



Hearing Loss Association of Michigan NEWS

Focus on Issues Related to Hearing Loss
Summer/Fall 2008

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Call for nominations to the HLA-MI Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of HLA-MI is seeking candidates to serve 3-year terms beginning January of 2009. HLA-MI serves as an extension of National HLAA, making hearing loss and related issues a concern within the state. Candidates must be a member of the national organization. In addition, candidates must have access to e-mail and be willing to serve on committees and participate in fundraising activities. Quarterly HLA-MI meetings are generally held on the 3rd Sunday of January, April, July and October.

Anyone interested in applying to the BOT is encouraged to review the by-laws of HLA-MI and to download the BOT application, both of which are available at:

http://www.hearingloss-mi.org/hla-mi_002.htm

To apply by mail, please complete the application and submit to the address listed with a brief statement of why you wish to serve on the HLA-MI Board of Trustees and describing your skills and talents. All applications must be received by 5PM on November 30, 2008.

Additional questions may be submitted to Brenda Neubeck via e-mail at:

bneubeck@hearingloss-mi.org.

HLA-MI Nominating Committee
PO Box 4808
Troy, MI 48099-4808

-OR-

Email to: hla-mi-bot-applicants@hearingloss-mi.org.

Walk4Hearing Updates

By Barb Quart

For the second year in a row, the **Southeast Michigan Walk4Hearing** event was a huge success!! The forecasted rain held off, temperatures were perfect for a May 3rd spring walk, Kensington Park was beautiful as always, and walkers and attendees showed a lot of peppy spirit to make it a fun event again!

A DJ and a clown provided a festive atmosphere with lively music, face painting and balloon animals. There was a HLA-MI information display as well as representatives from the FCC in attendance to answer questions regarding the pending conversion of analog tv signals to digital. And food, so much food; bagels with cream cheese, apples and bananas, granola bars, coffee, fruit juices, and bottled water!

Many, many thanks to the committee members who helped organize the 2008 SE Michigan Walk4Hearing event: Caroline Caughell, Janet Haines, Liz Kobylak, Ann Liming, Audrey Pleasant, Barb Quart, Brenda Neubeck, and Maureen Treppa.

A most special thank you to the all the Walkers! You were superb and helped us exceed our goal of \$25,000!!! A round of applause for the 15 SE Michigan Walk4Hearing teams and we hope to see you in 2009!

Audrey's Awesome Amblers
Delta Zeta
Hear a "Little Moore"
Hearing Consultants of Michigan



Kobylak's Krew :)
Lansing Loiterers
Mighty Maccombers
Moose Room
MSU Spartans
Premium Hearing Solutions
Royal Oak Rowdies
Sassy Sisters and Company
Say It Again Sams
The Warriors
Thumb Thunder

By Marilyn Knoll

Hello Team Captains, Volunteers and friends, What a beautiful day and fun time we had on the first day of summer for the 2nd annual **West Michigan Walk4Hearing** - June 21. Thank you all so very much for your generous contributions of time and sponsorship to this year's walk. We set a healthy goal this year and consider the walk a huge success. Besides the beautiful morning, we were blessed with about 100 walkers this year. Our performance this year was only dampened by the slow economy. Yet we are very excited to report that we have confirmed receipt of over \$21,100. That is absolutely fantastic. One thing I ask is would each of you reply to this email and let me know if you think you will have more donations to turn in. That way we can get the final numbers to national and know exactly the proceeds for West Michigan. THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH! It was very heart warming for me that so many of you were able to attend the walk. You just can't imagine what a contribution you are making to the community of us that are hard of hearing. Our use of the money collected is toward continued awareness, education of the community and a Hearing Helper Center. We envision that as a physical location where people could test, even check out, equipment that would help them hear better, raising the quality of their lives. Thank you again for your generous contribution to this national issue!

View pictures from both walk events at www.hearingloss-mi.org/gallery.

2008 HLAA Convention Awards

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The 2008 HLAA National Convention took place June 12-15 in Reno, Nevada. One highlight of the convention is the Awards Ceremony and Breakfast, which was held on Friday, June 13th. Several Hearing Loss Association of Michigan (HLA-MI) members were honored as recipients of special awards.

**Professional Advisor Award:** Noreen Gibbens, AUD  
Dr. Gibbens is the professional advisor to the Macomb Area HLA-MI chapter. She was also nominated for her efforts and advocacy as an organizer of the annual Day at the State Capitol, which raises awareness about the needs of Michigan citizens with hearing loss.

