

Our December “Meeting” is a SOCIAL!!!
Monday December 14th
6:30 PM via Zoom Videoconferencing
(Party Room opens at 6:15...come early)

OK, HLAAGang, we are not going to let COVID19 spoil the party! Fill your favorite glass with whatever you like in it, grab some eats, and pop in to join the fun!!

This year has been a bummer, but it has brought out the creativity in people. We have some fun and games planned, and some **PRIZES!**

No responsibilities for food. No money needed for the bar. No white elephant gifts. What’s not to like? We look forward to a good time that brings us together as friends. Don’t be among the missing. **Show up, share your happy faces with us, and be sure to wear your ugliest Christmas sweaters!**

This month, we ask that you e-mail the chapter at hlaafoxvalley@gmail.com to let us know you want a link to the meeting. Do that ASAP so we get you on the list. If you’re a procrastinator...then do it at least by 4 PM on December 14th so we can still get that link to you. We reserve the right to bug a few of you who have been participating if we don’t hear from you early!



Get ready for a special night, and a time to celebrate the end of 2020; a year we shall not forget!

TO PARTICIPATE IN ZOOM:

1. Let us know, in advance, that you want to join us. (see above.)
2. Click on the link you receive around 6:15 pm on 12/14/2020.
3. If you are asked to sign up for Zoom, do it. follow the instructions. If you did it before, you won’t have to do it again.
4. Join with audio and also with video.
5. The host or co-host will let you into the party room.
6. **SMILE!** Say “HI”! Relax!! Have Fun!!

January & February... Let’s Get Together!!

Video conferencing has changed the landscape. It’s not perfect, but the good side is it allows us to meet wherever we are. We have decided to use the Zoom Pro program that the chapter purchased to meet during the months of January & February when we have not met in recent years. Put January 11th and February 8th on your calendars. Since the newsletter is not sent out those 2 months, we’ll depend on e-mail to send the meeting link. **SUGGESTION: Send an e-mail to: hlaafoxvalley@gmail.com, and we will put you on a ‘reminder list’.** We have an e-mail list, but not everyone is on it.

You have ideas too, right?

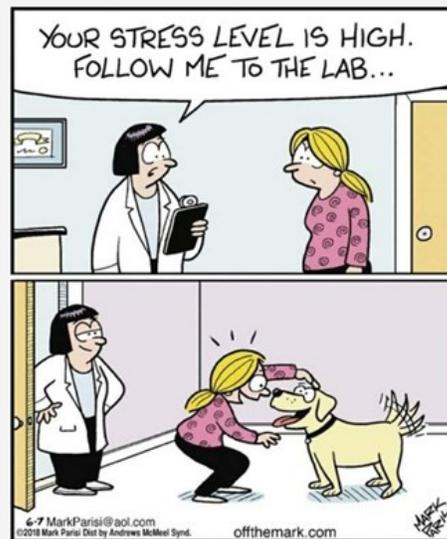
Here are a few thoughts for spontaneous discussion: Mask Barriers & How they Affect Us; Managing Stress During COVID times; What YOU Are Doing With all Your Extra Home Time; How Hearing Aid Advertisements Affect Perceptions of Hearing Loss; Finding Humor in Some of the Crazy Things We Do.

Meanwhile, the chapter board and program chair, Rhonda Clancey, are planning a variety of programs for regular meetings for 2021. Feb. may also be a program.

We will all be glad when we can meet in person once again, but until then, let’s make the best of it! Your participation is vital to the continuation of HLAAGang Fox Valley Chapter. Do join us!

November Meeting Summary...

Thankyou to Nancy Gilbertson for sharing her service dog, Dalton’s story, while introducing us to ‘Canine Companions’.



Twenty one people enjoyed our November program. Everyone was amazed at how well these dogs are trained, and what they can do for their owners. Dalton III,  You are amazing!



December 2020

An Interview With Madame Secretary*



Welcome to our sixth personalized hearing loop experience story. Did you know there are over 750 public hearing loop installations in Wisconsin? You can find them listed by geographic location at hlaawi.org/resources.

December's interview is with Kathy G. from the Green Bay area. Yup - she's a proud ♀ and longtime Packer fan. Here is her story.

MS: How did you learn about hearing loops?

 Like all of my siblings, I have a hereditary hearing loss. My first hearing aids were really just generic sound amplification devices. As my hearing got worse, I realized I needed more.

I was fortunate to follow in the footsteps of an older sibling whose hearing loss journey had begun earlier. She told me about hearing loops, sent me copies of HLAA brochures and helped me research audiology practices in my area. Most importantly, she helped me compose a letter to my audiologist stressing the importance of including telecoils in any hearing device I got.

