



Wake Chapter Newsletter

Nov 2023

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[Next Meeting: New Age Dawning for TV Captions?](#)

Captions are invaluable for many television viewers with hearing loss (as well as for countless other TV viewers!). While TV captioning has improved dramatically since it was introduced on *The French Chef* in the early 1970s, it is still far from flawless, especially on live programs.

Join the HLAA Wake Chapter on Wednesday, November 15, for a look at the past, present and promising future of TV captioning in a program meeting that you can attend in person or remotely via Zoom.

The program will begin at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church, 200 High Meadow Dr. in Cary. In-person participants are invited to arrive at the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. for social time and snacks.



Our guest speaker will be Pete Sockett, Director of Engineering and Operations for Capitol Broadcasting Company, the owner of four North Carolina television stations, including Raleigh-based WRAL. Pete's career in TV engineering spans 30 years – more than half of the lifespan of TV captioning. Following his presentation, Pete will take questions from the in-person and Zoom audiences.

The Fellowship Hall is equipped with a hearing loop that provides telecoil-equipped hearing aid or cochlear implant users with an enhanced listening experience. For people wishing to participate remotely, a Zoom link will be provided in an email a few days prior to the meeting to everyone on this newsletter's distribution list. If you aren't on the list, request the link with an email to Steve Barber (steve.barber@earthlink.net). Captions will be provided for both the in-person and Zoom audiences.

[Scroll to see more Upcoming Meetings and Events](#)

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[Future Meetings and Events: Save the Date](#)

The HLAA Wake Chapter plans to hold a lunch social on **Saturday, January 13, 2024**, in the Fellowship Hall at [Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church](#) in Cary. More details will be provided in the December newsletter and on the [Wake Chapter Facebook page](#).

[Learning More About Hearing Assistance Dogs](#)

HLAA Wake Chapter members Joyce Adler and Steve Latus attended a recent event in Chapel Hill conducted by [Dogs for Better Lives](#), a nonprofit that provides hearing, autism, and facility assistance dogs.

They met the chair of the organization's board, Dr. Danielle Rose, and other supporters of the organization. The star of the event, however, was Dr. Rose's assistance dog, Delight. A black Labrador, Delight demonstrated how she assists Dr. Rose, who uses two cochlear implants. Upon hearing a door knock, Delight tapped Dr. Rose's leg with her nose and led her to the door that was being knocked.

Dogs for Better Lives has training campuses in Oregon and Massachusetts and is looking to develop another location in the southeast.



Extensive information about hearing assistance dogs is available in a recent HLAA website article titled [National Service Dog Month: Spotlight on Hearing Dogs](#).

[DSDHH Fall Newsletter](#)

The Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing ([DSDHH](#)) [Fall newsletter](#) may be of interest to HLAA members. Their Fall newsletter includes articles about October being "National Protect Your Hearing & Audiology Awareness Month", and another article about "How More Veterans Can Thrive with Hearing Loss". It also includes information on how to subscribe to their newsletter.



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Travel Tips Cover Lots of Ground – and Air as Well!



Casey Tischner from the Raleigh-Durham International Airport Guest Experience Team speaks during the Wake Chapter's first-ever "hybrid" program meeting. The screen behind Tischner displays his presentation and other video as seen by the remote Zoom audience, as well as live captions. In-person attendees with telecoil-equipped hearing devices benefited from the meeting room's hearing loop.

About 30 people participated in the Wake Chapter's first-ever "hybrid" program meeting in September. The topic: "Tips for Safer and Less-Stressful Travel." The audience was evenly split between in-person attendees in the Fellowship Hall at Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church in Cary and remote participants using Zoom.

Casey Tischner from the Raleigh-Durham International Airport Guest Experience Team explained how his group assists airport guests, including those with hearing loss. He also discussed special services available through the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower, a program that RDU and other airports offer for travelers with numerous types of disabilities.

A discussion of further air travel tips – as well as general, car and hotel travel tips, was led by Wake Chapter board member Steve Latus. Below are links to the program's two presentations:

- [Travel Tips – RDU Guest Experience Team](#)
- [Tips for Safer and Less-Stressful Travel](#)

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[Thanks for Supporting the 2023 NC Walk4Hearing](#)

Thanks to all the walkers, donors and volunteers who made the 2023 Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) North Carolina Walk4Hearing a success.

Held at WakeMed Soccer Park in Cary on a sunny and mild October Sunday, the annual awareness and fundraising event attracted about 300 registered walkers, as well as hearing-related businesses and organizations and several special guests.

To date, the 2023 NC Walk4Hearing has raised about \$41,000, including \$3,300 from the Wake Chapter Team. If you've yet to support the walk and the chapter team, you have until December 15 to donate at https://www.walk4hearing.org/site/TR?fr_id=2838. Money raised through the walk supports groups that provide essential resources and educational programs for people with hearing loss in North Carolina and beyond. It is the primary source of funding for the Wake Chapter.

Among those attending the event were HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley and HLAA Board Member Ira Rubenstein. The master of ceremonies was John Clark, co-anchor of ABC11 (WTVD) Eyewitness News morning newscasts. On hand to greet walk participants were Stormy, the Ice Hog, the mascot for the Carolina Hurricanes hockey team, and RJ (Rameses Junior), a ram mascot for the University of North Carolina.

