



May 2020 Volume 21, Issue 5

May Meeting

The May meeting has been cancelled.

Even though many businesses are opening, and being careful about how they do so, too many of us have underlying conditions to risk getting together in May. Let's hope that we can be patient a while longer. Then, when we can safely get together, it will be a wonderful cause for celebration!



Speaking of celebrations, we are hoping to have our yearly
Ice Cream Social!

(The pandemic statistics in Oklahoma will determine the decision to go ahead with the Ice Cream Social)

When: Sunday, August 2, from 2 to 4pm

Where: Will Rogers Gardens Exhibition Center, 3400 N.W. 36th St., Oklahoma City 73112

Bring your favorite ice cream, or cookies, or your favorite treat!

Note: Usually no newsletters are published for June and July. However, if major changes in plans occur, we will send everyone a notice.

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

Email the editor, Elaine: elains@cox.net



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.

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, (405) 537-4907. We welcome you to join us!

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!

HLA Board Members

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Looking Forward

May Meeting

Cancelled

June and July:

We usually do not have regular meetings in June and July. In the past we have had a game night and bingo night.

In the more recent past, we went on interesting “field trips” as a group.

This is an unusually uncertain time.

Currently, we do not have firm plans for June and July.

We are waiting to see how the “re-opening” progresses, and the data that results from it.

Let’s hope and pray that we can look forward to August and the Fall months for celebrations and gatherings. In the meantime, we know that many of us plan to have patience and stay safe.



August

Ice Cream Social!

(We are assuming the pandemic will be at an end, but if it isn’t, we will let you know of the cancellation.)

When: Sunday, August 2, from 2 to 4pm

Where: Will Rogers Gardens Exhibition Center, 3400 N.W. 36th St., Oklahoma City 73112

Bring your favorite ice cream, or cookies, or your favorite treat!



BETHESDA, MD, December 31, 2019:

HLAA, the nation's leading nonprofit organization representing people with hearing loss, is proud to partner with American Girl, the inspiring world of dolls and a subsidiary of Mattel. HLAA and American Girl are teaming up in honor of the company's *2020 Girl of the Year, Joss Kendrick.

Hearing Loss Association of America partners with American Girl® to increase Education and Awareness of Hearing Loss. American Girl Donates \$25,000 to Support Hearing Loss Association of America in Honor of its 2020 Girl of the Year™, Joss Kendrick.

When the Pandemic is over, 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.

May Birthdays

Ana Covey

Judy Dutton

Sara Rector-Rosa

Happy Birthday!

Please tell us your birthday month so we can celebrate in that month's newsletter.

Quote of the Month

The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.

Lesley Poles Hartley



May 7, 2020

The Challenges of Masks With Hearing Loss

Resources

Sheri Gostomelsky, Au.D.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, audiologists and other hearing healthcare professionals are concerned about our patients. With social distancing, we are communicating at a distance of six feet which is difficult if not impossible with a loss of hearing.

Going to the grocery store, socializing with others, or processing and collecting information at a medical appointment is more difficult than it used to be. If conversation is not understood, ask the person to write down what is being said. Request a written summary after any medical visit.

Thinking into the future is important for us so that we can plan for communicating with our patients. Masks pose so many concerns. Talking on the phone while wearing a mask makes conversation sound mushy. Wearing a mask is uncomfortable. Eyeglasses steam up. The list goes on.

During COVID-19, we all need to be cognizant of the difficulties that masks pose to people with hearing loss.

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Behind-the-ear (BTE) hearing aids and cochlear implants (CIs) in particular pose a great risk for difficulty. When one removes glasses, flips off a hat or hood, or removes a scarf, hearing aids can go flying off the ear. An active adult or child may forget to check that the hearing aid is still in place.

My colleagues and I have already gotten a few calls from patients who lost hearing aids by taking a mask on and off, and that the mask is not comfortable with BTE hearing aids. After all, unless you have a large space between your scalp and ear (which is to say, no one), there's limited real estate to work with. Anyone who wears both hearing aids and eyeglasses is already aware of the challenges.

Here are five solutions that may help people who wear BTE hearing aids or CIs.

1. If you have long hair, pull it back in a bun and, provided the face mask elastics are adjustable and long enough, loop the elastics around the bun.

2. Sew two large buttons onto a soft headband that are lined up with each ear. Looping the elastic around each button will take the strain off of your ears. See a photo of an example below.

3. Similarly, if you know someone who crochets or sews, you can create a face mask extension out of fabric, ribbon, or yarn that is four inches long. Then add buttons onto the extension so the elastics are off your ears.

4. There are YouTube videos on creating masks that tie behind the head, which puts absolutely no pressure on the ears. Here is a great example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68ONNhvIrP8>. This company, founded by a person who uses hearing aids, created a mask that uses a plastic toggle to keep the top elastic in place.

With everyone wearing masks, even people with typical hearing will find that they have relied on facial cues more than they thought. To help us all communicate better, remember to speak slowly and distinctly. Ask the person who you are communicating with if they understood what you said.

We all look forward to the future when life becomes a little easier. Until then, be cognizant of the communication difficulties created by wearing a mask. Be patient. Be kind. We all deserve it.



From the Hearing Health Foundation Magazine, Spring 2020

Can I Get My Hearing Tested Online?

