

Happy
Valentine's
Day!



February 2010

Hearing Loss
Association
of America
Bucks County Chapter

Next Meeting:

April 19, 2010

Future Meetings:

- June 21, 2010
- September 20, 2010
- December 6, 2010

This Issue's Highlights:

PA Farm Show

Banner Day in Court for
People with Hearing Loss

Consumer Protection for
Hearing Aid Purchasers

RIT Offers Benefits to
Veterans With
Hearing Loss

Arts & Entertainment

Save A Buck

Finding Hearing Aid
Compatible Phones

Some Things Aren't What
They Seem

ODHH's Community
Forum

On The Web:

HLA-PA's website:
www.hla-pa.org

HLAA's website:
www.hearingloss.org

Walk4Hearing website:
www.walk4hearing.org

We are the Hearing Loss Association of America's (HLAA) Bucks County Chapter.

HLAA, Inc. is a volunteer, nonprofit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to the welfare and interest of those who cannot hear well.

HLA-PA at the 2010 Pennsylvania Farm Show

The Hearing Loss Association of PA (HLA-PA) hosted an information exhibit at the 2010 Pennsylvania Farm Show on January 9th through January 16th at the Farm Show Complex and Expo in Harrisburg, PA. The purpose of the exhibit was to distribute information about HLAA and its chapters and to make people aware of how to identify hearing loss and what can be done to overcome its challenges. This was a wonderful opportunity to touch the lives of the 400,000 visitors that attended the show. Our very own chapter members, Marianne (chapter president) and Martin Lock volunteered to staff the booth for a shift along with many other HLAA local chapter members, including Steve Schultz, who is president of the Capital Region Chapter and organizer of our exhibit.



Steve Schultz with Marianne & Martin Lock

Banner Day In Court For People With Hearing Loss

On January 13, 2010, in San Francisco, there was an oral argument in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeal in a case concerning captioning and audio description in movie theaters. Jeff Thom of the California Council of the Blind, along with top access advocates/attorneys, provided an amicus brief in the case on behalf of ACB, AFB, the AAPD, the Screen Actors' Guild, and others as well as individual blind movie-goers. The case was argued by a lawyer in the Arizona Attorney General's office who filed the case against the movie theater chain that refused to provide captions or audio description. You'll enjoy reading the blog post by John Waldo which can be accessed on the web at: <http://www.hearinglosslaw.com/2010/01/articles/washcap-1/public-facilities/banner-day-in-court-for-people-with-hearing-loss/>.

Consumer Protection For Hearing Aid Purchasers

By: Lise Hamlin, director of public policy and state development, HLAA; lhamin@hearingloss.org
For full article see page 20 of the January/February 2010 edition of the *Hearing Loss Magazine*.

Do you know what, if any, laws are in place to protect you when you purchase a hearing aid? Do you know your rights as a hearing aid purchaser? Rights afforded to purchasers of hearing aids depend upon the state where you live and make the purchase. This system has resulted in a patchwork of laws and regulations across the country. To help you, HLAA has compiled information delineating the rights afforded to individuals in every state in the United States. Go to www.hearingloss.org/learn/hearingaids.asp and click on "Hearing Aids" to get the information for each state. Links and addresses for the state agencies are also provided for where to file complaints. If you prefer to have a printed copy of this information, make your request to Lisa Hamlin (email address above). Ask for "Hearing Aid Consumer Protection Information."

RIT Offers Benefits to Veterans With Hearing Loss

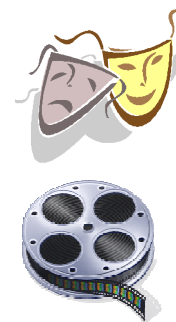
HLAA is pleased to announce that Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) is offering benefits for Veterans with hearing loss. On January 20th, HLAA hosted an online Guest Webchat for Veterans, discussing "Audiology and Hearing Aid Benefits" provided by the Veterans Administration. Dr. Gene Bratt, chief of the Audiology and Speech Pathology Service at the Department of Veterans Affairs Tennessee Valley Healthcare System in Nashville, answered questions in the chatroom. For a full transcript or replay of this Webinar, log onto this website: <http://www.hearingloss.org/Community/transcripts.asp>. You can download the transcript and see and hear the playback. The entire event was captioned as well.

