



Heard in Fort Worth

Hearing Loss Association of America – Fort Worth Chapter
August 2026

August 8 Program: Communication Breakdowns - Causes & Cures

Presented by Judy Oetting, hearing loss communication specialist

Hearing loss is not the only thing that brings communication breakdowns. Other factors in the listener, factors in the speaker, and factors in the situation or environment contribute to misunderstandings or a total breakdown. Help is on the way for coping with these barriers.

Judy Oetting is one of the founders of our chapter. She brings over 40 years of teaching lip reading and other communication strategies for people with hearing loss, their families and friends. She has a BS degree in speech pathology from Northwestern University and an MS degree from TCU. Judy also studied effective communication strategies and techniques from Dr. Sam Trychin, the hard-of-hearing psychologist who pioneered in this field.

Judy will lead an interactive presentation and provide handout materials, both for people with hearing loss and for their communication partners. Bring your family members and friends for this empowering program.

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.

September 12 Meeting Program

Patricia Aguirre, LMSW, MBA, will provide an overview of the services offered by the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and how it supports older adults, individuals with disabilities, caregivers, and professionals throughout Tarrant County.

Texas Health and Human Services Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Listening Session in Dallas

August 11, 5 - 7 pm at J. Eric Jonsson Central Library, 1515 Young St., Dallas 76201

This is one of several in-person listening sessions in various cities to gather public input on all DHHS offerings and initiatives. Join us as we discuss ways to improve access and support for people who are deaf or have hearing loss. American Sign Language and CART (captioning) services will be provided.

For more information about DHHS, visit hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing.

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

Dear Friends,

The chapter has had exciting opportunities for fundraising and advocating for the hard of hearing. The Panera Bread lunch that many enjoyed brought the chapter \$49.75. The first round of t-shirt purchases netted \$41.56. A new 14-day time period for t-shirt purchases will begin when another t-shirt is purchased. The website: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/hlaa-fort-worth/> is up and ready.

The t-shirt link is: <https://www.bonfire.com/hlaa-fort-worth-1/>. The store stays "open" for 14 days, closes and sends a check, and then opens again when another shirt is purchased. Many colors and sizes are available for each shirt. I hope that is not too confusing!

Fort Worth HLAA will have a vendor booth at the Healthy Lives Matter event on Saturday, Aug. 22nd. It's a great opportunity for chapter outreach, but also for those who would like more information on Alzheimer's disease. They always have great speakers, vendors, lunch, and door prizes. For details and registration, go to <https://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/alzevent>

Joyfully,

Joyce Parlin
Chapter President

2025 Chapter Board of Directors

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Heard In Fort Worth

This newsletter is published by the
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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.



THANK YOU, ATWOODS!

This year's HOT DOG SALE fund-raiser at Atwoods netted \$354.73 - better than last year's receipts. The funds came from sales and donations on Saturday, August 1, at the Jacksboro Highway store.

Atwoods provided hot dogs, buns, and drinks, along with the gas grill, tables, shade, and a prime location between the front entrance and exit. They also donated \$100 and on-site assistance. We sold two hot dogs and a cold drink for just \$1. Atwoods has invited us back next year. We plan to do it again!



Where Does the Money Go?

Our fund-raising activities go to support our chapter's monthly expenses and other activities. Facility rent and captioning services total \$350 a month. In addition, we pay exhibitor fees for events where we have an information booth, website and domain name fees, convention registration fees for chapter officers and first-time attendees, office supplies, brochure printing, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Are You a Member?

Our bylaws say membership in our chapter comes through membership in the national HLAA organization. All it takes is a donation to national HLAA *in any amount*. We do not charge a local membership fee. Rather, we ask attendees to make a donation at monthly meetings or by mail.

WHY BE A MEMBER?

Local membership gives you a voice and a vote on chapter business. It also allows you to hold an office and to be recognized as a member at chapter activities. We want your input and participation.

