



April 2010

Hearing Loss Association of America Bucks County Chapter

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.

Next Meeting:

April 19, 2010

Future Meetings:

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

This Issue's Highlights:

- Our Next Meeting Topic
Come To Milwaukee And Be Inspired
Disability Law Handbook Now Available
Arts & Entertainment
OC Events at a Discount
AAPR For Subtitles on Airline Carriers
House Exempts HA from Medical Device Tax
Financial Assistance for Purchasing Hearing Aids
REEP

Join Us for Our Next Meeting – April 19th!

Our topic for our next meeting will be "Hearing Loss in the Workplace: Strategies for Success," presented by Marcia Finisdore. Marcia has been an advocate for people who are deaf and hard of hearing for more than 25 years. She used hearing aids for more than 40 years and had a cochlear implant in 2000. She advocated for her hard of hearing children's rights in the local school system and in post-secondary schools. She served on the National Board of The Hearing Loss Association of America and was president of the Board from 1998 to 2000. She also established the PA state office of HLAA serving as its first State Director. Don't forget that our new meeting location is in the Community Room at the Free Library of Northampton Township, 25 Upper Holland Road, Richboro, PA 18954. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. Come join us!

Come to Milwaukee and Be Inspired

With its Old World charm and breathtaking beauty, you will absolutely fall in love with Milwaukee! This city is packed with parks, museums, theaters, world-class restaurants, shopping, and of course, breweries. HLAA's 2010 Annual Convention is set to take place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin June 17th to June 20th at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center and Midwest Airlines Center. It's not too late to register! Learn everything you need to know about the Milwaukee Convention on the next HLAA's Webinar!

Topic

Top Ten Reasons to Come to Convention 2010 in Milwaukee

Guest Speaker

Nancy Macklin, Director of Events & Marketing, HLAA

Date/Time

April 22, 2010 at 3:00p.m.



Join the Webinar by going to: http://hearinglossassociation.acrobat.com/hlaa/

The Disability Law Handbook Now Available

March 4, 2010 – The National Network of ADA Centers is pleased to announce the release of the new edition of the Disability Law Handbook.

Free copies may be downloaded at: http://www.southwestada.org/html/publications/dlh/index.html.

Hard copies can now be purchased for a \$5 charge (includes shipping/handling)

at: http://www.southwestada.org/html/publications/dlh/purchaseform.html.

Or call the ADA Center that serves you at 1.800.949.4232 v/tty to request a copy. You can also email them at: www.swdbtac@gmail.com.

The Disability Law Handbook is a 64-page guide to the basics of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability related laws. Written in an FAQ format, The Disability Law Handbook answers questions about the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA Amendments Act, the Rehabilitation Act, Social Security, the Air Carrier Access Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, and the Fair Housing Act Amendments. This publication is produced by the Southwest ADA Center, one of the ten National Network of ADA Centers funded by the National Institute on Rehabilitation and Research of the Department of Education, to provide technical assistance and training on the Americans with Disabilities Act and other disability-related laws.

On The Web:

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

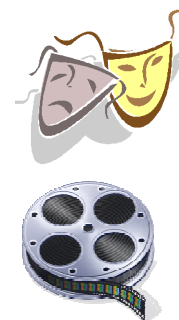
HLAA's website: www.hearingloss.org

Walk4Hearing website: www.walk4hearing.org

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
4/03/2010	1:00pm	Walnut Street Theatre	ASL	How I Became a Pirate
4/03/2010	2:00pm	Ritz Theatre Company	ASL	Arsenic and Old Lace
4/03/2010	2:00pm	Wilma Theatre	OC	Language Rooms
4/10/2010	2:00pm	Philadelphia Theatre Co.	OC	Red Hot Patriot
4/21/2010	7:00pm	ITVS Community Cinema	OC, ASL	The Horse Boy
5/01/2010	2:00pm	Society Hill Playhouse	OC	Respect
5/09/2010	3:00pm	Bridge Players Theatre Club	ASL	Big River
5/14/2010	8:00pm	Bridge Players Theatre Club	ASL	Big River
5/15/2010	8:00pm	Hedgerow Theatre	OC	Camping with Henry and Tom
5/22/2010	Noon	Arden Theatre Company	ASL	If You Give a Mouse a Cookie



*ASL – American Sign Language, OC – Open Captioning

Want to Attend Open-Captioned Plays & Live-Arts Events at a Discount?

