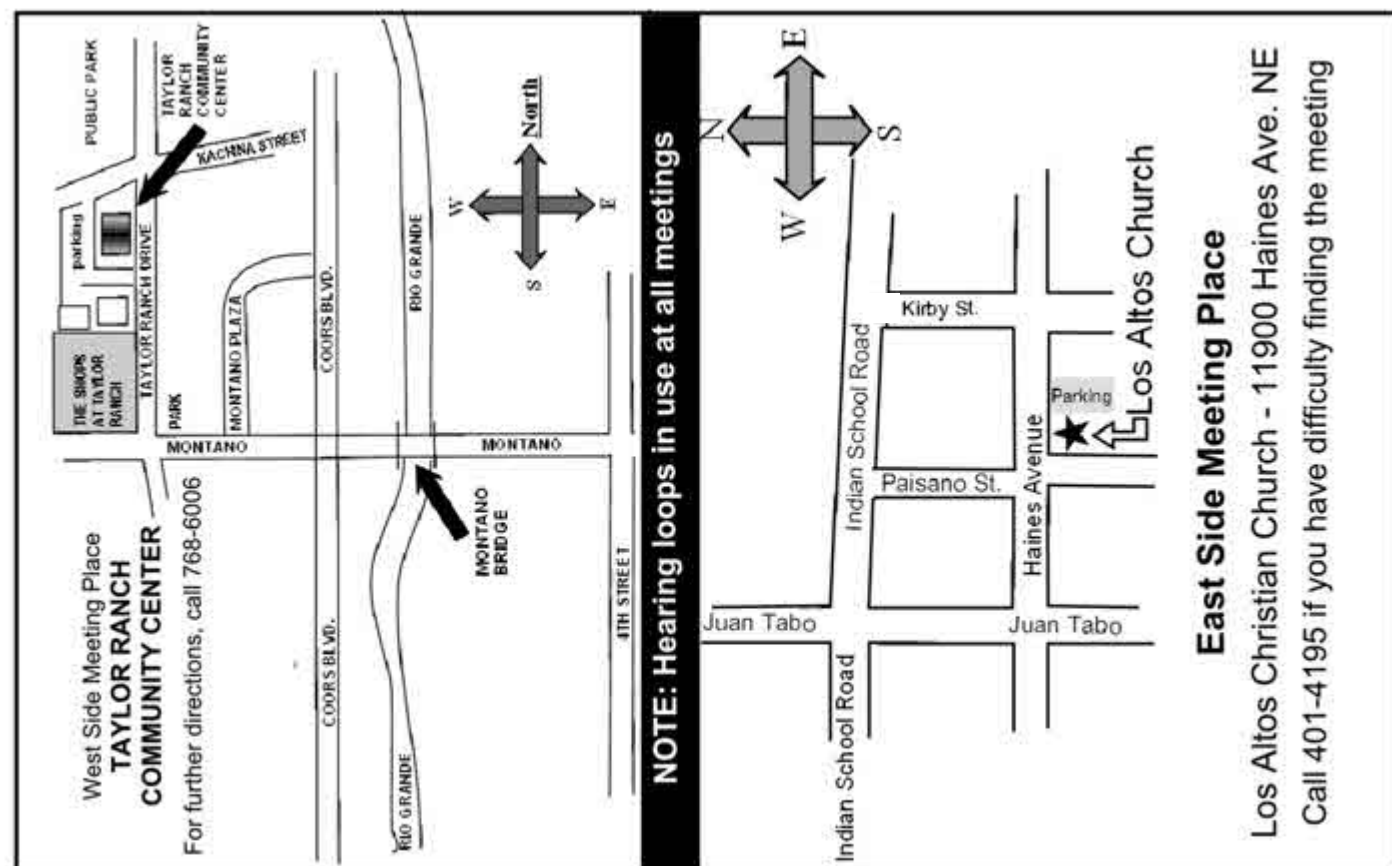


ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #515  
Albuquerque, NM



Come join in the fun at the  
**Annual Holiday Pot Luck and Social**



The newsletter of the award winning Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque

# WIRED FOR SOUND

Vol. 22, No. 4 December, 2010

Photo: Marble Street Studio



## CONTENTS

- Holiday tips for the HoH Page 2
- National/Chapter HLAA news Page 3
- Buying hearing aids - reading your audiogram Page 4
- Loop NM report Looped churches Page 5
- Hearing loss and marriage Cl to treat Meniere's Page 6

