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Fall 2018

Welcome...

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Hearing Loss Association of America, Michigan State Association (HLAA-MI) E-Newsletter. With this quarterly publication, we hope to keep you up-to-date on our activities and to encourage your participation.

Patty Becker

President's Corner...

by Tony Ferack

Welcome to the first edition of HLAA-MI's new newsletter. This is one of several projects on my wish list. HLAA-MI is active in the state of Michigan but many people, including hearing health care professionals, have not heard of us! The newsletter will help to change this.

I have only been involved with HLAA-MI since 2010, but the organization has been around for a long time. Future newsletters will touch on our roots, our structure, and tell us about our members.

We'll also offer tips for dealing with hearing loss, both as a person with hearing loss and as a communication partner. We rely on communication strategies and technology to function successfully in a hearing world. We educate others on our needs. We present information about hearing loss, advocacy, and technology at HLAA chapters, senior living centers, health

Answer the Survey

There is a new survey to gather information about the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing population groups in Michigan. See the article on page 5, and please participate! - and encourage other hard of hearing people to take part as well!

fairs, audiology conferences, and universities.

We also have relationships with several other organizations that provide services for people with hearing loss. HLAA-MI members serve on the State of Michigan's Division of Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing (DODDBHH) Advisory Council, which is part of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

Our organization visits with members of the Michigan legislature to influence legislation and changes in public policy that will benefit our population. With enough support, we will make a difference.



Update on the Walk for Hearing

by Barbara Quart

The Southeast Michigan Walk4Hearing was

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held on Saturday, May 19, 2018 at Kensington Metropark. It began one hour later than in the past, beginning at 10 am rather than 9 am. Sponsors, attendees, and the committee all appreciated the later start – the temperature was a little warmer and people had more time to get organized and be there.

There were 450 walkers, more than ever before. We had face painters and balloon twisters, a DJ, a bounce house, giveaways with the logo, raffles, and plenty of food and water.

We had a few additions/changes to the walk event this year:

- Starkey donated two hearing aids to AudioNet, our Platinum Sponsor, and these were awarded in a drawing.
- The Call to Action this year was #screenUR hearing. A mobile hearing trailer was brought in by Central Michigan University and audiologists were on site from Michigan Audiology Coalition.
- Our Honorary Business Chair was the President of AudioNet Americas, Colleen Shefferly. A plaque was presented to her as thanks for their Platinum Sponsorship.
- Sponsors and exhibitors were situated all around the walk site to allow for more visibility to walkers and visitors.

We raised a total of \$55,827. Half (50%) of all funds raised go to the National HLAA, 40% go to participating chapters and alliances, and after local expenses are deducted, 10% goes to HLAA-MI. \$13,100 of the funds we raised



Barb Quart and teammates on the Walk

came from sponsors; the remainder from individual contributions.

Save the date for next year's walk to be held on **Saturday May 18, 2019**. It will start at 10 am at Kensington Metropark West Boat Launch. We plan to have a walk planning meeting the first weekend of November to focus on publicity, marketing, and reaching out to current and potential sponsors. Please contact me at barb.quart@hearingloss-mi.org if you are interested in joining our committee.

HLAA-MI Website Receives Prestigious Award

by Liz Kobylak

HLAA-MI was awarded the **2018 State Website Award** during the national convention of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) held in Minneapolis, Minnesota in June, 2018.

Our Webmaster, Janet Haines, was honored with the crystal award pictured below.

The Awards Ceremony was held on Wednesday, June 20th, at the Minneapolis Hyatt Regency. Dave Hutcheson, Editor-in-Chief of *Hearing Life* magazine, presented the award after praising the excellence, dedication and hard work of volunteers who, like Ms. Haines,

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contribute to strengthen the HLAA organization and family.

Janet Haines has been our Webmaster since 1999. She first became involved in the Michigan organization of HLAA in 1998 and has served the organization at the local, state and national levels. She lives in Holland, Michigan and enjoys traveling, time spent with family as well as expressing her talents through beautifully crafted quilting projects.

Please visit the HLAA-MI website at www.hearingloss-mi.org.

National Convention Scholarship Available

by Liz Kobylak

Did you know that HLAA-MI offers a scholarship to the annual HLAA National Convention? This event is accessible via CART (communication access realtime translation) as well as induction loops. The convention also provides educational workshops, an extensive exhibit hall, and a chance to meet people from across the country who are living with hearing loss.

The 2019 National Convention dates are June 20-23. It will be held in Rochester, NY. For updated convention information, please check out the national website at www.hearingloss.org.

The HLAA-MI scholarship covers the following expenses:

- The cost of early bird registration, which includes the full activities package
- Lodging for 4 nights (single/double room)

The scholarship recipient is responsible for all additional expenses, including travel to Rochester, additional meals, and any other expenses including cancellation fees.

Qualifications for applicants are as follows:

- Must be a Hearing Loss Association of America dues paying member
- Must be hard of hearing
- Must live in Michigan

Priority consideration will be given to 1st time attendees.

Following the convention, the scholarship recipient is expected to submit a written report to the HLAA-MI Board of Trustees (BOT), about his or her convention experience, no later than mid-July, 2019. The recipient also agrees to appear at the July or October 2019 BOT meeting to provide a 5 minute presentation about the convention experience.