Come Visit us on the web: www.hla-pa.org/chapters/buckscounty

Arts & Entertainment

Check out updated events in the arts, theatre and movies in this section. Websites for more information include: www.phillyfunguide.com/group/detail/9, www.c2net.org/theatre.htm, www.fomdi.com, www.captionfish.com. Events listed below are part of the *Independence Starts Here!* Cultural Calendar of HLA-PA's Community Partner, Art-Reach.

Date	Time	Venue	Access*	Event
2/05/2010	7:00pm	Amaryllis Theatre Co.	OC	Gagarin Way
2/06/2010	1:00pm	Walnut Street Theatre	ASL	If You Give a Pig a Pancake
2/07/2010	2:00pm	Hedgerow Theatre	OC	Visiting Mr. Green
2/11/2010	8:00pm	Hedgerow Theatre	OC	Visiting Mr. Green
2/13/2010	2:00pm	Philadelphia Theatre Co.	OC	Golden Age (tickets \$10 off!)
2/20/2010	8:00pm	Arden Theatre Co.	OC	Blue Door (tickets \$10 off!)
2/21/2010	2:00pm	Arden Theatre Co.	OC	Blue Door (tickets \$10 off!)
3/02/2010	7:30pm	Phila. Young Playwrights	OC, ASL	Write On!
3/07/2010	2:00pm	Hedgerow Theatre	OC	Look Ma, I'm Swell
3/12/2010	8:00pm	People's Light & Theatre Co.	OC	King Lear
3/20/2010	2:00pm	Media Theatre	OC	The 25 th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
3/21/2010**	3:00pm	Media Theatre	OC	The 25 th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
3/23/2010	10:00am	Ritz Theatre Company	ASL	Arsenic and Old Lace
3/27/2010	8:00pm	Arden Theatre Co.	OC	Romeo and Juliet
3/28/2010	2:00pm	Arden Theatre Co.	OC	Romeo and Juliet
3/31/2010	7:30pm	Academy of Music	ASL	The Lion King



*ASL – American Sign Language, OC – Open Captioning

** Group rate of \$29 per person available for this performance. Contact Marianne Lock at MCL0312@comcast.net if you are interested.

Save A Buck: People With Disabilities Can Access Broadway Deals

By: Joan Rattner Heilman | Source: From the AARP Bulletin print edition | January 1, 2010

Enjoy a New York show at a bargain price, thanks to the Theatre Development Fund Accessibility Program (TAP), which offers discounted orchestra seats to those who are hard of hearing, are partially sighted or blind, require aisle seating for medical reasons, use wheelchairs or can't climb stairs. Other services include text open captioning, sign-language interpretation and listening devices. TAP lets up to eight companions buy tickets at the same discount. Patrons must become TAP members (free) and provide documentation of their disability. E-mail tap@tdf.org; call 212-912-9770, ext. 381, or TTY 212-719-4537; or download an application at www.tdf.org/tap.

Finding Hearing Aid Compatible Cell Phones

© November 2006 (revised May 2008) by Neil Bauman, Ph.D. Used by permission.

Taken from the article at <http://www.hearinglosshelp.com/articles/hacphones.htm>

As you may know, digital devices such as cell phones and computers give off various kinds of radio frequency and electromagnetic radiation. As a result, when you hold a cell phone (or other wireless device) up to your hearing aid or cochlear implant, you often hear annoying interference. This interference is typically a buzzing, humming, or whining noise that can make understanding speech difficult, if not impossible to understand, not to mention being extremely annoying. In severe cases, interference makes your cell phone completely unusable to you when you are wearing your hearing aids. Fortunately for us here in the USA, in the last few years the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) has mandated that cell phones be rated as to how much interference they are likely to cause to hearing aids. The FCC defines Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) for cell phones in terms of radio-frequency (RF) emissions—the "M" (microphone) rating, and telecoil coupling—the "T" (t-coil) rating. The rating scale ranges from 1 to 4. The four possibilities are: M1 or T1 (poor), M2 or T2 (fair), M3 or T3 (good) and M4 or T4 (excellent). Only phones rated 3 or 4 are allowed to be sold as hearing aid compatible (HAC). Phones that would have only been rated 1 or 2 are deemed unacceptable.



To know whether a particular cell phone is hearing aid compatible, look for the icon on the left. This icon not only indicates that this phone is hearing aid compatible, it also shows the level of compatibility for both "M" and "T" settings.