By Rebecca M. Lewis, Au.D., Ph.D., CCC-A

Inclusion of Article suggested by Ron Hendricks

Online hearing tests, or tests you take yourself using a computer or smartphone, are becoming more prevalent and popular, especially alongside the market for “hearables” (smart wireless ear buds or headphones). The current COVID-19 pandemic has also underscored the need for telehealth options across a range of medical specialties, as clinic hours are reduced for less urgent medical needs. And with over-the-counter hearing aids set to become available, these at-home tests will likely keep growing in popularity, too. Given their convenience and availability, but keeping in mind their variability, here is what to consider if you use an online hearing self-test.

Comparing hearing status between two different people: Let’s say that I’m interested in learning about my dad’s hearing status. As an audiologist, I know what my current thresholds are and my dad can take the same online test to compare our results. If I have typical hearing thresholds and I see that my dad’s results from the online test are similar to mine, then I can conclude that his hearing is also typical. If I have typical hearing thresholds and my dad’s results are poorer than mine, then I can conclude that he has decreased hearing abilities and would want to schedule a full in-person exam.

Monitoring one person’s hearing status over time: Let’s say that I want to keep tabs on my own hearing. I could use an online hearing test to determine a baseline and compare my own results to that baseline over time to guide me in whether I want to seek a full professional exam. Extra credit for this one would be to get a full evaluation first and conduct your own online hearing test that same day to compare results and monitor your hearing over time.

Changes to the method of the online hearing test can affect results. Because of this variability, it’s recommended to keep the conditions the same as much as possible. But remember: Besides telling you how much hearing loss you have, an **in-person appointment** can include checking eardrum movement, acoustic reflexes, and a number of other procedures that can determine if there’s a medical reason for the hearing loss, and if it is medically/surgically treatable. These are things that an online test or smartphone app *cannot do*. But if you keep the limitations of these self-tests in mind, they can still act as an easily accessible, initial evaluation of your hearing.



2020 HEARING LOSS SCHOLARSHIP

- ✓ UNIVERSITY
- ✓ CAREER TRAINING
- ✓ COLLEGE
- ✓ POST HIGH-SCHOOL
INSTITUTION OF LEARNING

**APPLICATION
DEADLINE:
MAY 20, 2020**

Go to our
website at
Oklomahearingloss.org
for complete rules
and information.

Complete Application must be received
by May 20, 2020 before midnight to qualify.

- 1 The Hearing Loss Association of America Central Oklahoma Chapter will award scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 to residents of Oklahoma who will be attending an Oklahoma institution of higher education(*) the fall of 2020.
- 2 Submit an essay consisting of 1,000 – 3,000 words expressing your goals and telling your story of how hearing loss has affected your life
- 3 Download application from OklahomaHearingLoss.org

Contact **Scholarship Chair Sharon Hendricks** at sharonok@swbell.net

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The Hearing Loss Association of America Central Oklahoma Chapter will award scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 to residents of Oklahoma who will be attending an Oklahoma institution of higher education(*) the fall of 2020.

The applicant must:

- Present documentation of hearing loss; such as a copy of an audiogram or letter from a qualified professional (AuD or ENT)
- Provide copy of birth certificate or valid state ID, etc.
- Be resident of Oklahoma and submit residence address and phone number
- Submit a transcript or other document showing GPA
- Submit a copy of the Oklahoma institution of higher education's(*) acceptance letter
- Agree to allow HLAACOC use of name & photo
- Submit completed application in writing by MAY 20, 2020
- Submit an essay consisting of 1,000 – 3,000 words expressing your goals and telling your story of how hearing loss has affected your life
- Agree to an interview of the Scholarship Selection Committee
- One application per student
- Scholarship recipients are selected by a Scholarship Selection Committee
- Recipient will be notified in writing
- Recipient must be willing to attend the August HLAACOC meeting to receive the scholarship certificate
- Funds may be used for tuition, fees and book expenses with scholarship funds paid directly to the institution
- Submit an article to be published about how the scholarship has benefitted you by January 11, 2021.

(*) Higher education is defined as university, college, career training, or post-high school institution of learning



The Hearing Loss Association of America Central Oklahoma Chapter will award scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 to residents of Oklahoma who will be attending an Oklahoma institution of higher education(*) the fall of 2020.

Application for HLAA Central Oklahoma Chapter's Scholarship

Name: _____

Parents name: _____

Address (City, State, Zip): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Institution attending: _____

Applications must be submitted in writing prior to **May 20** 2020 and mailed to:
HLAA Central Oklahoma Chapter
PO Box 42801
Oklahoma City, OK 73123

or delivered in person Monday through Friday 10AM -3PM to:

Hearing Helpers Room
5100 N Brookline, Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Required Attachments:

Essay

Copy of audiogram or letter from an Audiologist or ENT

Transcript(s)

Copy of birth certificate or valid state issued ID

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.

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.



HLAA Local Website and Forum

Visit **www.okchearingloss.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** 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***.

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. The national headquarters is located at 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814.

!! 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:
*Hearing Loss Association of Central Oklahoma, Chapter Treasurer, PO Box 42801,
Oklahoma City, OK 73123.***

Platinum Level: \$500

Gold Level: \$250-\$499

Silver Level: \$100-\$249

Bronze Level: \$50-\$99

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:

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Birthday Month _____ Phone _____

E-mail address _____

☐ 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!