

**Wake
Chapter
Newsletter
Jan 2023**

Websites: [Wake Chapter](#)

[HLAA-NC](#) [HLAA National](#)

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Upcoming Meetings and Events

Wake Chapter Social

When: January 14th from 11:30 to 1:30

Where: Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church
200 High Meadow Dr., Cary

What: The chapter will provide a light lunch, beverages, and a short program. We'll have plenty of time to catch up with old friends and make new friends.

Spouses and significant others welcome.

RSVP to jmcgettrick106@gmail.com



A PREVIOUS SOCIAL

Note: See the [Open Captioned Movie Showing Article](#) in this Newsletter, if you're interested in attending the 3D Open Captioned showing of Avatar at the Raleigh Marbles theater. There should be enough time to get there after our Wake Chapter Social.

HLAA National 2023 Convention: The 2023 HLAA national convention will be held 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.



Catching Up with the 2022 Wake Chapter Scholarship Recipients

Members of our most recent “class” of Wake Chapter scholarship recipients are adjusting well to college life. Below are brief updates from our 2022 recipients – Cierra Groves of Holly Springs (Apex Friendship High School), Sarah Hupp of Wake Forest (Heritage High School) and Lauren McClure of Raleigh (Raleigh Charter High School).

Cierra Groves

Hearing loss in Cierra’s right ear was confirmed at the age of four and she experienced sudden hearing loss in her left ear as a high school sophomore. She now uses two hearing aids.

A political science major at Florida State University, Cierra is interested in eventually going to law school.

“My first semester went great and is reshaping my education in a very motivating way. I’m incredibly excited for what future classes will hold! In terms of hearing, there are many resources available should I need them, but I have found that all my teachers in big lecture classes use microphones, which is very helpful.



Sarah Hupp

Sarah’s bilateral sensorineural hearing loss was detected at birth, and she began wearing hearing aids at the age of one.

A psychology major with a minor in child development, Sarah attends the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

“My first semester was good! College is definitely different from high school from a hearing perspective. Being in large lecture halls with over 300 students can make it quite difficult to catch things. Advocating for myself is a different conversation with my professors than it was in high school as they may not know me as well as a person and student. Overall, though, I’m grateful for the disability services office at Charlotte and all the things they have helped me with!”



Lauren McClure

Born with bilateral hearing loss due to a genetic defect, Lauren has worn hearing aids since the age of three.

She is attending the honors college at the University of South Carolina, where she’s an international business finance major with a Spanish minor.

“USC has been great so far! My first semester classes were good, and I’ve made some close friends. From a hearing standpoint it’s been pretty similar to high school. I was able to get the accommodations that I needed. They can’t guarantee that I get front row seating, but I made it to each class early enough to be able to sit in the front. None of my classes were bigger than 25 students so, luckily, I never had trouble hearing the teacher.”



We are now accepting applications for 2023 Wake Chapter college scholarships. To learn more, see the [article in this newsletter](#) or our [Wake Chapter website](#).

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*Learn More About Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids

American adults now have more choices in hearing aids. In October, over the counter (OTC) hearing aids became available in the United States for people ages 18-and-older who perceive they have mild to moderate hearing loss. These aids, often priced lower than traditional prescription hearing aids, may be purchased at a variety of stores or online without seeing a doctor or hearing care professional first.



If you or a family member or friend want to learn more about OTC hearing aids, here are some valuable sources of information (listed alphabetically).

The [AARP](#) website includes a comprehensive feature on [How to Shop for an Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid](#). It includes advice on determining if an OTC hearing aid is right for you, provides cost information and encourages you to get a hearing test before shopping.

[AgingInPlace.org](#) is a website devoted “to make it easier, more affordable, and more fun to age at home.” A section of the site devoted to [Hearing Aid Basics](#) includes explanations of how hearing aids work in general, types of aids and key features. From this section you can click on links providing product reviews of specific brands of OTC and prescription hearing aids. Aging In Place acknowledges that it works as an affiliate partner with some companies mentioned on its site but claims that “These partnerships or the commission we may earn do not affect our opinions or evaluations of the products we mention.”