### FUTURE MEETINGS

Helping your significant other and yourself with hearing loss  
Sat. January 15 @ 10:00  
Combined East/West meeting at Los Altos church



## Holiday social on East Side

*A Holiday tradition with great food, fun and fellowship*

It's time for the annual Holiday Pot Luck Lunch and Social that will end with the traditional white elephant gift exchange

**There will be no separate West Side meeting this month**

Everyone is invited to this East Side social - members, their families and friends - and asked to bring a favorite covered dish, salad or dessert. If you're looking for ideas of what to bring, call Rosemarie Rodriguez - 843-6973 or JoAnn Herreid - 881-4572 or email JoAnn at jahered@aol.com to find out what might be needed. Plates, utensils and beverages will be provided by the chapter.

**Come join in the fun.....**



Nobody has ever left past Holiday Socials hungry - the variety of casseroles, fried chicken, tamales, beans, slaws and salads, home made cookies, cakes and pies and more insures that all can indulge in some favorite foods while visiting with their special hard of hearing friends and family

**WHEN: Saturday, December 11 @ 11:30 a.m.**

**NOTE SPECIAL TIME** 

**WHERE: Los Altos Christian Church - 11900 Haines Ave. NE**  
See map on the back page of this newsletter to find meeting hall

## White Elephant Gift Exchange:

As part of the Holiday Social, there will be what has become a traditional White Elephant Gift Exchange after the meal. Anyone who wants to participate in the gift exchange should bring a wrapped gift (\$5.00 limit) with their name on it to the December meeting. You can bring something weird from home or a purchased gift.

Everyone will grab their gift and get into a large circle. When the lights flash, you pass the gift to the next person to your right, continuously until the lights flash again, then we stop.

Whatever gift you have in your hands is what you get. You can get with the individual that you received the gift from to say "thanks" and compare gifts and we can show each other the "surprise" gift that we received.



**HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF ALBUQUERQUE**  
 Providing support and advocacy for people with hearing loss

P.O. Box 36792 • Albuquerque, NM 87176  
 (505) 881-8824 or HLAAbq@juno.com  
 www.HLAAbq.com

President - VACANT

Wally Sedden - Acting VP for Programs  
 hwsedded@msn.com - (505) 299-8159

Steve Frazier - Acting VP for Publicity  
 hlaabq@juno.com - (505) 401-4195

Bobbi Rodriguez - Acting Sec./ Treas.  
 Losrodz1984@earthlink.net - (505) 858-4444

Rosemarie Rodriguez - Hospitality  
 (505) 843-6973

Tom Mathers - Acting Membership Chair  
 Tkmathers@juno.com - (505) 899-0906

Karen Twohig - East Side Chair  
 jktwohig@juno.com - (505) \*884-4715#

Norm Dawson - Immediate Past President  
 drnorm@gmail.com - (505) 897-3773

Carol Clifford, Au.D. - Director  
 cclifford@abqhearing.com - (505) 890-0003

Mike Grato, H.I.S. - Director  
 HearingsolutionsRR@yahoo.com - (505) 688-4019

\*CapTel number - dial toll free: 1-877-243-2823  
 then, at the prompt, dial this number including the #

**NEWSLETTER & WEB SITE**  
 Steve Frazier - Editor, Webmaster  
 Karl & Della Lee, Newsletter Delivery Expeditors

The Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque is affiliated with the



Funds for CART services at HLAAbq meetings are provided by

**The State of New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons**

whose mission is to provide effective leadership, education, advocacy and programs to reduce barriers to the social, economic, educational, cultural and intellectual well-being of Deaf and Hard of Hearing New Mexicans and their families, friends and colleagues.

**B.J. Wood, Executive Director**  
 (505) 881-8824



## Some Tips for Holiday Celebrations

**1. Realize that large social groups, especially around a large dining room table, are one of the most difficult environments for a person with a hearing loss.**

Be kind to yourself. Focus on the positive things that you can do, and not on the negatives of what you have difficulty doing. Think the glass is half full, not half empty.

**2. It's easier to talk with people one-on-one in a quiet environment than in a noisy living room. So:**

- Find a favorite friend or relative, and move the conversation into a quiet room, or a quieter corner. Or play a game or read a story to a child, if that's an option.
- Help out in the kitchen where there are usually less people gathered. And if you help with some preparations, you'll be doing something besides trying to hear.

