

December 12 Chapter Meeting – a guest speaker AND a party!

Learn how the Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation helps people in need

This month our guest speaker is David Walker of the Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation.

Many people suffering from hearing or vision issues can't afford the hearing aids or surgery that would improve their lives. David will tell us how the Foundation provides funding for surgery to restore sight or devices to restore hearing for those who lack insurance coverage or otherwise can't afford it.

David Walker has over 40 years experience working for various nonprofit organizations. In February of 2019 he joined the Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation of Southern California, where he is responsible for raising funds and support for those needing hearing or sight surgeries or other aids.

After our speaker, it's party time!

Two fun games will get us mingling and laughing.

We invite everyone to bring a treat to share.



UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, all events are at the Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712. (See map on last page.)

Dec 12 Chapter meeting

Thursday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
David Walker of Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation and chapter party

Dec 18 Board meeting

Wednesday, noon to 2:00 p.m.
Open to any chapter member

Jan 9 Chapter meeting

Thursday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Dr. David DeKriek, Au.D.
What's new in hearing aids?

Jan 11 HAT Demonstration

Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to noon

Lip Reading classes (ongoing)

Wednesdays 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. with Linda
No class Dec. 25 or Jan. 1. Class resumes Jan. 8, 2020

Chapter meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month from September through May, and are always free and open to the public. Meetings are telecoil looped, with live projected captions, and free use of assistive listening devices so everyone can hear. Refreshments and a drawing are included. Come join us!

Hearing aid battery safety

Debbie Clason, Healthy Hearing, August 2014

<https://www.healthyhearing.com/report/52253-Hearing-aid-battery-safety>

If you're a hearing aid user, chances are you have a stash of replacement batteries somewhere in your house. These small, button-shaped cell batteries keep your hearing aids working at their optimum performance, but did you know they can



cause serious injury or death if they're not handled properly?

Batteries contain mercury, silver, lithium and other heavy metals as their main component. When these chemicals are ingested and come in contact with body fluids, they create an electrical current which can burn through tissue and seriously damage internal organs in as little as two hours' time. When you handle a leaking battery, it can cause serious burns immediately.

This is true no matter if the batteries are fully charged or no longer power your hearing aids.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from **Gail Morrison**

Happy Holidays!

At our December 12 Chapter meeting we'll have a speaker, play some fun games and enjoy delicious holiday treats brought by everyone!

David Walker, Chief Development Director for the Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation, will tell us how the Foundation funds hearing aids and eye surgeries for people who qualify. To apply for help, you must be on Medicare, with an income not exceeding \$30,000/year and fill out a short application. David tells me they NEED applicants! So if you know someone who needs help, have them get in touch with David. Brochures will be available at the meeting.

At our November Chapter meeting, we tried our new loop, installed in October by Rick Archbold of [Hearing Now USA](#). Everyone said "It's Wonderful!" A big shout out to Craig Bowlby, who pulled this project through from start to finish—for over a year! Thank you, Craig!

We are wrapping up another successful year at HLAA! Here are a few things that are going on:

1. We earned \$62 from people who joined HLAA National this last quarter. Our chapter receives \$10 for each member who has joined HLAA. If you haven't yet joined, please do! You'll receive *Hearing Life* magazine, *Hearing Health* magazine, and *The Hearing Loss Californian* newsletter—all for \$45 a year. See page 5 for information on how to join. If you've already joined: THANK YOU!
2. Ram Kakkar, Vice President, shared his concerns about radiation that affected his cochlear implant as he went through a security check at the airport. I propose that we send a letter out to all California Chapters, then to our National Headquarters to address this problem. Ram said that it took weeks to get his CI back on track. He's consulting with his doctor to assist.
3. Ellen Mathis is updating the membership roster, to be ready for our January meeting
4. Last but not least, thanks to Miryam Hernandez, who researched a dozen games, from which we selected two to play at our December Chapter meeting.

news from HAT

Hearing Assistive Technology
by **Katie Wright**, HAT Chair



I took this picture during an online conference call with a group of captioners and consumers who are working to get some legislation changed. We live all up and down California.

Here is what you're looking at:

- Video-pictures large enough to be able to see faces to lip read
- Video-relay for a sign language interpreter for one of the participants
- Remote captioning for two of us
- A telephone-only connection for a participant who had no access to a computer
- Internet connection with captioning for a participant who had no camera

The video conferencing program—called Zoom—is so easy to use with a good internet connection and a camera. It's accessed via a web link that the program moderator sends to everyone. The screen can be configured to see everyone on the call or just the person who is speaking; the program will switch faces automatically based on who's talking! The single face fills the screen. Background noise can be muted.

The remote captioning is called StreamText, accessed via a web link that just has to be clicked on. The size and font of the text can be changed by an individual to whatever they need.

This was an amazing experience and I was humbled by the technology this group was able to use to include all of us – hearing, Deaf, and hard-of-hearing. HAT at its finest!