The [Consumer Reports](#) website includes articles on [How to Tell If Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids Are Right for You](#) and [Key Questions to Ask When Shopping for Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids](#). The first article outlines common signs of mild to moderate hearing loss and focuses on hearing test options. The second article discusses features to consider on OTC hearing aids, as well as company return policies and what to expect in terms of customer service and support.

The [Hearing Loss Association of America](#) has created an [OTC Tip Sheet](#) and an [OTC Shopping Checklist](#) in easy-to-print one-page formats.

The [National Council on Aging](#), the oldest national organization focused on older adults, includes an article on its website titled [Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids: What Does the FDA Rule Mean for Older Adults?](#) This article focuses on the safety of OTC hearing aids and includes a link to product reviews conducted by an independent third party.

Open Captioned Movie Showing this January

The Marbles theater in downtown Raleigh will present an open caption IMAX 3D screening of the new Avatar movie, "The Way of Water," on Saturday, January 14, at 2 p.m. You can order tickets at www.marblesimax.org. The Marbles IMAX theater is located at 201 E. Hargett St. in downtown Raleigh.

Unlike closed captions open captions are shown on the screen for everyone to see. Now that movies are digital, all the theater needs to do to show a movie as open captioned, is turn on the open captions in its projection equipment.



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Tech Focus: How Can I Use My Telecoil?

The first answer most people come up with for that question is “in a looped facility.” That’s one answer but it isn’t the whole answer. Sure, you can really benefit from using your telecoils in a looped facility, but there are many facilities that aren’t looped. So what good are telecoils if you’re not in a looped facility? In this article, we’ll explain all the ways that your telecoils can help you hear better ... sometimes in ways that even the latest technology can’t help.

Hearing on Telephones: You might not know that that was the original intent of telecoils. Back in the 1940s when telecoils were first introduced, telephone earpieces had a speaker driven by a strong electromagnet. That generated an electromagnetic signal that represented the sound of the incoming call. That signal could be sensed by a telecoil in a hearing aid, and that signal could be input to the aid’s amplifier. It bypassed the poor quality of the speakers and allowed you to hear the phone better.

Today, many hearing aids and cochlear implants can stream their own paired smartphone audio directly to their aids via Bluetooth, but often you might want to hear a phone that isn’t (or can’t be) paired. That might be your spouse’s smartphone, a landline phone or a work phone that doesn’t support Bluetooth. In those situations, there are two ways you can use telecoils:

1. You can simply hold the phone to your ear with your aid in telecoil mode. Almost all phones’ earpieces today emit an electromagnetic signal that the telecoil can input to your aid. Some early cellphones didn’t use a magnet to drive the speaker in their earpiece, but new regulations and new ways to generate the required signal now mean all phones emit the required electromagnetic signal.
2. Some desk and work phones have a 3.5 mm headphone jack, but many do not. But you can buy a “telephone recorder control” that patches into the wire between the phone and the handset, providing a 3.5 mm jack you can then plug in a neckloop. A neckloop is a personal “loop,” worn as a necklace, that transmits a signal to the telecoil in your hearing aid or cochlear implant. If you have Bluetooth that’s compatible, you can alternatively plug in a Bluetooth adaptor and stream via Bluetooth, but a neckloop can be a good option, even if you have a Bluetooth compatible hearing device.



Hearing in Facilities that Offer Assistive Listening Receivers: Today, many facilities, like churches, movie theaters and performing arts centers are not looped, but offer instead FM (and sometimes infrared receivers). Typically, they will loan you a receiver and a headphone (or sometimes a neckloop) that their transmitters will send the audio of their program to. Using their loaned headphones or neckloop (or your own neckloop if you prefer) plugged into their receiver allows you to hear the broadcast audio much more clearly using telecoils in your hearing aids or CIs. Neckloops are preferable if you have telecoils, but the headphones are also usually telecoil compatible, and may provide an option if a neckloop isn’t available.

