



### Chapter Calendar

**Chapter and Board meetings held at:**

**Weingart Senior Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712**

**Every Monday** - Lip reading practice: 10 a.m. to 12 noon – Craft Room

**Every Wednesday** - Lip reading instruction: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. – Craft Room

**November 4** - HAT Committee meeting, 12:30 p.m. at Coco's restaurant

**November 14** - Chapter meeting: 6:30 P.M. – Stacy Rogers of MED-EL will speak on updates to cochlear implant components, plus overview of Assistive Listening Devices

**Refreshments at Chapter meeting will be provided by Pat Andrews, Kaiso Miyao, Gail Morrison, and Joan Schlegel. Thank you!**

**November 15** - Rocky Stone hearing device exhibit (by HAT Committee)

**November 20** - Board meeting – 12:30 p.m.

**Chapter Contact:**

Bill Busch, 310-540-6322  
billbusch@ieee.org

**Chapter:** [www.HLALongBeachLakewood.org](http://www.HLALongBeachLakewood.org)

**California:** [www.hearinglossCA.org](http://www.hearinglossCA.org)

**National:** [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

### Thoughts on a Pole Walk: A Sentimental (Hearing) Journey

By Gael Hannan On October 14, 2013

This weekend is Canadian Thanksgiving, a holiday based on the English harvest festival of pumpkins and hymns. The earliest North American Thanksgiving was celebrated by the explorer Martin Frobisher in 1578 when he and his men managed to escape the fate of becoming human icebergs, as they searched, with Inuit guides, for the elusive Northwest Passage. Today, Canadians don't do Thanksgiving school pageants with little Frobisher and Inuit dress-ups, but we *are* grateful for the day off and we love our turkey or ham dinners.

Last night's big dinner was exactly what I was trying to work off when I hit the pavement this afternoon for a Nordic pole walk. An energetic walk on a misty day not only works off calories, but the imagination gets a brisk walk around the block, too.

*“What am I, as a hard of hearing person, thankful for today? Well, I'm grateful that I didn't accidentally turn off the stove while cooking the ham for 15 guests – like I did with the Easter turkey. And I'm also grateful that I could hear the stove timer *ding-dingy-dinging* to let me know the ham was done. Not an easy thing to hear above a crowd that was talking loudly over wine and appetizers.*

*What else? People with hearing loss should direct a prayer of thanks to the chain of geniuses (*genii? Genies?*) who invented captioning, all kinds: open, closed and real-time for movies, TV, and the computer. Captioning is the key to *communication access*; without it, we are cut off, bereft of comprehension of what's playing out on the screen.*

*What else? I'm lucky to have my *sight* that opens up sounds that I can't fully understand with my ears. Speech in personal, live conversations is not captioned – there are no little cartoon clouds above a person's head to clarify what's being said. But when we speechread by focusing on a person's face, we get meaning from every facial tic, blink of an eye, quiver of a lip, and flare of a nostril. If we stop for a moment to think about it, this human fusion of sight and sound cues into comprehension is as amazing as modern technology – even when we sometimes get it wrong.*

*And how can we *not* be thankful when family members, immersed in their pumpkin pie and free-for-all conversation at the dinner table, suddenly remember that *we* might not be enjoying ourselves as much as *they are*. Or maybe they're just responding to an attention-getting wave that says, “*Hey! Help me out, I'm not getting this!*” However it occurs to them, what's important is that they face us when they speak and even, God bless 'em, relieve us of the responsibility of saying to the rest of the gang, “*OK, can we cut down on the babble a bit?*”*

As I poled along the road, I pulled up my jacket hood to protect my hearing aids from the mist. Some say that in-the-ear aids won't be harmed by light drizzle or fog, but I prefer to err on the side of caution. As I walked, my hood grated loudly against my ears, and my hearing aids protested with occasional feedback. But it was the lesser of two evils at the time – I'm just happy that my aids are alive and well. To me (and probably to all hearing aid and cochlear implant users), my devices are 'more precious than gold' and I take better care of them than of any other possession.

