.

There.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Oh, what is that?

GEORGIA: It's a battery charger.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Oh, how nice, I didn't get that.

GEORGIA: It's fabulous.

WENDI WASHINGTON: Well over the years, I didn't know about that, I didn't get one but I have gotten a backpack, an umbrella, a variety of things.

So, you know there's prizes, there's raffles, it's a lot of fun and, again, we have -- one more thing, we do have a team goal and that is \$5,000.

So, if we are really trying hard to raise \$5,000, it's very doable and so I hope everyone will tell as many people and that we will get as many contributions as possible.

Thank you.

(Applause)

JENNIFER NELSON: Thanks Wendi, yeah, it is a lot of fun and it's a way to raise money for -- along with awareness, raise money for our chapter which is always needed.

Oh okay, really quickly, so some of you know that there was a Bill, 598AB which is for insurance companies to start paying for any child who needs hearing aids, 0 to 18.

So that Bill passed on Tuesday, and I want to give a big shout-out to Dale who sent what 80-something postcards? I mean he worked really hard, Katie Wright some of you know her she was the president of the Long Beach chapter now she's the president of HLAA camp and she went up with her grandson who also has hearing loss.

So, they were actually there to watch it pass unanimously.

And, the next -- the next step is to ... I'm trying to think --

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Appropriations.

JENNIFER NELSON: Anyway, so if you're interested for the next push which is probably going to happen in June or July, we'll post the information on the website.

Some of this information here is where you can find some information but there's actually a contact.

So, if you want to send more postcards or what have you, you can definitely do that and I encourage you because it's really heart-warming.

Now if they would just do it for adults, right? But baby steps.

Okay.

So, I just wanted to let you know, next month, we do not have a meeting.

We will not be here.

Because we are the party chapter -- thank you Wendi.

We are going to have a Memorial Day party which we do every year.

And the wonderful Jacqui Gritsch has offered her home.

She has an incredible house, I haven't been there yet but she sent pictures and she's right up here on Mulholland so very close to here -- she's got a pool, she's got a hot tub she's got a fabulous property.

There's only one minor glitch and that is parking is very limited up there so she's got about nine spaces.

So, what we're going to do is we're going to meet try on coordinate something after this meeting but hopefully people who have mobility issues can take those -- take those spots.

And then either Tim or myself or Sandy or somebody will -- we can also have people meet down here because what we're encouraging you to do is carpool so maybe you can park here at the library and we can drive you back.

We'll work out those school districts.

So, the chapter will provide the main course so we'll probably do something like chicken and for the vegetarians and Vegans we can do subs so we'll have a main course but it's pot luck huh so we would encourage you to bring salads, potato salad, anything you want, dessert is always welcome.

Beverages, adult and otherwise so it's a lot of fun and we're going to post information and right now it's going to be from noon to 4:00.

So, come one, come all, come hungry.

And, also, we -- so, we need a head count because we need to know how much food to bring.

On please we're going to send out an email and send it out on Facebook, please RSVP and let us know and once you RSVP we'll send you Jacqui's address -- so that's the bargain.

So, we have 30, Heather hosted last year our last president and we had about 40 people out there it was a beautiful day and it's a lot of fun and it's a way to be away

from here and just socialize and get to know each other better. It's a really, really fun time.

So, I would definitely encourage you guys to come and it will be that -- it will be Sunday May 26th so our meeting would be normally the 25th but we're going to have the party instead so we will not be here.

Did you have a question?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: You just answered it.

You just answered it.

JENNIFER NELSON: Oh, okay.

Cool.

Yeah, so again, we'll let you guys know how we're going to handle the logistics.

There is parking nearby, on Beverly Glen it's just -- yeah but you just you have to be able to walk a couple of blocks.

But if you're up for it, there's plenty of parking there and, again, we'll give you the lay of the land.

Tim, our vice president, has something awesome to talk -- oh, we have time.

TIM BROWNING: I'm going to stand over here because I'm left-handed.

So I wanted it bring this to your attention, so this meeting is about -- as some of you know I work for cruise industry I work for four different brands I work for All-American, Princess Cruises, sea born and Australia, we have a brand in Australia so we have a accessibility manager that works for Princess so she's in charge of setting up groups, people that are deaf, people that have mobility issues, people that are blind, for example.

This woman has been working -- her name is Jan Tuck, she's been working at Princess cruises for 40 years she was just named employee of the year for her company for this year and she's also been working with the U.S. government for nearly 40 years

she has worked with George Bush, she's gone to Washington D.C. many times she's very renowned person.

