



Heard in Fort Worth

Hearing Loss Association of America - Fort Worth Chapter
July 2023

July 8 Meeting Program



2023
CONVENTION
New Orleans, LA
June 29 - July 1, 2023

Chapter member and former secretary Loretta Barry will report on her experiences and observations at the HLA National Convention in New Orleans, June 29 - July 1. As a first-timer, her impressions will be interesting and informative. Be sure to attend!

August 12 Meeting Program

Presenter: Jennifer Clark, manager of the Dallas Hearing Foundation (DHF)

Dallas Hearing Foundation is a needs-based nonprofit that links people with hearing loss back to the world of sound. It works with children and adults who experience hearing loss in the greater Dallas area, across the U.S., and in nations across the globe. DHF services include surgeries, audiological services and therapies, hearing aids and accessories, and cochlear implants.

HLAA Fort Worth meets on the second Saturday of each month

in the fellowship hall of Central Christian Church, 3205 Hamilton Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107.

Snacks and mingle at 9:30 a.m. and meeting at 10:00. Please join us, and bring a friend!

We offer realtime captioning and assistive listening systems for communication accessibility.

Captioning is provided courtesy of Cauthen & Associates Court Reporting and CART Services.

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This newsletter is published by the
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Reflections from My Silent Pew

By Kevin Medlin, Chapter Vice-President

This last week marked seven years since I became deaf. I would not wish hearing loss on anyone, but my experience has changed my perspective.

At the time of my sudden hearing loss (during lunch at Chili's), I really had not been exposed to the community of Deaf/deaf/hard of hearing. Sure, like most everyone, I had a couple of elderly relatives that required some verbal repetition, but I did not have an intimate knowledge of the deaf experience. Sudden hearing loss changes that in a hurry.

I lost my hearing on a Saturday. On the following Monday morning, I dropped into my General Practitioner's office armed with a Marks-A-Lot and a pad of paper. I explained to the receptionist that I had lost my hearing and while I did not really need to see the doctor since my hearing was already gone, I was curious if they knew how to obtain a captioned phone. Articles online indicated that I would need a doctor's approval to receive a captioned phone. Could they help me?

The receptionist wrote on my pad of paper that I should take a seat and a nurse would come out to visit. In a matter of minutes, the head nurse came out, and wrote that she did not have any idea how to obtain a captioned phone, but she offered me a business card. I did not recognize the name or business listed, so I asked why I was getting the card. *"The card belongs to a patient that is hard of hearing,"* she said. *"Perhaps you should call him for advice."* And thus, my journey into silence began.

As I departed the medical office, I could not help but think, *"The world is not ready for dealing with the deaf."*

Since losing my hearing, I have been appointed to the City of Fort Worth Mayor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities. We see many issues dealing with the deaf and many issues involving a host of other disabilities. That being said, one of my bigger challenges has been creating inclusion within the City offices and even within the Mayor's Committee itself.

Last week I was invited to attend a 'town hall' meeting in regard to the City budget for the upcoming year. I contacted the organizer and asked if there would be accommodations for the deaf at the meeting. The first response was that I needed to go online and request accommodation 48 hours in advance. The second response a few days later was that the meeting would be held in the council chambers, so there would be an overhead captioning machine operating during the meeting.

The budget director spoke into a microphone during the meeting and an AI captioning machine ran his words by on a screen at the far end of the room after a delay of approximately 8-10 seconds. Eight to ten seconds is a very long delay when trying to follow a presentation... Halfway through the meeting, the budget director opened the floor for questions. Several attendees inquired about budget specifics, but the microphone was not shared, so there was no captioning for that portion.

As I departed City Hall, I could not help but think, *"The world is not ready for dealing with the deaf."*

With all that being said, I want to say that I appreciate my silent life. While I recognize that I have not accomplished even a small portion of my goals in making the world more inclusive to the Deaf/deaf/hard of hearing, I will wake up tomorrow and continue the fight with a smile on my face. I will do so because of you, my "new" (within the last seven years) friends. If I had not become deaf, I most likely would not have met you and my life would not have been as rewarding. The world may not be prepared to deal with the deaf, but we are chipping away every day at the obstacles. Thank you for all that you do and all that you do through the Hearing Loss Association of America!

Your friend,
KBM

NOTE: Chapter President Joyce Palin is now visiting in Sweden. She and her "Joyce's Jargon" column will be back for next month's meeting and newsletter. Thanks to Kevin for filling in.

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), founded in 1979 by Howard E. “Rocky” Stone, is the nation’s leading organization representing consumers with hearing loss. The mission of HLAA is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support, and advocacy.



Hearing Loss Association of America
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Rockville, MD 20852. 301-657-2248.

Membership has its benefits. Please join or renew. Go to www.hearingloss.org and click on “Membership” to join.

New FCC Requirements Include Videoconferencing Captions

On June 8, the FCC voted unanimously to **require videoconferencing platforms**, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Webex, to include accessible features for people with disabilities, including captions with a proposal for American Sign Language (ASL) support. HLAA has been working with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Congressional sponsors and other consumer organizations to support the **Communications, Video and Technology Accessibility Act (CVTA)**, which updates and amends the **21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA)** of 2010. FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel specifically acknowledged HLAA and others for our joint efforts on behalf of people with disabilities.