Cell phone interference is only half of the equation. Few people realize that hearing aids also need to be designed to be resistant to radio frequency (RF) interference (such as is generated by a cell phone). Although not currently mandated by law, hearing aids also have the same rating scale: M1-M4 and T1-T4. Currently a number of digital hearing aids have an M2/T2 rating. However, you need to be aware that not all new hearing aids use RF-immune components. The more immune your hearing aid is, the less likely you are to experience interference from cell phones in the first place. If you want to know what your hearing aid's immunity rating is, ask your audiologist. If he/she doesn't know, they can ask the manufacturer on your behalf. To read the full article, go to <http://www.hearinglosshelp.com/articles/hacphones.htm>. You can contact Dr. Neil Bauman at neil@hearinglosshelp.com.



Marianne C. Lock
President
MCL0312@comcast.net

Gay Balsam
Vice President
rgbalsam@juno.com

Debra T. Cannon
Secretary/Marketing Director
drcannon5@msn.com

Martin Lock
Audio Visual Manager
lockmw@comcast.net

Board of Directors
Marianne C. Lock
Gay Balsam
Debra T. Cannon
Kate Gargiulo
Eileen Trihoulis
Judi Venet

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.hla-pa.org/chapters/buckscounty

Some Things Aren't What They Seem

This unbelievable but very true story was submitted by one of our very own chapter members, Ginny Shoff.



No, the dog didn't eat my homework, but my friend, Janet, almost ate my hearing aid. It's true – although it was an accident. In October I was traveling in France with my friend, Janet. We were on a river barge on the Rhone. Before dinner one evening while we were enjoying a glass of wine and some snacks in the cabin, she picked up some nuts and – you guessed it – she chomped on my hearing aid. I can't say why it wasn't in my ear. Perhaps I was going to change the battery, but nonetheless it was shattered. Thank goodness she didn't break her teeth or swallow the battery which I have since learned is poisonous and could have been another problem. Of course, she was devastated. So was I, but what could I say except, "You must feel just terrible." She did. Fortunately it was my left ear which was put out of commission. I wear two aids, so my right ear, my better ear, still functioned. For the rest of the trip, I was "right-eared" but managed to make some accommodations. We were with a group. At various stops along the way, the leader wore a microphone and we all wore receivers. By standing close to the speaker, and putting the "bud" in my left ear, I was able to follow along. At meals, my friend sat on my left and relayed what I might have missed. In the end, I suppose things turned out for the best since I am now wearing a superior aid, one I probably would not have purchased until the original one was defunct. Yes, I am still good friends with Janet – in case you were wondering.

ODHH's Community Forum For People With Hearing Loss

Whether you've been diagnosed with hearing loss, or are and have begun having problems with daily tasks such as hearing the phone ring, the Pennsylvania Office for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (ODHH) can help advocate for, inform you about, or refer you to services that will help improve your quality of life. Sponsored by ODHH, there will be a Community forum on Wednesday, March 3rd at 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Extended Stay-America Philadelphia Hotel, 437 Irwins Lane in Plymouth Meeting, PA. Family and friends are also encouraged to attend this community forum, so they can receive valuable information that can help a loved one with hearing loss. Interpreters, Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription, or CART, and an assistive listening device (ALD) will be provided. Please contact Denise Brown at 1-800- 233-3008 (v/tty) or denibrown@state.pa.us if you require additional accommodations. Learn more about ODHH by logging onto their website at www.dli.state.pa.us.



Information – Education – Advocacy – Support
The Nation's Voice for People with Hearing Loss

About our Organization

Membership in HLAA chapters is separate from membership in our national organization. The Bucks County Chapter does not collect dues. We just ask that you be a member of HLAA. HLAA, Inc. annual dues are \$35 and include a wonderful bi-monthly magazine, **Hearing Loss**.

To join HLAA, Inc., please send your name, address, and check for \$35, payable to: HLAA Inc., 7910 Woodmont Ave., Suite 1200 Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 657-2248 (Voice or TTY) or go to: www.hearingloss.org.

Our chapter meets four times a year on Mondays. If you would like to learn more about our chapter, how to join us, about HLAA and its events and programs, or if you have questions about this publication, please contact our newsletter editor, Debra Cannon at drcannon5@msn.com or call 215-805-6011.

SAVE THE DATE!

--- **October 29, 2010** ---
HLA-PA Employment Conference
at the Radisson Valley Forge
Convention Plaza in
King of Prussia, PA

MORE DETAILS COMING SOON!