MS: When did you first experience being "in the loop?"

 I was hoping that it would be in the office of my audiologist when I picked up my new hearing aids. I was puzzled to find out that he did not have a demonstration hearing loop.

 Plan B was to experience the loop at Options for Independent Living. Options definitely had a functioning hearing loop. Unfortunately, my audiologist had neglected to activate the telecoils in my brand new hearing aids. What the heck? Very frustrating... My telecoils were finally activated via an additional appointment with my very apologetic audiologist.

 So the first time I experienced a hearing loop was the next Sunday in my church. WOW. I could understand every word. Amazing clarity. No background noise to garble the deacon's message. What a difference the hearing loop made.

 I have since purchased a hearing loop for my TV room at home. The kit cost \$150. My husband installed it under the room's perimeter baseboards in about an hour's time. Love it.

MS: What places do you think should be looped?

 Community meeting rooms at elderly care facilities should definitely be looped. That's where activities like Bingo, movies, crafts, lectures and meetings take place. It would make a big difference in the quality of life for many residents.

MS: Thank you Kathy for sharing your story. And thank you for your suggestion that a hearing loop might be the PERFECT Christmas present for the HOH in your life. "Who says you can't give a gift to yourself? Ho Ho Ho! 🎁 Merry Christmas! 🎄

**Christine Klessig is now MS (Madame Secretary of our chapter board). Please share your story with her. (e-mail on pg. 4)*

Margaret Ferris Memorial Scholarship 2021



Before Margaret H. Ferris, passed away, she financed a scholarship through the Community Foundation of the Fox Valley Region. It started as a \$500 annual award. With further donations from her family and from memorial donations when she passed, this has grown to a \$2000 award given annually to a high school senior with hearing loss who uses technology to remain in the hearing mainstream.

If you know a high school senior that meets that criteria, who plans post secondary education, encourage them to apply.

Applications will be available online sometime in December at: www.cffoxvalley.org/scholarships The deadline for application is in early March. (Exact dates will be on the foundation website.)

After retiring as a teacher of hard of hearing and deaf students in Oshkosh, Margaret joined Fox Valley Chapter. She served as president, helped with the newsletter preparation, and participated on several committees. She often said she had joined FVC so she could teach us all she knew about hearing loss; but soon discovered that we were the ones who were teaching her.

Margaret was motivated to teach in this particular area because both of her parents had hearing loss. She, herself, became hard of hearing in her 50s. She was an amazing woman who was an inspiration to her students and everyone who knew her. We are honored to be able to promote this annual scholarship in her name.



25 Years of Digital Tech in Hearing Aids...

November marked the 25th anniversary of a hearing aid that heralded a fundamental change in how hearing care professionals, consumers and the media perceived hearing aids. The first ear-level fully digital hearing aid was developed and introduced by Oticon. This development moved hearing aid discussion out of the image of "your grandfather's hearing aids" into the new world of digital innovation. Other major manufacturers soon followed Oticon.

In 1995 the Los Angeles Times predicted: "What digital technology has done for music and video is about to happen in another industry-the manufacture of hearing devices." Further, the devices were referred to as 'tiny computers for your ear'.

Before they were built on a digital platform, hearing aids could do little more than amplify sound. An important element of moving into the era of digital was that it allowed developers to begin to imagine solutions that simply could not be developed using analog technology. And, it keeps getting better!

HLAA has been very much involved in advocacy and education that has bent the ears of manufacturers. We WANT to hear better!



November 19, 2020

Dear HLAA Friends,

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, life changed quickly. People needed to take action in order to control the virus's spread, and to keep themselves and others safe. But for many with hearing loss, those measures created added communication challenges and exacerbated the isolation that people with hearing loss often feel.

Immediately, HLAA stepped up to provide information, resources and the continued sense of belonging that people needed by adapting to an online format that individuals could safely access.

HLAA needs help to sustain, evolve and grow. We must continue to reach and support the ever-increasing number of people with hearing loss throughout this pandemic and beyond.

Please join the HLAA Giving Challenge. Our aim is to raise \$500,000 by year's end. We believe we can meet that goal because people who have received support from HLAA care.

Since the earliest days of the pandemic, HLAA has done everything it could to keep our organization together and thriving. The Walk4Hearing was moved online. The 2020 HLAA national convention was cancelled, but quickly pivoted to a two-day online event that brought highlights of what would have been the convention to people across the country. They were given free access to a leading-edged research symposium and other programs. **The number of webinars available on the HLAA website was upped, all free, all captioned, and all on timely topics. HLAA developed a host of resources desperately needed on telework, telehealth, medical situations, and more, all available at: [hearing loss.org](https://hearingloss.org)** Chapters across the country jumped online to help too.