**3. When sitting down to dinner, make sure you choose a seat that is best for you! Here are some seating suggestions:**

- If you have a "better side," seat yourself so that most people are on that side.
- Seat yourself next to a person you usually have the least difficulty hearing or lipreading (avoid those folks with bushy mustaches and beards!)
- Seat yourself next to someone who usually has the patience to clue you in on what the conversation is about, or the punch lines you'll miss.
- Try not to seat yourself facing a window because the glare could make it difficult to see people's faces.
- Ask your host to turn off any background music during dinner. And if a football game is blaring from a TV, turn it off or if that's not an option, set it on mute.
- Remember to be assertive about your needs! Pleasant, polite, but assertive!

**4. Conversation tips:**

- It's inevitable that you will not be able to hear the conversation with many people talking and laughing at once. Content yourself with speaking with the people on either side of you.
- If you start a conversation, then you'll know what the topic is, so it will be easier to follow.
- If you miss something, try to ask only for the part you missed, instead of just saying "what?"
- Expect that there will be jokes that you will not hear, so you will find yourself sitting at a table where everyone is laughing except you. Stay calm—you have a few options:
  - ask the person next to you to tell you what was so funny
  - ask the person next to you to remember what was so funny so they can tell you later.
  - say "excuse me" to everyone at the table, and ask for the joke to be repeated so you can get it too. Remember that if you do this with a pleasant attitude, then people will usually want to help you out.

**5. After-dinner strategies:**

- Volunteer to help out in the kitchen to get yourself away from that dining table with all the conversations and jokes you're having trouble following. **Do not** offer to wash the dishes! This will put your back to everyone in the kitchen and you won't be able to lipread. Offer to dry the dishes or put food away. Or just keep everyone company.

Author: *Arlene Romoff* - author of the book *Hear Again: Back to Life with a Cochlear Implant (League for the Hard of Hearing Publications, NYC)* and president of the *HLAA-New Jersey State Association*.

*We thank these donors\* for their very generous support*

**Platinum**  
 Albuquerque Hearing Associates  
 Carol Clifford  
**ATS Resources**  
 NM Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing  
 Worth Hearing Center  
 Catherine Worth

**Gold**  
 Virginia Car  
 Sally Schwartz  
 Jim & Carol Stanley  
 Jim & Karen Twohig

**Silver**  
 Don Arenfeld  
 J.C. Beverly  
 Irene Green  
 John & Carol Simmons

**Bronze**  
 Tom Dillon  
 Jana George  
 Charles & Linda Hale  
 John Hooper  
 Jim Koch  
 Martin Luna  
 Jonni McClure, Au.D  
 James Ogle  
 Roger Proctor  
 Jack Wilkins

**Friends**  
 George Alarcon  
 Gail Anastasio  
 Reggie Behl  
 Rees Bevan  
 Dick & Susan Blinzer  
 Robert & Carolyn Braziel  
 Teresa Burke  
 Rosalin Cohen  
 Dr. Norm & Barbara Dawson  
 Steve Frazier  
 Kim Granzow  
 Johnnie Griscott  
 Patricia Gonzales  
 Richard Kutzscher  
 Marguerite Lambert  
 Victoria Magown  
 Ivan Melada  
 Betty Meyer  
 Lee Roy Milton  
 Harry Mumma  
 Fran Neil  
 Jack & Betty Newman  
 Joan Parker  
 Leona Quigley  
 John Reitmeyer  
 Martin Rhoads  
 Roberta Rodriguez  
 Josie Schuessler

Helen Schmillie  
 Dale Shafer  
 Muriel Smedley  
 Greg Swager  
 Phyllis Welch

JoAnn Herreid  
 In memory of Pat Lester  
 Wolf Elston  
 In memory of Lorraine Hind Elston  
 Betty Meador  
 In memory of Marilyn Wilkinson

**A special thank you to the UNM Department of Linguistics and the student volunteers for providing ASL interpreting at our meetings, and to the many chapter members who volunteer to assist in setting up and conducting our meetings.**

**DONATION CATEGORIES**  
 Platinum .....\$400 or more  
 Gold ..... \$200 to \$399  
 Silver..... \$100 to \$199  
 Bronze..... \$50 to \$99  
 Friends.....Up to \$49

\* Donors listed here have made a donation to the chapter within the last twelve months

All donations to the Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque or to the Hearing Loss Association of America are tax deductible

The HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA is a volunteer association of Hard of Hearing people, their relatives and friends. It is a nonprofit, non-sectarian educational organization devoted to the welfare and interest of those who cannot hear well. Membership is by annual dues which are separate from the annual Chapter Fee paid to this local chapter. National membership includes a subscription to the bimonthly publication **Hearing Loss Magazine**.