I do not apologize for my joy in hearing. If I had less hearing – or none at all – I would still be grateful for many of the same things. And however challenging, frustrating and imperfect some of my hearing moments might be, I will never stop being thankful for the family, technology and professional hearing support that give me the best gift of all – the ability to communicate and connect.

## HLAA - Long Beach / Lakewood Board Chapter Officers

**President** - Bill Busch  
**Vice - President** - Herb Balkind  
**Treasurer** - Walt Lowrie  
**Recording Secretary** - Craig Bowlby  
**Corresponding Secretary** - Ken Saw

**Programs** - Gail Morrison  
**Ways and Means** - Stephen Fisher  
**Professional Adviser** - Dr. David DeKriek

### Newsletter

**Layout** - Lisa Rettino  
**Editor** - Louise Allen

### Committees

**Educating Parents** - Maxine Barton-Bauman  
**Hearing Assistive Technology** - Herb Balkind / Bill Busch  
**Refreshments** - Joan Schlegel  
**Lip Reading** - Linda DeGuire  
**Looping** - Ram Kakkar  
**Membership** - Flo McDavid

## HLA Websites

**Long Beach/Lakewood:** [www.HLALongBeachLakewood.org](http://www.HLALongBeachLakewood.org)  
**California:** [www.hearinglossCA.org](http://www.hearinglossCA.org)  
**National:** [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

**CTAP** California Telephone Access Program  
Information, Repair & Exchange

**English** Voice 1-800-806-1191 **Spanish** Voice 1-800-949-5650

## HLAA

To join send \$35/\$45 for individual / family membership to:

Hearing Loss Association of America  
7910 Woodman Avenue, Suite 1200,  
Bethesda, MD 20814.  
phone: (301) 657-2248 Voice;  
(301) 657-2249 TTY

Membership brochures are available at our chapter meetings.

## OCTOBER MEETING VISITORS

We welcomed the following guests: Suzie Torres and Sarah Bugs.  
Please come again! We look forward to seeing you at our meetings.  
Current members: bring a guest to our next meeting.

### **REMINDER –**

## **Donate Your Old Hearing Aids**

Bring your old hearing aids to Chapter meeting, and they will be put to good use helping young families to obtain new ones for their little ones. We will give them to the John Tracy Clinic who will receive money to buy new hearing aids for those who cannot afford them for their little children.



## **MEMBER BIOGRAPHY – WALT LOWRIE**

Walter Borlich Lowrie was born in Brainerd Minnesota. In 1942, Walt's family relocated to San Diego so his father could take a position at Convair, working in the War effort. Walt grew up and went to school in San Diego. He attended San Diego State for three years. At that point, he met his wife-to-be, Penny, who was a student at UCLA so he moved to Los Angeles and enrolled in UCLA to complete his senior year. Penny and Walt were married in 1958.

After graduation, Walt was employed by Occidental Life Insurance and began studying to become an actuary. About halfway through the program, he decided it was not for him, and returned to Cal State Los Angeles to get his Master's degree in Mathematics – a goal he achieved in 1967.

Walt and Penny's family grew during these years: Stephen was born in 1959; Cathy arrived in 1960, followed by Edward in 1964.

He worked toward his Ph.D. for four years, taking classes at USC, but discovered there was no market for Ph.D.'s in Mathematics, so he went back to his actuarial studies and completed them in 1977, all this time being employed by Occidental.

In 1980, he heard about an opening for an Assistant Professor position at the University of Nebraska, so the family (with the exception of Stephen) relocated to Lincoln, Nebraska in 1980, where Walt discovered he loved teaching. Later, he learned of an even better opportunity at the University of Connecticut, so the family again moved, this time to Storrs, Connecticut, in 1984. He continued there until his retirement in 1998.

During these years, the children moved, one by one, back to Southern California, leaving Walt and Penny by themselves in Connecticut. After two years of retirement there, in the year 2000, they made the move back to California. They rented a house in Lakewood to assure themselves they liked the area, and then bought a house there in 2001, where they still happily reside.