The immediate impact of the pandemic and the cost of HLAA's efforts also meant our revenue went down. When in-person events were cancelled it meant dollars were lost just at a time when HLAA's mission became more important than ever.

HLAA has done all it could do to be there for you. Now HLAA is asking you to be there for us. Together we can sustain our community, evolve our programming to a robust digital platform, and grow our outreach.

For every dollar you give, 89 cents goes directly to helping us reach, support, and empower people with hearing loss. The remaining 11 cents keeps HLAA running and helps raise funds that will keep us going. If, between now and December 31st, you can help HLAA, know that every dollar donated will be appreciated and put to good use. We will do everything we can to reach an even greater number of people who are struggling with hearing loss alone.

The HLAA Giving Challenge is about much more than raising money for the short term. It's about the future of HLAA while building our capacity as an organization to better help people who are determined to live their best lives with hearing loss.

With Much Appreciation,

*Barbara Kelley, Executive Director

* This letter has been condensed from the original letter written by Barbara Kelley, HLAA Executive Director

In the words of HLAA's founder, Howard E. "Rocky" Stone...

***"Increasingly, I have come to celebrate life. I may not be here tomorrow.
Today, I must do the best I can for myself and for others."***

89 cents of every dollar donated to HLAA goes directly to help reach, support and empower people with hearing loss to live their best lives. The remaining 11 cents keeps the organization running, and helps HLAA raise the next dollar.

HLAA's vision is to support and empower every American with hearing loss. To do so, we must sustain our community, evolve our organization, and grow our reach and impact.

Yes, I want to join the HLAA Giving Challenge. My gift is enclosed.

\$35 \$75 \$100 \$150 \$250 Other \$_____

My employer will match my gift and I am enclosing my matching gift form.

My gift is a tribute. _____ In honor of. _____ In memory of _____

Please send a letter to the following person to acknowledge my tribute.

Name _____

Address _____

City, state, zip code _____

Make checks payable to HLAA.

Mail to: HLAA National Office
6116 Executive Blvd, Ste.320
Rockville, MD 20852

HLAA is a tax-exempt charitable
501c(3) organization.

Donations can be made online at: www.hearingloss.org/donate

The HLAA Challenge Leadership Committee includes the following past board members and actively involved members:

Terry & Jim Bedard, Diana Bender PhD, Elizabeth Booth, Raegene Castle, Holly Cohen, Don Doherty, Peggy Ellertson, Peter C. Fackler, Kevin H. Franck PhD, Toni Iacolucci, Paul Lurie, Esq., Susan Miller, Michael Meyer, Deborah Mohney, David Myers PhD, Richard Neely, Edward O'Brien, Julie Olson, Cheri Perazzoli, Anne Pope, Wayne Roorda, Nancy Sonnabend, Ann Thomas, Teri & Ray Wathen, Margaret Widner-Kolberg, & Beth Wilson PhD.

Why Thank HLAA? Here are a few more reasons...

HLAA founder, Rocky Stone, had a vision for a future where people living between two worlds – not fully deaf and not fully hearing, could participate fully in the mainstream of society. His inspiration has powered our organization for 41 years, and kept us here for you, and each other. **Now, HLAA needs our support.***

HLAA was there to assure the National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders within the National Institutes of Health, included hard of hearing research.

HLAA made sure the Americans with Disabilities Act would include captioning and CART, assistive listening devices, and hearing aid compatible phones. HLAA insisted that communication access be more than sign language interpreting

HLAA supported newborn hearing screening legislation that jump-started hospital programs for infant hearing screening throughout the country.

HLAA was there when subjects were needed for innovative studies on procedures like cochlear implants when they were still considered experimental. And will be there as more and more research for a cure is being done.

HLAA advocates for better, more affordable solutions for hearing loss, hearing assistive technology, better hearing instruments, insurance & Medicare coverage and for more options to support people who need technology but cannot afford it.

***A national board member donated \$100,000 to begin this challenge. A big thank you to her.**

Chapter President's Message...



Our annual November board election was a shuffling of cards already in play. We had hoped a few new faces might join us but that didn't happen. It remains as it has been for the past few years, with a small shift in officers. Christine Klessig stepped down as President, but graciously accepted the role of secretary. Dale Voskuil will remain as Vice President; Michelle Frisbie as Treasurer, while Julie Olson becomes President. Rhonda Clancey will remain as program chair and CI group chair. Jane Young will continue as newsletter prep person and will be the board's liaison to the H.O.P.E. group.

