



**September 2019    Volume 20, Issue 7**

**Welcome to the Meetings! Please Join Us!**

**Don't Miss It!**

**The September Luncheon Meeting!**

**When:** Third Thursday, September 19.

**New Time:** 11:30 am until 1:00 pm.

**New Location:** Will Rogers Gardens Exhibition Center, 400 N.W. 36th St., Oklahoma City 73112

**Speaker:** Dr. Jace Wolfe, Director of Audiology and Research at the Hearts for Hearing Foundation in Oklahoma City.

**Come for Information**

**Come for Lunch**

**Any personal news, articles, etc., to be included in the newsletter are due by the 15th of the month!**

Email the editor (Elaine) at [elains@cox.net](mailto:elains@cox.net)

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## OUR MISSION

The Mission of the Oklahoma City Hearing Loss Association is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy.

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*Volunteer: a person who performs a service willingly and without pay.*

**Good friends are like stars. You don't always see them, but you know they're always there.**

**Want to volunteer? Contact Venice Meade at [vmegade1@cox.net](mailto:vmegade1@cox.net), (405) 537-4907. We welcome you to join us!**

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# Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who has given me tips, advice, material and suggestions for the newsletter. The newsletter is very much a team project!

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### HLA Board Members

Charles Chastain, [c-chastain@sbcglobal.net](mailto:c-chastain@sbcglobal.net)  
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Visit the **Faye Donalson Hearing Helper Demonstration Room (HHR)** at 5100 N. Brookline, Suite 100. Assistive listening devices, sonic boom alarm clocks, telephones (also for visually impaired), bed shakers, smoke alarms, and more are available for **demo and short-term loan**.

**Hours are Mon-Fri 10am to 3pm.**

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**The HLAA Access Committee is working hard to increase hearing access in Oklahoma. Won't you join us?** *By Ana Covey.*

The Accessibility Committee was created to tackle the lack of hearing access in Oklahoma. We hope to encourage our cities and the state to provide accessible services and facilities for citizens with hearing loss.

The need for better hearing access is everywhere:

- Noisy restaurants and service counters where it is impossible to hear.
- Church services where you have to struggle to read lips or fight the echo.
- Theaters where you have to hassle with customer service to find technology that rarely works well.
- Courtrooms, libraries, city halls, and public auditoriums that assume everyone can hear well.

We hope to educate local venues about basic hearing loss facts, promote hearing loops and better technology, and help add hearing access to our members' favorite locations. We also hope to increase hearing access with new legislation that many other chapters in the country have passed.

We need you and your ideas! There are easy ways to help our committee, including writing letters to newspaper editors or local businesses, making a few phone calls to managers, and by telling us where you would like to hear better. Also, if you have experience in legislation, NOW is the time to contribute your skills to help our committee, and see our chapter grow!

Please contact the committee Chairperson Ana Covey at [okhearingloss@gmail.com](mailto:okhearingloss@gmail.com) or 405-640-5152 to share your ideas or to join the HLAA Access Committee. ###

## Quote of the Month

Perhaps you will forget tomorrow the kind words you say today,  
but the recipient may cherish them over a lifetime.

Dale Carnegie

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*September Birthday*

*Amy Doughtry*

*Happy Birthday!*

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## Joke of the Month

Q: What happened to the guy who sued over his missing luggage?

A: He lost his case.

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Share the newsletter! Someone with hearing loss, their family member or friend may find just the answer or encouragement they need.

## Change of Address - Mail or Email

Please let us know, so you can continue to receive the newsletter and other publications from the HLA Central Oklahoma Chapter. See page 2 for people to contact.

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## Free Hearing Screenings!

Submitted by Nancy Landrum

**Free** hearing screenings are available at two local audiology clinics. Gift of Sound at the Hough Ear Institute and Hearts for Hearing both will perform hearing screenings, by appointment. Hearing screenings detect whether there *may* be a hearing loss concern that should be followed by a hearing test by an audiologist of your choice to determine the severity of loss. Hearing tests are more in-depth and detailed than screenings.

Gift of Sound conducts hearing screenings by appointment only. Although Hearts for Hearing will accept walk-ins for hearing screenings, they prefer you make an appointment. There is no charge for hearing screenings. There will be a charge for hearing tests.

Gift of Sound	405-947-6030
Hearts for Hearing	405-548-4300

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## CHECK IT OUT!

