New England Hears!
.....a newsletter bringing you highlights about
HLAA's national office and New England chapters:
Plymouth, North of Boston, Boston, Central Massachusetts,
Eastern Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

News from HLAA's National Office

HLAA Executive Director has been appointed to the Ida Institute Advisory Board.

As a member of the Ida Institute Advisory Board, HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley will serve with eight distinguished leaders in patient centered hearing health care, providing counsel and support for Ida’s strategic planning and helping the institute disseminate its tools and resources for patient centered care. Advisory Board members are appointed for a term of two years.
Did you know that the Ida Institute offers hearing healthcare providers opportunities to learn about tools for comprehensive, efficient delivery of person centered care in their practices? Individual professionals and clinics can earn Inspired by Ida certification through the Ida Institute Learning Hall. If you would like to share information about this program with your clinician, click the Ida Institute logo to learn more!

**HLAA will Collaborate with Gallaudet University on Communication Technology.**

HLAA will serve as a subcontractor for Gallaudet University’s Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center -Technology Access Program (RERC-TAP) in collaboration with American Institutes for Research, the University of Colorado-Boulder, the University of Iowa and the University of Minnesota. In its press release on a $4.6 million dollar grant awarded to the university’s TAP, Gallaudet recently described the various research and development projects that will be undertaken, including the area on which HLAA will focus: "a consumer-industry alliance to make technology products accessible and usable from the ground up,"

**The 2019 New England Walk4Hearing is a wrap!**
Cold and rainy weather failed to dampen the spirits of the 2019 Walk4Hearing fundraising teams and volunteers! The New England Walk brought together an energized gathering of members of our hearing loss community for music, calls-to-action, a brisk walk around Artesani Park - and successful raising of 96% of our fundraising goal of $65,000! Funds raised will support the work of HLAA’s national office in Bethesda, HLAA chapters across New England, and local not for profit groups working on behalf of children and adults with hearing loss. Thank you to all who helped to make this important event a rousing success - puddles and all!

**HLAA partners with American Girls as the 2020 Doll of the Year is announced!**
Walk4Hearing Managers, Alissa Peruzzini Peruzzini, Ann Rancourt and Chapter and Membership Coordinator, Carla Beyer-Šmolin visited the American Girl store in DC to see 1st doll with hearing loss, Joss Kendrick, 2020 Doll of the Year!

To increase education and awareness about hearing loss, HLAA and American Girl, the inspiring world of dolls and a subsidiary of Mattel, have partnered in honor of the company’s 2020 Girl of the Year, Joss Kendrick. She is a fierce athlete with a passion for surfing and competitive cheering, has hearing loss, and wears a hearing aid. She joins American Girl’s lineup of inspirational characters who impart meaningful life lessons to help girls learn and grow with confidence. Whether she’s on her surfboard or in the gym, Joss shows girls the importance of trying new things, pushing past stereotypes, and being a good team player. So much for hearing loss stigma!

To learn more about Joss Kendrick and HLAA’s partnership with American Girl, you can click the photo of Walk4Hearing Managers on their visit to the American Girl Store in D.C.!
HLAA has launched an official community and support group on Facebook.

If you are a Facebook user, you're invited to join the growing HLAA online community and support group to connect with peers and offer and receive support and encouragement. (Community participants who are interested in acquiring the American Girls Doll of the year: Stay tuned for news about an upcoming online community raffle for an American Girls Joss Kendrick doll! )

News from HLAA New England Chapters

HLAA Boston

Chapter Meetings take place at Watertown Public Library, 123 Main Street, Watertown, MA. Refreshments, CART and induction loop provided. Free parking is located in back of the Library.
• January 11, 2:00-4:00pm Start off the new year by learning about Widex and Phonak Hearing Aids

• February 8 - Learn about Hearing Aids from Starkey and Additional Companies*

• March 14 - Learn about Cochlear Implants including Advanced Bionics, MedEl & Cochlear Americas*

(*For time and other details yet to be announced, contact Betty Hauck at bettiola4@gmail.com or Sue Schy at sueschy@gmail.com.)

HLAA Central Massachusetts

Chapter meetings take place at the Northborough Free Library, 34 Main St, Northborough, MA.

• March 21, 2-4:00 pm. Click the photo for upcoming program details on the chapter website!
**HLAA Plymouth**

Chapter meetings take place at the **Plymouth Public Library**, 132 South Street, Plymouth, MA, 2nd floor Board Room. CART and Assistive Listening Devices are provided.

- **January 15, 7:00-8:30** **Ask the Audiologist** with Melissa Campbell, Au.D, CCC-A. For a flier, click [here](#).

- **March 18, 7-8:30 pm** **A Life in Music Lost and Found** with Betty Hauck. A presentation about Betty’s inspiring journey as a professional violist with hearing loss. Discussion and performance will be included in this presentation.

**HLAA Rhode Island**
Chapter events take place at the Warwick RI Public Library, 600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI.

- January 11, 2:00pm - Talks on a range of topics, including:
  
  New Phone Features for the Hard of Hearing
  Report on the Rhode Island Hearing Loop Project.

- March 21, 2:00-4:00 pm.

Contact hearinglossri@gmail.com for details.

**Chapter Post Scripts**

- HLAA Boston Chapter held a fun holiday "H.A.T. Party" in December!