A bit of history: In the spring of 1983, I learned about a new organization being developed in Bethesda MD. They were looking for people to support it. I connected with the founder, and decided I wanted to try to start a support group in Appleton. My hearing loss was defining me, and I was frustrated. After calling a meeting at the Appleton Library, ten of the 50 who showed up, offered to help, and we did it! It has been a labor of love since then. While I served as the first chapter president from 1984 – 1986, I've not held a specific office since. The newsletter editor's has kept me involved. So here I am, back where I started, which is a bit scary.

2020 has been taxing for all of us. It appears that challenge will continue in 2021. We will try hard to keep HLA A, at all levels, up and running. We will continue to hold monthly meetings and socials with video conferencing. It's different. We've had to learn how. It's not perfect, but it can keep us together if we let it. We are disappointed that some of our regulars have not participated, and hope you will try. It's not how we want it, but we also believe that online connecting is here to stay.

Since 1984, our chapter has met on the 2nd Monday evening of the month. Some years we took summer months off; more recently it was winter months. We don't know when we'll be able to hold meetings in person, nor do we know if the facility we've been using for years will be available. We'd like your thoughts. Our mission has always been to provide information and support to people with hearing loss who want to remain in the hearing mainstream. We are not a deaf group. All of us know there are tons of people with hearing loss who could benefit from what HLA A has to offer. How do we reach them? How can you help? What ideas do you have?

Without input from those who find HLA A helpful, we are unsure of how to plan. We will do whatever is necessary to keep HLA A Fox Valley Chapter going. If you can hop on this wobbly old wagon to help in some way, please call or e-mail me. (920-202-6449 julieo@athenet.net)
Happy Holidays to Everyone! Stay Safe & Stay Healthy!

Julie Olson, HLA A Fox Valley Chapter President

The Sponsor Program is Fox Valley Chapter's Main Fundraiser. If you would like to support the chapter this way, send your check to: HLA A-Fox Valley Treasurer, P.O. Box 25, Menasha WI 54952. hlaafoxvalley@gmail.com

2020 Chapter Sponsors

Platinum Level (\$200 or More)

Ear, Nose & Throat Surgical Associates (Audiology) - Kristin Borgen, AuD; Beth Gabavics, AuD; Nicole Maxam, AuD
Fox Valley Hearing Center - Melissa Dintelman AuD; Jody Jedlika, AuD; Stephanie Long, AuD; Brittany Uitenbroek, AuD; Candy McGinnis, AuD
Haviland Hearing Aids - Peter J. Zellmer, AuD; Kyle Martell, AuD
Helen Hardt Family Fund/Fox Cities Community Foundation Rural Audiology Services, Waupaca
Seeing the Word LLC - Margo Lucas, RPR, CRC, CRI Cart Reporter
Judy & Larry Benish
Douglas Grant MD
Jim Machalk
Tom & Linda O'Connor
Howard & Charlene Porter
Raymond Smith

Gold Level (\$100 - \$199)

Ascension Audiology - Debra Engebos, AuD, Susan Iwanski, AuD, Lisa Esser AuD.
O.C. & Pat Boldt, Ival & Dorothy Grotegut, Charles & Judy Hastert, Christine Klessig, Mike & Sue Landreman, Jay & Babbette Robitshek, Carol Smokovich, Barb & Russ Soderberg, Jan & Diane Vennendaal, Dale & Rene Voskuil, Grace & Bill Zurovitch
Thrivent Choice Program - Amy Richter

Silver Level (\$50 - \$99)

Jim & Rhonda Bartelt, Russell Brodtke, Sue Brown, Jo Crabb, Michelle Frisbie, Mary Ginke, Joyce Hanneman, Betsy & Charles Hansen, James Hemmen, Ione Muehlenbein (in memory of Paul), Julie & John Olson, Sharon Salm, LeRoy Sauer, Stevie Schmidt, Karen & Tom Schuppe, Phyllis & Lyle Sconzert, Jerome & Phyllis Van Handel, Mike & Lois Vande Loo, Harriet & Paul Zucker,

Bronze Level (\$25 - \$49)

Anonymous, Richard Erickson, Kevin Gossens, Dirk & Maureen Fisher, Lorna Hamilton, Tom & Patty Reimer, Katie Weber

We are grateful to everyone who has made smaller donations to our treasury, & to those who contribute personal resources of time, energy, mileage & more. We depend on them to make our chapter successful.

Our Mission: To share information, educate, advocate and provide support to people with hearing loss who choose to remain in the hearing mainstream with technology.