National dues are: Individual: \$35; Student: \$20; Library/Nonprofit: \$50; Professional: \$60; Corporate: \$150  
 To join, please send your name, full mailing address, email address and a check or money order in the appropriate amount (above) to:

Hearing Loss Association of America  
 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200  
 Bethesda, Maryland 20814

For more info: [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)  
 (301) 657-2248 V  
 (301) 657-2249 TTY

If you wish to make a donation toward the educational and advocacy efforts of the national organization, you can do so using the form below



**Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque - Annual dues, Subscription, Donor form - 2011 CALENDAR YEAR**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. Number \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(Voice) \_\_\_\_\_ (TTY) \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX: Annual Chapter Fee: \$15   - or Newsletter Subscription Only: \$7.50    
 (Includes newsletter subscription) *Renewal* *New Member* *Renewal* *New*

Donation to the chapter \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Hearing Loss Association of America \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable and mail to: **HLAAbq • P.O. Box 36792 • Albuquerque, NM 87176**

## Treating hearing loss can improve marriage

*.....in marriages where one spouse has an untreated hearing loss, the other partner suffers as well.*

While a recipe for a happy marriage can be complicated – a little bit of this, a dash of that – one of the main ingredients of any successful relationship is good communication. Take that away and hello trouble!

You think we are just kidding around? Unfortunately we aren't. If you have hearing loss or are living with a spouse or partner who does, you know how frustrating interacting with that person can be. There is a lot of ear-cupping and asking "what did you say?"

This is not merely – no pun intended – hearsay; several studies have shown that poor hearing can put a big strain on marriages.

A new British survey found that in marriages where one spouse has an untreated hearing loss, the other partner suffers as well.

Feelings of frustration that arise from the inability to communicate can be a source of stress and often lead to domestic arguments. In fact, some of the respondents with hearing loss in the above-mentioned study said that their partner had threatened to leave unless the hearing loss is treated.

While the findings of this recent survey are quite alarming, they are not new. Previous research into this topic also clearly demonstrates a link between unaided hearing impairments and difficulties in relationships.

For example, an earlier British study released a few years ago found that 44 percent of respondents felt their relationship with their partner, friends or family had suffered because they couldn't hear properly.

And don't think that this problem is only prevalent in Great Britain. In the United States, Energizer released a similar study several years ago that revealed 48 percent of participants felt their marriage had suffered due to their spouse's hearing loss.

So you might say that hearing loss-related relation-

ship problems are the same on both sides of the big pond. The reason why poor hearing can cause problems in a marriage is quite simple: If you can't hear your significant other, if his or her words fall on deaf ears, the very basis of your relationship is straining at the seams.

Slowly but surely, feelings of frustration set in, leading to isolation, loneliness and even depression – not just for you, but for your partner as well. How many times did you hear people say: "We live under the same roof but we don't talk anymore?"

Some marriage issues are difficult to solve, but hearing loss isn't – or at least shouldn't be. In that sense, hearing aids are real marriage savers!

SOURCE: HearingHealth.com, 3 Nov. 2010

## Modified cochlear implant to treat Meniere's disease

*Success could spur new treatment approach for millions of people who suffer vestibular problems*

A University of Washington Medical Center patient is the world's first recipient of a device that aims to quell the disabling vertigo associated with Meniere's disease.

The UW Medicine clinicians who developed the implantable device hope that success in a 10-person surgical trial of Meniere's patients will lead to exploration of its usefulness against other common balance disorders that torment millions of people worldwide.

The device being tested - a cochlear implant and processor with re-engineered software and electrode arrays - represents four-plus years of work by UW specialists in signal processing, brain-stem physiology and vestibular neural coding.

In the United States, Meniere's affects less than one percent of the population. The disease occurs mostly in people between ages 30 and 50, but can strike anyone. Patients more often experience the condition in one ear; about 30 percent of cases are bilateral.

For more details, go online to: <http://www.hearinglossweb.com>, click on HoH\_LD news and link to volume 45, number 4.