The vicious cycle of shame and hearing loss

Jenny Beck, *Voices Through Silence*

Listen to me. You don't have to be ashamed. You don't have to be trapped in a cycle of 'what ifs' and regrets. You are on a journey. And wherever you are on that journey is where you are meant to be. Having hearing loss can be difficult. It can also bring many blessings. You don't have to be ashamed of your hearing loss, of being hard of hearing or deaf.

But this world can be cruel. It may feel like people are punishing you for your hearing loss. Social isolation, missed work and educational opportunities, the threat of being fired....it is understandable if you try to hide your hearing loss. You don't have to be ashamed of not speaking up, of pretending to hear when you can't. You are not letting down every other deaf or hard of hearing person when you pretend you can hear in order to fit in with hearing society. That burden is not on you.

As I have written about my experiences of being hard of hearing and talked with others who are hard of hearing or d/Deaf, the experience of shame remains a common theme. It is an emotion that I am all too familiar with. Many of us did not grow up in Deaf culture. We may come from a Hearing family whose parents felt the best option was to mainstream us in order to help us fit into Hearing society. We were taught to lipread instead of using sign language. We went to speech therapy. We were the only d/Deaf or hard of hearing person we knew.

So we did what we could to fit in. We hid our hearing loss. We laughed at the joke when we couldn't hear the punchline. We didn't ask our teacher or our boss to repeat themselves when we didn't hear the information. We nodded our heads and did our best to decipher what people were saying. We relied on facial and body language cues and fudged our way through

when attempting to answer a question we didn't quite hear. We learned it annoyed people when we said 'what?' all the time or constantly asked them to repeat themselves.

So, we perfected the art of smiling and nodding along, faking that we heard everything perfectly. We didn't ask for accommodations at school or work. We felt ashamed of our hearing loss. Then we felt ashamed of not speaking up, of not fighting to get the resources we needed. We felt ashamed of hiding our hearing loss and of trying to pass ourselves off as a Hearing person. The shame intensified and became a vicious cycle.

We met other people who were completely comfortable with their hearing loss and had no trouble speaking up and getting the resources they needed. We wished we could be more like them. We wished we could go back in time and fight to get the resources we needed to succeed at school or work. I have been there. I hid my hearing loss in college and struggled with the coursework because I was not hearing the information I needed in class. I had to retake classes, adding thousands of dollars to my student loan bill. I often wish that I could go back and do everything over again. But I need to keep moving forward and do what I need to succeed with the choices I have made whether they have hurt me or helped me.

We can't continue to keep beating ourselves up. We can't continue to drown in shame. Each one of us is at a different stage in our journey with hearing loss. We need to keep moving forward. Give yourself grace for where you are at. Seek support and don't feel guilty for not speaking up more. Yes, the hard of hearing and Deaf community still face a great deal of discrimination. Yes, it is important to show our support for others who are struggling and being discriminated against. But you have to do this in a way that you are comfortable with. You are the one who knows your own situation and what

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Battery safety

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Storing your batteries

Now that you know, you can see why it's important to keep your hearing aid batteries safe from little hands or inquisitive pets. If you have small children or animals in your house, it's important to find a safe place to store your batteries. Here are some dos and don'ts:

- DO invest in a container with a snap-tight lid. Store it on a shelf (the higher the better – as long as you can reach it safely) in a closet which has a door you keep shut.
- DO store your batteries at room temperature. Heat shortens battery life and, contrary to popular opinion, battery life is not extended by storing them in the refrigerator.
- DON'T store batteries next to metal objects, such as coins and keys. These are common items found in pants pockets and purses.
- DON'T store your batteries with your medications. Many pills are the same size and shape as hearing aid batteries. Many cases of accidental battery poisoning have occurred from individuals who mistakenly ingested a hearing aid battery while taking their daily medications.

How to properly discard your batteries

When you change your hearing aid batteries, be sure to place them in a child- and pet-proof container immediately until you can take them to a recycling center. Do not leave them on a counter or throw them in the trash can.

Because of the valuable metals these batteries contain, they're extremely recyclable. Those same contents make them extremely hazardous if you simply throw them in the trash. Over time, the batteries can leak these hazardous chemicals and contaminate the environment. Recycling centers extract the

dangerous chemicals and discard the remaining contents, which are safe for landfills.

In this day and age, it's likely there are more than a few battery recycling collection centers in your community. If you aren't already aware of their location, check with your hearing center or city recycling program.

[editor's note: bring your batteries to the Weingart Center, which has a battery dropoff container]

Swallowed a battery?

According to the National Capital Poison Control Center, more than 3,500 Americans of all ages swallow button batteries every year. If this happens to a person or pet in your home, seek medical attention immediately.