The scholarship application can be printed from the HLAA-MI website at: <http://www.hearingloss-mi.org/hlaa-convention>. The completed application must be postmarked and mailed to the address provided on the application no later than March 1, 2019.

Ann Liming - an HLAA-MI Heroine



Ann Liming has a long and storied history with our organization. She first learned about HLAA (then SHHH) in 1988, and went to her first national convention in 1989. She came home ready to get the Lansing chapter started, and was its co-founder and first president.

Three years later, she was asked to be co-

coordinator of state activities in Michigan. Together with Howard Potrude from Kalamazoo, Michigan SHHH – now HLAA-MI – was founded.

Ann applied to become a member of the SHHH national Board of Trustees in 1999 and served three 3-year terms. During that time, she served as Secretary and was elected to the office of President in 2000 for a 2-year term.

Ann has a hereditary hearing loss which was diagnosed when she was 28. At 34, she received her first hearing aid. She received a cochlear implant in 2014, and continues to wear a hearing aid in the non-implanted ear.

Professionally, Ann is a nurse with both bachelor's and master's degrees in Health Education from Michigan State University. After working as a Lansing Community College Professor of Nursing for 30 years, she served as a Hard of Hearing Specialist for the State of Michigan Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing, predecessor to the current DODDBHH.

Within HLAA-MI, Ann's most recent activity has been as Chair of the Advocacy Committee, a role in which she has worked countless hours on behalf of our hard of hearing community. She has asked to be relieved of this responsibility in 2019, but she will be very hard to replace.

See below for Ann's description of how to be an effective advocate.

Becoming an Effective Advocate

by Ann Liming

To become an advocate, one need only to search the Internet to learn pointers for effectively advocating for oneself or for the good of a larger population of people. Members of the HLAA-MI Board of Trustees (BOT) often serve on other boards, coalitions or councils. The HLAA-MI BOT has an advocacy committee that advocates for issues that are either legislative or related to general access that benefits the larger community.

Although, as advocates, we often work with people who are Deaf or DeafBlind, we feel that we do not have the knowledge or life experiences to address the needs of other populations. Thus, we limit ourselves to addressing needs/issues affecting people who are hard of hearing.

How can we become effective advocates? First, we need to understand our own hard of hearing identity. If we remove our hearing aids or cochlear implant(s) and have very little useful residual hearing, we may consider ourselves deaf. People in the general population may assume our mode of communication is sign language and believe they are meeting our needs when they provide an interpreter for an event.

HLAA views hearing loss as occurring on a continuum with total deafness on one end, mild hearing loss on the opposite end, and varying degrees of hearing loss in between. A small number of people with residual hearing may choose to identify with Deaf Culture and use sign language. Their choice needs be accepted and respected. However, the vast majority of people who are hard of hearing want to reduce the impact of hearing loss, so that they can more fully participate in the world that is familiar to us.

Second, we need to educate ourselves about the social/emotional/physiological impact of hearing loss, population statistics, hearing assistive technology, etc. We don't need to know all of this before we accept a position on a board, council, etc.; we can learn as we go, but we do need to learn, to question and to become critical thinkers. We need to recognize when people make generalizations or false statements that are readily accepted by people in positions of power, but which negatively impact our population. We must be ready to educate and correct misinformation. If you have an opportunity to serve in some capacity, don't hesitate because you feel inadequate. HLAA-MI has people who will support you and you may find it a rewarding experience!

HLAA-MI Chapters

by Liz Kobylak

The following areas of Michigan have something very special in common: Ann Arbor, Downriver, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Macomb, Royal Oak, Saginaw and Western Wayne County. Each of these communities has an active HLAA-MI chapter.

Each chapter has a personality and dynamic of its own, but they share the common mission of providing information, education, advocacy and support to people living with hearing loss – either their own or that of someone they know. HLAA-MI chapters provide a supportive and comfortable atmosphere and an opportunity to learn and interact with persons sharing common experiences.

The meetings are free. In addition, some chapters provide CART -- Computer Assisted Realtime Translation, sometimes referred to as real-time captioning -- during their meetings. Please check out <http://www.hearingloss-mi.org/chapter/> for a list of HLAA-MI Chapters and consider joining us!

New Survey for Deaf, Deaf/Blind, and Hard of Hearing Community

Not Without Us is a new coordinated research initiative lead by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights' Division on Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing, usually referred to as DODDBHH. The goals are:

- To gather current and accurate information about the Deaf, Deaf/Blind, and Hard of Hearing communities throughout Michigan.
- To understand the needs of people within these communities for the purpose of guid-

ing development of future policies and programs.

- To share and discuss these data with a broad audience.

The survey is being conducted primarily online in both English and American Sign Language (ASL). It is also available to take with assistance at in-person events or by mail when requested.

The link to the survey is <https://notwithoutusmich.org/survey>. Parents may provide the information on behalf of their children. Please do sign on! Encourage anyone you know who is hard of hearing to do so as well!

About HLAA

HLAA-MI is the all-volunteer state organization of the Hearing Loss Association of America, the nation's foremost membership and advocacy organization for people with hearing loss.

If you're not already a member, you can join at the following link: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew>. Membership in the national organization automatically connects you to HLAA-MI.

However, HLAA-MI does not share in your national HLAA dues. Thus, donations to support our work are appreciated. We are a 501(c)3 charitable organization, and your donation is deductible within the limits of the law.

Please make your check payable to HLAA-MI and mail it to:

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