Everyone who wore a colorful hat was entered in a drawing to receive copies of rehabilitation audiologist Dusty Ann Jessen’s book, Frustrated by Hearing Loss? 5 Keys to Communication Success. Attendees gathered in a circle to each tell about their favorite (and least favorite) HAT (Hearing Assistive Technology,) and since CART was not used for this meeting, chapter member Sue Schy helped people download captioning apps onto their smart phones - Otter for Apple iPhones, and Live Transcribe for Android. A microphone connected to the loop system in the meeting room was passed from speaker to speaker. Attendees learned a lot from each other, and (as you can see in the photo below,) a good time was had by all!
• Kudos to the Rhode Island General Assembly! With the support of the Rhode Island Hearing Loop Project, permanent hearing loops have been installed at the Rhode Island State House in both legislative chambers, all public galleries, several hearing rooms, and the Governor's reception room!

• HLAA Central Massachusetts Chapter Member Margaret Myatt is on a mission! Now retired and with a passion for helping others with hearing loss, she has become a frequent presenter at meetings of hearing loss
groups in the Greater Boston area. In addition, with the support of three audiologists, Margaret is working on establishing a hearing loss peer support group that will serve individuals living in and around Portland, Maine. At the inaugural meeting of the group on March 21, Margaret plans to address the exciting recent passage of Maine legislation requiring insurance companies to cover the purchase of hearing aids and will survey local hearing loss resources in the Portland area.

Carol Agate is an active member of the Boston Chapters of HLAA and ALDA. A number of years ago, she completed what was then the HLAA Hearing Assistive Technology training, and since that time, she has taken her training to its next iteration, updating her presentation for the new generation of hearing aids that come with their own external microphones.

Carol is fast becoming one of New England’s go-to presenters to groups wanting to learn more about assistive listening devices (ALD’s,) Her emphasis is always the same: what a person with hearing loss can do when hearing aids alone are not enough. In an hour packed with information about hearing loss - lightened with touches of humor - Carol leaves people
amazed at how much they don’t know about managing communication with hearing loss and newly aware of the importance of getting information about tactics beyond the use of hearing aids, including using captions available in movie theaters and captioned phones; requesting CART; learning about the audiogram and the concepts of different frequencies (thus demystifying why people with hearing loss sometimes can understand and at other times cannot;) understanding the meaning of speech-to-noise ratio and why an external mic is the best way to overcome that problem.

Carol provides a handout with links to web sites where her audience members can get more information. She actively promotes participation in self help groups available to people in the Greater Boston area, and, in doing so, stimulates attendance at peer support meetings. She wants to offer her PowerPoint presentation to anyone who would like use it or adapt it for their own presentation. “All are welcome to take this show on the road and get the word out all over New England.”

Carol says that she explains to her audiences how they can advocate for themselves, and in doing so advocate for all of us. It’s probably safe to say that her example as a fierce peer educator provides a great lesson in how we each can roll up our sleeves and meet the challenges of hearing loss head on and together!
The 2019-20 theater season across New England continues to offer theater lovers with hearing loss a host of great options!

**Hair: The American Tribal, Love-Rock Musical**  
Moby Dick  
Gloria: A Life  
Cats  
Mean Girls  
A Tale of Two Cities  
Little Women The Musical......

and many more great productions are on the calendar at theaters where you can use induction loops, infrared and FM systems, and open captions to enjoy the show!

**Check out the possibilities by clicking the links below!**

**American Repertory Theater**

**Barrington Stage Company**

**Boston Opera House**

**Bradley Playhouse, Putnam, CT**

**Hanover Theater for the Performing Arts, Worcester**

**Huntington Theater Company, Boston**

**Long Wharf Theater, New Haven**

**New Rep Theater, Watertown**

**Portland Stage – The Theater of Maine**

**Trinity Repertory Theater, Providence**

**Wheelock Family Theater, Boston**

**Yale Repertory Theater, New Haven**
MA Eye and Ear Infirmary (MEEI) is one of a small number of hearing healthcare settings in the Greater Boston area that offers a designated Aural Rehabilitation program for persons with hearing loss. The program is available both to those who are MA Eye and Ear patients and those who receive audiology services from other practices and clinics.

MEEI Senior Speech-Language Pathologist Cheryl Bakey, C.C.C.-S.L.P. works with clients collaboratively, using a process of shared decision making about a range of personal options that help the client with hearing loss meet individual goals. Such options include the choice of a device (or combination of devices) to be adopted, the use of communication strategies, practice with auditory training - or using a “wait and see” approach if a client is reticent about how to move forward.

The overall goal of the aural rehab program at MEEI is improvement of communication. Family and friends of clients are encouraged to join sessions to participate in building awareness about communication habits that can help the listener with hearing loss improve speech comprehension.

The Aural Rehabilitation Program is offered at two MEEI locations:
Boston (243 Charles St.) 617-573-3266
Stoneham (1 Montvale Avenue, Suite 203) 617-573-5639
2020 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Constituents Day

On Monday, March 30th from 10am until noon, the 2020 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Constituents Day will take place in the Great Hall of the Massachusetts State House in Boston. This morning of presentations from speakers and legislators and acknowledgement of award recipients provides inspiration and information for our diverse community. Participants are invited to partner with their legislators to support and improve access and services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing adults and children throughout Massachusetts.

(Note: Enter the State House at the Ashburton Park entrance, take the elevator to the second floor. There will be ASL, CDI and CART communication access providers. Assistive Listening Devices will be available at the event upon request. To request close vision/tactile interpreters please email: Hana Hanigan at Ami.Hanigan@MassMail.State.MA.US. Deadline for communication access requests is: March 2.)
Kudos to the many contributors to an excellent, recently updated resource on hearing loss from MCDHH!

Click the image to access a pdf. copy!

To become part of the HLAA team, click here for HLAA membership information.

Wishing you health, happiness and well being in the new year - and decade!