### Special note to readers of WIRED FOR SOUND

If the word **COMP** appears after your name on this newsletter's mailing label, it is a complimentary copy that has been sent to familiarize you with our Chapter as part of our outreach to the hearing loss community in the hope that you will consider joining our group. The printing and mailing costs have been covered by our members or by the generous donors listed on page 7 of the newsletter.

**The Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque does not endorse products or services. Mention of such in articles, plus ads or inserts, is intended only to provide readers with up-to-date information on such products or services that might be of interest and is not a recommendation or endorsement.**

### NATIONAL HLAA NEWS: from Brenda Battat, Executive Director

#### Captioned telephone service

HLAA participated in a stakeholders meeting with the Disability Rights office of the FCC to discuss the need to mandate captioned telephone services (CTS) such as CapTel which is not required under current FCC regulations and is thus not available in all states. Some states also offer only limited availability of the service since there is no mandate that it be offered. The issue holding up progress is that there is only one company, Ultratec, that offers the service and that it is an analog application. HLAA still believes that we must make the service available to those people with hearing loss, many of whom are among the aging population, who do not now and most probably will never use computers or digital wireless handsets.

#### Medicare and hearing tests

In other advocacy efforts, HLAA as requested that Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services, include hearing loss as part of the development of a standardized health risk assessment. This would fall under Medicare coverage of an annual wellness visit to prevent chronic conditions and promote health as called for in the recently passed Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

#### Will Boston get looped?

In October, HLAA presented testimony at a Boston City Council hearing on hearing loops. Five HLAA representatives testified including staff, a board member, and three members of Boston area chapters — two of whom were young adults.

Representatives also attended from MassPort, the airport authority, and the MBTA subway. HLAA arranged for the council chamber to be looped and provided each person attending who did not have hearing aids with headsets so that they could experience what it sounds like to listen through a loop system.

The council members were very impressed. This was a first step for the council to collect information to

help them decide how to move forward on installing hearing loops in city owned facilities.

The testimony included information on these loop installations around the country: 28 New York City subway information booths with plans for a total of 488; City of Cerritos, CA Council Chamber; hundreds of houses of worship; information kiosks at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Disney World ticket center; U.S. House of Representatives; Brooklyn Botanical Gardens shuttle bus; Albuquerque Little Theater; Osh Kosh Grand Opera; Apple Store, Soho Branch NYC; both concourses and all gate areas of Grand Rapids airport; Mets Stadium ticket window; 14,759 seat Michigan State University basketball arena.

### CHAPTER NEWS:

At October's West Side meeting there almost was no assistive listening system. Parts of the city owned loop/PA system were missing and the Center's staff had no idea where they were.

Fortunately, the chapter's old portable loop system was on hand and **Jim Ogle** and **Tom Mathers** rushed to get it up and running. There were no loudspeakers and only one microphone but the loop worked well for those with telecoils in their hearing aids or implants.

It's now apparent the center's equipment was stolen and the chapter's old loop was set up by **Tom Mathers** again along with a PA system set up by chapter advisor **Mike Grato**

### FIRST CALL FOR 2011 DUES

The annual chapter fee becomes due each year on January 1st. A few members have already sent in their renewals for 2011. Please join them by using the form on page 7 of this newsletter to renew.

The last two digits in the code following your name on the mailing label on this newsletter will be an 11 if you have already paid.

# WHAT DOES AN AUDIOGRAM TELL YOU AND WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN YOU SHOP FOR HEARING AIDS?

Mike Grato, BC-HIS of Livingston Hearing Aid Center was the speaker for November's chapter meetings and his far ranging discussion opened with a reminder that most hard of hearing people take 7 to 10 years to accept that they have a hearing loss and then dealing with it by having a hearing test. By that time, for most of them, the use of hearing aids is called for.

The need for hearing aids and what style of aids are recommended depends largely on the degree of hearing loss. Up to a 40 decibel loss is considered a mild loss, From there to 70 decibels is consider moderate with over 70 being considered severe and over 90 is profound.

For those with the typical "ski slope" loss that goes from maybe 20 dB in the low tones to 70 in the higher ones, the loss would be described as mild to severe.

As the severity of the loss increases, the size, power and style of the hearing aids increases. A severe hearing loss is not overcome smallest CIC (completely in the canal) hearing aids while a mild to moderate loss does not call for a large, powerful BTE (behind the ear) aid with a custom ear mold.