Apps for your iPhone or Android

<http://www.captionfish.com/theaters/cinemark-tinseltown-usa-oklahoma-city>

- ◇ Cinemark Tinseltown—6001 N. MLK Blvd, OKC 73111
  - ◇ Harkins at Bricktown
  - ◇ Regal Spotlight Stadium 14 in Norman —Sony Glasses
  - ◇ Starplex West End Pointe 8 in Yukon
  - ◇ Warren Theater in Moore -Sony Glasses
  - ◇ AMC Northpark Mall
  - ◇ AMC Quail Springs Cinema 24 Theater—Quail Springs Mall
  - ◇ AMC Penn Square Mall
  - ◇ AMC Crossroads Mall
  - ◇ AMC Springs Mall West
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### **HLA - Central Oklahoma Chapter Committees**

**Join a committee and have a say in your HLA!**

Share and listen to ideas that might contribute to providing information, education, support and advocacy for people with hearing loss in the Oklahoma community.

You are welcome to join any of the committees:

Fundraising, Marketing, Membership, and Scholarship.

Contact any board member to join.

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### **Scholarship Committee Report**

The Scholarship Committee is excited to have \$5000 to award in 2020. We gained some new committee members at the Ice Cream Social and are excited to have them. We will be meeting on August 20 to determine the Rules for our 2020 Scholarships. If you support the Scholarship program, we would be delighted to have your contribution!

*Sharon Hendricks*

*Scholarship Chairperson*

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### **Note from the treasurer:**

Remember that we operate on a calendar year -- Jan 1-Dec 31. Annual dues are only \$10 per person, \$15 per family. If you have not paid your dues yet we certainly encourage you to do so. Additionally, we accept your contributions to help support our programs such as; the scholarship program, increased to \$5,000 this year, Access Oklahoma City in which we offer "seed money" to help install hearing loops, lunch included at our monthly meetings, and the newsletter to name a few. We are a 501(c)3 organization so all your contributions are tax deductible. Please let us hear from you.

*Ron Hendricks*

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The **Hearing Loss Association of America Central Oklahoma Chapter (HLAA-COC)** newsletter is published monthly by the Central Oklahoma Chapter. The views and ideas expressed herein are those of the editor and staff of the Hearing Loss Association of Central Oklahoma and may not always reflect those of Hearing Loss Association of America. For further information: Write to our chapter address: PO Box 42801, OKC, OK 73123.

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### **Senior Day at the Fair!**

The 2019 Oklahoma State Fair, that is. The Fair will be held September 12 - 22.

Senior Day at the Fair is Wednesday, September 18.

In the Modern Living Building:

- ⇒ Door prizes will be offered throughout the day from 8:00am - 4:00pm.
  - ⇒ Exhibitors will include your fellow HLA members who will be giving out informative brochures on the great advantages of being a member of the Central Oklahoma Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association.
  - ⇒ We will include information about all of the helpful hearing assistive devices available for demonstration and loan at the Hearing Helpers Room.
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Hearing aids have yet to reach the same level of high fashion as eyeglasses. But they've come a long, long way and so has public attitude towards them. But until recently, personal hearing technology was still big and ugly, which helped explain the distaste that people had for using them.

At least, that's how I felt when I got my first hearing aid. In my eyes, it was a nauseous shade of beige – a solid and unwelcome presence behind my right ear. Even worse, my hair was short-ish, putting my hearing aid in full public view, beaming a message to all who saw it: *“Hey, lookit here! Harda-hearing girl!”*



Similar to my first hearing aid

I eventually made my peace with that one and a succession of others. I didn't mind people knowing I had hearing loss – it was better than having them think I was stupid – but I didn't see any reason to *advertise* the point. When I looked in the mirror, I couldn't see my aid and that was the image I preferred to project. If someone was taking a picture of me, I gave face-forward or left-side views. And if I saw a photo of my right profile, the glint of hearing aid always surprised me, as if I was looking at a picture of someone else.

Two decades after getting that first beige boom-box, three things changed. One was a seismic shift caused by baby boomers reaching the hearing loss age. A new generation of people needing hearing aids wanted something better than the old style. At the same time, digital technology was exploding, offering people with hearing loss better sound, cleaner aesthetics and smaller size. Blah-blah-beige had given way to various shades of silver, blue, red, black, you-name-it. I happened to be due for a new hearing aid and I switched to two small – and absolutely adorable – completely-in-the-canal (CIC) hearing aids. They not only helped me hear better but freed me up to do whatever I wanted with my hair.