Sign up to join HLA-PA's [email](#) notification list, managed by Art-Reach, and find out about **discounted** open-captioned live arts performances in and around the tri-state area. Art-Reach (www.art-reach.org), through their Independence Starts Here project, will negotiate group discounts for us and notify our members via email. If you are interested in attending a performance, you will need to contact the theater directly to purchase your tickets and give them our discount code. Art-Reach will have the theater block off a group of seats for us that will be accessible to the captioning.

Please note that this is an **email** notification list; we cannot send notification by regular mail at this time. If you would like to be on this list, please sign up at the link below and:

- 1) make sure to check the third box for captioning
- 2) put "HLA-PA" in the space where it says "How did you hear about Independence Starts Here"

Click on this link to sign up http://www.art-reach.org/ARR_ISH_EGroup.html.

If you are already receiving email notifications from Independence Starts Here, you still need to sign up to be notified of special **discount offers** for captioned plays by filling this form out and checking the box for captioning. If you have any questions, please contact Marianne Lock at MCL0312@comcast.net.

AAPR Calls on DOT to Require Subtitles on All Airline Carriers



Hearing Loss Association of America has been advocating for visual access to air travel information for a very long time. We have filed comments with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and held meetings in concert with other consumer organizations urging DOT to mandate as visual display of audible information at the gates and other areas, as well as providing captions for in-flight videos. DOT requires that captioning be available on all safety and information related videos, but still does not have a mandate for in-flight entertainment, such as movies or other videos provided.

Now we have a new ally. The Association for Airline Passenger Rights (AAPR) is calling on the U.S. Department of Transportation to require commercial air carriers to provide closed-caption or subtitles on all in-flight entertainment for the deaf and hard-of-hearing passengers. They are offering individuals an opportunity to sign a petition asking for captioning of in-flight video that will be presented to DOT. AAPR organized two years ago to "promote fairer customer service and accessibility standards in the airline industry and to improve passenger satisfaction." HLA and other disability organizations have signed onto a letter to be delivered to the US Department of Transportation to support in-flight captions or subtitles. [See the signed letter.](#)

For more information about AAPR visit their website: <http://www.flyfriendlyskies.com/index.html>.

To sign onto the petition to improve access to in-flight entertainment, visit: <http://www.petitionspot.com/petitions/subtitles>.

House Exempts Hearing Aids From Medical Device Tax

From blogpost on March 22, 2010 by: Lise Hamlin, director of public policy and state development, HLAA; hamlin@hearingloss.org
For more blogposts go to: http://hlaa-advocacy.blogspot.com/2010_03_01_archive.html

Hearing Loss Association of America has been working for some time with a coalition of organizations to advocate for a tax credit on hearing aids. This coalition found a new role when health care reform legislation threatened to impose a tax on hearing aids. Together we contacted our representatives to voice our concerns and HLAA sent out an action alert. You responded. Since then, several of you have asked: what happened? Here's the latest:

The House of Representatives adopted a Health Reform Reconciliation Bill on March 21, 2010 to amend the Senate's overall health reform bill which the House also adopted verbatim as part of the process. During final negotiations, the FDA Class I medical device tax exemption was dropped; however, a **specific hearing aid exemption that was included** in the legislation on March 18th was retained. This will exempt hearing aids from the medical device tax that will be imposed on almost all other devices not sold at "retail." The Senate will now consider adoption of the House's Reconciliation Bill through a simple majority vote, although the process is likely to be challenged on various legal and procedural grounds.

Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), lead sponsor of the Hearing Aid Tax Credit, organized much of the opposition to a hearing aid tax. In addition, every Representative who attended an HIA-sponsored local AG Bell/HLAA/IHS event since 2007 in support of the tax credit championed a hearing aid tax exclusion, including **Reps Shelley Berkley (D-NV); Dave Camp (R-MI); Ron Kind (D-WI); Allyson Schwartz (D-PA); Mike Thompson (D-CA); Dina Titus (D-NV); and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)**. This demonstrates the effectiveness of hearing health organizations working together both in Washington and across the country. As part of the final House Reconciliation bill, the medical device tax rate was lowered from 2.9% to 2.3%. This reflects the widened tax base created by the inclusion of Class I devices, which was the desire of numerous Class II and III device manufacturers.