**Spirit of HLAA:** Janet Haines

Ms. Haines is the immediate past president of HLA-MI. Having served as president for 4 years, the state organization benefited greatly from her leadership, vision, tireless efforts and graciousness.

**Walk4Hearing Awards:** Janet Haines, Marilyn Knol

Ms. Haines chaired the 2007 Southeastern Michigan Walk4Hearing committee. Ms. Knol chaired the 2007 Grand Rapids Walk4Hearing committee.

**Retiring State Organization Leaders:** Janet Haines

Ms. Haines served as HLA-MI President from 2004-2008.

**Retiring State Chapter Coordinators:** Liz Kobylak

Ms. Kobylak served as HLA-MI Chapter Coordinator from 2000-2008.

**2009 HLAA National Convention**



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Convention 2009: Save the dates June 18-21 in Nashville, Tennessee!

4 Great Reasons to attend HLAA Convention 2009:

Education Programs

Exhibit Hall Trade Show

Networking

A Ton of Fun!

Once again, get those calendars out! HLAA Convention 2009 is in Nashville, TN from June 18-21, 2009. The Country Music Festival will be taking place the week prior to the convention, so it's a great family vacation opportunity.

Airport puts hearing-impaired travelers in the loop

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Monday, June 23, 2008

By Emily Monacelli

The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- West Michigan residents who use hearing aids won't need to worry about missing airport announcements at Gerald R. Ford International Airport. In a move hearing assistance advocates are calling "a world of difference," the Gerald R. Ford International Airport recently became the first United States airport to install a hearing loop system.

A loop allows people with telecoil-equipped hearing aids to hear public address announcements more clearly, transmitted through their hearing aids. The user can flip a switch or use a remote-control device to activate the telecoil. Once it is turned on, anything that runs through the loop is transmitted into the person's hearing aid, blocking out background noise.

Hearing loss occurs in about 30 to 35 percent of adults between the ages of 65 to 75, and in 40 to 50 percent of adults older than 75, according to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

The airport used \$137,000 of general revenue to buy and install the system, and it is available on both of the airport's concourses, said Bruce Schedlbauer, the airport's marketing and communications manager. Grand Rapids-based AsCom Inc. installed the system. West Michigan has been a hot spot for hearing loop systems, according to Michael Wiersma, operations manager of Holland-based Premovation A/V System Integration, which has been installing loop systems for seven years. Premovation has installed hearing loops in West Michigan establishments including Grand Rapids Civic Theater, DeVos Performance Hall and the Kent County Boardroom. Their client roster is expanding to include buildings all over the United States, Wiersma said. Hearing loops for the home for the television or radio usually cost about \$200, he said. Loops for commercial buildings run about \$3,000 to \$5,000 for a typical church. About 50 percent of hearing aids have telecoil receptors, said David Myers, hearing assistance advocate.

Myers, a psychologist at Hope College, said he first experienced a hearing loop in Scotland. At first, he couldn't make out what a speaker was saying. His wife nudged him to activate the telecoil receptor in his new hearing aid. "It was as if the person was talking at the center of my head," he said. "I was practically in tears, it was so beautiful." His discovery led him to launch an initiative in West Michigan that brought the looping of most worship places in Holland and Zeeland. Vic Krause, former president of the Hearing Loss Association of America, Grand Rapids Chapter, first experienced the hearing loop at his church.

"It just makes all the difference in the world for me and anybody with this kind of hearing aid to be able to hear," he said. "To be in an airport and to listen for flight announcements and not be able to know whether or not it's flight 387 or 367 was very frustrating," he said. "Now I can hear, and so can anybody else who has hearing aids with the telecoil feature."

## **Is a Cochlear Implant for you?**

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Learn the basics about Cochlear Implants. Click on the link below.

www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/coch.htm#c

Free! Free! Free! Demonstrations of Hearing Assistive Technology

(HAT)

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There is a wide range of hearing assistive technology (HAT) available for persons living with hearing loss. However, it can be confusing trying to determine which piece of equipment is right for you. That's where our trained volunteer Hearing Technology Resource Specialists (HTRS) can help. Each Specialist has a "kit" of hearing assistive technology that contains devices which can help you hear better in many every day life situations. You are able to try and compare devices to explore features which will help you the most.

