



Heard in Fort Worth

Hearing Loss Association of America – Fort Worth Chapter
November 2023

November 11 Program

Where Hearing Loss and Tinnitus Happen and Why It Matters

By Addison Wilson, Au.D., audiologist at Carson Hearing Care

When you listen to a conversation, your ears and your brain work together as a system. It's your brain that does the heavy lifting. We will take a deep dive into where hearing loss comes from and what the breakdown in the auditory pathway means for your hearing loss. We will also discuss tinnitus and the triggers and symptoms behind it and why it is considered a phantom sound. Lastly, we will be going over speech sounds and the audiogram with the visual device HearVu. With HearVu, we will show why certain sounds are harder to hear than others. (See HearVu on page 5.)

Addison Wilson was born and raised in Edmond, Oklahoma. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders and her Doctorate of Audiology degree from the University of Oklahoma (Boomer Sooner!). She has lived in Fort Worth and worked for Carson Hearing Care for the last year and a half. "I love what I do and where I do it," Addy says.



Chapter Bylaws call for officer election at the November meeting. Our current officers are willing to serve for another year, but other candidates would be welcome to allow us to "pass the torch." Members may make nominations from the floor with the consent of the person being nominated. Jill DeMoss is stepping down as Hospitality Chair and Janice and Delton Parker have volunteered to take the Hospitality position.

December 9 Meeting

Holiday Brunch Party

Food, Fellowship, and Entertainment
by the Gold Tone Senior Citizen Show Choir

Details in the December issue

Mark your calendar and make plans to join us.

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.

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

Greetings!

Two things are important this month. First, which will be our meeting date, is Veteran's Day. With the strife in our country right now, we need to be ever thankful for those men and women who served, are serving and those who gave their lives for our freedom. If you're reading this and are a veteran, let me express my gratitude to you for your service, your sacrifice, and your commitment to our country.

Secondly, we celebrate Thanksgiving, which often gets bypassed by the December holidays. Again, we have much to be grateful for in this country. I'm thankful for all of you - for the things you have taught me about my hearing loss, for the new friendships formed, for the dedication of the board and the members who support one another with struggles along the way. Thank you for being a part of my life.

This saying hangs on our wall and says, "Let our lives be full be full of both thanks and giving." May each of you have a very special day of celebration and Thanksgiving.



See you on Veteran's Day.

Joyce Parlin
Chapter President

2023 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), 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
6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320
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Membership has its benefits. Please join or renew. Go to www.hearingloss.org and click on "Membership" to join.

October 14 Chapter Meeting Summary

Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP)

Featured Speaker: Elma Torrez, Community Education Director with Senior Assist Texas

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

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission's Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP) helps people who have trouble using a regular phone. Qualification is not based on age, income, insurance, or medical records. Texas residents with hearing or vision loss, upper mobility difficulties, or cognitive or speech impairment may apply.

A hard of hearing applicant must be certified by a hearing health professional. An applicant needs a current Texas driver's license or current Texas voter registration card. Once the application is submitted, receiving a voucher takes approximately seven months. The applicant then exchanges the voucher for an item of equipment. At the October 14 meeting, Elma explained some of the more popular equipment:

The SOS phone is an amplified, big-button, speaker phone with a red emergency alert button. Elma will program four emergency contacts and 9-1-1 for the consumer. This phone requires a land line.

The cordless Bluetooth phone is an amplified, big-button, speaker phone. It requires a land line or a Bluetooth enabled cell phone. Pairing the cordless phone to a cell phone allows a person to answer cell phone calls on an amplified handset. The phone has an emergency button and an answering machine.

Senior Assist Texas also carries a small phone primarily for vision loss. The buttons are bigger and stick out a little. It talks to the user.

The Apple iPad has built-in support for vision, hearing, physical and motor skills, and for learning and literacy. Features include: Siri and Switch Control, Closed Captions, and Assistive Touch and Speak Screen. STAP provides \$580.00 toward an iPad or Tablet.

The Samsung Galaxy Tablet has built-in Accessibility settings: Voice Assistant for vision, subtitles for hearing, and Interaction control for dexterity. Phone calls can be made from a Samsung Tablet or from an iPad if connected to Wi-Fi.

The iPhone and Samsung Galaxy phone have all the accessibility features. The iPhone 11 or higher has a live captioning app called Live Caption in Settings under Accessibility. An Android phone has Google Live Transcribe. The font is adjustable. Captioning apps work on Facebook, Face Time, or any app with speech. Real time captioning is helpful when talking to a doctor or nurse in a hospital or to anyone wearing a mask. Other captioning apps are available via subscription.

The basic iPhone SE64gb is free. STAP provides \$537.00 toward a smartphone. Someone wanting a fancier phone must pay the difference. People with cognitive issues can only get a land line phone or cordless phone, not a smartphone or tablet.

For people with speech disorders, the old TTY (teletypewriter) relay service is offered by Sprint Relay. People can make and receive calls using a computer, tablet, or smartphone. They type their message, and a relay agent types back what the hearing caller says.

The HLAA website has a list of state hearing programs at hearingloss.org>Hearing Help>Financial Assistance>State Telephone Programs. HLAA membership is not necessary to access the list.

Elma and certifier Lynn Bell stayed afterward and helped attendees complete a STAP application. When your voucher arrives, call Senior Assist Texas. Elma will deliver your equipment to you. You need not purchase the equipment where you were certified. A person can receive a new device every five years. For additional products, visit www.SeniorAssistTexas.com.



