

September chapter meeting

At our September Chapter meeting, Dr. Brad Ingrao, Au.D., will help us understand why hearing aids and cochlear implants struggle to process music. He will show us how to accept and grieve the way music used to be for us and teach us how to rebuild music perception and enjoyment within the limitations of your hearing loss and technology.

Dr. Ingrao is an eclectic audiologist with 25 years of diagnostic, dispensing, and teaching experience. He excels at finding solutions for traditionally “difficult” patients—especially those with severe to profound hearing loss. His specialties include: severe to profound hearing loss, Hearing Assistive Technology, cochlear implants, complex diagnoses, teaching, and the integration of audiology clinical practice into computerized data systems.

Dr. Ingrao has been an HLAA member for over two decades, and is a regular columnist for their official journal, Hearing Loss magazine. Locally, he is a member and regular presenter at HLAA chapters across Southern California including Lakewood and Los Angeles, and is the professional advisor to the HLAA-City of Orange chapter.

The parent of an adult Deaf son, Dr. Ingrao is fluent in ASL, and hosts the monthly Long Beach Deaf Coffee Chat, a gathering of ASL users and students.

from the HAT cabinet

Come to the chapter meeting early (we'll start at 6 pm) to see and try examples from HAT's collection of 50+ assistive listening devices. Devices will be on view after the meeting too.

For September—

A versatile alarm clock that can be expanded to alert you to doorbell, phone and more.



Health benefits of listening to music

Excerpted from

<https://accuquest.com/music-can-benefit-hearing-health/>

Research has linked listening to music with several health benefits such as immune system function and lowered stress levels.



However, it might come as a surprise that listening to music can also benefit your hearing health. While it is important to enjoy music at a safe decibel level to avoid noise-induced hearing loss, several studies

have found that music can play a role in processing speech, specifically in regard to those that play music. This is due to the fact that speech and music processing functions overlap in the brain, and playing music can additionally hone other skills such memory and attention. The advantages of musical training have been observed in subjects of all ages, including older adults.

Transferable skills

Practicing music provides humans with the ability to process rapid changes in sound and hones the brain's ability to understand speech in noisy environments. Music differs from speech in regard to sound duration and pitch changes, but music increases the ability to discriminate speech. In older adults, musicianship can help slow or remedy age-related problems with processing speech, particularly in noisy

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CHAPTER CALENDAR

All events and meetings are held at the at Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712

Sep 14 Chapter Meeting, 6:30: Audiologist Dr. Brad Ingrao

Sep 17 Tech Expo 2017, Ken Miller Rec Center, 3330 Civic Center Dr, Torrance 90503

Sep 23 HAT Committee meeting 9–10 am, HAT demo 10:30–12:30, Weingart craft room

We offer 2 different lip reading classes: Mondays 10:00–noon and Wednesdays 9:30–11:30 am.
Fall classes begin on Wednesday Sep. 6 and Monday Sep. 11.



Free admission • Open to the public

Sunday, September 17, 1:00–4:00 pm

Ken Miller Recreation Center, Torrance Cultural Arts Center
3330 Civic Center Drive, Torrance, CA 90503

HLAA SoCal Tech Expo comes to Torrance

We invite HLAA members, people with hearing loss, their families and friends, hearing professionals and anyone interested in hearing loss.

- Learn about the latest products and services for people with hearing loss.
- Meet and network with others with hearing loss.
- Receive a complimentary reusable tote bag stuffed with valuable information and prizes.
- Complimentary refreshments
- Free parking

For more information visit:

www.hearinglossca.org/hearing-loss-tech-expo-2017

About the Hearing Loss Association of America, California State Association (HLAA-CA)

HLAA-CA is the California state association of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), which is the nation's leading organization representing people with hearing loss. Founded in 1989, HLAA-CA provides information, education, support, and advocacy services to Californians with hearing loss, their families, and their friends. HLAA-CA also supports the 16 HLAA California chapters and their members.

EXHIBITORS

Advanced Bionics
California Academy of Audiology
California Telephone Access Program
CapTel Outreach
CaptionCall
Clarity
ClearCaptions
ClearSounds Communications
Cochlear Americas
Connect Hearing
Department of Rehabilitation
Envoy Medical Corporation
General Technologies
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Envoy Medical Corporation
General Technologies
Hamilton Relay
NeoSensory
OTOJOY

Memorial service for
Barbara Bostwick

2 pm, Tuesday, September 26
Grace First Presbyterian Church
3955 N. Studebaker Rd.
Long Beach CA 90808



Ralphs Community Contribution Program

**Help your chapter
whenever you shop at Ralphs**

Register online at www.ralphs.com/account/create
or phone 1-800-443-4438 to call or renew.