*“This could be a gamechanger for people with hearing loss at school, on the job or in a telehealth appointment.”
[Lise Hamlin, HLAA’s director of public policy, who helped advocate for the change]*

HLAA Works to Increase Air Travel Access

HLAA is also fighting for safer flights for people with hearing loss. We are advocating to get the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act (ACAAA) included in an upcoming reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) by Congress. We are pushing for better assistive communications, such as captioning and other provisions that would make flying more accessible for passengers with hearing loss or other disabilities, at airports and in-flight. Congressional committees are finalizing the FAA reauthorization, so stay tuned for updates throughout the summer.

A REMINDER:

Attend SIARC

UTD’s Summer Intensive Audiology Revitalization Conference

SIARC is a unique opportunity for adults with hearing impairment and their communication partners to strengthen their communication abilities and experience assistive listening technology in real-world scenarios. The conference held July 23 - July 27 (Sunday through Thursday) at the Callier Center for Communication Disorders in Richardson.

Participants try out the latest hearing aids and various assistive listening devices in restaurants and other venues. These devices work with hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Registration is \$350 per couple or \$175 per individual. After July 1, registration is \$400 per couple and \$200 per person. **Scholarships are available.** The fee includes all classes, assessments, activities, and meals.

Contact Dr. Linda Thibodeau, Professor, Au.D. Program. 972-898-3463; thib@utdallas.edu.

June 10 Meeting Summary

Sharing: Questions, Answers, and Experiences

Program summary edited by Darlene Liesner from a transcript by caption writer Carrie Gibson, CSR, of Cauthen & Associates, Court Reporting & CART Service

At the June 10 meeting, Chapter Program Chair Leslie Kilton introduced Esther Kelly. Leslie is a Hearing Resource Specialist. Esther was her mentor. Esther Kelly was a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Technology Specialist at the Dallas Deaf Action Center for twenty-eight years. Esther installed hearing technology for people in their homes and workplaces and taught at Richland Community College in Dallas.

At six months of age, Esther lost all her hearing in one ear and part of her hearing in the other. Not getting her first hearing aid until age twenty, Esther recounted some of her struggles with hearing loss. At two different jobs Esther complained to the human resources department because her boss was mistreating her.

Esther gave everybody a sheet of questions - four questions for hearing aid wearers, four for cochlear implant wearers, and four for people with normal hearing. Esther asked for volunteers from each group to stand and answer the questions aloud and to share their issues with the audience.

One participant wears a CROS hearing aid which transfers the sounds entering her deaf ear to her better ear. She noted that age related hearing loss may contribute to dementia. Another participant has worn hearing aids for three years and has aphasia. Aphasia affects specific brain regions making speech and speech comprehension difficult. Born with hearing loss, Gema De la O had low self-esteem. Her esteem improved when she became a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Technology Specialist at the Fort Worth Deaf Action Center helping others like herself. Esther was her mentor. Gema reminded everyone that hearing aids and assistive technology will never give you perfect hearing.

Chapter President Joyce Parlin's living room has a hearing/induction loop. The loop transmits the sound from her TV directly into her hearing aids. When one member's allergies stop her ears up, she needs to remove one or both of her hearing aids. Another woman's earwax builds up. Her audiologist recommended a drop of oil in her ears. Esther stressed that different audiologists have different opinions. Ask your audiologist before following suit.

After having his eardrum removed, one member struggled to hear. He got his first cochlear implant in 2014 and his second in 2021. In meetings or lectures, he gives the presenter a mini-mic to wear so he can hear the presentation.

Now having worn a cochlear implant for twenty-seven years, Esther touted the benefits of her Cochlear Americas Nucleus 7 Sound Processor. With the Nucleus Smart App on her smartphone, Esther's phone calls stream directly to her processor. The Nucleus 7 Sound Processor has SmartSound iQ with SCAN which automatically suppresses background noise in noisy environments. Kevin Medlin, Chapter Vice President, also has a cochlear implant. Kevin's wife orders for them if the restaurant server is wearing a mask.

Lindy, an Au.D. student at the University of Texas at Dallas, now has more patience with her hearing-impaired father. Lindy has learned to speak slower and to make sure he can see her lips.

When Esther works with couples where one partner has hearing loss, she makes them promise that for one month they will walk into the same room and speak to each other face to face.

A hearing aid wearer and his mother were at HLAA for the first time on June 10. His mother said she wished employers understood hearing loss better. Her son's boss told him not to use his hearing loss as an excuse. Another UTD Au.D. student said if the boss makes comments or the workplace is not appropriate to you, resources are available. Start with the ADA (The Americans with Disabilities Act).

Everyone had fun and learned much from their fellows.

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We will acknowledge your donations in each issue of the newsletter.

The list is updated monthly.

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Given by Stephen J. and Joan S. Boyle, Judith Fitzgerald, Dan White

The Fort Worth Chapter is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Hearing Loss Association of America - Fort Worth Chapter

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Cauthen & Associates, Inc. is a woman-owned business, founded by Lisa Cauthen in 1998, and incorporated in 1999. Cauthen & Associates has provided the DFW Metroplex with **captioning, communication access real-time translation (CART), and court reporting services** for over 20 years. It provides CART services for our meetings

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