Mike noted several key factors that need to be considered by the hearing aid user and the dispenser in selecting the appropriate hearing aid. Among them:

- Degree and type of loss - both ears (bilateral) or one ear (unilateral) and sesnsoinural (nerve damage) or conductive ( damage to the middle ear).
- Lifestyle - active, spends time in noisy situations, or quiet socializing in small groups and quiet settings.
- Affordability - what hearing aids will best fit in the consumer's budget and not exceed they can be afforded.
- Service - the willingness of the provider to provide follow up appointments to review the performance of the hearing aids, make needed adjustment and develop and effective bond with and trust of the patient.

The topic that possibly raised the most questions in the program was a discussion of the equipment used to take "real ear measurements" of the performance of the hearing aids when they are dispensed. Rather than try to paraphrase the explanation that was offered, below is how Dr. Mark Ross described this technology in Hearing Loss Magazine:

"One of the most important tools in the audiological armamentarium at the present time is a probe microphone system that measures the "real-ear" response of hearing aids. What this entails is the placement of a very fine flexible tube alongside the earmold and extending it a few millimeters past the tip into the ear canal. The tube leads to a microphone and a sound wave analyzer. What a probe-mike device does is measure the spectrum of sound in the ear canal produced by a hearing aid. It is the most accurate estimation we now have of the sound signals that actually reach a person's eardrum as it reflects all the electronic and acoustic pathways from microphone through the earmold."

Use of this technology will help ensure the best possible performance of the hearing aids .

# More NM churches are getting in the hearing loop

Two more Albuquerque names are being added added to the list of known looped churches in New Mexico: St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church and Bethlehem Lutheran, which is expected to be looped before Christmas..

St. Michael's installation challenged Mike Langner, the installer, and he met the challenge by installing one section of the loop outside of the building but with a strong enough signal that it penetrates the wall and provides excellent reception in the sanctuary.

## Another loop in Los Alamos

Also getting in the loop is the meeting room in the Los Alamos County/Community building, joining the two churches listed to the right that were already providing telecoil friendly assistive listening systems in Los Alamos.

A good many of these churches and other installations have been made after HLAA members pressed their church and community leaders to add hearing loop technology to the other assistive listening systems that were already in place.

The looping movement is gaining momentum with over 40 churches being looped in just the last two years in the Fox Valley area of Wisconsin.. Sports venues are "getting in the loop>" The ticket windows at Citi Field - the new home of the NY Mets - are looped and major sections of the basketball stadium at Michigan State University are scheduled to have hearing loops installed.

# Popejoy Hall upgrades their assistive listening system

For many years Popejoy Hall had only an infrared (IR) assistive listening system that required the hard of hearing to remove their hearing aids and don a borrowed headset to hear well during performances there.

At the urging of Loop NM and HLAAbq leaders, they supplemented those headsets a few years ago with neck loops that could pick up the IR signal and transmit it via neck loop to telecoil equipped hearing aids.

That old infrared system was recently supplemented with a state of the art FM system where patrons are again offered the choice of borrowing a brand new headset or an equally brand new neck loop to better hear performances. The equipment is available and loaned out at the information counter in the main lobby.

## Here are churches where you can enjoy the benefits of a hearing loop when attending Christmas services



- Albuquerque Center for Spiritual Living
- Abiding Word Lutheran Church
- Calvary Baptist Church - Alamogordo
- Christ United Methodist Church
- Christ Unity Church
- Cumberland Presbyterian Church
- Fair Valley Church
- Faith Lutheran Church
- First Methodist Church - Belen
- First Presbyterian Church
- First Unitarian Church
- Good Shepard Lutheran Church
- Immaculate Heart of Mary RC Church – Los Alamos
- Montgomery Church of Christ
- Northeast Church of Christ
- Our Lady of the Annunciation RC Church
- Prince of Peace Roman Catholic Church
- Rio Rancho Presbyterian Church
- Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church
- Saint Anne's RC Church - Santa Fe
- Saint John's United Methodist Church
- Saint John's Episcopal Cathedral
- Saint John the Baptist RC Church
- Saint Joseph's Catholic Church – White Rock
- Saint Joseph on the Rio Grande
- Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church
- Saint Paul Lutheran Church
- Saint Paul's United Methodist Church
- Sandia Baptist Church
- United Church of Los Alamos
- Well Spring Church - Las Cruces

*(If your church is not on this list, show it to your church leaders and encourage them to loop the sanctuary.)*

Hearing loss is no laughing matter but.....



This comic strip was created at MakeBeliefsComix.com. Go there to make one yourself!