National membership offers many benefits:

- Make an impact helping millions thrive with hearing loss
- Receive *Hearing Life* magazine, published three times a year*
- Get the latest in hearing news, events and action alerts each month
- Advocate for change through important local and national initiatives
- Get connected with other HLAA members in your community

**You can donate any amount to become a member. If you donate \$45 or more, you can opt in to receive the Hearing Life magazine in print for one year. Magazines are available online to everyone.*

Membership is open to ALL of our valued supporters who help fuel HLAA's mission to change the lives of people with hearing loss.

You can join online at <https://www.hearingloss.org/get-involved/donate/>.

You can also join by filling out a form and making a donation to national HLAA at our monthly meetings.

Please review the HLAA identity statement on the bottom of page 2 of this newsletter.

UPCOMING NATIONAL HLAA EVENTS:

The Information We Carry: Genetics and Hearing Loss

Webinar Wednesday, August 26, 3 - 4 pm Eastern Time

https://hearingloss.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_XpZ8yf0lR2q0VYzH4LKL9Q

Genetic hearing loss affects people of all ages and is one of the most common causes of hearing loss, yet many individuals and families are unaware of how genetics may play a role. Join us for an informative webinar that explores the basics of genetic hearing loss, why genetic testing can be an important tool for diagnosis, treatment, and family planning, and how advances in research are shaping the future of hearing healthcare. Whether you are living with hearing loss, caring for a loved one, or simply interested in learning more, this session will provide valuable insights into the rapidly evolving field of hearing loss genetics.

HLAA National Meeting - Wednesday, September 16, 7:00 pm Eastern Time

Dr. Jan Blustein will share highlights and key insights from the **2026 Research Symposium: AI and Hearing Loss**. Following her presentation, participants will have the opportunity to connect in virtual breakout sessions to discuss the theme "**The Silver Lining of Hearing Loss**" before coming back together as a group. We hope you'll join us for what promises to be an engaging evening of learning and conversation. *More information and the registration link will be available soon.*

Summary of July 11 Presentation

HLAA National Convention Report

Presented by Ann Marie Flint, Patricia Hindman, and Joyce Parlin
Summarized by Darlene Liesner from the meeting transcript by Carrie Gibson, CSR

HLAA Fort Worth Chapter board members Joyce Parlin, Patricia Hindman, and Ann Marie Flint attended the HLAA 2026 Annual Convention in Louisville, KY, June 10-12, 2026. The Convention consisted of a general session, educational workshops, an exhibit hall, and a Research Symposium. The plenary (entire group) sessions had captions and a sign language interpreter. All the rooms had hearing loops. At our July 11 chapter meeting, our board members did an excellent job of sharing the sessions they attended.

Voices of Impact: Meet the Board of Directors & 2026 Award Ceremony

Ira Levine, chair of the board of directors for the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) said building a movement takes all of us. Determine what we want out of HLAA, then work together. Share HLAA Facebook, Instagram, and Fort Worth Chapter posts on your own accounts. Invite friends, neighbors, and coworkers to a chapter meeting, and share HLAA resources with anyone with hearing loss.

A Chapter Portal is on the HLAA website, hearingloss.org, for HLAA Chapter and State Association leaders and key volunteers.

Educational workshops:

Staying Safe Online as Well as on Your Phone

Our board members brought back plenty of brochures.

Hearing Loss Does Too Hurt

No one likes being singled-out. Respect others with a different type of hearing loss or disability. We need to be unified. Help each other.

Take a New Look at Your Hearing Loss: The Healing Power of Mindshifts

70,000 negative messages a day cross our minds. Try to have a positive mindset.

The Cursive D: Redefining Our Identity

Biases exist between Big D - born deaf and Little D - deaf later in life. Who am I now? Where do I fit? What does this mean for me? Not hearing enough, yet not deaf. Try not to judge others who have a different type of hearing loss. We do not have to fit in the box.

