



# Heard in Fort Worth

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Hearing Loss Association of America – Fort Worth Chapter  
May 2026

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## May 9 Program Stories from Our Board

Presented by Melissa Forsythe, Sharon Huber, Patricia Hindman, Joyce Parlin, and Dan White

Come and hear about our hearing loss journeys and the benefits and life changing results our hearing devices give us. Some of us use hearing aids and some use cochlear implants. Each of us has different causes, types of hearing loss, and pathways along the journey to better hearing and communication. Each story is interesting, informative, and perhaps even inspiring. Questions and answers will be included. Sharing our stories has been one of our most popular presentations. Come and join us!

The previously scheduled presentation by Texas Hands and Voices has been cancelled for this month.

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### **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.**

**We have snacks and mingle at 9:30 a.m. and meet at 10:00. Please join us and bring a friend!**

*We offer real time captioning and assistive listening systems for communication accessibility.*

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## **FUTURE PROGRAMS**

June 13 - CapTel Captioned Telephones Free for You, presented by Ann Mannon

July 11 - HLAA National Convention Report by Chapter President Joyce Parlin and others

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### **The DALLAS Chapter of HLAA meets on the THIRD Saturday of each month**

in room A120 (auditorium) at the Medical City Dallas Heart Hospital

at 11970 North Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75243.

For information, contact Jason Taylor at [jmironetaylor@gmail.com](mailto:jmironetaylor@gmail.com)

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## **May is National Speech-Language-Hearing Month**

National Speech-Language-Hearing Month is observed every May to raise awareness about speech, language, and hearing disorders, to encourage people to consider their own hearing health and to promote early detection and treatment. First called "Better Hearing and Speech Month," it was created during the 1920s by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

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**Photo Credit:** The photograph of The Fort Worth Herd on our Heard In Fort Worth banner is used by permission of The Fort Worth Herd and its sponsor, the City of Fort Worth Parks and Community Services Department.

# Joyce's Jargon

Good Day,

Here are some things to encourage and educate each of us this month:

1. **We have ended our monthly storage unit rental**, and the church is allowing the chapter to have a metal cabinet here. We are grateful to the church for the space for our cabinet.
2. **Upcoming HLAA Webinar** May 14, 2-3 pm ET  
Breaking the Silence: Hearing Loss, Mental Health, and Substance Use.  
For more information and registration, go to page 4 of this newsletter.
3. **Helping Our Members Navigate the HLAA Website:**  
Are you investigating the HLAA website? The website has much information for those with hearing loss, advocacy, education, and chapter help. It's a wealth of materials you can use. Please check it out at [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org).
4. **HLAA member lists.** Please be assured that HLAA does not sell member information. Our Fort Worth chapter makes the same pledge. Your information is confidential.

See you Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> for real life stories from chapter members. Come hear the struggles, challenges, and triumphs of chapter friends.

Joyfully,  
Joyce Parlin  
Chapter President

## 2025 Chapter Board of Directors

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## *Heard In Fort Worth*

This newsletter is published by the  
**Fort Worth Chapter of the  
Hearing Loss Association of America**  
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**The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)** is the leading voice of the growing number of people with—and at risk of—hearing loss in the U.S. We advocate to increase access to care and treatment, break down stigmas through education and awareness, and empower people with hearing loss through a nationwide community of support.

Our work impacts millions, improving the lives of people with hearing loss, and elevating the importance of hearing health and accessible communication through national legislation and public policy and a network of chapters, state organizations, and grassroots efforts.

## Summary of April 11 presentation

# Fire Safety for People with Hearing Loss

Presented by Elfidio Quinonez, Jr., Fort Worth Firefighter

Summarized by Darlene Liesner from the meeting transcript by Carrie Gibson, CSR

Elfidio Quinonez, Jr. has been a Fort Worth firefighter for eleven plus years. Now in Fort Worth's Community Risk Reduction department, he goes to events, schools, and businesses teaching fire extinguisher use, CPR, fire safety, and related subjects. At our April 11 Fort Worth Chapter HLAA meeting, Elfidio gave an interesting, informative presentation on fire safety.

For those of us who don't hear well on the phone, texting 9-1-1 may work better than calling. Just text 9-1-1 and enter your address and say what the emergency is.

The American Red Cross provides free smoke alarms for people with hearing loss or deafness. The Fort Worth Fire Department distributes and installs them for residents in need. These smoke alarms include a bed shaker and strobe light alarms for the deaf or hard of hearing.