When registering, reference number **82259**,
Hearing Loss Assn. LB/Lakewood Chapter.

Thanks for your support!

Better TV sound for those with hearing loss

James K. Willcox, for *Consumer Reports* magazine, August 2016
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Not long ago, a reader wrote to us asking for help with a common problem: Due to hearing loss, she was having a hard time watching television. Even with the volume at maximum level, she couldn't quite make out the dialogue. What could she do?

For me, the issue hit close to home.

In the later years of his life, my dad struggled to understand what was being said on TV shows. When I called or visited him, the TV was often at full blast. And yet, he complained, that really didn't help him follow the on-screen conversations. It simply added another layer of commotion.

"We see this issue quite a bit, especially with our older patients," says Dr. Meredith Scharf of Manhattan Audiological Services in New York. "It's not just volume; it's clarity any time there's a high background level of noise. It can be with speech and conversations, as well as with TV."

These days, the problem is also compounded by a quirk of modern TVs. Unlike old-school "tube" sets, which had deep, wide cabinets, today's super-slim models leave little room for powerful speakers systems. That doesn't mean you must resign yourself to life without your favorite programs, though. Here are a few things that might help improve the TV sound on your set.

Audio Settings

While the thought of playing around with your TV's settings might make you uncomfortable, you should know that almost all models have an option that will return you to the manufacturer's default settings if you're unhappy with the results.

To begin, go into the TV's menu, click the icon or label for Settings, and look for an item labeled Audio or Sound.

Now look for the available pre-sets. Some TVs have a setting specifically designed to enhance dialogue, for example. You might also find a "night" mode, which flattens out the volume, pitting the actors' voices against the show's

sound effects. If you turn it off, you might find it easier to hear what's being said.

Some TVs try to create a surround-sound effect with a more diffuse soundfield. In that case, switching the TV to Stereo or Normal might help. If the set decodes multichannel sound, such as Dolby Digital or DTS, you may be able to boost the volume of the center-channel speaker, which contains dialogue, and then reduce the volume levels of the other speakers.

And if the TV has a "User" mode, it may have an equalizer (EQ) that lets you adjust various frequencies. "Many older adults experience high-frequency sensorineural hearing loss, which can affect the clarity of the program," Scharf explains. "An increase in volume alone will not help." If that's the case, try lowering the bass and lower mid-range and boosting the upper midrange and higher frequencies, where voices are typically found, to compensate. Sometimes there are EQ pre-sets that automatically do the same thing. They're all worth trying.

Wireless Headphones and Headsets

Some TVs are outfitted with two-way Bluetooth, which lets you send the sound straight to a pair of wireless headphones. If your set lacks this feature, you can purchase a system with a transmitter that plugs into your TV and a set of headphones with a built-in receiver. The headphones typically work using infrared (IR) or radio frequencies (RF). Some models, such as Sennheiser's RS 195, have a speech enhancement mode that boosts the dialogue while lowering background noise.

There are also stethoscope-style headphones, called stethosets or TV listeners, designed to enhance TV sound for those with hearing loss. They, too, work by boosting the frequencies common to dialogue. TV Ears is probably the best-known manufacturer, though other companies, including Sennheiser, make stethoset-style systems. These generally use a small base unit with a transmitter you connect to the TV and a pair of horseshoe shaped earphones with a receiver. For homes with more than one person suffering from hearing loss, you can also find TV speakers outfitted with the

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Better TV *(continued from page 3)*

same technology.

Sound Bar Speakers

Sound bar speakers are a great way to improve TV sound and a few claim to have built-in voice enhancement technologies. We do not test those features in our labs, so I can't vouch for their effectiveness, but you may want to give them a try. For example, the Sonos Playbar speaker, a bit pricey at \$700, has a "Speech Enhancement" setting that reportedly boosts the audio frequencies associated with the human voice. Sony's HT-ST7 7.1-channel sound bar speaker and subwoofer combo (\$1,000) has a "voice" button to boost dialogue levels. And we recently learned about a new model from Zvox—the \$250 AccuVoice AV200 TV Speaker—that's designed specifically to improve dialogue intelligibility. According to the company, the AccuVoice feature tries to mimic the function of a hearing aid by isolating voice frequencies and lifting them out of background sounds.

Room Loops

For those who already use a hearing aid, a room loop (also known as an induction loop) is another option. This technology is often deployed in Broadway theaters and movie houses, but it can be set up on a smaller scale in your home. By connecting an amplifier to your TV's audio output and running a wire around the perimeter of the room, you distribute electromagnetic TV signals that can be picked up by a tiny receiver (called a T coil or telephone coil) built into most hearing aids. One benefit to this approach is that multiple listeners can tune in, provided they each have a compatible receiver in their hearing aids. Another plus: You get good reception no matter where you are in the room, so you don't have to worry about moving around.

