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Upcoming Meetings and Events

Wake Chapter Zoom Meeting: Our Zoom meeting on **Thursday, March 16, at 7 p.m.** will include presentations on a new category of hearing aids and Camp Sertoma, a summer camp for deaf and hard-of-hearing children that the chapter supports with a scholarship.

- Chapter board member **Steve Latus** will present on “**How OTC Hearing Aids Impact Everyone with Hearing Loss.**”
- Audiologist **Geneva Britt**, a Sertoma and HLAA member, will share what makes Camp Sertoma such a memorable and meaningful experience. It’s sure to be an informative and uplifting meeting.



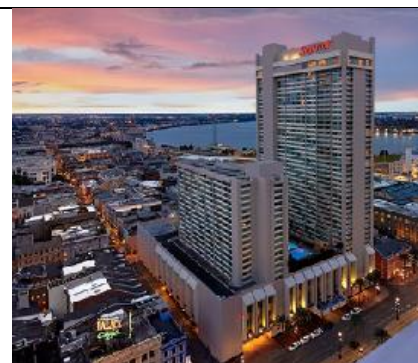
We’ll have time for questions, answers, and discussion about hearing loss after the presentations.

Do plan to attend, and if you have any questions about Zoom meetings, please email steve.barber@earthlink.net

Cary Senior Center Health Fair March 31: Learn more about hearing loss and the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) at the Cary Senior Center Annual Health Fair on March 31. Volunteers from the Wake Chapter will staff a table at the fair, which will run from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Cary Senior Center ballroom. About 50 health and wellness organizations are expected to participate in the free event. The address for the Cary Senior Center is 120 Maury O’Dell Place in Cary.

HLAA National 2023 Convention: The 2023 HLAA national convention will be held June 29 - July 1 in New Orleans. There will be so many great presentations you can choose from that it is often difficult to decide which to attend. The huge vendor area will be filled with companies and non-profits introducing their products and services ... often letting you try them out.

Finally, one of the greatest benefits of the convention is the chance to meet hundreds of others and instantly feel that you are kindred spirits with your shared interests in hearing loss learning and advocacy. Plus, New Orleans is one cool city to visit. See the [HLAA 2023 Convention web page](#) for details and plan your 2023 summer adventure.



Donate No Longer Used Hearing Aids

Many of us with hearing loss have no longer used hearing aids gathering dust in a dresser drawer. They were once our “main” hearing aids and then, perhaps, our “back-ups.” Or we “inherited” hearing aids from a deceased relative.



These devices can be donated to the [Hearing Aid Project](#). This effort, driven by the missions of organizations like [Sertoma](#) and [Hearing Charities of America](#), is making hearing aids available to those who might otherwise go without.

Audiologist Geneva Britt is a local champion of the Hearing Aid Project, using her many area connections to solicit hearing aid donations from audiology practices, retirement centers and even funeral homes.

“The project accepts donations in any condition,” Britt says. “It doesn’t matter if the dog has chewed it up or it’s grandma’s 20-year-old model. Hearing aid accessories like remote controls also are accepted.”

Mail your no longer used hearing aids, batteries, cleaning tools and hearing aid accessories to the following address:

Hearing Aid Project
1912 E. Meyer Blvd.
Kansas City, MO 64132

Donated hearing aids are evaluated and tracked by staff and students in the Department of Speech-Language-Hearing: Sciences & Disorders at the University of Kansas. They determine if an aid is current enough to be reconditioned and redistributed. Aids that don’t pass this initial screen are cannibalized for parts or sold for their salvage value.

“We use the money received for salvaged aids to buy new aids,” says Britt. “Some program participants receive reconditioned aids while others receive new aids.”

Potential aid recipients visiting the [Hearing Aid Project](#) website are encouraged to visit a [resources page](#) to see if they qualify for national and state hearing aid assistance programs.

To qualify for a project aid, an applicant must:

- Have hearing loss diagnosed and documented by a licensed audiologist;
- Have a recommendation for hearing aid(s);
- Have a low income (either with no health insurance or insurance that doesn’t provide any hearing aid coverage); and
- Be a United States resident.

Apply for the program by sending an email to info@hearingcharities.org.

An accepted applicant needs to work with an audiologist to get fitted for their hearing aid(s). “We encourage audiologists to dispense our aids,” says Britt. “We ask them to provide an applicant with three visits at no cost. These visits could include a hearing test, a hearing aid fitting, and a post-fitting follow-up.”

HLAA Wake Chapter will encourage members to bring no longer used hearing aids and accessories to our next live event and the chapter will forward them to the Hearing Aid Project.

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Promoting Better Hearing in Worship Services

Many places of worship provide assistive listening devices such as FM receivers, neck loops and headphones that enable worshippers to better comprehend amplified audio presented during a service.

However, getting people to use these devices – which can benefit worshippers with or without hearing loss – is often challenging.

HCAA Wake Chapter members Janet McGettrick and Susan Monroe have mounted an effort at their church, Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian in Cary, to promote the availability of the facility's assistive listening devices.