About 1990, Walt became aware that his hearing was diminishing, so he had his hearing tested and bought hearing aids. He was aware of an inherited tendency of hearing loss because his grandfather experienced it.

Around 2009, while at a physical therapist being treated for a sore neck, Walt met Herb Balkind, who was also hard of hearing. They enjoyed each other's comradeship, and Herb invited/urged Walt to attend HLAA meetings with him, which Walt did. Walt volunteered to assist in the outreach efforts of the HAT Committee, helping Herb and Bill Busch conduct the Rocky Stone Hearing Device Exhibit every month, an effort he continues to this day. Walt also serves as Chapter Treasurer for HLAA.

Walt says his grandfather lived to be 104 years old, so in addition to inheriting Grandpa's hearing loss, Walt hopes he also inherits his longevity!



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Dr. Bill Busch*

With the holiday season approaching it is a great opportunity for you to use some of the things we have been stressing in our meetings and newsletters. Many of you have heard the messages I am about to repeat, but do you use them? With a hearing loss it is too easy to slide into old patterns so I suggest you make a resolution to be assertive about your communication needs. You will have a better experience if you do. Here are some tips:

**Make a plan and write it down.** Think about the situations you will be in and figure out ways of communicating better. Be sure you have all your hearing devices and fresh batteries ready including spares.

**It's easier to talk with people one-on-one in a quiet environment than in a noisy living room.** Find a favorite friend or relative, and move the conversation into a quiet room, or a quieter corner. Or play a game or read a story to a child, if that's an option.

**When sitting down to dinner, make sure you choose a seat that is best for you! Here are some seating suggestions:**

- If you have a "better side," seat yourself so that most people are on that side.
- Seat yourself next to a person you usually have the least difficulty hearing or someone who usually has the patience to clue you in on what the conversation is about, or the punch lines you'll miss.

### Conversations

- It's inevitable that you will not be able to hear the conversation with many people talking and laughing at once. Content yourself with speaking with the people on either side of you.
- If you start a conversation, then you'll know what the topic is, so it will be easier to follow.
- If you miss something, try to ask only for the part you missed, instead of just saying "what?"

**Assistive listening devices can be very effective at reducing background noise.**

Personal amplifiers like the Pocketalker or personal FM systems can have a fixed microphone that you can point at someone you wish to converse with or a lapel mic that you can provide to the person. Having the microphone close to the person's mouth makes a big difference. These can work either in conjunction with your hearing aid or cochlear implant, or with ear buds or headphones. If you need more information about these devices ask us or come to one of our Rocky Stone Hearing Device Exhibits (see page 4).

**Remember to be assertive about your needs!** Pleasant and polite, but assertive. If you do this with a pleasant attitude, then people will usually want to help you out.



## TIME TO GO TO THE MOVIES

*By Herb Balkind, Co-Chairman HAT Committee*

This past week Bill Busch and I got a chance to see the new movie, **Gravity**, a 2013 3D science fiction thriller and space drama film, directed, co-written, co-produced and co-edited by Alfonso Cuarón. The film stars Sandra Bullock and George Clooney as surviving astronauts from a damaged Space Shuttle mission, as they attempt to return to Earth. This movie is spectacular and technically dazzling, with panoramas of astronauts tumbling against star fields and floating through space stations interiors just visually beautiful beyond words.

The best part of this movie was that Bill and I got to watch it in 3D with captioning. That's right, captioning. We have previously talked in this column about captioning being provided at most major theater chains, and this is just a reminder that if you still haven't experienced it or it's been a while since you attended a movie, this movie is worth your time, money and popcorn (of course, with movie butter...love that high cholesterol movie butter). What was especially nice was that Edwards Theater, at the Long Beach Town Center, uses the Sony Caption Glasses. These glasses actually have the words appear right on the lenses. It's almost like watching captioning at home on TV. They are easy to wear, even over your regular glasses, and can be personally adjusted in many ways. First the NOSE PIECE adjusts up and down, or in and out, for desired comfort. The BRIGHTNESS of the words can be increased or decreased. The last adjustment is for DISTANCE, which can control the position of the words to make them either FAR from you, NEAR you, or MID in the middle for you.