The third change was my new involvement in hearing loss advocacy. The people I met didn't care whether their hearing aids showed or not – what was important was being able to hear better. In this new world, I lost any lingering wisps of shame I'd felt about

displaying my disability. Or so I thought...

When it came time to get a cochlear implant (CI) a couple of years ago, I immediately gravitated to the smaller sound processor being offered by two of the CI companies. Rather than the behind-the-ear style of the traditional CI sound processor, Cochlear's Kanso model sits on the head, attached by a magnet with a safety line that clips to the hair or an article of clothing. But I learned, once again, that there's a price to pay when vanity rules our decisions. If you try to hide something, it sometimes becomes more visible. At a function, a woman tried to whisper in my ear which never works for lipreaders like me, but she managed to get across that there was a black bug in my hair. The processor may not have been too noticeable, but the safety line *was*. (I've since learned to tuck it under my hair more efficiently.)

I also noticed that young adult members of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association and passionate advocates for living well with their disability, were doing absolutely *nothing to hide* their hearing gear. They are walking the talk about not feeling embarrassed about hearing loss, whether it's the devices we use or having to ask for repeats or fighting for communication access. They inspire me.

I once wrote that when I got a CI, I would wear feathers in my hair. I haven't figured that out yet, but I've found a charming new type of safety line from The Hear Clip. I love the look of the funky ear cuff that attaches to my sound processor. There may be other companies out there that offer *lovely* enhancements to the *beautiful* devices that let us hear *gorgeous* sound. If so, please let us know!



If you've got it, flaunt it! If that's too much to ask, at least don't try to hide it.





## HLAA Local Website and Forum

Visit [www.okhearingloss.org](http://www.okhearingloss.org) to view maps and schedules for our local chapter meetings and special events. Read about the services offered by the *Faye Donalson Hearing Helpers Room*. Visit [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OKC\\_HLAA](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OKC_HLAA) for the OKC-HLAA forum. Sharon Hendricks is our webmaster. We welcome your feedback and comments on our websites. For the Facebook page, search in the Facebook search box for **Hearing Loss Association of Central Oklahoma**.

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### **Hearing Loss Association of America**

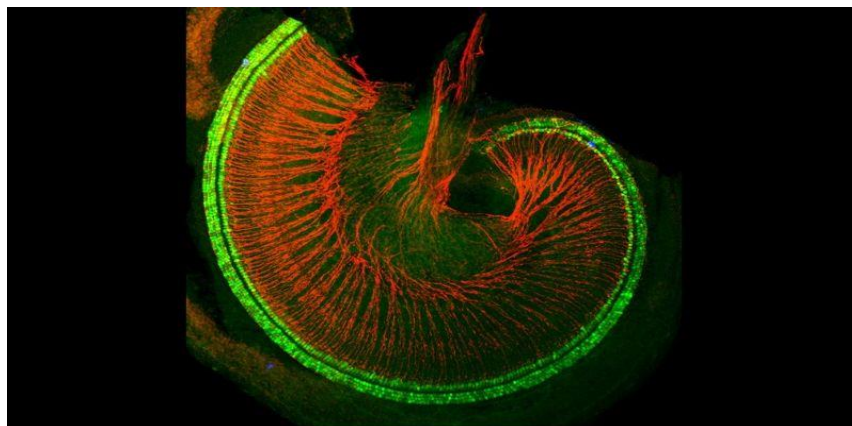
If you are not yet a member of National HLAA, you are encouraged to join and take advantage of their services. The bimonthly Hearing Loss Magazine is full of treasures for anyone with hearing loss or the family and friends of such.

Founded in 1979, the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), is the nation's foremost advocacy organization for people with hearing loss. It opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy and support.

Information can be found at [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org). The national headquarters is located at 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814.

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Researchers Find Proteins That Might Restore Damaged Sound-Detecting Cells in The Ear, **08/05/2019** <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/newsroom/>



*Mouse cochlea with hair cells shown in green and auditory nerves shown in red. Credit: Doetzlhofer lab*

Using genetic tools in mice, researchers at Johns Hopkins Medicine say they have identified a pair of proteins that precisely control when sound-detecting cells, known as hair cells, are born in the mammalian inner ear. The proteins, described in a report published June 12 in [eLife](#), may hold a key to future therapies to restore hearing in people with irreversible deafness.