In addition to increasing the visibility of the devices, the church has created a video explaining how to use them. A portion of the video also provides tips for effectively communicating with people with hearing loss.



Titled “Suzy’s Monday Moment,” the video is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVb0CWLwX0I>. If you need captions, click on the CC in the video.

Application Deadline Approaching for Chapter Scholarship Program

The application deadline for the Hearing Loss Association of America (HCAA) Wake Chapter Scholarship Program is Friday, March 31.

The program, in its fourth year, provides \$500 scholarships for one or more college-bound students with hearing loss from Wake County.

Applications are open to high school seniors who reside in Wake County and are seeking acceptance at an accredited university, college or community college. They also must have a moderate hearing loss or more and wear a hearing aid or cochlear implant. Financial need is not a consideration. The \$500 scholarship is a one-time award and will be sent to the recipient when s/he begins classes.

Refer a potential applicant to the [HCAA Wake Chapter Web Site](http://www.nchearingloss.org/wake.htm) at www.nchearingloss.org/wake.htm or to these two forms:

- [Scholarship Application Form](#)
- [Scholarship Reference Letter Form](#)

The scholarship program is made possible by the generous support of participants in the North Carolina Walk4Hearing, a hearing health awareness and fundraising event conducted by the Hearing Loss Association of America.

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Tech Focus: Types of Hearing Loss

For us to hear, sound waves in the air must be detected, amplified, and transmitted to the cochlea where they're turned into nerve signals sent to the brain. But it's really the brain that translates those signals into recognizable sounds: words, music, and unfortunately, noise. To understand the types of hearing loss, we must understand how sound in the air gets converted into the perception of sound in the brain. That magic occurs in three distinct areas:

The Middle Ear: The detection is done by the ear drum. The ear drum is a small membrane at the end of the ear canal. The sound waves are focused down the ear canal by the pinna (the visible part of your ear). The sound waves cause the ear drum to vibrate.

The Inner Ear: The vibrating ear drum causes the ossicles (the smallest bones in your body) to not only mechanically amplify the vibrations but transmit the vibrations to the oval window of the cochlea. The ossicles are often referred to as the "hammer, anvil and stirrup".

The amplified vibrations of the oval window set up waves in the fluid in the cochlea and stimulate the hair cells (they are not really "hair" but cilia) that line the inner parts of the cochlea.

Some hair cells further amplify the vibrations. At the base of other hair cells is a nerve cell that translates the vibrations into nerve signals that then travel up the nerve fibers in the auditory nerve to the brain.

The Auditory Processing of the Brain: The nerve signals delivered by the auditory nerve are processed by parts of the brain that cause us to perceive sounds.

Each of these areas that detect, amplify/transmit, and process sound are directly related to the types of hearing loss that most people encounter.

Conductive Hearing Loss: Failure to detect and deliver sounds effectively or at all to the cochlea is called a conductive loss. It can be caused by a problem with the ear drum or the ossicles. Damage to the ossicles, often caused by calcification of or damage to those tiny bones, prevents them from amplifying and transmitting the vibrations to the cochlea. But a conductive loss can also be caused by a damaged ear drum or fluid behind the ear drum that interferes with the ossicles' movement. Conductive losses typically affect all frequencies more or less at similar loss levels. Conductive hearing loss typically accounts for a small percentage (maybe 10-15%) of hearing problems.

Sensorineural Hearing Loss: Failure to translate the wave patterns in the cochlea to nerve signals or failure to transmit the signals to the brain effectively or at all is called a sensorineural hearing loss. It's the most common cause of hearing loss. In most cases, the hair cells in the cochlea have become damaged or otherwise unable to do their job. A sensorineural loss usually results in more loss in some frequencies than in other frequencies. The frequencies with the most losses can be low, middle, or high, but the most common sensorineural losses are high frequency losses. The name "sensorineural" implies and is often called "nerve deafness," but the auditory nerve itself is usually not the problem; it's almost always the hair cells that are the problem.

Auditory Processing Loss, or Auditory Neuropathy: Sometimes hearing loss is not caused by the middle ear or the inner ear but by a problem with the brain's processing of the signals sent by the auditory nerve. People with auditory processing problems may pass a hearing test but can still have difficulty understanding speech.

If you have a hearing loss, it's important to understand which type of loss you have, because choosing the right treatment or hearing device depends on the type of your loss. Some losses are caused entirely by one type, but it's possible that a combination of two or more loss types can occur. Your audiologist can measure your hearing and determine which solution can best help in your case.

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January Social

HLAA Wake Chapter held our first live social in quite a while in January. Janet McGettrick arranged for us to have a nice large room at her church and about 24 members attended. Following introductions and announcements, the chapter provided a light lunch. There was time to get to know each other and share questions and discussions about hearing loss. It was great to see so many members again in person.

Job Opening: Hard of Hearing Services Specialist

If you, or someone you know, might be interested in and qualified to be a Hard of Hearing Specialist in Greensboro, please [check out this DSDHH job offering](#). This job offering closes on 7 April, so act quickly if you are interested.

HLAA Wake Chapter Contacts

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