The theater will provide the captioning equipment and/or an ALD (Assisting Listening Device) at GUEST SERVICES. The staff at GUEST SERVICES will instruct you in the use of the adjustments. They will also provide you with a very informative instruction card, which will show you step by step how to use these features.

Now you might question how you will see 3D. You do need a special pair of glasses for that. So if you wear glasses, and have to put the captioning glasses over them, does that mean you have to put 3D glasses over the other two glasses? There would be no more ear space to hold all those eyeglass frames. Not to worry. There is a simple solution. The staff member will place a thin 3D lenses on the caption lenses. You won't even know they are there. Now you'll see the 3D movie and captioning and enjoy the movie.

So what are you waiting for...go to the movies tonight and enjoy. It's hard to believe in the old days they made a big advertising deal out of "ALL DANCING...ALL SINGING...ALL COLOR." At last, we can add "ALL CAPTIONING...." See you at the movies!!!

Hearing Loss Association  
Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter  
c/o Louise Allen  
3033 Chatwin Avenue  
Long Beach CA 90808-3704

Address Service Requested

**Message from Gail Morrison:**

Warren Willard of HearingNowUSA is hosting a loop demonstration on Sunday, November 10 at 2:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church in Garden Grove: 11832 Euclid Street (92840). Warren is looking for our people of the Hearing Loss Association to bring their friends to learn about the loop. He will "turn on" the loop after everyone present is there. If you would like to go, he would appreciate your RSVPing to him at [warren@hearingnowusa.com](mailto:warren@hearingnowusa.com). Refreshments will be served. Also, he will send out packets of information, too, so it sounds like a very nice meeting. Knowing Warren, it will be very well organized, too!

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**HAT DEMONSTRATION**

Please come join us for our next **ROCKY STONE HEARING DEVICE EXHIBIT** (HAT DEMO) on Friday, November 15th, between 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at the Weingart Senior Center, in Lakewood. No reservations are needed.

This HAT Exhibit does not include hearing aids. These meetings are sponsored by the Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America. This HLA chapter does not sell any of the devices itself, nor does it otherwise profit from this demonstration service. The Weingart Senior Center and the Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter of HLA make no warranties, presentations or claims concerning the quality, quantity or availability of services or products herein.

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**SCOREBOARD**

	Members	Guests	Total
October	32	2	34
September	34	6	40
August	33	10	43
July	30	5	35
June	30	1	31
May	35	0	35

**SUMMARY OF  
FOUNDER'S DAY MEETING**

We had at least twenty baskets donated at the Founder's Day Chapter meeting on October 10. The baskets were prepared by members to be used as an opportunity drawing in order to raise money to forward to our National organization to support starting new HLAA chapters all over the U.S.

Included were nine plants – several large ones – donated by Helen Bologna. Also included as 'silent auction' items were three beautiful necklaces donated by Gordon Langsam, and a "wine and sail" which meant a sailboat cruise from Los Alamitos Bay to the battleship Iowa in San Pedro with some bottles of wine to enjoy during the cruise. These silent auction items were offered on the bidding sheet, with highest bidder taking the prize.

Everyone who attended received one free ticket. More tickets were purchased at \$2 per ticket or 3 for \$5. These tickets were placed in the 'brown bags' in front of each basket, and at the end of the fundraiser, a winning ticket was drawn out of the bag and taped to the bag.

Overall, we brought in \$1,000, the most we have ever raised at this annual event. Thank you all – everyone who participated – a job very well done! Fun, too!

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**DUES COLLECTION**

As a result of a change in our by-laws, beginning in November this year, we will begin collecting membership dues of \$1.00 per calendar year, per member.

Collection of dues for 2014 will begin in November, with a deadline of January 31, 2014.

At the same time, we will be polling members as to their preference in receiving our newsletter, The Informer. Do you want to receive it via e-mail (environmentally friendly), or do you prefer having a hard copy mailed to you?

If you want a hard copy mailed to you, you will be asked to donate \$10 for the calendar year to assist in defraying those costs.