“Scientists in our field have long been looking for the molecular signals that trigger the formation of the hair cells that sense and transmit sound,” says [Angelika Doetzlhofer, Ph.D.](#), associate professor of neuroscience at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. “These hair cells are a major player in hearing loss, and knowing more about how they develop will help us figure out ways to replace hair cells that are damaged.” In order for mammals to hear, sound vibrations travel through a hollow, snail shell-looking structure called the cochlea. Lining the inside of the cochlea are two types of sound-detecting cells, inner and outer hair cells, which convey sound information to the brain.

An estimated 90% of genetic hearing loss is caused by problems with hair cells or damage to the auditory nerves that connect the hair cells to the brain. Deafness due to exposure to loud noises or certain viral infections arises from damage to hair cells. Unlike their counterparts in other mammals and birds, human hair cells cannot regenerate. So, once hair cells are damaged, hearing loss is likely permanent.

Scientists have known that the first step in hair cell birth starts at the outermost part of the spiraled cochlea. Here, precursor cells start transforming into hair cells. Then, like sports fans performing “the wave” in a stadium, precursor cells along the spiral shape of the cochlea turn into hair cells along a wave of transformation that stops when it reaches the inner part of the cochlea. Knowing where hair cells start their development, Doetzlhofer and her team went in search of molecular cues that were in the right place and at the right time along the cochlear spiral.

Of the proteins the researchers examined, the pattern of two proteins, Activin A and follistatin, stood out from the rest. Along the spiral path of the cochlea, levels of Activin A increased where precursor cells were turning into hair cells. Follistatin, however, appeared to have the opposite behavior of Activin A. Its levels were low in the outermost part of the cochlea when precursor cells were first starting to transform into hair cells and high at the innermost part of the cochlea’s spiral where precursor cells hadn’t yet started their conversion. Activin A seemed to move in a wave inward, while follistatin moved in a wave outward.

“In nature, we knew that Activin A and follistatin work in opposite ways to regulate cells,” says Doetzlhofer. “And so, it seems, based on our findings like in the ear, the two proteins perform a balancing act on precursor cells to control the orderly formation of hair cells along the cochlear spiral.”

To figure out how exactly Activin A and follistatin coordinate hair cell development, the researchers studied the effects of each of the two proteins individually. First, they

increased the levels of Activin A in the cochleas of normal mice. In these animals, precursor cells transformed to hair cells too early, causing hair cells to appear prematurely all along the cochlear spiral. In mice engineered to either overproduce follistatin or not produce Activin A at all, hair cells were late to form and appeared disorganized and scattered across multiple rows inside the cochlea.

“The action of Activin A and follistatin is so precisely timed during development that any disturbance can negatively affect the organization of the cochlea,” says Doetzlhofer. “It’s like building a house — if the foundation is not laid correctly, anything built upon it is affected.”

Looking more closely at why overproduction of follistatin results in disorganized hair cells, the researchers found that high levels of this protein caused precursor cells to divide more frequently, which in turn made more of them convert into inner hair cells in a haphazard way.

Doetzlhofer notes that her research in hair cell development, although fundamental, has potential applications to treat deafness caused by damaged hair cells: “We are interested in how hair cells evolved because it’s an interesting biological question,” she says. “But we also want to use that knowledge to improve or develop new treatment strategies for hearing loss.”

The research was supported by the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (DC011571, DC013477, DC012972 and DC016538) and the David M. Rubenstein Fund for Hearing Research.

Other contributors to the research include Meenakshi Prajapati-DiNubila, Ana Benito-Gonzales, Erin J. Golden and Shuran Zhang, all from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

**!! THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS !!**

**Our thanks to these sponsors for supporting the Hearing Loss Association - Central Oklahoma Chapter. Your support of our organization and its programs is greatly treasured.**

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**Mail your support of an annual tax deductible donation to:  
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**Platinum Level: \$500**

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**New Membership or Renewal:** Bring to a chapter meeting or mail to:  
Hearing Loss Association of America Central Oklahoma Chapter  
PO Box 42801, Oklahoma City, OK 73123

Please Print Clearly:

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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New to Hearing Loss Association – Central Oklahoma Chapter

Preference for your newsletter delivery:

email  Postal Mail

Are you a member of HLAA – National?  Yes  No

Annual chapter dues: \$10.00 per individual or \$15.00 per family.

Contributions are tax deductible. Amount of donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is based on the calendar year: January through December.

**JOIN TODAY!**