The House Reconciliation provisions are not binding until adopted by the Senate through its reconciliation process, and we will keep you posted as this issue develops. In the meantime, the Senate bill will be enacted into law when signed by the President. That bill does contain the Class I exemption which also excludes hearing aids from the tax. Contact Andy Bopp, abopp@bostrom.com with any questions.

Sources of Financial Assistance for Purchasing Hearing Aids

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Taken from the blog post at <http://www.hearinglosshelp.com/weblog/?p=495>

A question I get asked is:

Where can I get financial help for purchasing hearing aids? They are so expensive, and I can't afford them, but need them. Can you help me?

There are a number of sources of help, but ferreting them out is quite a chore. The good news is that the Better Hearing Institute has just done all that work for you. You can find 69 sources of financial help for purchasing new hearing aids in their new publication "Your Guide to Financial Assistance for Hearing Aids". This is the first comprehensive guide of this kind of information. It contains information on charitable foundations, private organizations, insurance plans, corporate benefits and government programs that can help you get the hearing aids you need. Be aware that your eligibility for financial assistance may depend on where you live (various organizations/states/counties may require you to live in their "area" to be eligible. In addition, you will be subject to a means test in order to prove that you really can't afford new hearing aids. Often, you will find there is a sliding scale of funding depending on your means. In some cases, if your income is below a certain threshold you may be eligible for 100% (or close to 100%) funding. You can [download a free copy of this valuable 48-page guide](#) from the Better Hearing Institute website. While you are on this web page, you may want to download some/all of their other great guides in this series. These include:

- Your Guide to Better Hearing
- Your Guide to Your Child's Hearing
- Your Guide to Hearing Aids

In addition, the Northern Virginia Resource Center has published a 6-page fact sheet entitled, "[Financial Assistance for Hearing Aids](#)" which you can download. (Currently it's the fifth link listed on the page.) This Fact Sheet naturally emphasizes local (northern Virginia) sources of help as well as some national sources. And while you are on the NVRC website, there are 15 other good facts sheets you may want to look at or download. To read more of Dr. Neil Bauman's blog posts or articles, go to www.hearinglosshelp.com. You can contact Dr. Neil Bauman at neil@hearinglosshelp.com.





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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.hla-pa.org/chapters/buckscounty

Reused and Exchanged Equipment Partnership (REEP)



Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT) supports a variety of programs that may be a source for "previously-owned" assistive devices, usually available at a lower cost than buying new. These efforts help get used assistive technology devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, lifts, portable ramps, and other devices out of attics and garages and into the hands of people with disabilities who need them. These programs include "exchange" programs such as PIAT's Reused and Exchanged Equipment Partnership Online Classifieds ("REEP Classified").

REEP programs include those that actually accept donations of equipment, clean them up, store them and donate them to others who are in need, such as [Into New Hands](#), [Changing Hands](#), and the newly expanded reuse programs at the [Center for Independent Living of North Central PA](#) and [Life and Independence for Today](#). These programs are available to all Pennsylvanians with disabilities. The REEP Classifieds is a free statewide service for people with disabilities, their families, friends, service providers, and other interested individuals who want to find, buy, sell, or donate previously owned assistive technology. Equipment in the REEP Classifieds includes stair glides, adapted vehicles, wheelchairs, vision aids, communication devices and much more. You may view the REEP Classifieds by going to: <http://piat.reep.ioddev.org>.

The REEP Classifieds is now an interactive online service, providing up-to-date listings that change frequently! From this site, sellers can post their own listings, including photos. Buyers can peruse the listings and, after registering, can obtain contact information about the sellers. For individuals who do not have internet access or who are not skilled users of the web, PIAT's [Assistive Technology Resource Center](#) (ATRC) Information and Assistance staff can post and search the listings. PIAT and its ATRCs do not accept responsibility for the devices that are listed on the REEP Classifieds.



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



Calendar of Events

April 19

Chapter Meeting
Hearing Loss in the Workplace
by Marcia Finisdore

June 17-20

Milwaukee Convention 2010

June 21

Chapter Meeting
Speechreading by Dr. Judith Curtin

August 8

Walk4Hearing Kickoff Event

September 20

Chapter Meeting

September 25

Walk4Hearing Walkathon

October 29

HLA-PA Employment Conference

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 in the Community Room at the Free Library of Northampton Township, 25 Upper Holland Road, Richboro, PA 18954. 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.