Acid burn

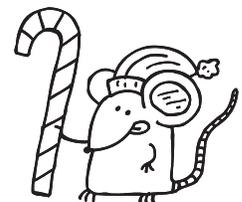
Sometimes, batteries can leak acid which can burn your skin. If you receive an acid burn when handling your hearing aid batteries:

- Use a wet cloth to wipe any area on the hands, face or feet.
- Remove any clothing or jewelry which may have come in contact with the battery acid so it doesn't burn any other areas.
- Run cool water over the affected area for 15 minutes.
- Wrap the affected area with a clean piece of gauze or cotton towel and call your doctor if your skin continues to discolor.

In case of a poisoning emergency, contact the National Capital Poison Center:

Phone 1-800-222-1222

<https://triage.webpoisoncontrol.org/#/exclusions>



Vicious cycle

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you are facing. Realize that where you are today is not where you will be in a year or five years or a decade from now. You will find ways to advocate for yourself and others, even if that simply means telling someone that you understand. Life can't be lived in regret. Embrace who you are in this moment and extend compassion to yourself and others. Don't be held back by shame. Live your life in grace.

<https://medium.com/voices-through-silence/the-vicious-cycle-of-shame-and-hearing-loss-de82a5df7b13>

CHAPTER NEWS

Chapter meeting game plan

At our December 12 Chapter meeting, Miryam Hernandez will lead us in 2 fun games after our speaker's presentation.

Christmas Trivia 10 Christmas trivia questions will be posted around the room. The person with the most correct answers wins! Pens and pads will be provided to write your answers.

Who am I? When you arrive, you'll get a tag placed on your back with the name of a holiday character. You must ask others Yes or No questions about the name on your back in order to guess what it is.

Refreshments

Help make our December meeting festive! Please bring finger foods (sweet or savory) to share with your fellow chapter members.



Free and fun!
Join anytime

**Lip Reading
Class**

**Wednesdays
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.**

No class Dec. 25 or Jan. 1

Hearing Assistive
Technology

**HAT
Demonstration**

**Saturday
Jan. 11, 2020
10:30 a.m.– Noon**

both at the Weingart Senior Center in Lakewood

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Receive paper copies of our terrific newsletter, the Informer. A subscription for 12 monthly issues delivered by US mail is only \$10 per year.

HLAA, Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

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Vice-President Ram Kakkar

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Hearing Assistive Technology Katie Wright

Lip Reading Linda DeGuire

Looping Ram Kakkar

Membership Ellen Mathis

Programs/Publicity Gail Morrison

Refreshments Adela Praderas, Joyce Bowlby

Ways and Means *need volunteer!*

Professional Advisor

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HLAA Hearing Loss Association of America

Join HLAA to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and to become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the U.S.

Send \$45 for individual or \$55 for family membership to:
Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodman Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814

Or join online: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew/>

For more information:

(301) 657-2248 or email inquiry@hearingloss.org.

Membership brochures are available at chapter meetings.

CTAP California Telephone Access Program

For information, repair or exchange:

English Voice 1-800-806-1191

Spanish Voice 1-800-949-5650

www.californiaphones.org/about-us

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Upcoming Programs

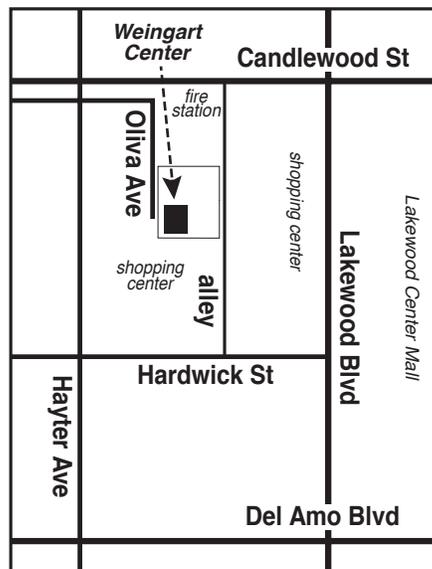
- Dec 12** David Wilson of Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation and our holiday party!
- Jan 9** Dr. David DeKriek, Au.D.: *What's new!*
- Feb 13** Heather Van Wijk, City of Long Beach: *Update on ADA compliance (speaker to be confirmed)*

Monthly chapter meetings:

2nd Thursday of each month
6:30-8:00 p.m.
September through May

All Chapter meetings, Board meetings, lip reading classes, and HAT demonstrations are held at:

Weingart Center
5220 Oliva Ave.
Lakewood, CA 90712



If you don't like meetings because you can't hear well, our meetings are different!

- We have a high quality sound system
- We'll lend you an assistive listening device
- If you have hearing aids with telecoils, we have a hearing induction loop.
- We project captions on the wall for you to read.

We provide all these options free so you can understand what is said.



Hearing Loss Association of America

HLAA opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and advocacy.

Join HLAA now at

<https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew/> to receive *Hearing Life Magazine* and become part of a nationwide nonprofit organization representing the interests of 48 million people living with hearing loss in the United States.