So, I don't have enough time to go into all of the different people she knows and so forth, but she is a very interesting person.

So what I did I one day I went up to her and talked about what can I do is this how can I help the hard-of-hearing have a better experience traveling, in workplace and what advice would she have for me to help us get out there and have Mohr have more outreach and so forth?

So we talked a little bit, and what I'm trying to do is trying to set up something, this is just for your awareness but I want it try to set up maybe a meeting at someone's house or some sort of rap session where I can talk to you guys and get your feedback because she was very interested in what I had to say and we have a new class of ships coming out in 2023 and they would like to hear what I have to say about making sure that it's the best experience possible for people like us.

All the way from I go to the airport, I don't know what to do, how can we help you? When I get to the cruise terminal and I'm checking in for the cruise, what can I do to make sure I have a seamless experience?

There's so many things you can do.

And, she wanted to hear all the ideas and as you guys know there's a wide gamut between hearing loss so I have hearing loss when I was born, moderate to severe, everyone's late -- there are some people with late deafness, so instead of me giving advice to the ship and the workplace and so on, I want to hear all of your ideas and opinions as well.

So, what I'm hoping to do is either one-on-one or to have maybe some sort of rap session at someone's home for example or something of that nature -- I want to moderate and discuss with you the different ideas so I can really relay that back to her or just relay to the president of my company.

So, I got pretty good networking here have I great opportunity here to have your ideas influence the future of the cruising industry as well as workplace.

She wants to hear how can we improve workplace for people hard-of-hearing?

So, one thing I brought up was captioning for our quarterly company meetings where we have branch Presidents coming in to discuss and she said oh my goodness, yes, definitely let's put in captioning.

So, they're putting in captioning now for the 300 plus people that go, and I think a lot of them would want anyway because they don't want to admit they're hard-of-hearing, for example.

There's a lot of avenues here so, this is sort of my own journey that I need your help with because I have one idea but you guys have so many experiences, ideas, suggestions.

I want to hear them and be able to relay that.

So, this is ongoing, this is not oh I've got to have it next week, this is something over the course of the next few months that I wanted to talk about.

So I'm probably go work the going to work the Steering Committee and see if I can set up a time and place to discuss this opportunity and I'll explain more in that meeting but I do think it's a very unique opportunity and I've got a chance to meet up with them.

They've asked for me to be part of their accessibility board for the cruises -- so they will be asking me questions about hearing loss, what are the challenges you guys face traveling? What would encourage you guys to cruise or to -- whatever the case may be? So, I've got a pretty good, pretty inroad here with some pretty key people, all the way to somebody who knows George Bush, I don't know whether that's good or bad for you guys.

So put that on your radar, I just think this is a unique opportunity for our chapter as well as she will also help me to find a contact, give me advice and so forth to help us reach out to key individuals.

We otherwise might not know.

Stay tuned, pretty exciting, I'm looking forward to it so that's sort of my own theory and Florence here inspired me to go talk with her.

So, thank you.

JENNIFER NELSON: Thanks Tim I think that's -- please, please, these are the kinds of things when we have big name people who are going to help us advocate that's what we need.

And, Ron is that your name?

Yeah.

Something along this line because he came up to me and said is there something else, I can be doing? You know, because we only meet once a month and we, you know, we had our emergency preparedness. We have talked about getting advocacy for hospitals.

Anybody can form a committee and I really encourage you to do that.

Get together, I'm interested in the museum, form a museum for, you know, for our committee for that.

Try and do hospitals, maybe somebody just wants to drop off HLAA brochures at audiologist's office saying, please, let people know about this chapter, this foundation.

So, there's so much you can be doing outside of meeting once a month.

And so, it just, you know, it just takes time and energy but I know a lot of people here would be very, very interested in trying to join Tim, join Florence, starting a committee with Ray or somebody to do hospitals.

So please talk to each other, find your interest and ways that we can get the word out because it is happening.

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Like Georgia said, suddenly she saw captions and she didn't even have to ask for it.

So, I would encourage you all to do that.

I want to give a big thank you to Ali our captionist please give me Give him a -- well really appreciate it.

I know the one thing we all need to all do is use the microphone better and speak more slowly.

So good reminder.

And, that's it.

I want to see all of your shining faces at the Memorial Day party and like I said, also when you RSVP let us know what you're going to bring so we don't want ten Caesar salads or ten chocolate cakes, so tell us what you're going to bring, on we can keep track so thank you everybody, have a wonderful weekend.

MEETING ADJOURNS AT 12:00 P.M.