[Visit the Wake Chapter Facebook page](#) for more photos.



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[Walk4Hearing Raffle: And the Winner Is...](#)

Everybody leaves the annual North Carolina Walk4Hearing as a winner, but only one participant in the 2023 event left with a handmade quilt incorporating imagery from previous walks.

Wake Chapter member Joyce Adler, a long-time volunteer and participant in the event, won the quilt, one of the feature items in this year's Walk4Hearing raffle.

For a full recap on the 2023 Walk4Hearing, go to [Page 4](#).



[Over the Counter Hearing Aids Webinar](#)

On November 1, HLAA is presenting the first of four online events in its (click on the following link to register) [OTC 101 – Ask the Experts Webinar Series](#). During these one-hour Zoom events, industry and government professionals will share their expertise, clear up confusion, and answer your questions.

A promotional banner for a webinar. The background is dark purple with a bokeh effect of light circles. On the left, the text reads: "HEARINGU HLAA Webinars for Better Hearing", "OTC 101", "ASK THE EXPERTS WEBINAR SERIES", "Are over-the-counter hearing aids for you?", "Learn about a new class of hearing aids available directly to consumers.", and "WEDNESDAY | NOVEMBER 1, 2023 | 2-3 P.M. ET". On the right, there is a circular inset image showing a hand holding a white, behind-the-ear hearing aid device with a thin wire and a small earpiece.

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Tech Focus: Cochlear Implant Surgery

Cochlear implant (CI) surgery is a procedure to implant a device that can provide hearing for individuals with severe hearing loss or deafness. It's not a hearing aid; it inserts electronic signals representing sound directly into the cochlea. This Tech Focus introduces the surgery, recovery, activation, and rehabilitation.

1. **Before the Surgery:** You will be asked to choose one of the three cochlear implant brands, and several compatible accessories, including batteries, remote microphones, TV transmitters, and other options. Each brand has different internal devices, and accessories that are not compatible with other brands. There are two basic styles of external processors to choose from: a behind the ear model that has a separate coil that attaches by a magnet to the internal device and an off the ear model. Different clinics may provide patients with one or two processors for each implanted side. If you qualify and if your surgeon agrees, it may be possible to implant both ears in a single surgery, but the most common procedure is one side at a time.

2. **Anesthesia:** You'll be given general anesthesia, so you'll be unconscious during the procedure and won't feel any pain.

3. **Incision:** A small incision is made behind the ear. Surgeries done a few years ago used to require an incision of several inches, but most surgeons now use a very small incision right behind the ear and don't require much or any hair to be shaved. The skin behind the ear is gently lifted and the surgeon will create a shallow area under the skin on the outside of the mastoid bone, where the internal part of the implant is placed. A thin channel in the mastoid bone will be carved into the outside of the mastoid bone leading to the cochlea.

4. **Placement of the Implanted Part:** The surgeon will carefully place the internal part in the shallowed-out area of the mastoid bone just under the skin behind the ear, and then insert the implant electrodes into the cochlea, which is a snail-shaped structure in the inner ear responsible for hearing. The image at the right shows the implanted part. It's very thin and has two wires: the short wire is a ground wire and a longer electrode array that's curled at the end to conform to the shape of the cochlea upon insertion. The small circle is a little magnet that your external processor will use to transmit the signals representing sounds through your skin to the internal part. The electrodes can electrically stimulate nerve cells in the cochlea, which will then cause nerve signals representing sound to be sent up the auditory nerve to the brain. It's the brain that perceives the sound.



IMPLANTED PART

5. **Closing the Incision:** The incisions are usually closed with sutures, and the surgery site is typically covered with a bandage.

6. **Recovery:** The surgery is usually done in a hospital, but most people can go home the same day. After the surgery, you'll need some time to recover and may experience mild discomfort or swelling. You should arrange for someone to drive you home, and plan to take it easy for a few days. You'll be given instructions for post-operative care and pain medicines, in case you need them, but many can manage pain with just acetaminophen. Typically, you'll just let the bandage come off on its own, and the sutures will either disappear or the surgeon will remove them. There's usually a short time that you should wait before getting the incision wet, and some limits on how much weight you can lift during recovery.

7. **Activation:** About 2-6 weeks after surgery, the external speech processor is fitted by your audiologist, and the device is activated, and each electrode is "mapped" to provide the right amount of stimulation to nearby nerve cells for any volume of sound. This is the first time you may hear sound from the cochlear implant.

8. **Rehabilitation:** Rehabilitation and auditory training are essential to adapt to the new way of hearing with the cochlear implant. Your brain will need time to learn or relearn how to perceive the sounds it hasn't heard for a while (or ever). You may initially just hear "bells and whistles", robotic speech, or chipmunk-like sounds, but it will get better as your brain figures it out. Music may take longer. No one can predict how long it will take for your brain to make things sound more like they should. It may never be perfect, but your hearing is very likely to be amazingly better than it was when you qualified.

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[Connect with the Wake Chapter Facebook Group](#)

Wake Chapter has a Facebook page where members can post or share interesting information about hearing loss or about our chapter. It's a great place to stay connected with timely information between newsletters. You can join at [THIS LINK](#).



HLAA Wake Chapter

 Public group · 53 members

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