October 14th Second Presentation: Stephanie Stone, STAR + PLUS

Stephanie Stone is a Community Health Worker with the STAR + PLUS program and the Long-Term Support and Services Specialist with Maximus, Inc., the state's Medicaid enrollment broker.

STAR + PLUS is a Texas Medicaid managed care program for people age 21 and older with disabilities or those age 65 or older. The goal of STAR + PLUS is to provide services, resources, and service coordination to help members stay as independent as possible.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) determines who is eligible for STAR + PLUS. Besides those 21 and older with disabilities and those 65 and older, nursing home residents and Medicaid recipients with breast or colon cancer (MBCC) must enroll. STAR + PLUS is income based.

The enrollment process involves several steps. An outreach counselor first calls the applicant. An enrollment packet with the Texas STAR Program Health Plans goes out. An outreach counselor informs the applicant of their rights and responsibilities. The applicant receives two Medicaid cards - their Texas Benefits Medicaid ID Card and an ID card from their chosen health plan.

STAR + PLUS members receive basic medical services and prescription coverage. The number of prescriptions an individual may receive is unlimited. STAR + PLUS members receive long-term supports and services in a nursing facility or in the home. STAR + PLUS covers therapy, medical supplies, and adult day care. Members get free transportation to and from the doctor. Members are entitled to a service coordinator (case manager) who does the paperwork for long-term supports and services. The service coordinator works with family members and other caregivers.

Texas Star Program Health Plans offer value-added services, that is incentives. Members must call their health plan to receive incentives, and the incentives change annually. Outreach counselors working at health fairs or monthly events can assist everyone receiving Medicaid.

Some people may be on STAR + PLUS as dual eligible. Either they have Medicare and the Social Security Administration has determined they are eligible for Medicaid, *or* they are on Medicare and have applied for long-term supports and services. Medicare covers their primary care and prescriptions. STAR + PLUS covers long-term supports and services.

The **STAR** program is for children and pregnant women who are eligible for Medicaid. **STAR Kids** is for children from birth through age 20 with a disability, Social Security Insurance, or a state waiver. **Texas Health Steps** helps find Medicaid medical and dental providers for children birth through age 20.



FW Chapter Reaches Many at Arlington's Aging Well Expo

The annual Aging Well Expo provided by Arlington's Parks and Recreation Department has proven to be one of our Fort Worth Chapter's best venues for outreach to the general public and particularly to senior citizens.

The event, held on October 17, drew thousands of people age 50+, had perhaps 300 exhibitors, and included keynote speakers, free health screenings, fitness programs, and entertainment.

We talked to many people about hearing loss at our booth and gave out brochures and other educational materials. Thirty-five attendees signed up for our monthly newsletter.

Our booth was staffed by Joyce Parlin, Dan White, Loretta Barry, and Patricia Hindman. Patricia took the photo. The event was held at Arlington's Esports Stadium and Event Center in the city's growing sports and entertainment district, which includes Globe Life Field, AT&T Stadium, Choctaw Stadium, and Six Flags Over Texas.



HLAA Has a Seat at Many Tables

HLAA has a seat at many tables, and now that includes the prestigious National Institutes of Health (NIH) Council of Councils. Below, Executive Director Barbara Kelley takes a look at what her exciting new appointment means, and how this behind-the-scenes work at HLAA is where we are breaking down barriers and bringing hearing health into the mainstream.

HLAA represents all people with hearing loss in the United States. Much of the influence we have is behind the scenes. Some of our work is likened to running a marathon rather than an explosive short sprint with a well-marked finish line. Making transformational change is indeed a marathon requiring sustained energy, patience, and passion.

My new appointment to NIH's Council of Councils signals something important for people with hearing loss. It means at the world's foremost medical research center, hearing loss and hearing health has a seat at the table. Since this is an eight-year appointment, there's plenty of time to contribute and gauge how hearing loss is considered.

In addition, one of the 27 NIH institutes is the **National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders**, established in 1989 with the work of advocates, including HLAA, who pushed for this new institute. I just completed a three-year term on the NIDCD advisory council, where I established meaningful relationships and learned about ongoing research in the field of hearing loss. There's so much hope on the horizon.

Both appointments came through the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**, carrying the weight and prestige that implies. This is good news for HLAA and for people who care about hearing health.

HLAA is also represented at various agencies and regulatory boards at the federal level. Our busy advocacy department is headed by Lise Hamlin, director of public policy, assisted by Brian Meyer, public policy associate. Collectively, we are sitting at important tables representing all people with hearing loss who need communication access and advancements in hearing health. Add to that many of our members who represent HLAA in state and local governments.

For a sampling of the work going on behind the scenes, but very much in the forefront of strategy at HLAA, go to <https://www.hearingloss.org/a-seat-at-many-tables/>.

See HearVu this Saturday



During her presentation on Saturday, Dr. Addison Wilson will demonstrate the HearVu audiogram device. HearVu uses technology to bring a paper audiogram to life in a meaningful way to better communicate to patients what is going on with their hearing loss. Developed by Dr. Robin Carson and her associates, it is regarded as a breakthrough in patient care.

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

The list is updated monthly.

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

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Husband of Dr. Shirley Molenich,

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

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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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Southern Star Technology provides the assistive listening systems for our HLAA chapter meetings.



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