Call 817-392-6862 or email [Smoke.Detector@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:Smoke.Detector@fortworthtexas.gov) and set up an appointment. Other big cities have similar programs. FWFD will test alarms and check and change the battery. The Fire Department mainly provides detectors to home dwellers. In case of a fire fatality, FWFD canvases the ten-block area nearby making sure every home has a smoke detector.

Apartment landlords are required to provide a smoke alarm, but the tenant is responsible for changing the battery every six months. Even if the battery has never been used, it still needs to be changed. Smoke alarms will chirp or flash a red light when the battery needs to be changed. Test your smoke alarms monthly.

Our sense of smell does not work as well when we are asleep. Place smoke detectors in bedrooms and in the living room. Place them at least two feet from a vent and not over a ceiling fan. If on a ceiling, they should be four inches from the wall. Change smoke alarm batteries every six months when you change your clocks for Daylight Savings time.

Unlike smoke detectors, which are placed on the ceiling, CO (carbon dioxide) detectors are placed down low. Anyone with a gas stove or heat should have a CO detector. New homes come with a combination smoke and CO detector. The Fort Worth Fire Department does not provide CO detectors.

Since most fire fatalities happen at night, bed shakers are important. The sound from the smoke alarm alerts the bed shaker. Bed shakers are primarily powered by a wall plug with a battery back-up. Elfidio said a bed shaker in a 4000 foot home picked up the sound from the farthest away smoke detector. A bed shaker is put under the mattress of the person who needs it. Many strobe light smoke detectors come with a pager or beeper that flashes or beeps in case of fire. The Fort Worth Fire Department currently has no strobe light smoke alarms on hand but can request one from the American Red Cross.

If smoke banks down low, cover your face and crawl out. Get out and stay out. Clothing is very flammable. If your clothing is on fire, "stop, drop and roll." Have two ways out of every room. The door is the first choice, and a window is the second.

For a fire in a second-floor apartment, close the door, open the window, and yell for help. Fire escape ladders may be purchased on Amazon. Have a fire escape plan for your home and a meet up place.

For a burn, gently run cold water on it for fifteen minutes. Call 9-1-1. To avoid infection, go to the emergency room and have the burn treated. Wearing a medical ID bracelet or necklace saying you are hard of hearing can help first responders.

Google information at Fort Worth Community Connect. Community Connect is for medical emergencies and fires. Community Connect is a free, secure, and easy way to provide information about your household to emergency response personnel. Your information appears on the computer in the fire truck or ambulance. Update your information periodically.

Most big cities have Community Connect. If your town does not, call the nearest fire station non-emergency number. Tell them about your hearing loss. Ask how to give them your personal information.

Originally the Vial of Life came with a pill bottle or container. Nowadays people place a completed medical form in a Ziplock bag with a Vial of Life decal on it and tape it on the front of the fridge. [vialoflife.com](http://vialoflife.com)

Fire extinguishers require knowledge and training. Call the fire department first. To use a fire extinguisher correctly, follow these steps:

- P. Pull pin.
- A. Aim low at the object on fire.
- S. Squeeze lever or press button.
- S. Sweep side to side.

Fire extinguishers are for small trash can fires and need to be checked annually. Fire blankets can be purchased on Amazon. Most home fires start in the kitchen. Someone leaves something on the stove for a second. If safe, open the blanket and cover the fire.

Elfidio answered questions and took suggestions on how emergency personnel can better assist the hard of hearing. He left pamphlets on Fort Worth's free smoke alarm program.

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**Date: Wednesday, May 14 Time: 2 p.m. ET**

[https://hearingloss.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_HeDhko\\_TOe-KF8-GOvuUQ#/registration](https://hearingloss.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HeDhko_TOe-KF8-GOvuUQ#/registration)

This webinar will examine how stigma may prevent people with hearing loss from protecting or treating their mental health. You'll learn how isolation may heighten mental health challenges and the risk of substance misuse and learn where people can look for help.

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# Support your Fort Worth chapter

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

*The list is updated monthly, starting with the new year.*

*Platinum = \$400+; Gold = \$200 to \$399; Silver = \$100 to \$199*

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The Fort Worth Chapter is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.  
All contributions are tax-deductible.

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## Hearing Loss Association of America - Fort Worth Chapter 2026 CHAPTER DONATION FORM

Make checks payable to: **HLAA - Fort Worth Chapter**

Bring donations to the monthly meeting or mail to:

**HLAA - Fort Worth, PO Box 1310, Euless TX 76039.**

**Please take special notice of our mailing address.**

**DO NOT SEND MAIL TO OUR MEETING LOCATION.**

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