Meetings are open to the public, and are organized and run by volunteers.

2021 Sponsor Appeal Begins...

Our chapter's fiscal year begins January 1st. If you or your business would like to support HLA A Fox Valley Chapter, please let us know by sending a check to HLA A-FVC, P.O. Box 25, Menasha WI 54952. 2021 Sponsors will be listed in all of our 2021 newsletters, beginning in March.

Your support makes it possible for us to hold meetings, participate in educational events, publish our newsletter and much more. Thank you in advance.

Disclaimer—HLAA does not endorse products or services. Mention of such is intended to provide readers & those who attend meetings with information on products or services that might be of interest, & is not a recommendation or endorsement.

HLAA-Fox Valley Chapter
P.O. Box 25
Menasha WI 54952-0025

Chapter Calendar

December 14: Virtual Holiday Social!! Yes, we can!!

January 11 & February 8th Zoom with us at 6:30 pm

March 8: Regular Meetings Resume on 2nd Monday of each month through 2021. **Online until further notice.**

Most people who attended the Nov. meeting said they would like to meet casually in Jan. & Feb. So, let's try it. We have not met during those months for several years, due to weather concerns. Zoom foils Mother Nature's wrath. It's an opportunity to visit and learn!

2019 Chapter Leadership Board

President: *Julie Olson julieo@athenet.net

Vice President: *Dale Voskuil voskuild@gmail.com

Secretary: *Christine Klessig bommaklessig@gmail.com

Treasurer: *Michelle Frisbie michellefrisbie@gmail.com

Program Chair & CI Group Chair: *Rhonda Clancey
rclancey@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor: *Julie Olson julieo@athenet.net

Newsletter Prep & HOPE Representative: *Jane Young
YBLUEJAY@aol.com

Phone Contact/Social: Vacant...**Need Help Here!!**

H.O.P.E. Chair: Nancy Gilbertson nancy.gilbertson2@gmail.com

Chapter e-mail: hlaafoxvalley@gmail.com

Support Crew: Dave Gilbertson, Bob Opsteen, Jerry Van Handel, Paul & Harriet Zucker, Colleen Van Rooy
Feel free to contact any of us personally, or use the chapter's e-mail address. We will respond as soon as possible.

**HELP
WANTED**

If someone with 'good ears' would offer to serve as our telephone contact, it would be a great help to our chapter. Please consider.

Membership in HLAA would make a nice holiday gift for someone struggling with hearing loss!

Gift, join, or renew your membership at: hearingloss.org



CI Group Will Meet on Zoom in January



On Tuesday, January 19th, the CI group will meet at 6:00 PM via Zoom videoconferencing. Several people attended our October meeting, and a lot of good conversation resulted. It was so nice to

see people we had not seen for a while due to cancellations earlier in 2020. Our CI group provides the opportunity to share personal experiences, coping strategies, and to learn about technology that works with our CIs. It's also the place to learn whether a cochlear implant might be worth exploring for YOUR hearing loss. We are NOT brand specific.

To participate, please e-mail me so I can send you the link to our January meeting. We can learn so much from each other!

Happy Holidays to Everyone.

Rhonda, CI Group Moderator
rclancey@hotmail.com



H.O.P.E. Online Meetings

What We Need As Humans...

Connections, companionship, sense of belonging is what we need as humans. During this time of socializing isolation, virtual meetings help us stay in touch. I am not fond of virtual meetings. However, like the telephone ads of yesteryear, it is the next best thing to being there to connect, to share in on the camaraderie of the H.O.P.E. Peer Support group. All it takes is a click on the link below to be among others who understand hearing loss, who listen, who don't judge. You are among those who have been there, are there, have the same experiences and feelings, and we learn so much from each other.

Join us to Hear Other People's Experiences/H.O.P.E.

On Dec. 17 at 1 pm, H.O.P.E. will meet. Click on the link, then click the box "Ask to Join". These meetings have captions. Here is the link for H.O.P.E.: <https://meet.google.com/ung-axxn-gtd> Use this link for the Jan. 28th and Feb. 27th meetings too.

H.O.P.E. meets on the 4th Thursday of each month at 1 PM, with the exception of Nov. and Dec., due to holidays, when it meets the 3rd Thursday. February 2020 was our last in person meeting. It is unknown when we will be allowed to meet in person. Thus, the meetings will be virtual until then.

If you receive the newsletter in the mail, send me your email address if you would like me to send you this link a few days before the H.O.P.E. meeting dates.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if I can be of help to you.

My best to you and yours,

Nancy Gilbertson
nancy.gilbertson2@gmail.com