Loops and Other Resources: Although most facilities are not looped, there are lots of exceptions ... mainly some churches, live theaters, and occasional meeting rooms. Movie theaters are generally not looped. You can find looped facilities at www.loopfinder.com. Most HLAA local chapter meetings are looped, so all attendees with telecoils can hear the meeting clearly. It’s usually a portable loop temporarily installed around the room, but in small venues it works just fine. If you’re even moderately technical, you can install a loop that lets you hear your TV at home. You may find a few banks, pharmacies or grocery store checkout facilities with a “counter” loop that transmits to the telecoils of anyone standing in front of the counter. Some automated bank teller machines also broadcast an electromagnetic signal that your telecoils can hear.

Don’t let anyone tell you that telecoils are “old” and you don’t need them. It’s true that newer technology sometimes is better, but it’s also true that there are hearing challenges that even the latest technology can’t solve as well as telecoils. Maybe in the future newer technologies will be able to compete with telecoils, but it could be years before such solutions are widespread. Ask for telecoils in your next hearing devices and learn how to use them.

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2023 Wake Chapter Scholarship Application Forms Available

Application forms for the 2023 Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Wake Chapter Scholarship are now available. Submissions will be accepted from January through March, and one or more recipients will be announced in May.

Applicants must reside in Wake County and be 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.

Wake Chapter has provided scholarship application forms to high schools across the county. If you know potential applicants, refer them to the HLAA Wake Chapter website 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 HLAA each October. The chapter has awarded scholarships to eight students since the inception of the program in 2020.

Did You Know: Google Maps Now Has Looped Facility Information

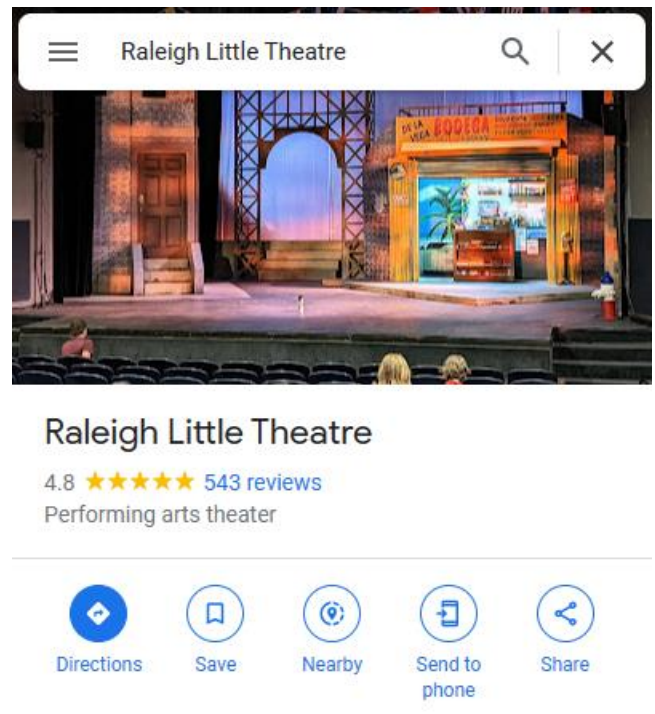
Google Maps searches (on either www.googlemaps.com or on the Google Maps app on your smartphone or tablet), now provide accessibility information about the facility, including whether a specific facility has an audio loop.

The image at the right shows part of the Google Maps results. The actual Google Maps results will also show you where the Raleigh Little Theatre is located.) If you click on the > symbol at the bottom right of that image (see the red circle at the right), you will see accessibility information about the facility.

Of course, there are other ways to find looped facilities like www.loopfinder.com, which help you find looped facilities in your area. There's also a LoopFinder app available for iPhone, iPad and iTouch devices. LoopFinder will provide information about libraries, museums, universities, healthcare, theaters, hearing professionals, houses of worship, movies and other facility types. Often the information is not verified, but LoopFinder offers contact information that might help.

While this is useful information, it's wise to contact the facility and confirm the availability of a functional loop.

But if you already know which facility you're interested in, using Google Maps search option and the > link can help you determine whether the facility is looped. For more information on Google Maps now providing looped facility data, see [Stephen O. Frazier's article](#) at Hearing Health Foundation.



Long-standing community theater offers multiple annual productions plus drama classes for all ages. [>](#)

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