Closed Captions

One additional remedy, especially for those with significant or total hearing loss, is to turn on the closed caption function in the settings on your TV or cable box and read the dialogue as it scrolls across your screen. My dad found that helpful. My wife and I did, too—when our son was an infant and we wanted to watch TV while he slept.

In fact, a 2006 survey in the United Kingdom revealed that 80 percent of the TV viewers who use closed captions do so for reasons other than hearing loss. It works well, for example, for shows with rapid-fire dialogue or in rooms filled with people shouting about an awards ceremony or a sporting event. We found that it works best for pre-recorded shows, though. When it comes to live programs, transcribing on the fly can often produce comical results.

As we get older, many of us struggle to hear onscreen conversations, especially in movies or TV shows with lots of additional sounds. It's always a good idea to get your hearing checked by an audiologist or other specialist.

Note from the editor: visit a HAT demo to see and try some of the products mentioned in this article!

Benefits of music *(continued from page 1)*

situations. Adults who have played music all their lives therefore have enhanced their ability to process speech. Essentially, playing music exercises the brain and can improve functions that are necessary to understanding speech.

There is some evidence that suggests music-based applications can potentially benefit older adults as well. This is represented by the OPERA hypothesis, which stands for overlap, precision, emotion, repetition, attention—the five tenets many hearing professionals believe are why music can benefit speech skills. Music thereby serves as an exercise regimen for adults looking to preserve their hearing health, provided that it is enjoyed or practiced at a safe volume.

Due to the effect music can have on hearing health, those working with audiologists or hearing health care professionals to better their hearing should mention musical experience. Musicians are potentially more aware of minor changes in hearing due to a decline in musicianship. Hearing aids are often programmed to optimize speech, but these devices can be easily adjusted by a professional to better accommodate music. Most models of the AQ PC9 family of hearing aids, for example, have a live music and cinema setting to optimize listening to music.

Learn ^{How}To Lipread



Free & Fun!

**2 classes
weekly—
Join anytime!**

**Starting
in September!**

Lipreading can help anyone better understand what someone is saying. This skill is especially helpful to the hard-of-hearing, and when used in combination with hearing aids.

Mondays 10:00 a.m. to noon
Fall classes start September 11

Wednesdays 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Fall classes start September 6

Classes are held in the craft room of the Weingart Senior Center.

Hearing Assistive Technology HAT demonstrations moving to Saturdays in fall!

Saturday, Sep. 23
10:30–12:30
Weingart Senior Center

**New day
and time!**

Invite your friends and relatives with hearing loss to come and try out a large variety of devices that can improve their ability to hear better in difficult situations. These devices can be very helpful to people with or without hearing aids and are a lot less expensive.

In addition to our large selection of devices for you to try, Sam Moghadam, Hearing Instrument Specialist from Ascent Hearing Center, will also be present to answer questions about hearing aids.

HAT does not sell hearing aids or hearing assistive devices, but provides information on where to purchase items demonstrated.

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HLAA, Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

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HLAA Hearing Loss Association of America

Join HLAA to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and to become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the U.S.

Send \$35 for individual or \$45 for family membership to:
Hearing Loss Association of America
7910 Woodman Avenue, Suite 1200
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Or join online: www.hearingloss.org/content/join

For more information:
(301) 657-2248 or email inquiry@hearingloss.org.

Membership brochures are available at chapter meetings.

CTAP California Telephone Access Program

For information, repair or exchange:
English Voice 1-800-806-1191
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www.californiaphones.org/about-us

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Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

Hearing Loss Association of America,
Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter
c/o Katie Wright
7802 Kingbee Street
Downey, CA 90242

First Class

Address Service Requested

Upcoming Programs

Sep 14 Audiologist Dr. Brad Ingrao on music after hearing loss

Oct 12 Sam Moghadam on why you should wear hearing aids

Nov 9 Alle Rhames from CapTel

HLAA Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, 6:30-8:00 pm, at the Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712

If you don't like meetings because you can't hear well, our meetings are different!

- We have a high quality sound system
- You can borrow an assistive listening device
- If you have hearing aids with telecoils, we have a hearing induction loop
- If none of these help, we project captions on the wall for you to read.

We provide all these options free so you can understand what is said.



Hearing Loss Association of America

HLAA opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and advocacy.

The national support network includes the national office in Washington D.C., state organizations and local HLAA Chapters.

Join HLAA now

to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the United States.