How to Deal with the Emotional Aspects of Hearing

Reframe and rename. Look at things differently. Take a positive approach. Take one thing a day to try and do differently. Support is available through both technology and people. Take advantage of it.

Maximizing Telecommunications Access: State Programs and Resources Available to You

Reach out to your state. See what programs and assistance they offer. The Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) is a national non-profit association. In Texas, specialized telecommunication equipment assistance is handled locally through the Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP) managed by Texas Health and Human Services (HHS). (<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing/stap-services>)

Wow! This is Hard Sometimes: Strengthening Connection & Relieving Frustration with Our Partners

One spouse or friend is hard of hearing; the other is not. Communicating with your spouse, family member, or coworker is important. Talk to your partner about how your hearing loss affects your relationship. "There's too much noise in the room." "I need you to slow down when you talk to me and look at me when you talk to me." Make the effort. Emphasize that both your feelings are important.

Turning Hearing Loss into Leadership Strength: The Superpower of Listening

V - visibility. Use your voice to share your hearing loss.

O - observation. Non-verbal listening. Listening with your eyes and body language.

I - intention. Be fully present.

C - connection.

E - empowerment. Turning our hearing loss into a strength.

Be thankful for the hearing you have, your hearing aids and cochlear implants, and the technology that makes hearing possible.

Research Symposium: The AI Revolution in Hearing Health: Smarter Tech, Greater Access

In the near term, one of the most significant advances will be the use of AI in hearing aids to address the long-standing challenge of understanding speech in noisy environments - the signal-to-noise ratio.

Exhibitors

One of the many exhibitors was The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Their website has a wealth of information including literature in Spanish [asha.org].

Every HLAA 2026 Convention presentation will be on the HLAA website, hearingloss.org, in six to eight weeks. The HLAA 2027 Annual Convention is in Atlanta June 24-26. For a discount, register early. The Fort Worth Chapter gives financial assistance to convention first-time attendees.

Advocacy in Action

HLAA is Working Hard for Us Behind the Scenes

It's been a surprisingly busy time for the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and its allies working on accessibility at the federal level. As you might expect, much of the activity is happening in the regulatory and standards-making space, where several changes are afoot. HLAA is also involved with several group efforts to keep the policy priorities of people with hearing loss front-and-center for lawmakers. Let's dig into it.

Legislation Still Matters

HLAA and its partners continue to advocate for the Communications, Video and Technology Accessibility (CVTA) Act. The bill would expand on the success of older laws to update accessibility standards for streaming platforms, emergency communications, virtual meeting services and other modern tools.

Concern About Federal Grant Process Changes

The federal government is usually proactive about soliciting input from subject matter experts and community groups to ensure the real-world applications of research and assistance programs are effective. Now, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is **proposing a rule change** that would reduce this kind of evidence-based collaboration with people with disabilities and make it harder to share information that helps federally-funded programs succeed.

HLAA joined coalition partners in writing and posting public comments about the rule change. The comments explain that federal grants have a long record of making accessibility options successful in daily life. (Captions during emergency briefings, screen-reader access for blind people, tactile interpreting for DeafBlind people, video relay services for DeafBlind people, video relay services for Deaf people and hearing-aid-compatible phones for people with hearing loss, just to name a few. We emphasized that the rule would let agencies reject strong projects, cancel successful long-term work after money and trust have already been invested and make it harder to share lessons learned with the public.

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

Bronze = \$50 to \$99; **Friend** = Up to \$49

Platinum: Patricia Hindman, Sharon Huber

Gold: Mike & Kim Brownen, Bennet Jones, Delton & Janice Parker

Silver: Anonymous, Yolanda Thursby, Andy Ybarra

Bronze: Kris & Linda Dorasami, Susan & Monty Tucker

Friend: Linda Hines, Darlene Liesner, Marilynn Smith, Fred & Laneta Terryn

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

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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