HTRS volunteers are prepared to demonstrate equipment to individuals or groups. Our Specialists care about people with hearing loss. Most have experienced it first hand, having hearing loss themselves. They know how difficult it can be to function in a hearing world.

All presentations are completely free and there is no obligation to purchase anything. In fact, HTRS do not sell equipment!

Email us today to set up your free demo!

[htrs@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:htrs@hearingloss-mi.org)

## **Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit**

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Michigan House of Representatives adopts HR 155 urging the United States Congress to enact the Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act
During a late legislative session on June 28, 2008 the Michigan House of Representatives adopted HR 155.

Speaker Pro Tem Representative Michael Sak (D-Grand Rapids) offered the resolution that will be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United State House of Representatives, and members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

The two Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act bills in Congress are H.R. 2329 introduced by Representatives Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) and Vern Ehlers (R-MI), and S. 1410 introduced by Senator Norm Coleman (R-MN) and co-sponsored by Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). The bills provide a tax credit of up to \$500 per hearing aid, available once every five years, towards the purchase of such hearing aid, available to 1) individuals age 55 and over, 2) those purchasing a hearing aid for a dependent, including families for children.

HLA-MI Chapter Activities

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By Marla Schindler and Barb Quart

Everyone is always welcome at the local chapter meetings regardless of hearing ability. Some of the most rewarding experiences attendees have had were the results

of family members or friends coming to the meeting in support of the person with hearing loss. That kind of support can reverse years of hearing loss related isolation and frustration and make great strides toward an improved quality of life. Take a look and consider attending a local HLA-MI meeting. You won't be sorry!

**No local chapter in your area?**

Please contact Brenda Neubeck, State Chapter Coordinator at [bneubeck@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:bneubeck@hearingloss-mi.org) for help in establishing a local chapter. Brenda and the chapter development committee are ready to help you reach that goal.

For more information, please click on the chapter name.

[HLA-Allen Park](#)

[HLA-Ann Arbor](#)

[HLA-Dearborn](#)

[HLA-Flint](#)

[HLA-Garden City](#)

[HLA-Grand Rapids](#)

[HLA-Kalamazoo](#)

[HLA-Lansing](#)

[HLA-Macomb](#)

[HLA-Royal Oak](#)

[HLA-Saginaw](#)

[HLA-St. Joseph](#)

[HLA-Traverse City](#)

[HLA-Waterford](#)

Cochlear Implant chapter meets in three locations: [Ann Arbor, Mt. Pleasant and Grand Rapids.](#)

**HLA-MI Contact Information**

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This publication is the official newsletter for

**Hearing Loss Association of Michigan:**

**President: Caroline Caughell**

[ccaughell@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:ccaughell@hearingloss-mi.org)

**Vice President: Audrey Pleasant**

[apleasant@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:apleasant@hearingloss-mi.org)

**Secretary: Ann Liming**

[aliming@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:aliming@hearingloss-mi.org)

**Treasurer: Barb Quart**

[bquart@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:bquart@hearingloss-mi.org)

**Chapter Coordinator: Brenda Stimson Neubeck**

[bneubeck@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:bneubeck@hearingloss-mi.org)

**Newsletter Committee:**

Caroline Caughell, Editor  
Liz Kobylak  
Ann Liming  
Brenda Neubeck  
Howard and Georgia Potrude  
Barbara Quart  
Betty Saputo  
Marla Schindler

*This newsletter is published 3 times a year.  
Submit letters and questions to:*

**Hearing Loss Association of Michigan  
PO Box 4808  
Troy, MI 48099-4808**

Web-site:  
[www.hearingloss-mi.org](http://www.hearingloss-mi.org)

E-mail:  
[info@hearingloss-mi.org](mailto:info@hearingloss-mi.org)

*Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the person submitting the information and not necessarily of Hearing Loss Association of Michigan (HLA-MI).*

*Mention of goods or services does not mean endorsement by HLA-MI, nor should exclusion suggest disapproval.*

## **Hearing Loss Association of America Contact Information**

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Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the largest international consumer organization dedicated to the well-being of people who do not hear well.

If you are not a member of HLAA, you are encouraged to join. Membership includes the bi-monthly journal, Hearing Loss, an outstanding information resource.

Dues are \$35 for USA individual, \$45 for couple/family, \$60 for Professionals and \$20 for students. Pay by credit card at: <http://www.hearingloss.org/membership> or make checks payable to "HLAA" and mail to:

Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200
Bethesda, MD 20814
V/301-657-2248
TTY/301-657/2249
www.hearingloss.org